

## REVIEWS

PRIESTHOOD AND PRAYER. By Bede Frost, O.S.B. (Mowbray and Co., Ltd. ; pp. 220 ; 7/6.)

The purpose of this book, as the author states in the preface, is to insist upon the true nature of the Christian priesthood as essentially one with the priesthood of our Lord ; secondly, to show the meaning of that priesthood as exercised by those who continue it here upon earth ; thirdly, to point out that the whole value of the apostolate of souls depends upon and flows from the priest's living union with his Divine Master ; and finally to emphasize the need not only of prayer but of prayer that is progressively more contemplative.

It is a book which is admirable not only in scope and purpose, but also in the competent manner in which the author has treated his subject. Father Bede Frost is widely read in Roman Catholic dogmatic and mystical theology. His lengthy bibliography contains, with several unimportant exceptions, the names only of writers who are of the fold. In consequence one will find little or nothing which is necessarily objectionable to a Roman Catholic from a viewpoint of doctrine. He writes, moreover, with a persuasive sincerity of manner which will commend him to those who are seeking more than intellectual exercise in their theology.

Life being what it is, it is not easy to share the author's high hopes for the penetrating intellectual vision into things divine that will come to the overworked parish priest who, with an hour a day at his disposal, sets himself to give a quarter of it to Holy Scripture, and other quarters to St. Thomas, St. Augustine, and to some big modern book—theology, science, biography. It is so very much like the liberal education promised to those who buy Dr. Elliot's Five Foot Shelf of Books and burrow through it, a few pages each day.

Footnotes, references, quotations abound, sometimes to the point of irritation. Our zeal for scholarship and reverence for authority often make us appear just a little absurd. Books of this sort seldom make voluptuous reading : why break into a passably readable page with unnecessary and platitudinous citations of our masters?

P.K.M.

LA COMMUNION MÉDITÉE AU PIED DU ST. SACRAMENT. Par A. Jos. Chauvin. (Deslée de Brouwer et Cie ; pp. 758 ; 13 fr.)

This is the third book of meditations before the Blessed Sacrament by this author, and it follows logically after those on the Passion and the Mass. It includes the whole doctrine of Communion from many points of view, while the frequent

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references to St. Thomas and the Council of Trent are enough to inspire even the most timid with confidence. All the sixty-three meditations are valuable, instructive and practical, but among them the sections on the relation of Communion to the Holy Sacrifice, the Social Effects of Communion and Daily Communion have a special value for the needs of to-day.

In his previous works the author has expressed his intention of making the meditations into short theological lessons. This method of instruction has great vogue at the present time, and is perhaps symptomatic of the machine age. People become so accustomed to inventions for doing work for them that the spirit even creeps into prayer. Here is a book which will, if read for half an hour in church, instruct you in a most important doctrine, put words into your mouth to be spoken to our Lord, and occupy every moment with special 'acts' placed at intervals between the instruction. It might have been better to include these excellent instructions in a book half the size, omitting all the rest, and thus encourage the faithful to read also at home and say their own prayers before the Blessed Sacrament. But it is rather an unfair criticism to find an affinity between this book and a mechanical invention. Those who are already used to this form of devotion will find great help in this volume, which in spite of its numerous pages is of a convenient portable size.

C.P.

R. P. BELTRAN DE HEREDIA (VINCENTE), O.P. *Los Manuscritos del Maestro Fray Francisco de Vitoria, O.P.* (Biblioteca de Tomista Espanoles, IV; Apostado 145, Valencia, 1929; pp. 240; 12 pesetas.)

Father Beltran de Heredia, whose contributions appear regularly in the *Ciencia Tomista*—the organ of the Spanish Dominicans—deserves to be reckoned one of the greatest living authorities on the theological school of Salamanca. His many treatises on the subject have gained him a world-wide reputation, and there is certainly no other modern author upon whom the student of this subject may more confidently rely.

The volume under review is an invaluable document on the MSS. of the Founder of International Law, Francis de Vitoria. We know that de Vitoria never wrote any of his *lectures* or *relectiones*. He contented himself with giving the oral explanation of the *Summa* and of the *Sentences*, leaving his pupils entirely without written notes. They were thus forced to jot down carefully what they could of the scholarly commentaries of their master.