

## BLACKFRIARS

It is impossible to give any adequate idea of the *Achievements*; only a perusal of the book under review can do that, and it is packed with well-chosen examples on every page showing the eminently successful issue of the scouting experiment in slums, in Borstal institutions, in Leper Settlements, in times of national crisis, in wartime, in traffic control, in deep sea waters, on expeditions to the Pole, in unemployment areas, in charitable works, in public disasters, in the home circle and in a multitude of other equally diversified circumstances. But the important point is that the spirit and practice of Scouting, as this book amply proves, brings out the best in any type or condition of boy and, though it cannot be said to be in any sense a religious organization, provides opportunity and inducement for the practical exercise of religion at least so far as this latter is concerned with social contacts. Thus many of our own Parish Priests have had cause to bless the name of Baden Powell for providing them with an excellent and effective means of holding and perfecting the Catholic allegiance of their boys, especially during the difficult period of adolescence. Mr. Beresford Webb, though not, I think, himself a Catholic, is aware of these possibilities. He writes:

"Rover Scouts will naturally take a keen interest and activity in the various organizations attached to their particular creed or denomination. For instance, Catholic Rovers in Great Britain are intimately concerned with the charitable work of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, and various other guilds, fraternities and societies which are devoted to Catholic action. In France, the Rover Scouts de France, a Catholic organization, make a special study of the revival of liturgical practice, and they try to ensure in their own parishes that the full liturgy is carried out, as altar servers, sacristans and members of the choir. These Rovers, too, make a special job of pilgrimages, and they have organized very successful pilgrimages to Lourdes, the Holy Land and the Shrine of St. James at Compostella" (p. 207).

When it is added that the book is written in a pleasingly vigorous style, copiously illustrated with excellent photographs and offered by Messrs. Putnam in a format that is beyond criticism, enough will have been said, we hope, to prove that this is a volume well worth having and well worth reading.

HILARY J. CARPENTER, O.P.

SWASTIKA NIGHT. By Murray Constantine. (Gollancz; 7/6.)

This book is worth reading twice, first for a shocker and then for social philosophy.

In the seventh century of the Hitlerian Era the Nazi Empire divides the world with the Japanese; the stalemate of powers equally strong. The men of German Blood rule Europe and Africa and east to the Urals and Persia; the English have been crushed, the last rebels against this holy might. Not born of

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woman but exploded from the head of God the Thunderer, Hitler, a giant with a great blond beard, is worshipped in thousands of Swastika churches all oriented towards the Sacred Aeroplane in Munich in which he lead the flight against Moscow. A few Christians remain, small wandering bands like gypsies, despised yet despising, expiating their sin in forgetting the dying Christ's words, *forgive them for they know not what they do*, by persecuting the Jews, who have entirely disappeared. Women are no longer human persons, they live segregated in pens as child-bearing animals and their male children are taken from them eighteen months after birth. All records relating to religion and culture before Hitler have been systematically destroyed.

Yet the Empire is beginning to crumble, for the women, acquiescing in the denial of their proper value, are ceasing to bear females, and the men, denied the outlet of the essential ethic of pride and violence and ruthlessness, are losing their nerve. There is nobody left to go to war with. The beginning of the disintegration is told in this story, how the obliteration of Memory is not complete, for a precious book of gleanings from the wisdom of pre-Hitlerian times together with a photograph of an almost tubby dark-moustached little man smiling pleasantly at a maiden fall into the hands of an outwardly casual, protestant-minded Englishman, the sceptic who is looking for something; the type that Totalitarianism finds so difficult to assimilate.

Catholics will note their substantial agreement with this Gollancz book in its criticism of the nightmare it describes. For the argument is based on the two fundamental principles, first that men are not necessarily inferior for being different; second that they cannot live in a closed system. The principles are those of St. Augustine and St. Thomas in their treatment of man as the *imago Dei*.

THOMAS GILBY, O.P.

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THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD: Conferences on the Two Precepts of Charity and on the Ten Commandments. By St. Thomas Aquinas. (Burns Oates; 2/6.)

THE THREE GREATEST PRAYERS: Commentaries on the Our Father, the Hail Mary and the Apostles' Creed. By St. Thomas Aquinas. (Burns Oates; 2/6.)

Father Laurence Shapcote, O.P., has once more put us all in his debt. Not content with translating the whole of the *Summa Theologica*, the *Summa contra Gentiles*, and portions of the *Quaestiones Disputatae* as well as some of the *Commentaries on the Epistles of St. Paul*, he has now given us translations of these minor treatises of St. Thomas which should prove a boon to the preacher. A brief but admirable Introduction by Fr. Thomas