

lent choice of illustrations. Many of the continental churches referred to in Mr Hammond's book appear in good photographs, and there are numerous pictures of paintings, carvings and ornaments besides. The emphasis of the book is perhaps excessively Germanic, and Herr Henze's over-rigid categories could be questioned, but text and illustrations alike are a sober reminder of what has already been achieved in restoring the artist to his proper place in the life of the Church.

I. E.

**ORIENTAL ESSAYS: Portraits of Seven Scholars.** By A. J. Arberry. (Allen and Unwin; 28s.)

Oriental studies in England are not uninfluential; rather their influence is irregular. You may meet quite unacademic persons who are fascinated by Indian sculpture, by the Japanese theatre, by Islamic mysticism; you may hear famous scholars generalizing about Greek vases or about landscape painting without awareness that vases have existed in Persia or landscape in China.

It is, I suppose, more especially the ignorance of the learned that Professor Arberry hopes to pierce by these studies of six predecessors in Arabic, Persian and general Islamic scholarship and by one chapter about his own life and aims. And indeed, if the 'cultured reader' may be expected to take some interest in the work and career of a Bentley or Routh or Housman, why should he not do as much for Simon Ockley or Edward Lane? Above all, what a subject is Sir William Jones, perhaps the most admirable figure among all eighteenth-century men of letters, a master of Eastern and Western learning who reached far beyond literary greatness and whose name is now scarcely known in England!

The material Professor Arberry has is thus very promising indeed, but I fear he fails to do it justice. He often spoils a good narrative by mere clumsiness, and he is oddly insensitive to the English language. He mixes quite inconsistent styles, and his judgment of other men's translations too often confuses their hits and their misses. He himself writes this prose: 'Laura Palmer began to ail, and it was soon clear that consumption, which had robbed Palmer of his father, was out to claim another victim.' He approves this verse of E. G. Browne:

'Up its sleeve the wind, meseemeth, pounded musk hath stored away'.  
I deplore this tactless advocacy of an excellent cause.

WALTER SHEWRING

**THE FACE OF THE ANCIENT ORIENT.** By Sabatino Moscati. (Routledge & Kegan Paul and Vallentine Mitchell; 30s.)

This is a brilliantly conceived book, as we have come to expect from the never-idle pen of Professor Moscati, the Director of the Centre of Semitic studies in the University of Rome. The treatment is original: it began as a series of broadcast lectures on the Radio Italiana in 1955 on the civilizations of the Ancient Orient; the next year the lectures were expanded into a book entitled *Il Profilo dell'Oriente Mediterraneo*, and now this book has appeared

in English. The translation is exceptionally good, and it is a pity that the translator has remained anonymous. The author, in a foreword specially written for this edition, writes of 'assessing a cultural epoch as a whole . . . a more difficult and risky approach, one not previously tried; a comparative study of the essential characteristic features of the ancient Oriental civilizations.' 'To begin with' (he continues) 'it was necessary to define the spatial and temporal limits of the subject', and then in the first chapter, after speaking of what he calls the 'Oriental Renaissance' of our days (beginning in the discovery of Ugarit in 1928), he defines his limits of the 'Ancient Orient' (otherwise the Near East or the Mediterranean East) as including Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Arabia, Anatolia, Mesopotamia, and Iran (p. 7) as a cultural whole, excluding the 'more outlying cultures of Crete and the Indus', which belong to another field of study, and he then limits his time from the first documents of c. 3000 B.C., to the time of Alexander's conquest in 330 B.C., when the East came under Western domination. This time and space area is then studied by cultural areas: Sumerian, Babylonian and Assyrian, Egyptian, Hittite and Hurrian, Canaanite and Aramaean (including Ugaritic), Israelite, and finally Persian. In each section a similar plan is followed as explained in the foreword: 'dealing, not with history, but with the historical outlines; not with religion, but with the religious structure; not with literature, but with the literary genres; not with art, but with the artistic types'. In each case there is a complete impression of a whole culture, with many complete examples in each sphere, and of course full scholarly documentation for sources in the footnotes. A curious feature is however the omission, except for a passing reference on page 204 (in the Canaanite and Aramaean chapter), of the Philistines. The last chapter sets out to 'bring together the threads which link up facts and ideas . . . which create an organic whole'. There are thirty-two excellent plates, five plans and a good map.

SEBASTIAN BULLOUGH, O.P.

THE THIRD VOICE. Modern British and American Verse Drama. By Denis Donoghue. (Oxford University Press; 30s.)

Professor Donoghue's *The Third Voice* is concerned with what Eliot described as 'the voice of the poet when he attempts to create a dramatic character speaking in verse'. His book is a witty, analytical and profound study of English and American twentieth-century poetic drama. Professor Donoghue shares with American critics such as Yvor Winters and R. P. Blackmur the ability to analyse and evaluate not only carefully but also enticingly. His own excitement communicates itself by means of a style which is vivid, pithy and concrete. He is at ease with generalizations simply because his primary concern is with particulars. Briefly, he is a master of the pertinent paradox.

Professor Donoghue declares that 'a play is "poetic" . . . when its concrete elements (plot, agency, scene, speech, gesture) continuously exhibit in their internal relationships those qualities of mutual coherence and illumination required of the words of a poem'. At the end of his survey he goes further