

Blackfriars

Bishop Hedley was! Hence he is never narrow—always the big mind, the wide outlook, the search for real truth, regardless of school. 'Everlasting punishment' is as valuable now as the day it was written. Then, men were beginning to doubt the existence of hell; now, it is the common opinion of the mass of non-Catholics. 'Prayer and Contemplation' is one of the most valuable things Bishop Hedley ever wrote and it shows him to be a master of the spiritual life.

The book ends with 'Modern Controversy,' which should be read by every member of the Evidence Guild, and 'Catholic Culture,' a plea for a wider study among Catholics of the essentials of their religion, without which no culture is true culture. The key to this book is Abbot Butler's long and valuable introduction, with its summary of each Essay in turn, and his own personal reminiscences of the writer.

F.M.

THE SPIRIT OF THE LITURGY. By Dr. Romano Guardini. (London: Sheed & Ward; pp. 150; 2/6.)

Dr. Guardini is a distinguished German theologian and a professor in the University of Berlin. This essay will go far to disarm a lingering suspicion that the liturgical movement is ritualistic and archaeological: it is primarily theological. The book is evidently addressed to Catholics who have already given some thought to the subjects under discussion. The relation of dogma to worship, the social character and the disinterestedness of Christian prayer, beauty and false aestheticism, form the basis for an energetic analysis of the laws of sound Christian spirituality. The author has many wise and penetrating conclusions to offer. To one point he returns frequently—the problem that seems to exist in the fact that the liturgy is objective and universal while the individual's needs in prayer are personal. He fears an exclusive insistence on liturgical prayer and would seem to postulate the *absolute* necessity for extra-liturgical devotions. There is a danger in over-stressing the impersonal character of the liturgy. There are no more deeply personal prayers than the Psalms, yet they are objective and of universal application. The Christian must carry his prayer beyond the set times of the official prayer, but he never prays alone and his prayer is acceptable only through Christ. If extra-liturgical devotion is an excuse for individualism and forgets the universal mediatorship of Christ and the necessity for complete union with the Church, it cannot be regarded as complementary to liturgical prayer, each of whose essential elements it denies. There is no

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incompatibility between liturgical and personal prayer, while for the Christian no such thing as purely subjective or 'private' prayer exists.

C.C.H.

THE TRIAL OF JEANNE D'ARC. A complete translation of the text of the original documents, with an Introduction by W. P. Barrett. (With twelve illustrations; demy 8vo.; Routledge; 15/-.)

This text of the trial of Jeanne d'Arc was drawn up not long after her death. As M. Champion observes, its aim was principally apologetic. It was intended to assure any who might be troubled with doubts—and doubts existed even among the English—as to whether she was really a dangerous, depraved, unholy woman (in fact a witch) and condemned by Cauchon and the Inquisitors only after a most scrupulously legal procedure. Strangely enough—though indeed it is not so strange if one takes the trouble to read it through—it is the most convincing of all the historical data concerning the life of a woman we have come to honour as a saint.

It is a legal record and therefore there is much dull formarty about it likely to discourage the reader at first. Trivial details, irrelevant repetitions, pompously formal letters; the conscientious recorder has spared us little. Yet in the end we are thankful that he did not, and thankful, too, that Mr. Barrett has given English readers the complete text without any alterations. Her biographers and interpreters have done the work of selecting the more interesting passages and translating them into more dramatic forms quite well enough. It is a new and very interesting experience to read it through, from beginning to end, and come to one's own conclusions.

In spite of its legal form it is a very human document. The story of her life unfolds slowly, her judges subjecting every detail of it to a most meticulous scrutiny. The result is a picture of her that is clear and authentic, with pious biographers will never be able to spoil. Thanks to the compilers of this text, she will always remain one of the most exquisitely human of the saints.

In his Introduction Mr. Barrett explains the setting briefly. He used as a basis for his translation the text established by Jules Quicherat, though he acknowledges his indebtedness to M. Champion for various readings. It is a pleasure to be able to say, after comparison, that his translation combines fidelity to the original text with thoroughly readable prose.

A.M.