

## **Blackfriars**

dict of Subiaco symbolised no accession of exterior strength to the body of the Roman world.' No Celtic monastery could resist this rule simply because the Celts lacked the Roman administrative genius of St. Benedict. The excessive asceticism of the Irish monasteries points to an unwise individualism. They were a renewal of the monachism of the desert. Thus half the rule of Columbanus is comprised of penalties. The author fails to point out that a peculiar organisation was the cause of the large numbers in the monasteries of Ireland. The monastery was simply the clan. On p. 81 he says: 'It is not certain that . . . . Boniface . . . . even preached to the heathen.' If he did not, it is peculiar that he should have been martyred by them, which is a certainty. This bias comes out all through the book. The author tries to make out that Scotland was a colony of Irishmen (note p. 27), since the Latin word for Ireland is Scotia. But this applies only to the south-west of Scotland. Things like this tend to shake one's confidence in the book, and could with so vast a bibliography have been quite easily avoided.

READINGS FROM FRIEDRICH VON HÜGEL. Selected by Algar Thorold. With an introductory essay on his Philosophy of religion. (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd.; 7/6 net.)

These selections are divided into three Books, entitled respectively 'The Approach to Religion,' 'The Soul of a Saint,' and 'The Philosophy of Religion.' All the passages (save two) of the First Book and all those of the Second are taken from *The Mystical Element of Religion*; all the passages (save two) of the Third Book are from the two volumes of *Essays and Addresses on the Philosophy of Religion*. The selection has evidently been made with care, and gives a good idea of von Hügel's thought. It should prove very stimulating to students of theology. Von Hügel made mistakes, sometimes serious mistakes, but there ought to be no doubt about the value of the greater part of his teaching. Moreover, his thought was living thought, a sincere, whole-hearted attempt to get at reality, and not a mere paper logic. Like all great minds, he was not afraid to state things which, stated by lesser men, would seem trite; that they were not so with him was because they were seen in God's complex living world, and were animated with its life. Not the least of this volume's merits is that it will serve as a remedy against the facile simplicity to which theologians are sometimes prone.