

EXTRACTS

SOME HITHERTO UNPUBLISHED PRAYERS of Nicholas of Clananges (1368-1437) have been recently published in the *Revue d'Ascétique et de Mystique* (Toulouse). Intended for recitation before each of the canonical hours, they are in effect *catenae* of scriptural and liturgical phrases. We give a free translation of the prayer to be said before Prime:

Grant to me, O Lord, at the first hour of this day the spirit of understanding. As the sun at its rising fills with its splendour the eyes of my body, so may the sun of understanding dawn on the eyes of my soul and drive away the shadows of evil, scattering the cloud of wickedness with its beams. Then may I pass this day, with that sun to lead me, fearlessly and ever in the right way, avoiding all that is harmful and idle, vain and unprofitable. May that brightness guide my words and all my actions; may it make me understand and follow in all I do those things that are pleasing to thee, O God, spurning all that is alien to thy will. May it make of me a child of light and not of darkness; may it enable me to render thee a reasonable service in thy sight. . . . May it bring me with a quiet mind to all the tasks I have, that I may do them without fuss, measured as they will be by thy guidance. May that sun of understanding govern my sight and rein my tongue, moderating the words I use and ruling the inclinations of my mortal body, preserving all my senses from vanity, warding off all anger and disquiet throughout this day. So may this day, begun with thy praise and continued with thy grace to lead me, end too with that praise on my lips and with my mind serene and free from guilt. Then shall I give thanks to God for a day passed in peace and free from all harm.

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ORATE FRATES (Vol. XXI, No. 10) has the views of Dom Pius Parsch on 'Intensive or Extensive Pastoral Care?' Pursuing an argument that has been made familiar by the Abbé Michonneau in France, he makes the radical distinction between the 'formed' Christian parish and the semi-pagan world without.

The parish can be likened to a series of concentric circles which increase in warmth and light the closer they approach the focus. In every parish there should be some provision for the guidance of those who seek to live the Christ-life more fully, and who are expected to give from the abundance of their interior life and so to promote the health and growth of the body as a whole. One means towards this end would seem to be the provision of

parochial retreats. The 'mission' has by no means outlived its usefulness as a means of grace for a parish as a whole. Yet of its nature it must be a common denominator for a most disparate gathering of people. A retreat, aiming at the spiritual formation of what one can only call the *élite* of a parish (and the category bears no sort of relation to 'importance' or pew-status), should be complementary to a mission. And there is no greater disaster than the assumption that ordinary people have no need of instruction in prayer and the developed life of grace.

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CHURCH AND PEOPLE, published by the Benedictines of Farnborough at sixpence, has shed two articles—definite articles, that is to say—and changed its format. Its aim remains the same: "To show "the people" (the faithful) how really and truly they are part of "the Church" and how important it is that they should fully participate in her life of worship'. The November number is an encouraging item on that agenda, and D. M. H. does well to remind us, in his essay on 'Reading the Fathers', how essential patristic study must be for any liturgical revival. We may perhaps be pardoned for pointing out (and this applies to several other periodicals besides) that the publications of the *Editions du Cerf*, so warmly welcomed wherever they are known, are readily obtainable in this country from Blackfriars Publications, Oxford.

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LIKE AS THE HART, a sixteenth century translation of St Augustine's commentary on Psalm XLI, has appeared at the modest price of one shilling and sixpence (Blackfriars Publications).

PRAEGUSTATOR.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor, 'The Life of the Spirit'.

Dear Sir.—May I draw your attention to the contention of Dom Luismet, O.S.B., in 'The Mystical Contemplation of the Blessed Trinity' in respect of St John's use of 'Logos'? He argues with considerable cogency that Apocalypse 19, 11-14 indicates that this title of our Lord's was directly revealed to St John. 'His eyes were like flaming fire, and on his brow were many royal diadems; the name written there is one that only he knows. He went clad in a garment deep dyed with blood, and the name by which he is called is the Word of God'. If St John's gospel was written after the Apocalypse it would be very reasonable to suppose that St John's 'weighing up' of the title 'Logos', as surmised by Dom Columba Cary Elwes, came after and as a confirmation of the primary revelation of the Holy Spirit.—Yours, etc., JOHN TODD.

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