

## BLACKFRIARS

- TEMPS PRESENT (March 11): A strong number includes an interview with Mgr. Yu Pin, remarkable contributions on the Niemöller trial from Paul Claudel and Stanislas Fumet, on the Moscow trials from François Courtenay, and on *Un Gentleman Chrétien* (our new Foreign Secretary) by Jean Guitton.
- VIE INTELLECTUELLE (Feb. 25): *The Jews among the Gentiles*, a magnificent address on the Christian view of the Jewish problem and of current anti-semitism, by Jacques Maritain. ("Israel, like the Church, is in the world but not of it; but since the day it stumbled, because its leaders preferred the world, it is rivetted to the world, a captive and victim of the world it loves, but to which it does not belong, nor ever will nor can belong. That is how, with Christian eyes, we perceive the mystery of Israel.")
- WORLD PROBLEM is a "Monthly Survey of Modern Atheism," invaluable for documentation, published by the Vatican Polyglot Press. 6/6 annually from Via Carlo Alberto 2, Roma 128.

PENGUIN.

## REVIEWS

### THEOLOGY AND THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

CONFIRMATION IN THE MODERN WORLD. By Matthias Laros.  
Translated by George Sayer. (Sheed & Ward; 7s. 6d.)

One of the happier signs of our time is a new awareness, among Catholics, of the Community. The Liturgical Movement, the stirring to Catholic Action, are facets of a great reality, set in the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ. It would be more than a pity if the very enabling power, instituted by Christ Himself, were to be neglected. Confirmation is, too often, a forgotten Sacrament; if not in its reception, at least in its appreciation. Yet it is this Sacrament which makes us full members of the Mystical Body; which, as the word indicates, comes to confirm, reinforce, complete and perfect the spiritual life of the baptized. It represents the adult state of life where one begins to live and act not only for one's own personal profit, but for the general good of the community.

This study of the Sacrament of Confirmation, translated from the German, sets out in simple language to deepen our knowledge and appreciation of the equipment that God has given us, as militant members of His Kingdom; for, in the words of Cardinal Faulhaber, quoted by the author, "It is not enough for us to be fishes in the net of the apostle, we must be fishers and apostles ourselves."

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Some passages were evidently written with an eye to present happenings in Germany, but they are none the less valuable, for it belongs to every confirmed person "ex officio" to confess his faith before the enemies of Christian worship. Persecution is an extreme case, but not the only case where the confirmed person is called upon to exercise the character, or spiritual power conferred in this Sacrament; there may be notable occasions for profession of faith at a dinner table. Catholics must take their place in public affairs; in fact, as the author observes, "Christians will soon become the only bibles which people will bother to read."

A valuable chapter is the one which links the Sacrament to the traditional teaching on the priesthood of the laity, so overlaid since the Reformation. Chapters on the relation of the Sacrament to Personality, to the Apostolate, to Catholic Action, are made to cover the ground of the nature and effects of the Sacrament. There follows a short treatise on the Gifts, and a study of the Sin against the Holy Ghost. This last, much disputed subject, is particularly well worked out. Much use has been made of the *Summa* of St. Thomas.

If one may be permitted a minor criticism of a book which is happily so free from technicalities, it is that not sufficient place has been given to the Sacramental Character, and the way in which it is a participation of the priesthood of Christ. Perhaps, too, more light could have been thrown on this Sacrament of Adolescence, by a more thorough comparison with Baptism, the Sacrament of Spiritual Birth. But the book, as a whole, is keenly alive, and its teaching should inspire those who are about to enlist in the service of Christ the King: "Youth," says the author, "will always fight to the last for any true and heroic cause."

PETER WHITESTONE, O.P.

MARY'S PART IN OUR REDEMPTION. By Canon George D. Smith, Ph.D., D.D. (Burns, Oates; 6s.)

This book, which is at pains to explain Mary's Part in our Redemption, is most admirable from every viewpoint. We have so long grown accustomed to rely almost exclusively on foreign publications or in translations from them, that it is distinctly refreshing to be put in possession of scientific work by one of our own thoroughly competent theologians. Admittedly it is no easy task to be theologically lucid and at the same time not to be beyond the range of the layman by reason of technique. This difficulty has however been bridged by Canon Smith, and with conspicuous success.

The purpose which the author sets before him is "to show