

divine character becomes evident'. (p.3.) This rests on the 'principle of faith that it is through the Holy Ghost that the Church is vivified and unified'. (p. 7.)

Book Three has already made its contribution to the theological exposition of the doctrine of the Eucharist, especially in the sacramental view of the Sacrifice of the Mass, according to the idiom and thought of St Thomas. The doctrine follows on easily and naturally from the splendid chapters of the first volume, where the Holy Eucharist is represented as the memorial of Christ's death but also as a monument of his victory over Satan, over Sin, and over death.

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NOTICES

THESES AND PAPERS

THE LONDON AQUINAS SOCIETY'S two latest papers are of great importance to the study of mystical theology. In No. 19 Dr A. H. Armstrong discusses *The Greek Philosophical Background of the Psychology of St Thomas* and claims that St Thomas 'has transplanted the Aristotelian doctrine of the unity of body and mind into a Platonic context' guided thereto by the revealed doctrine of the fall and the resurrection of the body. Dr Armstrong in this inspiringly provocative essay shows many other Platonic elements in St Thomas's thought. Fr Gerald Vann, O.P., in Paper No. 20, follows this discussion with a conspectus of *The Wisdom of Boethius*, the first great Christian thinker who set out to show the fundamental accord of Plato and Aristotle. 'We might well have recourse to Boethius to renew our wonder and love and understanding of the earth and its fullness and the beauty that comes forth from man's hand.' (Both 1s. 6d. each; Blackfriars.)

SACRA DOCTRINA, the subject-matter of St Thomas's first question in the *Summa* and indeed that of the whole work, has always been difficult to interpret; and Fr Gerald F. van Ackeren, S.J., selects it for a thorough-going investigation (Rome; Officium Libri Catholici; n.p.). Père Y. Congar, O.P., contributes an introduction in which he points to the special value in this thesis. The phrase 'Sacred Doctrine' has a meaning that works, so to speak, in two directions: It is the action of teaching or educating in revealed truth, and it is also the content of the teaching. As the author claims, the proper understanding of this question alone gives the true meaning of 'Catholic education' which ought to be the English equivalent to the Latin phrase. The thesis is written in English and is specially to be recommended to educationists.

DE PULCHRITUDINE. Fr Jordan Aumann, O.P., calls his Latin treatise

on Beauty a Philosophico-Theological Enquiry, and the student need not be worried about his appreciation of Picasso for the treatment is as deep as it is broad. A paragraph from the Prologue will show its intense interest and importance: 'I certainly do not maintain that the aesthetic, religious and mystical experiences are the same thing, as some moderns would have it. They are indeed alike by analogy; yet the natural and the supernatural orders are infinitely distant from each other. Nonetheless, since all perfections and activities of the natural order are to be found in some way in the supernatural order, aesthetic psychology helps enormously in deepening the understanding of religious and mystical experiences.' So the reader is led to study the divine beauty in the souls of the just. (Editorial F.E.D.A. Valencia; n.p.)

DE VALORE SOCIALI CARITATIS is another Latin thesis which helps to link up the Christian's personal life of grace with the world organisation of society that is now emerging. Fr Edward E. Bezzina, O.P., shows the link very adroitly in his dissertation (D'Auria Editore Pontificio, Naples; n.p.). The whole question ultimately turns on the fact 'the last end of society is the same as the last end of the individual'. St Thomas has already insisted that 'the last end of the multitude of men is not to live virtuously, but through the virtuous life to reach the divine fruition' (quoted p. 51); that is one of the most comprehensive and fruitful statements for the student of Christian life and Fr Bezzina makes good use of it.

EXTRACTS

It may help readers to appreciate the papers that form the bulk of the present issue of THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT if we include here a brief résumé of the discussions that followed them when they were originally delivered at the Conference. Père Albert Plé, O.P., editor of *La Vie Spirituelle*, gave the lead with his paper on Charity and *koinonia*, and the discussion centred on the way in which the love of the community—the Church, the parish, the religious house, the family—could be made a reality. To begin with, could one say that one loved personally and directly the *totality* of Christ-on-earth in a way that was distinct from loving Christ himself in every individual that one met? St Paul wrote of 'The Church *who* is in Corinth . . .', showing how the whole Church is realised in each distinct community in which one may find oneself living. So one does not only love the particular community as *part* of the Church, but *as* the Church herself, and so as the Person of the Word made flesh. This means that people actually worshipping and loving and living together are the object of an act of charity. A convert, for example, should be instructed so as to prepare him for entry into a family, a loving common life—how rarely the exposition of the catechism bears any relation to the