

BLACKFRIARS

LITURGY

LITURGICAL EDUCATION. By Dr. Linus Bopp, translated by Albert Paul Schimberg. (Coldwell; 9s. 6d.)

The main thesis of this book is that the Liturgy is the solution to the problem of education, that the basis of true education is to be laid by forming in the child an intelligent liturgical spirit and life.

As a thesis it is magnificent in conception, and no less so is the exposition. Education is not a matter of intellect alone: scholarship is only one factor in the process. The *whole man* must be trained; moral as well as intellectual principles must be assimilated; taste, too, must be developed and cultivated; a right scale of values inculcated; a whole philosophy of life must be formed.

So much is now commonly recognized. But Dr. Bopp has seen that this whole process must be taken on to the supernatural plane, and this by means of the Liturgy. The Liturgy gives dogmatic and moral principles, and this in a vital and living way; it cultivates taste, a right sense of values, a whole supernaturalized outlook on life.

But above all, a supernaturalized education must be a process of supernatural transformation, and this can be the work only of the grace of God. Herein, most especially, lies the supreme educational power of the Liturgy, for, in the author's words: "Since education seeks above all else to renew, to make better, to 'transform,' and this transformation is only possible through the grace of God, and grace is transmitted through the Holy Sacraments, that is through the Liturgy, it is evident that the Liturgy is necessarily the basis of all true education."

The author gives much excellent practical advice as to how this may best be achieved, both in the home and in the school. The training will be at once both *in* and *by* the Liturgy: *in* the Liturgy by instruction; *by* the Liturgy through actual participation in it. He lays timely stress on the fact that such liturgical education will not crush but rather foster individuality; it does not make for a multitude of standardized, mass-produced Catholics. For the Liturgy itself teaches that the Body is made up of a great variety of members, each with a separate and distinctive function. He insists, too, that this supernatural transformation through liturgical education itself fosters the cultivation of natural talents in a unique way.

One other essential point brought out in this book is that of the relation of the Liturgy to social problems. There is no pedantic insistence on the need for Latin or Plainsong, though the value of these are fully recognized: the author will not debar from the fullest participation in the Liturgy those incapable of

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performing with technical accuracy the external expressions of the inner spirit. Because it can be shared by all, the Liturgy is in a sense the whole of life: "the mirror of the Catholic spirit in all departments of life."

Such is the generous view of the Liturgy presented in this book: not a code of regulations—bye-laws of public worship—but the social hierarchic life of a living organism which lives by a divine life; something itself, therefore, vital and divine.

But there is one drawback in recommending this book. The translation gives a general impression of lack of cohesion: it does not "flow," and reads more like a series of notes and jottings than a finished work. The editor's italicized sub-headings, though invaluable for reference, serve to intensify this impression. It says much for the cogency of the author's arguments and the wealth of his thought that he really *does* succeed in conveying his matter in spite of an unfavourable medium.

GERARD MEATH, O.P.

HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO. By Fr. Hugh Pope, O.P., S.T.M., D.S.S. (Sands; 12s. 6d.)

It is easier to advertize than to criticize this book. One of its many excellencies, perhaps the chief, is, we think, its arrangement. The work is divided into nine essays in which the author presents St. Augustine to us from several angles whereby we get a better idea of the man, the teacher, and the saint than we could from a long unbroken narrative of his life and events.

The first essay deals with Roman Africa, the North Africa of St. Augustine's day, in its political setting, followed in the second essay by a description of Christian Africa, then one of the most populous and important sections of Christendom, yet utterly destroyed within a century of St. Augustine's death by those Vandals whose siege of Hippo brought such sorrow to the saint dying within its walls. Though the city which was the scene of his labours held out for almost a year after his death, and actually forced the enemy to raise the siege in 431, the defeat of the Romans the following year caused the abandonment of the place to the barbarians who so completely destroyed it that since then it has remained only a name. The present port of Bona lies a little more than a mile from the ancient site.

Though his very episcopal city thus disappeared at his death, yet Augustine remained and still remains a power never waning in Catholic life. Pope after Pope has lavished on his writings the highest praise and Clement XI in the early days of the eighteenth century styled him "the brightest light and the