

The interest of *The Sign of Jonas* is not that it is a finished book, or even perhaps an eminently publishable one, but that it is a true enough account of someone in this painful condition. Indeed to many of those who recall some of the noisier pages of *Elected Silence* it may possibly seem like the portrait of a man eating his own hat. It is a journal of five years search for that silence which it was easier to choose than find, and of the gradual discovery of it in unexpected places. In the process it shows how strong a line in internal criticism the mere business of living can develop. 'Rilke's notebooks have so much power in them that they make me wonder why no one writes like that in monasteries. . . . It is a common failing of monks to lose themselves in a collective professional personality. . . . We cling to our eccentricities and selfishness, but we do so in a way that is no longer interesting because it is after all mechanical and vulgar.' The implied contrast here between the common and the commonplace, between real solitude and merely deliberate isolation is what this diary explores, and it might almost be summed up in the sentence which has perhaps deeper implications for the future than would at first appear: 'the Rule and the common life untie all the knots and worry and trouble and unquiet that gather in your head when you are living on your own'.

ÆLFRED SQUIRE, O.P.

ENGLISH ARCHITECTURE SINCE THE REGENCY. By H. S. Goodhart-Rendel. (Constable; 25s.)

Some years ago the writer of this book delivered a paper to the R.I.B.A. about what he described as 'the rogue architects' of the Victorian era. By which he meant drawing a parallel with 'rogue elephants'—the architects who worked apart from the main herd. The phrase is most apt to describe an architectural phenomenon which happens repeatedly in our civilisation and it would not perhaps be far off the mark to describe Mr Goodhart-Rendel himself as a 'rogue architect' of the twentieth century—or at least as a rogue writer on architecture. For where everyone else in the field has been pointing out the inability of the traditional idea of architecture to cope with our situation in building, he alone among the gifted has held to that idea and has dared to apply its tests to what has been going on.

This position of the writer's, his well-tryed, clear-cut philosophy of architecture equip him so well to prod the excessively soft belly of what we have come to call 'the Contemporary Movement'. He is thus not unlike a solitary Thomist in a room full of Existentialists: and if his approach to the subjects at issue prevents him from coming to grips with the difficulties people feel, it at least enables him to score many telling points. His book therefore seems likely to take its place at the side of Scott's *Architecture of Humanism* as an enduring piece of devil's advocacy. This is

not, of course, what it sets out to be; for it is described, modestly, as 'An interpretation of English architecture since the Regency'. But in reviewing this field the writer keeps so strictly to his premisses that, in the end, it is these which impose themselves on the reader.

Though he makes a point of seeing it through French eyes, no man knows more about latter-day English architecture than Mr Goodhart-Rendel. We have often been invited to re-assess Victoriana on the strength of its nostalgic or imaginative content—we think of Mr Betjeman carried away by the smell of rotting hymnbooks: but here we are invited to reassess it on the strength of its value as design and composition—as these are understood in the Ecole des Beaux Arts. Fearful as your reviewer is of the possible effect of this book on the architectural lay reader, he would not be so mean as to try and detract from what is in fact an exquisite performance. For however much you may quarrel with what is implied in it, this is the most lucid book on architecture which has come out during the last quarter century.

LANCE WRIGHT

THE MANUAL OF OLAVUS PETRI, 1529. By Eric E. Yelverton, D.D.  
(S.P.C.K.; 15s.)

The main interest of the Manual, here edited in an English translation with a learned introduction, is that it was the first vernacular Prayer Book to appear in modern times. Olavus Petri was no Cranmer either on the stage of ecclesiastical politics—though he was in many ways a leading reformer in Sweden—or in the sphere of literature, though his *Manual* has had a considerable influence on subsequent Swedish liturgical books. It was, however, unknown to Cranmer.

Olavus Petri was an early disciple of Luther and he studied theology at Wittenburg. Luther's teaching was decisive and Olavus became one of the pioneers of the Swedish Reformation, which however was brought about for any but purely religious reasons. An examination of his *Manual*, and, with the help of the many extracts provided by Dr Yelverton, of similar books compiled at the time, shows that the principal concern of the reformers was theological rather than liturgical. That liturgical reforms were eagerly desired at the time cannot be doubted, but among the reformers the reason behind that desire was a determination to harmonise the liturgy with their heretical opinion. Over and over again Olavus Petri leaves the shell of the ancient rite—for fear of upsetting the people—and by a slight change here and a suppression there produces a nice 'evangelical' document. It is all very sad. So many of these men were able, had the good of ordinary people at heart, and yet because they had broken with the See of Peter they went sadly astray and drew whole nations after them. They destroyed the Faith, once delivered to the saints, and evacuated the liturgy of all but a moralistic significance.