

# SCRIPTURE

THE QUARTERLY OF THE CATHOLIC BIBLICAL ASSOCIATION

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## EDITORIAL

The Annual General Meeting was held at the Newman Centre, 31 Portman Square, London, W.1, on Thursday, 3rd January 1952, at 6 p.m. The Secretary and Treasurer read their reports for the past year. The principal activity was the course of lectures at the Newman Centre. The audience for these had remained at a fairly steady level and even slightly increased. Work on the *Catholic Commentary* had continued steadily although progress was slower than had been hoped. The treasurer reported that the Association had just covered its expenses which consisted chiefly of the printing of the QUARTERLY and sundry secretarial expenses such as postage and stationery. The draft rules of the Association were then commented on and amended. At the end, the revised rules were voted on and passed. In the course of a discussion a member asked if arrangements might be made for purchase of the *Catholic Commentary* by instalments, as this method might be useful for students. Any decision on this point would rest with the publishers. Dr Leahy described contacts he had had with the Catholic Truth Society with a view to co-operation in the matter of publications. There was apparently little demand for pamphlets on the Old Testament. There was a regular sale for NT pamphlets especially simple accounts of the life of Christ, so long as they appeared as one pamphlet. Cost of production (exclusive of any payment to the writer) was almost equal now to the price charged. In reply to a query about more popular lectures on the Scriptures it was said that the organizing of such lectures had been undertaken some years ago but had resulted in a financial loss and was therefore discontinued. Nevertheless the idea would be taken up again. It was also noted in a later discussion that the Quarterly SCRIPTURE is not well known and needs publicizing. The editor observed that it needs not only publicizing but also articles of a more general character, to meet the needs of a wider public; but that such articles are hard to come by. At the conclusion of the Meeting, Mr R. A. Dean, a member of the Committee, proposed a motion that this Society express its pleasure at the



election of its Chairman, the Very Rev. Mgr J. M. T. Barton, D.D., F.S.A., to the position of President (1952) of the Society for Old Testament Study. This motion was seconded by Dr Leahy and passed, *nem. con.*

In response to some requests we reprint on page 43 with appropriate modifications an answer published originally in 1945, in *SCRIPTURE*, before it became an official quarterly. The subject is the Millennium, and we believe many readers will be glad to have this reprint.

The Liturgical Apostolate, Abbey of St Andrew, Bruges, Belgium, has produced an excellent booklet on the restored Easter Eve service, giving the text in Latin and English and adding just such short explanations as are necessary for the intelligent following of the ceremonies. Thus, a very interesting plan of the ceremonies is printed on page 4, showing the main parts and subdivisions; and throughout the text, short notes are inserted wherever necessary. The booklet is available at the very modest price of one shilling, and is entitled 'Easter Eve'.

## THE FOURTH GOSPEL, AN OBJECTIVE RECORD?

SINCE the portrait of Christ in John differs apparently from that in the Synoptics, because there are notable differences in the discourses and on account of the Evangelist's elaborate use of symbolism there have been constant attempts to maintain that the fourth Gospel is in fact not a work of history at all but largely an allegorical composition designed to portray Christ, not as he actually was in life but as he was believed to be at the beginning of the second century. 'Such a view' notes MacRory, 'reduces the claim to divinity made by our Lord himself in the discourses of the Gospel to claims set up on his behalf by the Evangelist seventy years or more after his death' (Gospel of St John, p. xlix).

Before dealing with the difficulties it is well to note first that the Gospel presents itself as a record of fact. This is stated categorically in xx, 30-31. The text of the Gospel bears this out. There are the same historical persons as in the Syn., eg. the apostles, the holy women, Caiaphas, Pilate and Joseph of Arimathea. The events too, generally speaking are the same—the Baptist's testimony, Christ's many miracles, feeding of the 5,000 and above all the details of the Passion. That John relates many events not in the Syn. and *vice-versa* is accounted for by his intention of supplementing, not repeating their account in detail.

John's Gospel has more chronological indications than the other Gospels. At least three Paschs or a period of two full years, the feasts of