

(ii) that blood and water flowed from the pierced side of Christ, showing that the blood had separated into its two component parts. This was much more likely to occur if the blood had escaped from the cavities of the heart.

(iii) that the blood and water flowed out immediately the side was pierced. This seems to indicate that the fluids were under some sort of pressure immediately behind the chest wall. As soon as the pleural cavity was opened the lung would collapse, and air would be sucked in rather than fluid expressed, unless the clotted blood was under pressure in the pericardial sac. And the only happening which could explain this would be that the heart had ruptured and pumped the blood through the rupture into the pericardium.

Against this view, most medical authorities regard rupture of the heart in a healthy young man as practically unknown. Yet again the physical and mental sufferings of Christ were so unique that the possibility that he died of a broken heart still remains.

It is impossible to praise too highly this very important book which surpasses all other works in this field. The author covers an immense literature, writes with great lucidity and brings to his task such deep scholarship that this volume must become the standard work of reference for years ahead.

J. RYLAND WHITAKER, S.J.

LETTRES LETTRES AUX FRATERNITÉS. By René Voillaume, Prior of the Little Brothers of Jesus. (Cerf; Vol. I, 12 NF. Vol. II, 9.60 NF.)

It is possible that the work of Père Voillaume be seen as little more than a reaction to the *embourgeoiser* tendency so apparent in religious institutions. If it were it would be valuable but it is something far greater. Père Voillaume's ideal is that of living the Christian life to the full, that is regarding it as fundamentally contemplative, whilst at the same time submitting to the hardest physical conditions, in home and work, that the poor have to suffer in the world. It is an attempt to join the extremes and so at the same time to embrace all that lies in between.

It is for religious with these ideals, whose life is otherwise characterized by adoration before the blessed sacrament, the small community of three to five, wage-earning, and a particular stress on simplicity and friendship, that Père Voillaume writes. His first book, *Au Coeur des Masses*, the greater part of which was translated into *The Seeds of the Desert*, was a general approach to the life, dealing with the need for it in the present-day world and with some of the difficulties which its following obviously involves. The two volumes of *Lettres aux Fraternités* are both in the same vein, the first dealing with matters which from the accumulated experience of the fraternities demand special attention, such as obedience to vocation, the universal character of

charity, prayer, obedience to the Church, etc.; and the second being as it were the collection of the chapter talks of a prior to his brethren on the major themes of their life. In the second volume there are over a hundred of these addresses, mostly just a couple of pages long, written in all parts of the world between 1949 and 1960.

Reading these letters is a living experience, for not only are they the outcome of Père Voillaume's thought on the ideals of the congregation but they have been produced in response to the particular needs of the time, and consequently, through the binding of the ideal to the immediate and practical, one is presented with a very real sense of urgency and vitality. However, though these letters are often related to particular needs they have a permanent relevance and it is for this reason that they are now being published for use in the fraternities.

Similarly the reader can easily transpose the thought of Père Voillaume from the particular context of the Little Brothers to his own. To the religious these letters are bound to be of value; perhaps though it is to the layman who is trying to live a full Christian life in the world that will be most helpful. Whereas many religious institutions have particular ends the fulfilling of which is always before them, the Little Brother deliberately undertakes work which is not directly organized for the needs of the Church or the active apostolate. Thus the layman whose job so often seems sterile and remote from his faith should find what Père Voillaume writes for his brethren most helpful to himself. It is a shame that as yet they have not appeared in English. S.C.

FUNDAMENTAL MARRIAGE COUNSELING: A Catholic viewpoint. By John R. Cavanagh, M.D., and others. (Mercier Press; 30s.)

THE CATHOLIC MARRIAGE MANUAL. By George A. Kelly. (Robert Hale; 21s.)

Mgr Kelly and Dr Cavanagh have both done important work in America towards putting the findings and techniques of modern empirical psychology and sociology at the service of the pastoral work of the Church. It is good to see their books being made more easily available here by publication in England or Ireland. (Mercier Press have done a particularly good job in producing a book of 568 pages for thirty shillings.) But both books would have benefited from a little revision of the text. The bibliographies and references, for example, are entirely American, even books originally published in Britain being referred to in the American edition.

Fundamental Marriage Counseling is designed to provide reliable and easily accessible information for the counsellor about fields in which he is not professionally qualified. More than half the book is devoted to the physical factors in marriage, the remainder to 'social aspects' (divorce, canon and civil law, economic problems, mixed