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Milward's Commentaries on Hopkins

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MILWARD'S COMMENTARIES ON HOPKINS

A COMMENTARY ON THE SONNETS OF G. M. HOPKINS. By Peter Milward, S.J., Tokyo: The Hokuseido Press, 1969. xii, 150 pp.

A COMMENTARY ON G. M. HOPKINS' THE WRECK OF THE DEUTSCHLAND. By Peter Milward. Tokyo: The Hokuseido Press, 1968. (iv), 160 pp.

Father Peter Milward, an English Jesuit, must be one of the most prolific writers now teaching in Japan. From his professorial chair at Sophia University in Tokyo, he has sent to the press at least a dozen books dealing with English literature and the Christian tradition. They deal with a variety of subjects. One of the books is a commentary on T. S. Eliot's "Four Quartets". Another is an introduction to Shakespeare's plays. A third is a compilation, with introduction and notes, of Chesterton's essays on Shakespeare. These books (published in Tokyo by either the Hokuseido Press or Kenkyusha Ltd., and distributed in London by C. Hurst and Company) were primarily intended for the use of students in his adopted country: but some of them are important contributions to literary criticism and will be of interest to literary students and critics everywhere.

The two volumes under review deal with the poetry of Milward's fellow English Jesuit, Gerard Manley Hopkins. The commentary on "The Wreck of the Deutschland" is as thorough as one could possibly hope to find. It takes the poem stanza by stanza, phrase by phrase, and (where necessary) word by word. The entire commentary is marked by thoroughness, lucidity, and in many cases a delicate perceptiveness. For example, in the two opening lines:

THOU mastering me
God! giver of breath and bread:

Milward calls attention to the capitalized pronoun THOU, the emphatic position of the word "God" at the beginning of a line, the implications of the word "mastering", and the theological nuance in the word "giver". The first word of the poem, printed significantly in capitals, "indicates its main centre of gravity" as a religious poem addressed personally to God in the form of a prayer. The *thou* and the *me* in the first line receive the verse-stress, thus establishing the two poles of the poem: God and the soul.

On the phrase "giver of breath and bread", Milward notes that God's mastery of man (Thou mastering me, God) is revealed in the form of mercy, i.e., in the form of *giving*. He cites several passages in the poem to reinforce this insight, and compares it with the main idea

in the "Contemplatio ad amorem" of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola.

In the other volume, Milward deals with thirty-one sonnets, grouped into three sections. The first section contains the ten sonnets written by Hopkins at St. Beuno's in 1887. These poems ("The Windhover", "Pied Beauty", "God's Grandeur", "The Starlight Night", "Spring", "Hurrahing in Harvest", etc.) are among the most beautiful and most vital of Hopkins' works.

The second section contains nine sonnets written at Oxford or Liverpool or Stonyhurst between the years 1879 and 1882. These include "Duns Scotus' Oxford", "Henry Purcell", "Andromeda", "Felix Randal" and that magnificent theological poem, "As Kingfishers catch fire".

The third section, with eleven poems, contains the so-called "terrible sonnets" written in Dublin during the last five years of the poet's life.

As in the case of the "Deutschland", Milward deals with the sonnets with fearless lucidity. There is no shirking, no glossing over difficult passages, no hiding behind ambiguities. Every word, every phrase is explained clearly and simply.

Few critics are as well equipped to deal with Hopkins' poetry as is Peter Milward. He does not have to guess at the meaning of a passage; he knows, having himself been brought up in the same cultural tradition and with the same theological perspectives. Those who are familiar with the literature on Hopkins can appreciate this by comparing Milward's notes on the poem "As Kingfishers catch fire" with the explanations of that same poem given by other critics. Milward is not only sensitive to theological nuances: he also possesses a fine ear which can detect the great change of emphasis involved in such simple alterations as Hopkins sometimes made. In his original draft, Hopkins had written:

In God's eye acts as in God's eye he is.

He revised the line to read:

Acts in God's eye...

The obvious change in stress implies a subtle change in meaning.

There are other poems by Hopkins which, not being sonnets, are not included in Milward's book. There is the well-known poem "Spring and Fall"; there is the brilliant ode "On the Blessed Virgin compared to the air we breathe"; there is the playful poem on echoes from a wishing well ("The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo"); there is the magnificent affirmation of faith in the resurrection of the body ("That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire"); and there is that wonderful ode to

evening ("Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves") which begins with the two splendid lines:

Earnest, earthless, equal, attuneable,
 vaulty, voluminous stupendous
 Evening strains to be time's vast,
 womb-of-all, home-of-all,
 hearse-of-all night.

It would be interesting to see how Father Milward would deal with that!

MIGUEL A. BERNAD

THE MODERN APPROACH TO GUIDANCE

APPROACHES TO GUIDANCE IN CONTEMPORARY EDUCATION. By Joseph Zaccaria. Scranton, Pennsylvania: International Textbook Company, 1969. ix, 277 pp.

Contemporary education is committed to the total development of man in an ever changing society. The author advances seven approaches for confronting and meeting the challenges of life. The various perspectives on guidance are advanced in Part I, and in Part II the reader is provided with both supplementary and complementary materials in terms of current issues and trends.

Chapter One is a sound presentation of some alternative bases for guidance, where the guidance worker is called upon to "be a catalytic agent for change". Gilbert Wrenn has written in a similar vein in his book, *The Counselor in a Changing World*.

The Educative Approach to guidance is teacher-oriented, with the underlying assumption that the entire curriculum can provide a vehicle for guidance activities. Obviously, Zaccaria is attempting a much needed reconciliation between the teaching staff and the guidance office.

The Educational-Vocational approach projects utilitarianism in education, that is, a functional citizen and a productive worker. It appears to the reviewer that inclusion of "educational" in the chapter title is a misnomer since the discussion leans heavily on theories of vocational development.

As a reaction to the generalist, the role of the counselor specialist is elaborated in the counseling approach to guidance. Here counseling is viewed negatively and narrowly, i.e., "the primary focus tends to be remedial and therapeutic rather than educative and development". A questionable inference arises from the implication that "school counselors