

## BLACKFRIARS

earth, could only effect it by a permanent juxtaposition of native group and stranger group, which would eventually lead to a symbiosis of two *castes*. Yet the problem of caste is not so much as alluded to in the volume under review!

The authoress is not at her best in the ethnological section: her enumeration of Andaman, Australian and Melanesian data seems to me far too restricted; the ranking of the Bantus as 'primitive' betrays a woful lack of ethnological perspective. For her, 'alien communities' are those known to her as an American at home, *i.e.*, 'Immigrant Communities; or abroad, *i.e.*, 'Foreign Colonies.' With these she opens the second half of her book, which is excellent and treats successively of the stranger in the open country, the small town, and the big city. Thus she makes a useful contribution to the sociological structure of the United States: but I fear the fundamental problem of the Stranger in the history of mankind has escaped her.

For this can only be elucidated by an analysis of the proto-historic clash between the patriarchal, warlike, nomads of the steppes, and the archaic civilization of the pacific peasants along the big river-systems of tropical and sub-tropical Asia: the combination of these two elements in a symbiosis of caste, or their fusion in a far from homogeneous mixture, has ushered in the world as we know it in history; and the age-long struggle between the two basic cultures—nomadic and agricultural, dynamic and static, founded on loyalty to a personal chief or on obedience to a cosmic law respectively—endures still to-day, since these two component parts of our own and all the highest orders of human civilization have not yet been completely harmonized.

H. C. J. ZACHARIAS.

## MEDIAEVAL STUDIES

Most of St. Thomas's surviving autographs are in the Vatican Library. MS. Vat. Lat. 9850 contains almost a third of the autograph of the *Summa Contra Gentiles* (so scholarly edited by the Leonine Commission), the Commentaries on Isaiah and on the *De Trinitate* of Boethius. MS. Vat. Lat. 9851 contains the Saint's Commentary on the *Third Book of Sentences* of Peter Lombard.

Dr. J. F. Rossi, C.M., has written a remarkable study of this MS.<sup>1</sup> He first gives an account of the history of the codex. It is known that Reginald of Piperno, the faithful disciple of Aquinas, inherited all his master's MSS. This one came into the hands of Charles II of Naples, who erected a Dominican

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<sup>1</sup> G. F. Rossi, C.M.: *L'Autografo di San Tommaso del Commento al III Libro delle Sentenze* (Monografie del Collegio Alberoni, XII; Collegio Alberoni, Piacenza, pp. 64. I. 7).

## REVIEWS

priory at Aversa in 1291 and placed the MS. in the church as a relic. When this priory was suppressed in 1807-8, the MS. was saved by the Dominican S. Pignattaro, later Archbishop of S. Severina and Isernia. It came later into the hands of Mgr. Thomas Salzano, O.P., who presented it to Pius IX for the Vatican Library on August 21st, 1871.

The greater part of Dr. Rossi's study is, however, devoted to the description of the MS. itself. Those acquainted with St. Thomas's hand-writing—so difficult to read that it was usually called *littera inintelligibilis*—will appreciate the patience and sagacity needed for such work. Dr. Rossi examines it, quire after quire, folio after folio, giving the *incipits* and *explicitis* of each. He detects three kinds of script in the MS.: two written in Gothic letters (ff. 1-10) and the third in the cursive *littera inintelligibilis* (11-99). He considers that this only is the genuine autograph of St. Thomas, the first ten folios being a transcript. He notes all the peculiarities of the script and enumerates the missing fragments. The codex had often been mutilated by pious relic-hunters: twenty-nine of the original 128 folios have been removed, and of some of the others only portions remain. One particular case drew Dr. Rossi's attention: the mutilation of fol. 7, in which the Saint treats of the Immaculate Conception. Was this done to suppress evidence of St. Thomas's thought on the subject? After careful investigation he concludes that it had been removed solely as a relic.

Professor P. Castagnoli, C.M., gives us a scholarly critical edition of St. Thomas's *De Forma Absolutionis*.<sup>2</sup> In the solid introduction he discusses the available MSS. Of these he has discovered thirty-three, only two of which he has been unable to inspect. The rest are subjected to careful examination and classified. In so doing he has thrown light on many important points which will prove most helpful to all students of St. Thomas's Opuscula. He shows that the early catalogues and MSS. of *De Forma Absolutionis* unanimously establish its authenticity.

He next discusses its original title. St. Thomas did not himself inscribe the title; for the work is an occasional tract written at the request of the Dominican Master General, B. John of Vercelli, who had asked the Saint's advice regarding a pamphlet which questioned the *Ego te absolvo* formula. Professor Castagnoli, following the earlier MSS. and catalogues, shows that the original title was *De Forma Absolutionis Poenitentiae*

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<sup>2</sup> P. CASTAGNOLI, C.M.: *L'Opuscolo 'De Forma Absolutionis' di San Tommaso d'Aquino* (Monografie del Collegio Alberoni, XIII; Piacenza; pp. 112. L. 10).

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*Sacramentalis*. It appears to have been written during St. Thomas's second term as Master Regent in the University of Paris (1269-72), and completed, as he himself testifies, on the feast of St. Peter's Chair: *Voluntas autem Dei fuit ut pro defensione potestatis Petro traditae, in festo cathedrae Petri hoc opus de vestro mandato compilans laborarem.*

In the edition of the text which follows all *lectiones variantes* are given, references and quotations are identified and verified, and short notes are added. An excellent edition, worthy of the high standards of the *Monografie* of Collegio Alberoni.

Fascicule 37 of the *Florilegium Patristicum*<sup>3</sup> is due to one of the editors, Professor B. Geyer, of the University of Bonn, whose name is a guarantee of scholarship. St. Thomas's *Quaestiones de Trinitate* are, as the editor says, *classical* in the history of Theology, and fundamental for profound knowledge of the Catholic doctrine of the great Mystery. The Leonine edition of that part of the *Summa Theologica*, following too closely the Piana edition, sometimes even against the evidence of ancient MSS., has not attained the desired precision. Dr. Geyer did not intend to give a definitive critical edition; nevertheless, with the help of five MSS., in addition to the four of the Vatican already known and used by the Leonine Editors, he tries to improve the text. The authentic title of the *Summa*, according to Professor Geyer, is not *Summa Theologica* but *Summa de Theologia*, on the analogy of similar earlier *Summae*: *Summa de Creaturis*; *Summa de Vitiis*; *Summa de Anima*, etc. Another innovation in this edition is the suppression of the titles of the articles. The identification of the references to earlier writers and the indication of parallels in contemporary schoolmen add greatly to its value. Altogether a worthy contribution to the *Florilegium Patristicum*.

DANIEL CALLUS, O.P.

### THE PLAY

IN some ways the Press has done Mr. George Robey a disservice, in so far as it created the impression that his appearance as Falstaff was something of a stunt, or at least an audacious experiment. I have heard of Shakespeare lovers staying away in consequence, and certainly there was a strange contrast between the half-empty pit and the crowded stalls.

Nothing could be more mistaken. Mr. Robey at *His Majesty's* reveals himself as a great actor and a great artist.

<sup>3</sup> B. GEYER: *S. Thomae de Aquino Quaestiones de Trinitate Divina. Summae de Theologia I, q. XXVII-XXXII ad fidem codicum manusccriptorum recensuit, notis et prolegomenis instruxit.* (*Florilegium Patristicum Fasc. XXXVII*). Bonn, Hanstein. 1934: pp. 62. RM. 2.40.