

taries on Aristotle were destined for young masters in arts. Gauthier seems to be right : Thomas was induced to mitigate the excessive intellectualism that he had earlier displayed. Whatever was the specific cause of this change . . . it was of sufficient magnitude to affect all of his later writings' (p. 245).

This interesting passage comes in the chapter on Thomas's second regency at Paris (1269-72) which contains also a fine appreciation of the high-water mark of Thomas's purely biblical output, the commentaries on John and on *Romans* which belong to this same intensely productive period. Fr Weisheipl's remarks on them exemplify his capacity to relish deeply parts and aspects of Thomas's work that are unjustly ignored or underrated. But indeed there were depths below depths in this amazing genius which have scarcely, if at all, been explored. I am thinking particularly of Thomas in his last years, indeed his last months. When shall we have a worthwhile study of that 'trance' which overcame him (the event is well attested) at Naples on December 6th 1273, and which put an end to all his writing ('Reginald, I cannot go on. . . . All that I have written seems to me STRAW compared with what has now been revealed to me')?

I have expressed frankly my disagreement or dissatisfaction with parts of this book. Let me end by repeating that this is the best account I know of the life of St Thomas.



#### POEM FOR THE NEW YEAR

There isn't much blood with circumcision  
They tell me, all clinical or ritual.

With care whatever. It's not anything  
I've thought about for a child of mine though.

Yet, asleep with cats, breathing quietly  
In the night, they share epiphany blood.

And grow from wounds. It's a world of candles  
Tears and blood and prayers they inherit.

And inhabit. Into it, stretch their arms  
And wake. Nothing I see now is childish.

No pain is less, no laugh immoderate.  
Pain does not grow, no slapstick vanishes.

Like Gulliver, stature only changes,  
Hurt and joy, in us in them, together.

RONALD TAMPLIN