

Aristotle and the Arabs. Hence in Part II he begins immediately with a discussion of the existence of God. Unlike most theists he tells us what is actually said about the *five ways* in the text of St Thomas, and so avoids the usual howlers, especially over the *third way*. His knowledge of the sources enables him to clear up a number of doubtful points most helpfully.

The second half of the book (Parts III and IV) gives us that almost continuous rhapsody upon the verb 'to be' (*esse*, as he never fails to note) which has been a feature of so many of his books since existentialism became the continental fashion. Now of course it is important that, for example, St Thomas saw clearly how different it is to ask what kind of a thing something is, and to ask whether in fact anything of the kind exists in some given situation; for other philosophers have surprisingly often taken existence to be a property common to existing things. It is important too that he saw it was no longer sensible to make this distinction in the case of God, for he was thus helped to give a coherent account of creation. It is one of St Thomas' great merits to have treated the word 'existence' correctly, and in particular to have talked straightforwardly and unmysteriously about it.

What is alarming about Gilson's treatment is that through a hundred or more repetitious pages he never tries to show, by his own analyses and examples, just what is involved in affirming or denying this 'act of being' at the heart of things, which for him is the key to St Thomas' philosophy. The impression unhappily given is that terms are being used as counters: profound intuitions that cannot be expressed are, in philosophy, better not written. Even more unfortunately this *idée fixe* prevents adequate treatment being given to many other features of St Thomas' thought which are at least as interesting. There is, for example, a chapter called 'Man and Knowledge'. We might have expected it to contain some discussion of why it is important that St Thomas insisted on an active element in knowing, or some criticism of the curious doctrine of 'abstraction' that is commonly fathered on him. But what do we find? A further discussion of *esse*. It is painful to have to say this of a man for whose past work I have the greatest admiration; but neither truth nor Thomism is well served by the second part of this book.

LAURENCE BRIGHT, O.P.

THE EARLY LITURGY TO THE TIME OF GREGORY THE GREAT. By Josef A. Jungmann, S.J. (Darton, Longman & Todd; 50s.)

A COMMENTARY ON THE DIVINE LITURGY. By Nicholas Cabasilas. Translated by J. M. Hussey and P. A. McNulty. (S.P.C.K.; 18s. 6d.)

It is unfortunate that its high price is likely to limit the circulation of this useful series of lectures delivered by Fr Jungmann at the University of Notre Dame in 1949 and intended as an introduction to the oldest and most important period in the history of liturgy. Adroit in its avoidance of controversy, the book is, perhaps, as a consequence lacking in the illumination of any sudden and telling insights, but the author doubtless thereby achieves his purpose of giving, without the technicalities of scientific research,

a carefully balanced picture of worship in the early Church. Thus his opening section does not plunge into a discussion of the Last Supper, but insists upon the formative influence on the liturgy of the Christian apprehension of the Paschal mystery. It is thus, too, generally by an exploration of themes and contrasts, that he moves in section two from a refreshing exposition of baptism in Hippolytus, through a consideration of the impact of paganism and of the Christological disputes in the age of Constantine, to his concluding sections on liturgical developments in East and West which end with a sketch of the Roman liturgy before Gregory the Great. In this massive survey the specialist is bound to meet many details about which he would wish to make reservations, but the range of Fr Jungmann's learning is a sufficient guarantee of the substantial soundness and weight of his judgment as a whole.

Those on the other hand who find they learn most from forming their own impressions of original documents will be extremely grateful for the inexpensive English edition of the *Commentary on the Divine Liturgy* of Nicholas Cabasilas, the fourteenth-century Byzantine theologian. The presentation of this brief and lovely little work is admirably efficient and austere, the reader being provided with a description of the Byzantine liturgy by way of introduction. Not that the horizons of the commentary limit it to those with an interest in the Byzantine liturgy. Many who find the bulk of modern commentaries on the liturgy intolerable will have their eyes opened by Cabasilas, who is full of traditional theological insight and balance. Particularly striking is his association of the conception of thanksgiving in the Eucharist with the work of sanctification: when the Church gives thanks for anything, it is always for the perfection of the saints that she is giving thanks. All that the Lord has made was made that the choir of the saints might be established; and the Church, whenever she gives thanks, has the choir of the saints in mind. That is why our Saviour, in instituting this holy sacrament, gave thanks to God, since by it he was to open for us the gates of heaven, and to gather there the assembly of the firstborn.

ÆLRED SQUIRE, O.P.

APPROACH TO CHRISTIAN SCULPTURE. By H. Van Zeller. (Sheed and Ward; 16s.)

Ever since Theophilus first thought of the idea, dozens of delightful treatises on various arts have been written, usually intensely personal in style and addressed to a limited audience. Fr van Zeller's difficult subject, the growth, decline, and present position of Christian sculpture, is of interest to us all, and indeed in the preface to his book the author claims to be writing for practically everyone, but I suspect his personal friends will relish it most, knowing his character, habits of thought, and his conversation, of which this is evidently an extension.

We are now in an age of predominantly metal sculpture, rich in secular imagery, lean in religious, and our thoughts are conditioned by this almost without our knowing it. The fact that this book, by putting too little emphasis on what has happened in the art world in the twenty years since Gill died,