

CORRESPONDENCE

'The Foot of the Ladder'

To the Editor, LIFE OF THE SPIRIT.

Sir.—Your anonymous correspondent certainly intends to give Catholics a jolt. I cannot see that cramming one's day with all the exercises mentioned by him is going to do much good. It is sheer multiplicity, the bane of the spiritual life.

Your correspondent gives his whole case away by stating that the wonderful folk he has in mind have no idea of contemplation—up and doing is the order. Now, any action which does not proceed from close union with our Lord, or contemplation, is utterly futile. No time is apparently to be allowed for silent adoration. The duties of our state of life are, presumably, not taken into account. How different is De Caussade, who tells us we are sanctified by the duty given us at the present moment, which, if we take to be the will of God, becomes the sacrament of the present moment.

His references to fasting are, too, impracticable. The author of the *Cloud of Unknowing* and other holy writers tell us we should try to keep our health and eat the food necessary for us. How wise and moderate is the Holy Father, who has reimposed such a modified rule of fasting on the faithful. But, I suppose, there must be 'wise' people in the world who think they know better than his Holiness. No, your correspondent ignores the duties of a responsible married man towards his family, i.e. that he should keep his strength and health to fulfil his work in the world which God has given him to do. In his *Devout Life* St Francis de Sales has some sensible things to say about fasting. (So, material clods, take heart!)

Now for the constructive side of the question. Surely we tertiaries could be useful in the great mission in the coming summer. We all have, or should have, a good knowledge of our Faith. Why, then, could we not be catechists, and help to instruct converts, children, etc., and to assist the often overworked parish priests, thus showing the true Dominican spirit by passing on the results of our studies to others. Here, in the Dominican Order, is the material for apostolic work, and there would be no need for 'freak' societies. Also, our Order being contemplative, our action would follow our contemplation, and above all, as Dominicans, *we should know we have a vocation for the job*. So here we are, take us.—Yours, etc.,

AUGUSTINE, T.O.S.D.



ERRATA

The Editor very much regrets the following obvious errata in the April number of LIFE OF THE SPIRIT:

p. 455: The opening quotation of the article should read *Radicali et fundati in caritate*.

p. 470, line 10: read 'Marin-Sola'.