

EXTRACTS

FÊTES ET SAISONS (Editions du Cerf: 50 francs) has returned to its original plan devised during the Occupation of celebrating the great feasts of the year with a special issue beautifully illustrated with modern photographs. The September-October issue is devoted to *La Toussaint*. The theme is that the saints are not dead but alive, living among us as we are among the crowds and excitements of the world.

The feast of All Saints opens our eyes to the world of sanctity. An immense world where the saints are without number. An astonishing world because the saints are not unknown to us, among them are our relatives, friends, and perhaps even one of our children. A happy world where the triumphant joy of today is rooted in the life of work and suffering which they have led on earth. A wide-open world which grows ceaselessly, as every day that passes sees the arrival of new elect.

The saints are always calling us to holiness and to the joys of the heavenly Jerusalem.

Mention should be made of an English illustrated review which almost reaches the mark of perfection attained by its French contemporary. This is the monthly, *The Word*, published by the Divine Word Missionaries for only sixpence. The photographs are excellent and the articles of general and topical interest. The September issue contains articles on Prague, the Irish game of hurling, the Paris Opera, Buddha, Adenauer, and St Francis. Liam Brophy a little excitedly describes the Poverello:

He brought religion to the people. He founded the most popular body of ministers of religion that has ever existed in the Church. He transformed monachism by uprooting the stationary monk, delivering him from his bondage by poverty, and sending him as a mendicant friar, to be a stranger and sojourner, not in the wilderness, but in the crowded haunts of men, to console them and do them good. This popular instinct of his is at the bottom of his marriage with poverty.

Not all the articles are as exaggerated as this one. But the review could perhaps take a few lessons even yet from *Fêtes et Saisons*.

MOUNT CARMEL (edited by the Carmelite Fathers from Wincanton) devotes its autumn number to the great personality of Sister Elizabeth of the Trinity, the counterpart and contemporary of St Teresa of Lisieux. Fr Benet Weatherhead, O.P., writes of the Image of God in her life and teaching.

It is interesting to see how immediately her mind associates simplicity and silence, silence of the faculties, simplicity of intention, her

'one pious practice', with this growth in the image of God. But not only is this silence and simplicity an ascetic discipline which facilitates the work of God in the soul, restoring his image, it is itself a reflection of the simplicity of the divine nature. . . . Parallel with this reflection of the unity and simplicity of the divine nature . . . goes a reflection of the immutability and eternity of God in so far as the will is continuously united to the will of God.

The presence of God, union with God, the image of God—each implies the other: as the soul grows in one the others are more perfectly realized in it. The image of God, conformity to the Word made flesh, assimilation to the life of the Blessed Trinity in the depths of the soul, all are coherent in the simple, unified vision of Sister Elizabeth. Miss Hilda Graef writes of her Trinitarian Prayer, and Fr Thomas, O.D.C., of her as 'The House of God'. We miss perhaps her great theme of *Laus Gloriam* in which she described her life, the life of every good Christian, as 'the praise of glory'—she was nothing if not Pauline in her theology of the spiritual life.

Sursum Corda, the Australian review for priests and religious, gives us another good number with its August issue. Of particular note is a theological article on the Mass as the same sacrifice as that of Calvary.



COMMENT

A Text-Book for Beginners

MOST lay people regard the *Summa Theologica* with awe, if only because of the space it takes up on a bookshelf. And few would ever dream of attempting to read it. Yet St Thomas himself described it as a text-book for beginners. Indeed, as one comes to know and love it, it reveals St Thomas as a great and most patient teacher as well as one of the world's greatest thinkers. One can almost hear the master dealing with his students; here are the simple examples, often, like the 'whiteness of Socrates', over-worked; here is the skilful repetition of basic arguments, so that the student is constantly being reminded of what he ought to know.

And it is precisely as a text-book for beginners that the *Summa* is being used today in the University of London Extension Courses given on the *Teaching of Aquinas*, year after year, by a Dominican lecturer. In fact, St Thomas would probably be surprised as well