

the chapter on 'The Psychology of Secular Religions' is one of the most valuable in the book. The campaign, he insists, could not continue if it were not religious, where the Party claims absolute faith in its infallibility here and now and in the certainty of the millenium in the future.

But as well as being Islam, i.e. the union of a religion and a people for the purpose of conquest, Communism is also a tyranny, i.e. 'a regime in which a victory in factional strife is consolidated and ensured, by an apparatus of power and social coercion, against the fickleness of history and changing circumstances'. This political aspect is illustrated by a wealth of comparison drawn from the history of Persia, Greece and Rome, and it is here that M. Monnerot is on least sure ground. Historical parallels have manifest limitations, although very recent history seems to confirm the view that rule by a triumvirate is the least secure form of dictatorship. But then who is to say that there is not some other, more shadowy, figure behind Molotov and Malenkov?

Incidentally, in the course of his general analysis, M. Monnerot makes many points of general importance covering a wide field. Thus, to mention a few: The fact that Communism received a certain tolerance because the workers' claims were approved by the bourgeois conscience—although the supposed dichotomy and duel between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is one of the grossest assumptions made by the Communist leaders. Again, Communism as a political structure in Russia is based on a real economic and sociological substructure; in other countries it is not. Hence the party in these countries is made to imitate the Russian party but with no relevance to the facts of the situation. Many instances are given of the dilemma of the liberals. Thus, 'totalitarian diplomacy would lose one of its trump cards if the democratic powers were to forbid their newspapers to be quite so sensational at certain times. The freedom of the press in their opponents' countries is in some ways extremely useful to the totalitarians.' The psychological judgments however are at times a little too hidebound by technical phrases. Is it really enlightening to say that Marxism is a neurosis resulting from an affective trauma, and that the cause of the trauma is the proletarianisation of the masses? Jargon apart, and despite an involuted style (translated in a workmanlike fashion), this is a valuable book.

J. FITZSIMONS

SELECTED POEMS OF GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS. Edited by James Reeves. (Heinemann; 6s.)

A HOPKINS READER. By John Pick. (Oxford University Press; 2s.)

It is time for a selection of Hopkins' poetry at what publishers are pleased to call a popular price; Mr Reeves' selection is entirely adequate, consisting of all the mature poems and sufficient examples of earlier work to throw light on methods and principles. There is so little of Hopkins'

poetry that selection might seem unnecessary; but Mr Reeves omits most of the unfinished poems and fragments and all of the poems which Bridges set in an appendix. Since these have little more than academic interest, and since the notes have been severely cut down and accents almost entirely eliminated, the popularity of the selection is ensured.

In 1942 Dr Pick published *Gerard Manley Hopkins, Priest and Poet*, which argued with convincing scholarship that Hopkins' poetry was the fruit of his religious and priestly life. In his introduction to the *Hopkins Reader*, Dr Pick retraces that thought with masterly brevity and precision. After a selection of poems, the prose extracts from diaries and letters are placed under headings: inscape, poetic theory, practical criticism, the other arts, personal letters, religion. There is something of everything: even a song and four drawings. As this is likely to become a students' handbook (supposing the Hopkins fashion among examining bodies continues) it is particularly good to have the full text of *Author's Preface* containing the account of sprung rhythm, and three valuable sermons on the Exercises.

As we re-read Hopkins' letters it appears once again how much of the pain and conflict of his life was a decisive instrument in his poetic development. Most of this conflict is attributable to Hopkins' own hypersensitive and unusual temperament. This has provoked some harsh and unfair judgments of the Jesuit discipline for which the critics need be little blamed; they have been deceived by Hopkins as Hopkins was deceived by himself. He was, I think, deceived because he did not distinguish between the laws of the Society of Jesus and his own severe heroic aspirations. Anonymity and self-effacement are indeed enjoined on members of religious orders, but the laws and constitutions of the orders generally provide for the publication of work which '*christianae reipublicae utilitati Ordinisque decori valeat*'. So Hopkins' protestations rarely ring true; religious men are allowed and encouraged to use their talents. He was unconsciously trying to get the best of both worlds, to make sure of being a poet and a saint. Somehow he never quite understood that if he had the ability to be a poet the vision would be clearer for his being a saint. He could never trust himself to 'let go', because, as Fr D'Arcy wrote in 1941, 'he tended to overemphasise the danger of mortal beauty and the proximity of sin'. Hopkins' exaggerated fear has caused the critics to misjudge not only the Society of Jesus but the purpose of religious life altogether. So Mr Reeves writes, 'his sensuality he punished by the vow of chastity, his pride and rebelliousness by the vow of obedience'. That is only half, and the less significant half, of the story. Religious life is not a sacrifice undertaken only for self-conquest or self-expression, but ultimately for love. Unfortunately 'love of God' is a well-worn phrase, and people find it difficult to believe a man who says he lives his life for this. Or rather, they find it

difficult to believe that he means anything real. But the love of God may be as real and as compelling as the love of husband or wife; the love of God was intensely real to Hopkins, as the now famous letter to Bridges testifies: 'the only person I am in love with seldom, especially now, stirs my heart sensibly, and when he does I cannot always "make capital" of it'. Of course he was afraid of disloyalty, not to a formula or an institution, but to a person. And when all the terrible heart-searching and torment was over there remained the final sonnets. If, as Mr Reeves says, 'nothing in English poetry is so powerful outside *Macbeth*', it is difficult to believe that the 'renunciations and privations he endured maimed his genius'. If that is a maiming, all credit to the Society of Jesus for such a fruitful maiming. No, Hopkins, like any artist, needed pruning (it is not pleasant to think of the super-aesthetical young man he might have been) and the Society of Jesus pruned well. If the pruning was severe the fruit was rich, and it is time we gave due credit not only to Hopkins' luxuriant muse but to the refining Jesuit discipline.

GERARD MEATH, O.P.

SOME PRINCIPLES OF FICTION. By Robert Liddell. (Jonathan Cape; 12s. 6d.)

Mr Liddell's new book on the novel suffers by comparison with his earlier work, *A Treatise on the Novel*. If (according to the dust-jacket) the problems treated in the new book are 'more fundamental' than those in the *Treatise*, their effect on the reader is much less profound. The later book gives the impression of having been composed too near the author's notebooks, so that much of the interesting material of the earlier chapters is either too insufficiently or too superficially argued, and the *obiter dicta* of the final chapter have not the underlying unity to justify this grouping.

That there is a definite, if limited, place for this kind of abstract discussion about fiction, Mr Liddell's own *Treatise* and Mr Percy Lubbock's *The Craft of Fiction* have sufficiently demonstrated, but in spite of these successes, this is a difficult field to cultivate, because abstract generalisation remains, invariably, alien to effective discussion of literature. The blue-print is inimical to literary criticism. Mr Liddell, of course, avoids the blue-print, and generally resists the temptations of turning legislator, but his obvious predilection for the kind of novel written by Henry James, Jane Austen and Miss Compton-Burnett, tends to make him insensitive to the value of novel patterns existing outside that scheme. Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, for instance, are rebuked for their lack of composition, and Hardy's prose style is examined and corrected. It is through ultra-Jamesian spectacles, then, that Mr Liddell sees 'the form' of the novel, but if the clarity of the vision blinds him to the form of *War and Peace*, it does not—apparently—conceal that of *The Heir of Redclyffe*. Such wayward judgments are a severe handicap to the kind of general discussion Mr Liddell proposes for himself.

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