

of what I bore for thee; at what a costly price I purchased thee, and realize what thou dost owe me." The Prophet seems to allude to this when he says, "I have blotted out thine iniquities as a cloud and thy sins as a mist: return to me for I have redeemed thee." (Isaias, 14, 22). This, then, is the first opinion we give on this subject.

The second is to affirm that though our Lord could have restored fallen man by many other means, none was more excellent, more suitable, or more expedient than this, both for God's glory and man's remedy, especially because in this work are found the two virtues which always accompany our Lord's actions: mercy and justice, which though they appear contrary, are here seen in perfect union, as will be noticed later on.

But before finishing this introduction I warn souls that, though all that is written here concerning the immensity of our Lord's goodness and charity and the pains and injuries he suffered to redeem us moves our heart to love our Saviour and compassionate his sufferings, to thank him for this supreme benefit and to wonder at such extreme bounty and love, yet this would not suffice to arouse our affections and intellect unless it was granted by the same Lord who redeemed us. For though he suffered for all men, he did not give them all to understand what he bore for them. Thus, when treating of the virtues of the Faith, what we write of them does not confirm us in it unless we first ask our Lord for special light and help, faith being the gift of God. And it is no less by a special gift of God that we should feel these devout and tender feelings regarding the sacred Passion. Therefore, merely reading what is written here will not avail us unless accompanied by humble and devout prayer in which we beg our Lord to bestow on us his promise to the Prophet Ezechiel, that he would take away the stony heart out of Israel's flesh and give it a heart of flesh (Ezech. 36, 26) in order that we may, to some extent, realize what our Lord suffered for us.

REVIEWS

CHRIST'S STRANGE WORK. By Alec. R. Vidler. (Longmans; 2s. 6d.)

The author takes as his text some words from a sermon of Lancelot Andrewes: "If (the Gospel) once lose the force and vigour of a law, it is a sign it declines." And from an article in the Formula of Concord (1576), which distinguishes Christ's "strange work," which is to set before man the wrath of God, the teaching of the Law and Moses, from his "proper office, which is to declare the grace of God, to console and vivify." He then expounds in detail this *opus alienum*, putting it in the setting of the whole divine scheme of salvation. The Law, as the same

Formula teaches, has three uses: the "political," that "a certain external discipline might be preserved, and wild and intractable men might be restrained;" the paedagogic, whereby men are brought "to an acknowledgement of their sins;" and, thirdly, the didactic, that "regenerate men, to all of whom, nevertheless, much of the flesh still cleaves, for that very reason may have some certain rule after which they may and ought to shape their life."

Such a book as this is a salutary counterblast to the sentimental Christianity which robs religion of its dogma and therefore of its rule of life. But it must be confessed that on some major issues this book is not as clear as it might have been. (1) While it is essential to present the Law of God as a command of a personal will, it is surely important to state the identity of the Law with the "natural law"—to show that it is not arbitrary, but demanded by reason itself. (2) "There is Gospel in the Law, and Law in the Gospel." Is it not more accurate to say that, apart from the ceremonial and judicial precepts of the old Law, which are ended, the Gospel *is* the Law? The Ten Commandments are unchanged; the difference between Old Law and New is that between imperfect and perfect in the sense that the motive for fulfilling the Law is in the one case external, fear, and in the other internal, love. When this is clearly stated, then we must go on to remind ourselves that even under the new dispensation Christ's strange work goes on because as long as, or in so far as, we remain "carnal men," we need, as St. Thomas puts it, to "be induced to virtuous action by fear of punishment." (3) Thus the life of the individual Christian needs to be stated more explicitly, perhaps, than is here done in terms of a progress from the obedience of fear to the obedience of love: the essence of the new dispensation (the liberty which consists in obeying not by external pressure, but because it is the will of love to obey) is something which has to be realized gradually in us. (4) "The Sermon on the Mount is not . . . the fulfilment or essence of the Gospel, but it is the fulfilment of the Law." Would it not have been well to elucidate this and similar statements by an immediate reference to point (2) above? (5) And is it accurate to say that the relation of the Sermon to the political use of the Law is only indirect? The implication seems to be that politics is concerned only with justice, not, like the Sermon, with love. But is this true? Is not the very thing that we have to preach incessantly today precisely the fact that for the making of peace and the building of world society justice is not enough? The author explains the apparent contradiction between the sanctioning by the Bible of the forcible restraint of evil and our Lord's "precept of non-resistance to evil" by distinguishing between the preservation and salvation of the

world, but this again is surely to divide the Law against itself. There are occasions when our Lord himself uses force, and others when He refuses to do so: in both cases He is obeying the law of love. Our reaction to evil must always be determined not by justice alone, but by charity; but there are times when charity will bid us resist the evil with force. The Christian who shares in Christ's work in the world may be called up to share either in the strange or in the proper work; but which, in fact, it is to be in any given case must depend not on himself, but on others: for him there is only the one law, the law of charity—he cannot relegate a part of life *a priori*, to the rule of justice without charity, and when in fact the stern office of justice is imposed upon him it must still be a justice determined and motivated by charity.

The reference to the *Summa* on p. 42, n.1, should read Q. 100: that on p. 56, n.4, should read A.2.

GERALD VANN, O.P.

DARK SYMPHONY. By Elizabeth Laura Adams. (Sheed and Ward; 6s.)

This book is at once charming and heartrending. Miss Adams, an American negress, tells the story of her Californian childhood, of kind but strictly parents, of the Methodist services which she attended, and of her eventual reception to the Church. The race problem of coloured and white is the main pre-occupation of "Dark Symphony"; the author deals with it in charity and justice. As we read our hearts go out to Elizabeth Laura Adams and her race and there springs up a desire to understand, to pray and to love. We hope this delightful book will be widely read. It should do untold good.

G. B.

SAINTS FOR GIRLS. By a Servite Nun. (Sands; 6s.)

This is a good homely book. We have Our Lady, Saint Anne, and ten other exemplars for girls, and not for girls only but for everyone. St. Juliana, foundress of Servite nuns, gave some splendid maxims to her nuns. "To keep constantly in mind that the world is a battlefield on which they must continually fight for victory and not seek repose." That is the first of them. There are nine others. They can be read on pages 42 and 43. The last exemplar in the book is S. Bernadette. When she was a novice at Nevers she asked one day: "Is skipping allowed in the Novitiate?" She was told no. "I only asked," she said, "because I love turning the rope for the others to skip." That was typical of Bernadette. We could not omit this quotation.

G.B.

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