

The Poet of the Eucharist.

St. Thomas Aquinas, O. P.

PERCHANCE, in silent vigils of the night-time,
 He heard the sweet celestial melody
 Of angels sweeping o'er their golden harp-strings
 Before "the great white throne" and "crystal sea,"
 And through his spirit, mystic echoes stealing,
 Soft whispered of his Eucharistic love:
 The "Angel of the Schools" and of the Altar
 Was fired with inspirations from above.
 In varied tones of gladness or of pathos—
 Like royal David's wondrous psalmody,
 He now intoned the glorious "Pange Lingua,"
 Then longed our Saviour's Face unveiled to see.*
 And, gazing through the vista of remembrance,
 On types and figures in the day of old,
 To his angelic science and devotion,
 How beautiful the symbols they unfold!
 He sees, by faith, on sacrificial altars,
 The Lamb prefigured as a victim slain;
 He sees Him, like the star of early morning,
 Illume the Manna on a desert-plain.
 The ages pass—He sees the hope of nations
 In Mary's arms is resting calmly now
 He hears that Name, of tender, loving sweetness,
 At which all knees adoringly must bow.
 He sings of Jesus' sacred Life and Passion,
 And of His glories in the kingdom fair;
 Then contemplates the Eucharistic species:
 The "Angel's Bread," the "Lord of Hosts" is there.
 O white-robed poet of the holy altar
 An "Angel" in thy spotless purity!
 The spirit of God's love swept o'er thy heart strings,
 And made thee "Angel," too, in minstrelsy.
 Thy canticles of praise and adoration
 Resound on Eucharistic festal-days,
 Thy sighs for "fatherland" † at Benediction,
 Oft murmur in our plaintive exile lays.
 In God's bright land, the saints with joy are thrilling,
 And sweet each song before the Lamb divine;
 But ah! there is a special, glorious beauty,
 O poet of the Eucharist! in thine!

—ENFANT DE MARIE.

* "Jesu quem velatum nunc aspicio."—St. Thomas.

† "Nobis donet in Patria!" (O Salutaris!)