

are angels. In him, by him and through him all creatures, from the humblest mineral to the shining Seraphim, give glory to God.

Glory is given to God by adoration and this is the first duty and the sole prerogative of intelligent creatures. Only one creature can adore God comprehensively and he is Christ; the human and angelic creations adore God adequately only in so far as they are engrafted by grace to the Son of God.

Accordingly Erik Petersen, in his very fine book, sees the angels as being at one with the Saints in the adoration of the glorified Christ in heaven. Such adoration is the supreme achievement of the Church. It is the liturgy of the Mystical Body triumphant. The liturgy of the Mystical Body militant is, argues Petersen, a participation by the Church on earth in the liturgy of the angels in heaven; and, conversely, the angels participate in the worship of the Church on earth. They assist at Baptism, at Mass, in the Divine Office and in prayer. They are the official worshippers of God in the society of heaven, and their participation in the liturgy of the Church . . . 'expriment ce fait que c'est un cult officiel qui est rendu à Dieu'.

Angels are now one with men in Christ. For the glory of God, which Isaias saw as worshipped by angels through their great Trisagion, has departed from the temple of the Jews and now dwells in the temple of the Body of Jesus. And him whom we salute at Mass in time, the angels worship in heaven as the Lamb who is slain before the foundations of the world.

ALAN KEENAN, O.F.M.

THE ANNOTATOR. By Alan Keen and Roger Lubbock. (Putnam; 21s.)

During the past ten years a certain amount of conjecture has arisen regarding a copy of Hall's *Chronicle* of 1550, in the possession of Mr Alan Keen, which contains 406 annotations in a contemporary hand; and it has been suggested that these were made by William Shakespeare when studying the reigns of Richard II, Henry IV, V and VI for his cycle of history plays. In 1949 there appeared a brief preliminary report by Moray McLaren, entitled *By Me*, and with the present volume the theory is carried a stage further.

It is certain that the annotations are in an Elizabethan hand; it is almost certain that Shakespeare knew and used Hall as a source book. So much may be granted. The marginalia consist for the most part of the sort of headings a student would make on first 'getting up' a subject. Of Henry V, for instance, we find: '9th. of aprile 1405 henry the Vthe beganne to reign . . . all flatterers and olde companions banisshid X myle from the courte . . . sage counsellors chosen . . . he beganne to reforme bothe the clergie and the layte', and so on. Only rarely does a

hint of the personality of the annotator break through, but when it does it is that of a stout patriot—‘note the kowardyce of the frenche men’, and of a Catholic who was stirred by Hall’s virulent Protestant bias to pen comments like ‘here he begynne to rayle’, ‘always lying’, and—when Hall writes of ‘the Romishe bishop’—‘note that when he speaketh of the Pope he sheweth himself of the englische schisme a favorer’. Most of these latter comments have been scored through, as if the writer feared to leave incriminating evidence of his partiality.

Leaving aside the question of religious principles for the moment, the annotations certainly provide some interesting parallels with the texts of Shakespeare’s plays; for instance, from the handful of comments quoted above regarding Henry V the reader will immediately recall the sentence of banishment pronounced on Falstaff by the young king ‘not to come near our person by ten mile’. Several dozens of similar instances could be quoted; but when all is said this proves no more than that when Shakespeare read Hall he noted the same kind of points as the annotator; it does not prove that Shakespeare *was* the annotator. More definite proof could only come from a comparison of handwriting, and genuine examples of Shakespeare’s hand are so scarce, confined to signatures written late in life, that it is difficult to draw any conclusion either way on such slender evidence. There for the moment the matter rested.

Mr Keen now attempts in the present volume to approach the investigation from the other direction, *via* the owners of the annotated volume. He emerges from a maze of genealogy, in which the reader will have some difficulty in following him, with a theory that may be summarized as follows. The first owner of the volume was apparently Sir Richard Newport, sheriff of Shropshire (who put his signature in the book); a much later eighteenth-century owner of the book was Robert Worsley, a Lancashire gentleman (who stuck a library press-mark on the end-paper). Mr Keen finds a point of intersection between these two important northern households in the family of Houghton of Lea Hall in Lancashire, with which each was distantly connected. And in the household of Alexander Houghton, who died in 1581, there was one William Shakeshafte, a player.

Was Shakeshafte Shakespeare? Did his father—a Catholic recusant, as we know—send his son—as a singing boy perhaps—to a Lancastrian Catholic household for his adolescence rather than to the Stratford Grammar School? Did he imbibe in the atmosphere of a country family of the old religion that breadth of culture that has surprised so many commentators? Did he pass from Lea Hall, as Houghton’s will requested, to the service of Sir Thomas Hesketh, another Lancastrian papist and patriot, who, too, kept his troop of players? Did he pass

from there, in 1588, into Lord Strange's company of players, and so to London, where he was spoken of by 1592? And, above all, did he during this apprenticeship in the country houses of the North first make notes for a projected series of historical plays in the margins of a copy of Hall's *Chronicle*?

The legend—on no very good authority—that Shakespeare 'died a papist' has long circulated. It is unlikely that he was ever a practising Catholic during his London career, but of infinitely more importance is the broadly Catholic attitude revealed in the plays, and the complete avoidance of the easy anti-papist gibes that could have come so easily (in *King John* for instance) and that mark the work of many another dramatist of his day. If Mr Keen's theory is to be accepted, the young Shakespeare was brought up in the old religion, and his mind sprang instinctively to its defence.

Before this attractive theory can be accepted there are at least three major hurdles to be negotiated. Firstly, why should Shakespeare change his name to Shakeshafte? It is true that his grandfather used both forms apparently indiscriminately, and that the spelling of surnames had not acquired its modern rigidity; it is possible that the scribe who wrote the will used the more common Lancastrian form in error, or that William himself was toying with the idea of adopting a variant stage-name; there are many possibilities, but no real explanation. Secondly, the theory of an upbringing among these northern households must allow for a return to Stratford in 1582 to marry Anne Hathaway, and for her to bear him three children in Warwickshire; the suggestion of an extended holiday, between one patron and another, Houghton and Hesketh, is difficult to accept. And thirdly, the progress of this now famous copy of Hall's *Chronicle* from Newport to Houghton and from Houghton to Worsley is a great deal less clear than the authors suggest; it is all very well to write vaguely of 'a close connexion by marriage' and that 'the link between Newport and Houghton we know (see Appendix I)'; but if we turn to Appendix I, and study the five genealogical trees of which it is composed, we do not find anything of the kind. Even if we take Mr Keen at his word, one does not normally present a book from one's library to the third cousin of the husband of one's great-niece. This copy of Hall may indeed have passed from the library of one northern country house to another by a hundred different routes, but to write of it 'travelling along the family tree' is pure bunkum.

The establishment of a new theory of this nature demands from its authors the most scrupulous scholarship and the most pellucid exposition. On neither count can *The Annotator* be accepted as satisfactory; the authors start too many hares, and lose their way among too many

speculations, for the reader to keep up with them. Yet this book should not be dismissed without trying—though some clear thinking will be needed—to understand its argument. And even if, after all, we can only suspend judgment, we have at least been presented with a detective problem of baffling but fascinating complexity; moreover, in a field where the professional scholars can only shake their heads and pedantically murmur 'we do not know', it is refreshing to see the amateurs bravely plunging in with a new and exciting explanation of the mystery of Shakespeare's hidden years.

G. V. SPEIGHT

ST GEORGE FOR ETHIOPIA. By Beatrice Playne. (Constable; 45s.)

Very little of either the contents or significance of this book is conveyed by its title. It falls into two parts; 149 pages are from a travel diary kept in Ethiopia after the end of the last war, there is a short chapter on Ethiopian rock churches and a long and very stimulating one on Ethiopian paintings.

The travel diary is vivid and very detailed. It conveys very perfectly both the character of rural life in modern Ethiopia and the character of the authoress. From it she appears as one of the most appealing examples of that uniquely English type, the Woman Traveller, completely unselfconscious, instantaneously able to get on easy terms with those she meets, quick-eyed and observant, with a zest for adventure and a very matter-of-fact disregard for physical risk.

Since Miss Playne was travelling in search of wall-paintings and panels, her diary forms an ideal prelude to her short study of Ethiopian art. Her conclusions here are re-enforced by admirably chosen illustrations—six colour plates, eight photographs and sixteen drawings. Perhaps only those who have already studied the subject will realize the originality of Miss Playne's approach, the extent of fresh ground that she has broken and the importance of her personal discoveries.

For my part I hold that Miss Playne has over-estimated the extent of seventeenth-century Western influence on Ethiopian painting; this is primarily due to her reliance on the unproved hypothesis of Monneret de Villard that the dominant convention of the Mother and the Child is derived from the Madonna of St Luke in Santa Maria Maggiore. The detailed resemblances in the two types are too close to be due to coincidence, but they could also be explained by a common source in a twelfth-century Byzantine variant of the 'Panaghia Hodi-gitria'. I believe that she underestimates the Byzantine influences that came seeping through the Ethiopian monastery in Jerusalem between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries. I do not think she has sufficiently taken into account the north Syrian origins of Ethiopian monasticism