

BLACKFRIARS

LITURGY

EXTERNALS OF THE LITURGY. THE MASS AND THE LITURGICAL YEAR. (Coldwell; 1/3 each.)

Both these pamphlets, published principally for the Confraternity Study Clubs of Saint Paul, Minnesota, deal in reality with the externals of the liturgy. The first one is concerned with the tangible externals such as church, vestments, and even the religious orders, while the second deals with the external rubrics and gestures of the Mass and their variations throughout the year. Unfortunately neither of them begins with a much needed introduction on the position of these externals in the general plan of the liturgy. It is risky to study a part without first considering its relation to the whole, particularly when that part is, if anything, the least essential. That is to say it is undoubtedly essential, but not of equal importance with the other two parts which make up the liturgy. The three essential elements are graded. Lowest in the scale come the externals, necessary at once to express and to encourage the worship of God by the whole man. Hidden within this shell lies the supernatural reality of union in the Mystical Body of Christ, while at the centre of all is the personal union of the soul with God. All three must play their part in religion and liturgy, and each is liable, and has indeed been subjected, to over-emphasis at the expense of the others. The modern liturgical movement as a whole—dare we suggest it?—tends to emphasize the social aspect of the liturgy in the doctrine of the Mystical Body. In England the movement—again we are conscious of the temerity of generalizations—lays stress on the externals and is linked in most minds with decided non-essentials such as Gregorian Chant and the Gothic style of vestment and architecture. So we may repeat our appeal for Study Club Outlines specially written for this country, dealing primarily with the spiritual realities of the liturgy, and modelled on the shorter type issued by the Liturgical Press (cf. BLACKFRIARS, February, 1937, p. 160), rather than these of St. Paul which are replete with facts but omit almost entirely the important item of the bibliography.

CONRAD PEPLER, O.P.

MEDITATIONS FOR LENT. From St. Thomas Aquinas. Translated by Philip Hughes. (Sheed & Ward; 2/6.)

St. Thomas, we are told, acquired his knowledge more by the merit of prayer than by human industry, for whenever he wished to study, dispute, read, write or dictate, he would have recourse to prayer that he might discover the divine secrets.

In these meditations, selected by Père Mezard, O.P., and translated by Father Hughes, we have the fruits of this wisdom. Day by day we accompany St. Thomas' thought upon the great truths

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of Our Lord's Passion, our Redemption, and the living response these ask of us.

The doctrinal riches in St. Thomas must always be something of an embarrassment to those on whom it falls to make a selection. These meditations cover a wide range of his writings: besides the greater theological works, the Commentaries on Scripture, the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, various *opuscula* and *quodlibetales* are represented. But it would surely have been preferable to find substitutes for the four passages taken from the *De humanitate Christi*, a work now recognized as apocryphal. Happily, its doctrine is not alien to that of St. Thomas, as the unknown author based his work almost word for word on the Third Part of the *Summa*, and the *Commentary on the Fourth Book of the Sentences*, adding some opinions of the Fathers.

Father Hughes' translation is a pleasure to read; it combines a living force with faithfulness to the original. One passage has a freedom that is overmarked, where he translates "non differt . . . secundum essentiam, sed solum ratione" as "does not differ as though it had a different essence, but only according to the way these two things exist" (p. 44).

We hope the translator will give us many more meditations from St. Thomas: to go through the liturgical year with him is to be in good company indeed. PETER WHITESTONE, O.P.

MISCELLANEOUS

SCOUTING ACHIEVEMENTS. By Beresford Webb. (Putnam; 8/6.)

If there are any who still doubt the practical and even the moral value of the Scout Movement, this monumental volume should dispel those doubts effectively. The author has selected from the copious material available sufficient to provide a comprehensive view of the worldwide spread and universal activity of Scouting, and even to those of us who have been in touch with the movement from the beginning this makes astonishing reading. It is not a history of the birth and growth of Scouting; that has been written often enough. It is a bird's-eye view of *Scouting Achievements* in every department of social life, amongst almost all classes, creeds and nations. "Soon after the Scout Movement had started, B.P. was in conversation with King Edward VII and His Majesty suggested that Scouting should be copyrighted so as to preserve it for British boys. B.P.'s modest reply was that he could not imagine anyone else wanting the idea. To-day, the world total of Boy Scouts is getting near the three-million mark, and forty-nine countries, counting the British Empire as one country, have scouts of their own" (p. 3). (It is not without interest to note that the few countries without scouts are principally U.S.S.R., Germany, Italy and China.)