

REVIEWS

commun. In particular he has not seen, as have Maritain and the French 'personalists' (not to mention his compatriot, Professor v. Hildebrand) that the key to the whole problem is to be found in the Thomist idea of *personality*. Of course he stresses the Aristotelian-Thomist idea of man as a 'social animal,' but he has not seen that the fundamental fact that the human individual essentially transcends its own individuality makes the antithesis of Society to the Individual ultimately meaningless. One outcome of this initial short-sightedness is that he flounders badly when he has to reconcile the 'individualism' of Thomist metaphysic with the primacy of the *bonum commune* in Thomist ethic. A deeper understanding of metaphysical finality would have further helped him in establishing the 'reality' of the social organism.

As an adequate exposition of Thomist social philosophy the book cannot therefore be altogether recommended. As an antidote to some current misconceptions it will be found extremely useful. As an orderly collection of the *ipsissima verba* of St. Thomas it will be found invaluable.

Lest it be thought that the work is a mere sop to Hitler, we may remark that it was published before the Nazi revolution.

V.W.

DE SACRA LITURGIA UNIVERSIM. By C. Callewaert, J.C.D. (Beyaert, Bruges, 1933; 25 francs.)

This is intended as an introductory volume to the whole study of the liturgy. As such the book achieves perfection. In a comparatively small space the author discusses the definition and nature of liturgical cult, the whole history of the liturgy, the *Fontes* of the Roman liturgy, and finally the nature and method of liturgical science. An introduction demands such a complete conspectus. But the treatment is in no way sketchy. The author, who is a bishop and a canonist, brings all his deep knowledge and experience to bear on each point. Disputed questions are stated dispassionately, and the whole work is marked by a sound common sense. Every statement is backed by a wealth of references to liturgical works and writers from the first century to the present day, to the Code of Canon Law, and, perhaps most valuable of all, to examples from the Missal and the Breviary. Such treatment of the subject makes further study easy and attractive. But the book deserves a wide circulation not only for its great value as an introduction, but also because it will help the reader to understand the spirit of the liturgy.

Perhaps there appears towards the end, in dealing with the *Fontes* of the Roman Liturgy, a tendency for details and re-

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condite points unnecessary in an introduction. But though this may limit the range of the book's appeal, it increases its value for the clergy, since here are discussed many practical details not found in other liturgical works. In the final chapter some may quarrel with the author for relating liturgical science to Canon Law rather than to Theology, for as a result the method of study advised appears to lay over-emphasis on rubrics; a method which differs from that implied and encouraged throughout the rest of the book. This third edition has been thoroughly revised so as to include reference to the most recent liturgical books.

C.P.

THE LITURGICAL ALTAR. By Geoffrey Webb. (Washbourne & Bogan; 5/-.)

DIRECTIONS FOR THE USE OF ALTAR SOCIETIES AND ARCHITECTS. New edition (Fourth) revised and enlarged. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne; 2/6.)

Mr. Geoffrey Webb's book on the Liturgical Altar, though in many ways an admirable and artistic production, cannot be unreservedly recommended. Its main purpose is, I take it, to give in a simple form a reliable statement of the liturgical laws relating to the construction and adornment of the altar. But this it fails to do. The book contains many inaccuracies. The author lays great stress on canons 1197 and 1198 which deal with the structure of the altar. On page 38 canon 1197 is wrongly translated (though in justice one must say that later on page 43, he gives a more accurate version). The interpretation of this canon is misleading. In passing one might suggest that the title of the book is not altogether satisfactory, since every construction which is an altar must of necessity be liturgical, *i.e.*, it must have the essential properties laid down by liturgical law. I wonder if Mr. Webb is clear about what is essential and what is non-essential to an altar? One has the impression that he would make a matter of law what is really a question of taste. Perhaps his dogmatism gives one that impression. But on purely artistic grounds I agree entirely with him. Again, the translation of canon 1198, page 38, is quite wrong. The author translates 'Both in the fixed altar and also in the consecrated stone there should be a sepulchre . . . containing the relics of saints, enclosed in the stone. This should read ' . . . sealed with a stone.' The *lapide* in the text is not the same as the *sacra petra*. Further, I cannot agree with what Mr. Webb says about the decrees of the Congregation of Rites. The obvious inference from his remarks on page 36 is that *all* these decrees deal with local abuses which have grown up at different times and are therefore 'corrective rather than