

somewhat cursory survey of art in relation to experience, the psychological preparedness in artist and audience, etc., having avowed his pre-occupation with the aesthetic contexts of imagery rather than with the processes of knowledge. The 'bridge-passage' to the final consideration of the art of drama is the chapter called 'Music and Poetry', which explores the alliance of poetry and musical expression, auditory and vocal, through the composer and the poet and the speaker. The full consideration of drama picks up the points elaborated in the first nine of the total of eleven chapters, and treats of dramatic speech, dramatic imagery, plot, costume, indeed all the elements of the play in performance. There is wide reference to the drama of many periods and countries, and some particularly interesting comments on contemporary dramatists such as Eliot, Cocteau and Giraudoux. The visual aspects of the play, as connected with the imagery from the visual arts, receive rather less than full justice, as does also the technique of the actor and of the intermediary—the producer—at a time when the terms 'a producer's play' or 'an actor's play' are in general, if often too glib, usage.

Professor Peacock is an exacting theatre-goer if the play that emerges as fulfilling his conditions is to be 'a picture and a music; a poetic image and a ritual; an illumination and a catharsis; an excitement in life and a serenity above it; a re-enactment in sense and a liberation in idea'. But his progress towards this lofty peroration, if labyrinthine in method, with something too much of recoil and recapitulation, is a provocative one in comparative studies of the arts. To argue and to disagree is to be challenged, and challenge is an important one among the critic's functions.

ELIZABETH SWEETING

LEFTOVER LIFE TO KILL. By Caitlin Thomas. (Putnam; 18s.)

This book tempts to sarcasm. Yet it is a sad book and the need for its publication is a pity. It contains some memories of Dylan Thomas but the larger part is an account of Mrs Thomas's widowhood, in America, in Wales, then on an island in Italy, where there is a tangled love affair with a young man called Joseph. Mrs Thomas writes English not very grammatically, but with verve and emotion. She spits loquacious contempt at convention and whispering public opinion and bourgeois morals, whether Italian or Welsh. She convinces herself that she feels deeply and that she is intensely alive. So she goes on like a female Jimmy Porter and her book looks back in anger. That and the pity of it must be its excuse.

SAUNDERS LEWIS