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EDITORIAL

In an article of exceptional interest in the September *Studio* Bishop Bell of Chichester makes a plea for the reconciliation of the artist with the Church as a step towards the regeneration of society. Such a reconciliation would in fact mark a great stride towards a new Christian society. But art is, in general, the expression of the existing social character, so that it would seem that society must first receive the breath of the Spirit before the artist returns to his true home. The living art of to-day is to be found in the cinema—particularly in the Disney films—in the modelling of machinery, in the dance band and in other secular works of modern man. Dr. Bell points to the effect of the Reformation in excluding the arts from the church; since then they have reached a pitch of self-consciousness which has turned 'Art' into a quest for 'significant form' devoid of any real content human or divine. That is why attempts to reintroduce them to the Church result in the prim symmetry of 'liturgical art' or the affected productions of church music enthusiasts. We are therefore particularly grateful to Professor Wellesz and the two societies to whom he spoke for permission to publish his lecture, for among other things he shows how objective and unaffected art could be when growing out of a society with a religious orientation. Modern art has somehow to recapture that 'naturalness' which went with the strict discipline of tradition. Dr. Bell does in fact realise that 'Communion' must come first, because, as Eric Gill insisted so effectively, communion with the True and the Good alone will result in beautiful things made by man.—If there is any way of introducing Christian art into a noble propaganda, *Propaganda Fidei*, if religion and art can be united to assist in Christianising society, it will centre in the art of Drama because the liturgy of the Mass is still alive, and the liturgy is drama. Most of the articles in this number point to that conclusion. It is high time that we 'acted' our religion, and acted it publicly. With religion, and with it the liturgy, tucked away out of sight the reconciliation of art remains a dream. We may justly parade our faith in religious drama and mime. In this may be seen the relevance of the present number.

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