

Blackfriars

reading; although occasionally there are under-translations, as when we read of a 'crisis of the Catholic spirit'; and over-translations, as when the university students of Louvain are called 'undergraduates.'

V.W.

A NEWMAN SYNTHESIS, arranged by Erich Przywara, S.J. (Sheed and Ward; 7/6.)

One characteristic of Fr. Przywara's work is its, at any rate would-be, thoroughness—we hesitate to say its German thoroughness because from his name the author would seem to be a Pole. According to the 'Publishers' Note' prefixed to the volume, 'his task is to reconstitute Newman's thought, systematically and in its completeness, as it was present in Newman's own mind'—certainly an ambitious undertaking. To accomplish it, we are told, the author sees man's growth to full spiritual maturity in three stages (fallen man's path to Christianity—his conviction of Christianity and of Christ as his divinely willed and commissioned Messiah and Saviour—redeemed man's path *in* Christianity), divides these three stages into a score of sections, and further sub-divides each section into some hundred steps; 'upon the points of that analysis Fr. Przywara threads passages from Newman—choosing those which careful research show to be representative of the final state of his mind.'

The publishers call the work a Newman 'Summa.' In reading what he wrote as a Catholic, one cannot help being struck by the fact that, while he quotes lesser theologians, he shows little acquaintance with the *Summa par excellence*. And yet had he gone beyond the medieval forms to the living thought—and we have not, of course, in mind simply the things in which Catholics cannot but agree—he would have found in St. Thomas much in which his mind and heart would have delighted. This *Synthesis* has reminded us again of passages to which very striking parallels can be found in the Saint's works. One reason of this is, we think, that both owed much to the same patristic sources.

Personally we prefer our Newman in bigger draughts than Fr. Przywara allows us. Many, too, will no doubt find Fr. Martindale's excellent little collection of extracts, *The Spirit of Cardinal Newman*, a more attractive introduction. But, whether or not this *Synthesis* is accepted as a systematic reconstitution of Newman's thought in all its fullness, it does give, serviceably arranged—and at a very moderate price—many of his best passages. And how very good they are!