

attains the minimum of English idiom; and even the rules of grammar have not always been respected.

Two things among many seem to invite protest: the idea that the Church of Rome *annexes* a devotion and proceeds to make it universal and the notion that the last stage in the progress of a doctrine is repression by the Church of all opposition. No doubt the author would disclaim both these things, as expressed in these English words; but the translator, alas, does not seem to have hesitated on that account.

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THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST. By John of St Thomas. Translated from the Latin by Dominic Hughes, O.P. With a Foreword by Walter Farrell, O.P. (Sheed and Ward; 16s.)

It was a venture of faith to publish this treatise in English and at a reasonable price. For in spite of the widespread and increasing interest in thomism, it is still difficult to bring readers back to the texts of the Angelic Doctor himself, and even then many are put off by the form in which his thought is expressed. At first sight, John of St Thomas seems wholly concerned to distinguish and speculate without more than a passing reference to the sources of revelation and to defend the doctrine of the master mainly by philosophical arguments against long forgotten critics. At the end of a long and critical survey of the history of the theology of the gifts, Père Jacques de Blic was recently constrained to ask, 'When shall we refrain from putting on the same level in our systems that which is a vital development of revealed truth and that which is a purely human, cultural or philosophical addition?' (*Revue d'Ascétique et de Mystique*, January-June, 1946, p. 179.) There is some justification for this outburst, but a patient application to the work of this very great and devout theologian, faithful exponent of St Thomas and even more a penetrating student of the divine word, can only increase our appreciation of the riches of the deposit of faith and our understanding of the structure of the human soul intent upon the divine and elevated to move Godwards under the impulse of the Spirit of God.

When God speaks, every word counts. And if he considered human nature a fit instrument to be transformed by grace, all the resources of philosophy must be pressed into service to give some kind of intelligible account both of that nature as *elevabilis* and of the wonderful adaptation by the Holy Ghost of its powers and dispositions. That is why John of St Thomas makes much of an occasional text of Scripture and carefully distinguishes between the varied acts of the soul, the possibilities of perfection which remain even after the infusion of the virtues and the definite types of response which must be given to the outbreath of the Spirit. The distinction, for instance, between the simple

assent of faith and the judgment exercised on the truths of faith by the soul to which these things have become connatural through the gift of the Spirit is not without justification in Scripture and is eminently satisfying as a psychological account of the quest of the keen and loving mind. It is good, too, to be reminded of the wealth contained in those books of the Old Testament which have so much to say of the wisdom that comes from God; although reckoned by Protestants among the Apocrypha, for Catholic theologians they provide precisely that 'fond de données traditionnelles' on which, Père de Blic maintains, any learned doctrinal structure should be firmly based.

Fr Hughes's translation is a noble piece of work, faithful to the original, but yet rendering this seventeenth-century author alive and interesting for our contemporaries. His introduction also provides a very necessary account of the life and work of John of St Thomas and indicates his place among the greatest minds in the history of theology. There are very full indexes of subjects, names and Scriptural references. The production and printing are almost perfect, but there is an obvious, but unfortunate, misprint in the very last line.

EDWARD QUINN.

LE POÈME DE LA PARFAITE CONSÉCRATION À MARIE. By M.-Th. Poupon. (Librarie du Sacré Cœur, Lyon, 1947; pp. 665.)

A JÉSUS PAR MARIE. By the same author. (Lyon, 1948; pp. 191.)

There can be no doubt that in spite of frequent reimpressions of St Louis Grignion de Montfort's *Treatise on True Devotion*, and its use by the Legion of Mary, many English Catholics feel ill at ease with the teachings of the Saint or at least with its seemingly exaggerated expression. At the same time it must be remembered that the Church holds the works of the Saint to be free from doctrinal error, so that, at most, it can only be the expression of the doctrine and not the teaching itself which may cause discomfort. The principal expression to which exception is taken seems to be that of 'slave of Mary'.

In the first of the two works mentioned above, Fr Poupon has studied the perfect consecration to our Lady, or rather to our Lord through our Lady, in its theological background, and at the same time, has illustrated his explanations with copious extracts from the works of St Louis himself and from other spiritual writers of the *École française*, whose works were the sources whence St Louis drew his teaching. Strangely enough, the perfect consecration is not attached to the *Treatise on True Devotion*, but to an earlier work, *L'Amour de la Sagesse Eternelle*; moreover, it was not just a formula to be recited without thought. Indeed, in the view of its author, its place in Christian life is of such importance that a retreat of thirty days is not too long nor too intensive a preparation. As he understood it, this consecration was not to be an