

Latin hymns recited quickly, without preparation, or sung to a chant that occupies the attention, are often passed over without tasting their meaning, like swallowing a mouthful of wine in a pint of wafer. Yet the chant and the public recitation are intended to bring out the meaning, freeing it from mere intellectual apprehension and allowing it to pervade the whole body and the whole church. Here the one who prays with Dominican hymns is treated to the best metrical translations, which follow the literal meaning and the metre of the original (given on the opposite page). For this reason many are from J. M. Neale's hymns, but the author himself presents a number of his own straightforward and accurate renderings. There is a brief note on the authorship and metre of the Latin hymn and then a commentary which is redolent of the Scriptures and clarifies many difficult verses. It is to be regretted that the author does not give a little more information on certain points. Thus he informs us that the Dominican rite has eighty-three hymns not included in the Roman rite and that there are many differences in those occurring in both rites. But the reader is left to discover for himself which are proper to the Dominican liturgy and what are the differences. There is no attempt to give any history of the individual hymns, apart from the author or date of composition. Finally the simple numbering of the hymns from 1 to 189 in the manner of a popular hymnal offers little assistance to those wishing to use it in day to day comparison with the Divine Office. These are small blemishes which the keen reader can remedy for himself, for the most part without much labour. In addition the book provides the student with a handy compendium of Dominican hymns and is likely to set many on to the study of hymnology in general, for the older compositions given here survived the Urbanic revision and have preserved the freshness and perfection of the early medieval hymns.

CONRAD PEPLER, O.P.

A HISTORY OF THE DOMINICAN LITURGY. By William R. Bonniwell, O.P. (Wagner, New York).

There will be many readers to welcome this book, and it is hoped it will be easily and cheaply obtainable in this country. For the Dominican Liturgy has long awaited a thorough and convincing history to justify its continuation as a living way of worship and to overcome the desire of impatient unifiers to bring what is regarded as an awkward archaism into conformity with the present Roman rite. The book is scientific, producing all the known evidence in this complex historical problem with skill and clarity, and providing an exhaustive bibliography and index; but it is also written in an easy style that makes interesting reading for all who wish to know about the Order of Preachers and

its Liturgy.

S. Dominic, the Canon of Osma, founded his Order as one of Canons Regular; and Fr. Bonniwell rightly insists that the classification of Dominicans as Mendicants which became purely nominal after 1475, should not obscure this fact since they have never abandoned their canonical duties. In other words the solemn choral performance of the Liturgy is an essential part of Dominican life. The Dominicans have been compelled to abandon "the quest" without destroying the nature of the Order but they could never abandon the choir. Liturgical prayer and study were the two essentials for the preacher in the mind of S. Dominic, who "knew that his Order must flourish so long as there ascended to God night and day the unending solemn supplication of the liturgy." (p.16). Against that background the author paints the outline of the Dominican way of supplication. But to discover precisely the form of the liturgy S. Dominic gave his first disciples is almost impossible, and the first thirty years after his death remain very obscure. However, Fr. Bonniwell has done a great service here by his careful sifting of the evidence and the establishment of some illuminating conclusions. As we might suppose, the Founder, himself so devoted to the public worship of Mass and Office, would wish his followers to have a uniform way of worshipping together. In opposition to a modern theory of the early Dominicans confused by an infinite variety of local customs, the author shows that an attempt at a uniform liturgy for the Order was already made at the end of S. Dominic's life or early in B. Jordan's regime. At so early a stage this could not have been perfect; there were two main attempts to eliminate all differences and causes of friction, and the whole was brought to a triumphant conclusion by B. Humbert in 1256. The last revisions were not very pronounced, the breviary of 1250 being in many respects identical with that published under Fr. Cormier in 1909. Fr. Bonniwell surmises that it was the Paris friars who, in B. Humbert's time, were making difficulties because the rite was not sufficiently Gallican for their taste. For Fr. Bonniwell gives sound reasons for the view that the Dominican rite is a purer form of the Roman than obtained in most "Roman" localities in the middle of the thirteenth century: "Indeed, the Dominican liturgists in many ways showed themselves more Roman than Rome herself by their unwillingness to accept a number of Gallicanisms which not long before had infiltrated into the Roman Rite or were clamouring for admission." (p.191). The Dominican achievement was evidently admired as a pure form of the Roman Calendar and Liturgy for the Teutonic Knights obtained leave in 1244 to adopt this rite in preference to the one they had celebrated for a century and a half, and in 1267 Clement IV gave it apostolic approbation

speaking of B. Humbert's "skilful and befitting arrangement of the ecclesiastical office". That manner of fulfilling the necessary canonical duties of the Order remained substantially the same till modern times; it may, in fact, be said to have remained in everything but detail the prayer given by Dominic to all his children, the way he prayed and fructified his preaching, the way the twentieth century Dominican prays and receives inspiration. We may therefore lament with Fr. Bonniwell the drastic changes made in the breviary as recently as 1923. The identity with the breviary of 1250 has been destroyed and "the ancient Roman Office, which the Dominican Order had preserved and guarded with such fidelity for seven centuries, ceased to exist". (p.352). But we may also hope that the Liturgical Institute, which the present Master General inaugurated in Rome in 1939 and which even during the war years has been engaged in valuable work on the sources and forms of the Dominican liturgy in its earliest era, will prepare a revision in the wise and pure spirit of B. Humbert. We may express a hope that Fr. Bonniwell will collaborate with the Institute as soon as war circumstances permit.

The book is well illustrated and the only disadvantage in its popular presentation is that very little of the original Latin of the text is given so that the reader has to depend on translation alone. A future peace-time edition will, we hope, remedy this defect.

CONRAD PEPLER, O.P.

REPORT OF THE LITURGICAL WEEK-END AT OXFORD, EASTER 1944.

(Society of the Magnificat, 13 King Edward St., Oxford: 2/1, post free).

The Society of the Magnificat is to be complimented on making generally available the papers read at its last Liturgical Week-end. Three conferences by Dom Victor Le Jeune are followed by papers by Fr. Conrad Pepler, O.P., on "The Worship of Images", Fr. Gerard Meath, O.P., on "The Liturgist's Charter" (an analysis of the Encyclical *Mystici Corporis*) and Lancelot Sheppard on "The Divine Office and the Laity". Fr. Pepler's witty and erudite essay is especially valuable, dealing as it does with a delicate subject and concluding soundly "Purge out literalism and idolatry is conquered". Some of Mr. Sheppard's observations are a little querulous, but his plea, that where the Divine Office is publicly recited public notice of the fact might be given, deserves attention. All who care for the Liturgy should get hold of this book. I.E.

Blackfriars, March, 1945 (Vol. II, No. 13). Price 6d. if purchased separately. The Ditchling Press, Hassocks, Sussex.