

rightly taught that by the agonizing death of His Son, gracious pardon is accorded to the guilty; and not only pardon, but the adoption of sons and the inheritance of heaven. And this was the adoption God made with our Noe, when the floods of the waters that fell had ceased, that He would make new contracts and covenants of peace and that rather should the mountains be moved and the hills should tremble than that He should cease to grant His mercy to those who, for the sake of this Son, should ask Him for it rightly.

REVIEWS

THE CODE OF CHRIST: An Interpretation of the Beatitudes. By Gerald Heard. (Cassell; 7s. 6d.).

This is a sequel to *The Creed of Christ*, which studied the *Our Father*: the Prayer establishes the conditions, the state of being, in which alone the principles of the Sermon, and the Beatitudes in particular, become practicable. For the Beatitudes give us in effect, a commentary on the saying of our Lord that only they who hate their life shall find it—a saying which makes sense only in the light of that change-over, the re-birth, from self-centredness to God-centredness, which is expressed in the *Our Father*.

The Beatitudes tell us how to be happy: not by looking for happiness but by precisely this process of "self-naughting" which is one aspect of the finding of infinite life. The poor in spirit are those who have learned to live not for the ego but for God; and so the kingdom is already theirs. Then the despair aroused by the "tears in things" is turned for them into a creative compassion: "mourning is necessary because we have to die to much in which we assumed our happiness to live"; but this sorrow is turned into joy because it can see the "redemptive process at work," that process which makes of sin a *felix culpa* because it can lead to something richer than "unself-conscious innocence." But again this process is something in which those who live the Beatitudes can join, must inevitably join: if you are docile enough to be tamed to God's purposes you share in his life and his power, and it radiates out again from you: you have within you the divine gift of creative pity, the divine power which alone can make peace on earth.

We live in desperate days because the "dream of a physical Utopia" has proved illusory, and to many the only alternative is despair: for the reality of the life and power of spirit, the meaning of "the kingdom of God is within you" is lost. We need to be told again and again that real power is inner power, that "we must be transcendental if we are ever to be in fact prac-

tical. And that is precisely the theme of this sincere and searching study of the Beatitudes, with its keen sense of their immediate relevancy to our plight and their practicality. True, there are a number of things which will jar on the Christian reader: there is a muddled sentence in which the divinity of Christ seems to be rejected, and another sentence which disposes of the sacramental system; the sayings of the Buddha are put on a level with those of our Lord; and again the treatment of the first beatitude is marred by an apparent identification of 'self-naughting' with being poor-spirited—lacking in 'go, guts and grit'—which clearly will not square with the personality of our Lord, nor for that matter with the author's apparently approving account of the character of Moses. (It is presumably this same line of thought which leads the author to the interesting but debatable conclusion that the highest saints are 'invisible' except at rare moments; and it is this also which causes him to contrast Christianity and 'Chestertonianity': a surely indefensible position since, whatever we may think of Chesterton as an artist, we have no right to assert that his use of wit and intellect were not selfless and humble—there is no intrinsic incompatibility). Finally, it will jar on some readers to find the Beatitudes fitted into the framework of Mr Heard's theory of evolution. In spite of all this the fact remains: the book is, in substance, a commentary on the words of the *Theologia Germanica*: "Nothing burns in hell but the ego"—and of the value of such a commentary there can be no doubt.

There are some interesting sidelights on the question of the Fall in relation to the animals, and of their possible share in the effects of the "redemptive process."

• GERALD VANN, O.P.

OFFICIUM ET MISSAE PRO DEFUNCTIS NECNON EXSEQUIARUM
ORDO: cura R. D. Joannis Lane. (Gill and Son; 5s.).

It is convenient to have all the Latin prayers for the Dead set out cheaply and clearly. The volume includes all the Little Hours for All Souls Day as well as the Preface and Canon of the Mass. The only blemish is the Chant which though given in full *ex editione typica Vaticana adamussim excerpto*, as the title page boasts, is so poorly executed as to remind one of the worst days of chant printing of a century ago. Since the editor went to the trouble of providing the chant he should have seen to it that it was printed with the same clarity as the Latin text. Even without access to French liturgical presses this could have been done.

C.P.

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