

Blackfriars

Bruder marked a new development of the Catholic revival in Germany and he has been exceptionally fortunate in his translator. Fr. Przywara's work can be considered either as an anthology from Newman's writings or as a synthesis of his thought. As an anthology it is one of the best of its kind, as a synthesis it has proved invaluable to those who look to Newman for a system.

G.M.

ST. FRANCIS AND THE BLESSED EUCHARIST. By Fr. Augustine, O.M.Cap. (Sands; pp. 101; 2/6.)

Fr. Augustine treats of St. Francis's own devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and of his influence on the devotion of others. This little book seems to owe much to de Chérancé. It is not unworthy of the great Capuchin tradition—though some will find the style a trifle too ornate and others will hesitate to accept all the author's conclusions.

MYSTICAL STUDIES IN THE APOCALYPSE. By the Rev. H. Erskine HILL. (Pp. x, 262; Cr. 8vo. Elliot Stock; 7/6.)

Mr. Erskine Hill is steeped in the Apocalypse and has evidently found in it a fruitful field for meditation. His standpoint may be gauged by his opening words: 'I believe the Apocalypse to be a complete and intelligible whole, embodying a progressive revelation deliberately given by our Lord through the agency of Angelic beings in a series of visions,' and again: 'It is the priceless gift to the Church of all ages of the Angels' point of view.' But Mr. Erskine Hill, being of a mystic turn of mind, has a tendency, we fear, to regard all the messages he discovers in the book as being its actual meaning. Thus in the section on *The Second Death* he argues that the physical, emotional and mental conscience demands a similar triple state of body, and maintains that, since death means a transference from the physical to the emotional body, the second death will mean man's ascent into heaven and—presumably—to a mental body, whatever that may mean. This subjectivism is regrettable because it will tend to put people off reading the many good things to be found in his pages, as for instance when he says that St. John has 'the power to see and represent in the form of pictures and living images the great truths which St. Paul . . . seeks to grasp by the aid of metaphor, and to express in terms of reason.' (p. 75).

Interest in the Apocalypse never wanes. We have received NOTES ON THE APOCALYPSE, by E. Bonello, Valetta. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne; pp. 32; 1/-.) The Notes are of a very

Book Reviews

elementary not to say jejune type: we are told, for instance, on xii. 11: The earth opened its mouth . . . that 'This is a reference to the rulers of the earth, Constantine and Licinius, who united their forces to put an end to the persecutions.' Q.E.D.

H.P.

VITA CHRISTI. Meditations on Our Lord's Public Life for the time after Pentecost. By Mother St. Paul, Religious of the Retreat of the Sacred Heart. (Longmans, Green & Co., Ltd.; 5/-.)

In these meditations on the third year of Our Lord's public life, Mother St. Paul gives us another of her helpful books based on the Holy Scriptures. In her preface she makes two remarks which might profitably be placed on the first page of many meditation books made fearsome by their seemingly complicated machinery. 'Ignatian contemplation (*i.e.* mental prayer; what's in a name?) is very simple—the whole contemplation should be a colloquy.' And, 'May it often happen that in using this book the person contemplating may be arrested by one person or word or one action in the Gospel story and may remain there under the Holy Spirit's influence.' Mother St. Paul does her work well of feeding the imagination with the setting suggested by the Gospel story.

M.F.

OF FAMILIAR INTERCOURSE WITH GOD IN PRAYER. By the Ven. Louis de Ponte, S.J. (From the 'Spiritual Guide' Translated by a Religious of the Order of St. Benedict. With an Introduction by the Most Rev. Alban Goodier, S.J. (Archbishop of Hierapolis). (London: Burns, Oates Washbourne, Ltd.; 6/-.)

An exhaustive treatise on the more active forms of prayer—though as leading to contemplation—by a master of the spiritual life. It offers a better equipment for mental prayer than would a library of meditation books—all of which should be headed by de Ponte's warning that meditation is 'not the substance of prayer, but only the means' to it, and should be 'a colloquy directed to God.' It is pleasant to find a sixteenth century Jesuit praising St. Thomas as 'no less skilled in mystical than in scholastic theology.' The English is excellent.

M.B.