

## BLACKFRIARS

yond criticism. We should have welcomed some short prefatory note, telling us how far Baron von Pastor had progressed in his task before his lamented death, and how many volumes may still be looked for by English readers. But we are left in the dark as to this.

ROBERT BRACEY, O.P.

VITORIA AND THE CONQUEST OF AMERICA. By Honorio Muñoz, O.P. (University of Santo Tomas Press, Manila. Pp. 220; P. 2.00.)

A scholarly analysis of Vitoria's treatise *De Indis Prior*, which discusses the legitimacy of the colonization and conquest of America. What of the famous bull of Alexander VI, which seems fairly unambiguously to grant the newly discovered realms to Spain, and what of the numerous arguments current at the time which seek to justify Spanish arms by reference to Scripture, ethics and law? Vitoria shows both fearlessness and sound commonsense; arguing that the most the Pope can do is to give these lands to exclusively Spanish evangelization, without reference to dominion and temporal power; and refuting the bulk of the somewhat specious arguments of his contemporaries. His destructive work done, he goes on to advance some positive arguments for the possibility of just and licit conquest; he is measured, and, as Fr. Munoz is at pains to point out, admirably free of nationalist bias. But we have travelled far to-day from the temper of mind which could view the world primarily in terms of the spiritual, and argue to temporal standards only in the light of the spiritual; and for this reason the positive side of Vitoria's argument may seem less compelling than the negative; Fr. Munoz was wise to devote some of his space to delineating this difference of background, and might perhaps with profit have devoted yet more. It is interesting, too, to speculate how far, not Vitoria's principles perhaps, but the mood of his treatment might have been changed by the experience of later times: we have learnt, bitterly, to suspect any association between the preaching of Christ and political penetration or in general the blessings of Western civilization. And our experience has no doubt purified our approach to the whole question of missionary activity. It is a pity that Fr. Munoz does not touch on these ideas.

A number of typographical errors might with advantage be eliminated in any future edition; and there are places where the style, fluent and idiomatic as for the most part it is, might be revised.

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