

# DOMINICANA

Vol. XXXI

SEPTEMBER, 1946

No. 3

## INTRODUCTION



WHEN the United States Department of Justice commissioned Mr. Boardman Robinson to paint appropriate murals in the foyer of its building in Washington several years ago, the Dominican theologian, Francisco de Vitoria, founder of International Law, was one of the subjects chosen. In executing his commission, Mr. Robinson undertook a search for a likeness of the Spanish friar. The search proved fruitless for enquiry and scholarship could produce no authentic portrait or figure of Vitoria. As a happy solution, Mr. Robinson painted the head of James Brown Scott, then Secretary of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, on the shoulders of the friar, all unknown to Dr. Scott. More than the painter knew, this was a unique tribute to a great American Vitorian scholar.

Dr. James Brown Scott, a non-Catholic,\* was one-time professor of International Law at Georgetown University, Secretary of the Carnegie Endowment, and world authority on international law. By his writing and scholarship he has done more than any other man to bring the teaching of Vitoria to the modern world. By his labors and interest in the Spanish theologian, he has brought almost singlehandedly, the doctrine of the *De Indis* to the attention of English-speaking legalists and students of peace and international relations. And to Dr. Scott principally goes credit for the growing recognition of Vitoria's title as the founder of international law.

Dr. Scott's contribution to Vitorian studies fittingly enough received particular notice in the international convocation in honor of the fourth centenary of the death of Vitoria, assembled at the Dominican convent of St. Stephen, at the University of Salamanca, the

---

\* It may be reasonably surmised that James Brown Scott, like Hugo Grotius before him, died a member of that Church whose moral teaching he so much admired and pondered.

place of Vitoria's teaching, in Spain, during June of 1946. At this celebration, delegates from countries all over the world, ecclesiastics, government officials, historians, lawyers and academic men, assembled to pay tribute to Vitoria and to dedicate themselves to the principles of international peace which he set forth. A leading part of this convocation was a lecture on the work of Dr. Scott given by the Rev. Charles Hugh McKenna, O.P., of Providence College, Providence, R. I. In addition, the delegates ordered a medal bearing the likeness of Dr. Scott to be struck in his honor.

In this two-fold way the names of Vitoria and Dr. Scott are bound together, and the mural in the foyer of the Justice Building in Washington, bearing the name and figure of Vitoria and the head of Dr. Scott, is a fitting memorial to the name and work of both of them.