

up by God, he possesses glory, power and dominion as the Messiah-King, the 'anointed servant'. Further penetration into the mystery through the titles 'Son of God' and 'Son of Man' is traced by Fr Benoit, O.P., in a chapter on the synoptic gospels. He recognizes that of itself the title 'Son of God' would have been unequal to conveying a claim of natural sonship, so hard for the Jew to grasp, but it was open to fulfilment in a divine sense by Jesus' unique relation to the Father. 'Son of Man', in contrast, already evoked a transcendent personality in the light of Daniel and the later apocalyptic literature; the heavenly origin of this bringer of justice and salvation would have prepared its hearers for the pre-existence of Christ, the eschatological Judge. Fr Boismard, O.P., resolves the apparent conflict between St Paul's stress on the resurrection and exaltation of Christ 'above every name' after his death and his divine pre-existence. An explicit connection is to be found between the title of 'Lord' given to him at his enthronement and the creative power which is his from eternity; if he rules in glory and power, it is because he is 'before every creature' and 'all things were created through him and for him'. 'Christ', Fr Boismard concludes, 'is therefore "the image of the invisible God"', even as the Wisdom of God was, not only by reason of the glory which took possession of him on the day of his resurrection, but also because he is the Son, begotten of the Father before time began' (p. 109).

Fr Mollat, S.J., in a final chapter on St John's writings, sees his conception of divinity initially through the implications of 'glory': Christ as the ultimate manifestation of God, the Truth and the Life, fulfilling the types which foreshadowed him, judging because he is the measure of life. His nature and mission are indivisible, as the author rightly insists, and this unity finds a luminous expression in the fourth gospel; the Son of Man who is to be 'raised up' is also, in St John's words, 'the only Son' sent by the Father and in a mysterious way one with him, so that we have power to become 'children of God'. Although these themes are dwelt on with unparalleled penetration into the pre-existence of the Word and the intimacy of knowledge and love which is the divine life, the author can still point to a fundamental agreement with the synoptic writers 'complete on all essential points' (p. 148); the gospel remains rooted in history.

In a symposium of this kind there are inevitably repetitions, and the final chapter suffers more in this respect than the earlier ones, but even this has its advantages in a book of such density. The market-place apologist who is content to proclaim Christ will find here great riches, the riches of the scriptures themselves. OSMUND LEWRY, O.P.

THE TRIAL OF JESUS. By Josef Blinzler. Translated by Isabel and Florence McHugh. (Mercier Press; 30s.)

In recent months, from two quite different sources, attention has been drawn to the trial of our Lord; one was the protest from the Jewish authorities against the anti-semitic tone of the Passion Play at Oberammergau, the other was the play *A Man on Trial* which was produced in London and also in Edinburgh during the festival. In both we witness an attempt by the Jews to minimize their share in the condemnation of Christ. From the controversy thus aroused it is with a sense of gratitude that one turns to the scholarly work of Josef Blinzler for an authoritative analysis of this very question. If Jesus was innocent, and yet was pronounced guilty and executed, who was responsible? The author shows that disagreement can arise in this problem due to different assessments of the sources. What some regard as reliable tradition others reject, and there are wide variations in the interpretation of the Bible. Further, knowledge of the legal administration of Judea in the time of Jesus is only fragmentary. And a third source of disagreement comes from a failure to realize that the aim of many scholars was apologetic rather than purely historical.

Because the Jewish people have always been exercised to show that Jesus was legally and justly condemned to death, it becomes a fascinating adventure to follow Dr Blinzler, as he guides us with consummate learning through the intricacies of their arguments to a satisfying conclusion. He discusses who was responsible for the arrest of Jesus; then follow descriptions of the various phases of the trial up to the death sentence passed by Pilate. Blinzler sums up by saying that the main blame rested with the Jews, especially for their deliberate distortion of the charge against Jesus when they delivered him to Pilate, but the Romans must also take some blame since the death sentence was passed by both Jews and Romans.

Blinzler seems to go astray a little in discussing the text 'Thou wouldst have no power at all over me were it not given thee from above' (p. 232). He departs from the usual interpretation without giving any adequate reason for doing so, and makes out that Pilate was not free to act otherwise than as he did.

The account of the scourging and crucifixion, although described in simple scientific terms devoid of rhetorical embellishments, is a deeply moving record.

The physical cause of the death of Christ is fully discussed, and the opinions of many scripture scholars and doctors are reviewed. It is interesting to notice that there is still a small body of opinion in favour of the theory that rupture of the heart might have been the cause of death. It certainly explains three facts which must be accounted for:

(i) that Jesus uttered a loud cry and expired. The sudden intense pain of rupture of the heart would explain this, and death would follow immediately.

(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