

## OBITER

IT IS PART, perhaps, of the Irish paradox that the most venerable of English Catholic reviews should take its name from Dublin. And the latest number of the *Dublin Review* (fourth quarter, 1950) presents as usual a wide variety of informed comment, from a masterly review of *The English Catholics, 1850-1950* by Christopher Dawson to a study of Christianity in Abyssinia, from an essay on contemporary Catholic thought in France by Gaétan Bernoville to a re-assessment of Ruskin by Arnold Lunn. The *Dublin* has never made the mistake of supposing that the Catholic voice is only likely to be heard if it is concealed under a fashionable falsetto. As truly today as under Daniel O'Connell it is solid but readable, and if only in its name it represents one of our larger debts to Ireland.

OF IRISH PERIODICALS, *Studies* (now in its thirty-ninth volume) carries the heaviest weight. It reflects, as it should, the special scholarly preoccupations of Ireland, and its articles on Irish history and poetry are always authoritative. But it finds room for general articles, too, such as the controversial, but excellently argued, study of von Hügel by Humphrey Johnson in its latest issue.

THE IRISH ROSARY has been long established, and it is an excellent example of the 'popular' review which leavens the lump of doctrine with short stories and lighter articles. It has for years been notable for the perspicuity of its editorial comments, and its recent Christmas number is as vigorous as ever. The section, 'Doctrine and Life', which has been a feature of the *Irish Rosary* for some time, is now to take on a separate existence as a review under that name, and it is to be hoped that it will continue its work of enriching popular piety with the resources of theology.

MAYNOOTH, as one might expect, is the home of several reviews. *The Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, now in its eighty-sixth year, is in one sense a professional organ for the clergy, including as it does Roman documents and authoritative answers to questions in Theology, Canon Law and the Liturgy. But it includes articles of wider interest also, such as those on Dr Joad and the R.L. Stevenson centenary in the December number. *Christus Rex*, 'an Irish quarterly journal of Sociology', has done much to forward Catholic social teaching, and its expert articles on contemporary affairs are of consistently high standard. The most recent of Maynooth reviews, *The Furrow*, is perhaps the most actual in emphasis. It might be described as a monthly of pastoral theology, and it is wide awake to the opportunities that await the Church in the

modern world. It has already published a valuable symposium on 'The Irish in Britain', and it announces a forthcoming symposium on 'Preaching' which should be of practical value.

OF IRISH CATHOLIC WEEKLIES, *The Irish Catholic* and *The Standard* are both well known. Of recent years they have shown an increasing appreciation of the wide territory which a Catholic newspaper should explore, and reviews of books and films, as well as the customary news items, are regular features.

LITERARY REVIEWS in Ireland have had, as elsewhere, a difficult time. but *The Bell* and *Envoy* compare very favourably with what England or America, with their much greater resources, are able to produce. *The Bell*, silent for a while, has begun to ring again under the editorship of Peadar O'Donnell, and no one is likely to find its tones soporific. In its December issue an Ulster Protestant minister answers the charge of 'bigotry', Denis Johnston continues his diary of the war years, Roger McHugh discusses the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill and Ireland, L. A. G. Strong provides a characteristic short story, and there are poems by Roy McFadden and others. *Envoy*, 'a review of literature and art', is consciously, not to say self-consciously, aware of its responsibilities, and its latest number includes a list of subjects which it will *not* deal with, e.g. 'Borstals and gaols', 'Holidays in Ireland' and 'The Jansenistic Irish', In fact: 'literary value, literary value' is its theme. Despite these warnings, *Envoy* manages to attract such writers as Christopher Sykes, Arland Ussher and Patrick Kavanagh, and in its December number an excellent article on 'Religious Art in Ireland' is accompanied by some unfamiliar and beautiful illustrations.

THE IMAGE OF OUR LADY OF YOUGHAL, a medieval ivory now venerated in the Dominican Priory church at Cork, is the subject of a learned study by Urban Flanagan, o.p. in the *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society* (1950). Fr Flanagan discusses the legends which surround the origin of this lovely carving and its eventful history, and his article is enriched by excellent photographs.

THE CAPUCHIN ANNUAL goes on from height to height of excellence: the world-wide esteem in which it is held, is only due recompense for the lavish courage of Fr Senan, and of the printers, John English of Wexford.

Special mention must be made of the Basil Clancy Publications: the monthly *Hibernia* has long had a fine record in gauging trends in Ireland, and promises, now that the scope has been enlarged, to enhance that record; *Junior Digest* is the most stimulating magazine of its kind; the firm's brochures are attractive and intelligent.