

REVIEWS

Some passages were evidently written with an eye to present happenings in Germany, but they are none the less valuable, for it belongs to every confirmed person "ex officio" to confess his faith before the enemies of Christian worship. Persecution is an extreme case, but not the only case where the confirmed person is called upon to exercise the character, or spiritual power conferred in this Sacrament; there may be notable occasions for profession of faith at a dinner table. Catholics must take their place in public affairs; in fact, as the author observes, "Christians will soon become the only bibles which people will bother to read."

A valuable chapter is the one which links the Sacrament to the traditional teaching on the priesthood of the laity, so overlaid since the Reformation. Chapters on the relation of the Sacrament to Personality, to the Apostolate, to Catholic Action, are made to cover the ground of the nature and effects of the Sacrament. There follows a short treatise on the Gifts, and a study of the Sin against the Holy Ghost. This last, much disputed subject, is particularly well worked out. Much use has been made of the *Summa* of St. Thomas.

If one may be permitted a minor criticism of a book which is happily so free from technicalities, it is that not sufficient place has been given to the Sacramental Character, and the way in which it is a participation of the priesthood of Christ. Perhaps, too, more light could have been thrown on this Sacrament of Adolescence, by a more thorough comparison with Baptism, the Sacrament of Spiritual Birth. But the book, as a whole, is keenly alive, and its teaching should inspire those who are about to enlist in the service of Christ the King: "Youth," says the author, "will always fight to the last for any true and heroic cause."

PETER WHITESTONE, O.P.

MARY'S PART IN OUR REDEMPTION. By Canon George D. Smith, Ph.D., D.D. (Burns, Oates; 6s.)

This book, which is at pains to explain Mary's Part in our Redemption, is most admirable from every viewpoint. We have so long grown accustomed to rely almost exclusively on foreign publications or in translations from them, that it is distinctly refreshing to be put in possession of scientific work by one of our own thoroughly competent theologians. Admittedly it is no easy task to be theologically lucid and at the same time not to be beyond the range of the layman by reason of technique. This difficulty has however been bridged by Canon Smith, and with conspicuous success.

The purpose which the author sets before him is "to show

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how our Blessed Lady's co-operation with the Redeemer may be explained in accordance with the general doctrine of Redemption, and in the light of the theological principles of St. Thomas." (Introductory Note.) Accordingly the foundation is laid by an account of the Fall and the Promise, followed by the fulfilment of the Promise through the New Adam and the New Eve, and the complete reversal of the Fall by the work of Redemption. The chapter on Redemption is itself most valuable in its unfavourableness to juridical concepts and exaggerated ideas of penal substitution. "Justice is certainly involved; but it is Love that plays the leading role in this drama of mercy which, in the history of mankind, follows immediately upon the tragedy of sin . . . Satisfaction is not merely the passive endurance of an inevitable penalty; it is the positive act by which man strives to expiate his sin, to atone, to make reparation." (pp.15,17.) Indeed suffering only has the power of satisfaction when it is associated by man with the will of God Who inflicts it. The human actions of the God-Man have an infinite worth because they possess an efficacy that is divine, the human nature of Christ being God's instrument for the salvation of mankind. "The redemptive action of Christ is best understood if we appreciate that God willed in Him to lead men back to His friendship by a path corresponding to that by which he had forsaken it." (p. 21.) This end was achieved by the voluntary offering in sacrifice of suffering and death in obedience to the Father as expression of immense love and of an infinitely pleasing homage on behalf of men. Here the very centre of St. Thomas's doctrine is touched, "He truly makes satisfaction for an offence who offers to the offended person something which he loves as much as or more than he hated the offence. But Christ, suffering in charity and obedience, offered to God something greater than was required to compensate for the sins of the whole human race." Each member of the Mystical Body has a share in Christ's redemptive work, but above all Mary His Mother. At this point the question is raised "in what sense is Mary to be called Co-Redemptrix?" (p. 82.) In the author's view, "so long as it is borne in mind that the title of Redeemer belongs in an exclusive sense to the Word Incarnate, and is applied to others only by analogy, there is no reason why the name Co-Redemptrix should not be given to ur Lady." (p. 83.)

The title then means that Our Lady "has done for the human race something sufficiently similar to what Christ has done to be called by the same name, but yet something so different that the function of Christ Himself remains unique." (p. 87.) Canon Smith finds himself unable to agree with some theologians who

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say that "Mary is our Co-Redemptrix in the sense that, with Christ and under Christ, she paid the ransom which freed us from the captivity of sin and made the realm of grace accessible to mankind." (p. 89.) Perhaps this thesis has been wisely left aside for one which is easier to explain, though we do not feel convinced that the reasons raised against it are unanswerable. There is for instance a similar seeming identification of cause and effect in the truth that salvation is gratuitous whilst not unmerited. Again it is possible to distinguish between Mary's redemption and ours without considering the price as already paid. Indeed it might be urged that it is precisely this supra-temporal aspect of divine efficacy which made it possible for Our Lady to collaborate with her Son in paying the price of redemption. This is not however to say that she added something to the price paid by the Redeemer. It is therefore prudently concluded that "in the absence of convincing reasons for maintaining that Mary's merit-atonement was able, even subordinately, to contribute to the price of Redemption; indeed in the presence of an objection to that view which cannot easily be solved, it would seem that we must assign to her co-redemptive activity of essentially the same order as that which belongs to the other members of the mystical body; that is to say, she merited that the fruits of Christ's redemptive act should be applied to her soul and to the souls of others." (p. 100.) This however does not prevent our Blessed Lady from being uniquely associated with that Life, Passion, and Death which were the universal cause of Redemption. Since her role was so unique we venture to suggest that only by analogy can co-redemption be assigned to her and to others.

From what little we have been able to say of this book it may be gathered that it is a most excellent contribution to a clearer understanding of the Mother of God, who is so uniquely associated with the sacrificial purpose and will of her Divine Son.

AMBROSE FARRELL, O.P.

ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS. By Bede Frost. (Hodder & Stoughton; 18s.)

St. John of the Cross remains among the greatest and the most enigmatic of Catholic mystics. Heroic in his following of Christ, subtle in his human psychology, supreme as a poet, he was to be first officially interpreted by 17th century scholastic controversialists who were not psychologists nor poets and were perhaps not saints. The acrid controversy on *contemplatio acquisita*, the emphatic resolve to dissociate Mount Carmel from Illuminism, the desire for an alliance with a dominant theological faction,