

believed it. There are still over six centuries to travel back, during which there is nothing.

A suggestion which has been made to explain the claims of St Victor's abbey to have possessed not only Lazarus but also its patron, the soldier-martyr and his companions, is that their bodies were brought from the East when the era of persecutions was over and relics began, so to speak, to circulate freely. It is tempting to believe that the bodies of Martha and Magdalen came to Gaul in the same way. Whether these bodies were really those of the saints whose names they bore it would, of course, be rash to decide.

OBITER

SOME RECENT GERMAN BOOKS

Many books have been written upon the love of God, but few with such wide scope as Fr Ohm, O.S.B., allows himself in the 544 pages of his *Die Liebe zu Gott in den nichtchristlichen Religionen* (Erich Weivel-Verlag, DM. 19.50). Its first fifty pages are concerned with the theological question of the natural desire for God in non-Christian religions; the second, and major, part deals with the evidence for the love of God in India, China, Islam, etc., fields in which the author has been working and studying all his life. The last hundred pages are devoted to the missiological problems raised by the preceding sections. If the encyclopaedic nature of the book makes it heavy in parts, this is compensated for by the author's balanced judgments, free from extremism.

Yet another German scholar, Erich Peterson, has recently presented us with the fruits of his life-long devotion to theology, in *Theologische Traktate* (Kosel-Verlag zu München, DM. 15.50), a collection of his essays and booklets of the last thirty years. Brilliant, that overworked word, is the only one to describe the thrusts of insight and effortless quotation by which Peterson exposes error as, for instance, in his annihilation of 'Crisis-Theology', or his respectful disarming of Adolf Harnack ('*Correspondence with Adolf Harnack*'). Again, the relevance of theology to politics is brought out in '*Monotheism as a political problem*', which, though discussing the early Church and Empire, helps us to interpret aright twentieth-century polytheism. A great deal is being written in Germany at the moment about the theology of politics along the lines suggested by Peterson. Philip Dessauer (in '*The politics of Anti-Christ*': *Wort und Wahrheit*, June) has shown that the rôle of the

Antichrist is to make the world incapable of receiving Christ. Dessauer's thesis receives support from Friedrich Heer in the August number of *Stimmen der Zeit*, where the well-known Viennese historian portrays the last seven centuries as a revolt against fatherhood, in the soul, in society, in the political order. The same issues are at the centre of Josef Pieper's striking volume *Über das Ende der Zeit* (Kosel-Verlag, DM. 6.80), of which the last section, on the Antichrist in the Christian tradition, would be well worth publishing in English.

Romano Guardini's latest work, *Die Sinne und die religiöse Erkenntnis* (Werkbund-Verlag, Würzburg, DM.2.70), seems to have been occasioned by his experience in the Cathedral at Palermo. There he noticed that the simple worshippers had no missals with them and yet were wholly absorbed in the liturgy: they were actually *seeing* what the liturgy *does*. Taking this fact in conjunction with Romans I, 19-21, Guardini argues with his customary grace for the senses to be accorded their true rôle in our coming to know God. The obvious difficulties, which Guardini raises, in the relations between faith and seeing, are more convincingly answered by another author, August Brunner, in *Glauben und Wissen* (Kosel-Verlag, DM.8.50). Brunner is able to reconcile the 'risk' of faith with the certainty of faith because he has already worked out in detail the foundations of his own philosophical position (cf. his *Erkenntnistheorie*, 1944). Also a true account of the act of faith requires a true valuation of the person, which Brunner gives us in his *Der Stufenbau der Welt* (Kosel-Verlag, 1950, DM.19.50). This latter book is strongly to be recommended for its phenomenology of the human person, especially since the lack of such a phenomenology has rendered critics incapable of uncovering the flaw in such books as Ryle's *Concept of Mind*.

Those who have read Brunner will also find it possible to correct the occasional over-simplifications in Friedrich Dessauer's masterly little treatise *Der Fall Galilei und Wir* (Verlag Josef Knecht, DM.4.80). It is most appropriate that a third edition of his work should appear this year, the seventieth year of this many-sided professor who has come nearer than anyone else to presenting us with an asceticism for the scientist and a philosophy of technics. All his leading thoughts on these matters are to be found in this present book along with a moving description of the very human, deeply religious Galileo. Physics and Theology is also the title of a book by Heins Dolch (*Theologie und Physik*, Herder-Verlag, Freiburg, DM.4.80). Dolch's discussion of 'classical' physics is a model of lucidity, his quotations from the newer physicists, Jordan, Weizsacker, etc., are skilfully chosen, and his own thesis clearly stated: just as recent microphysics open up a world other than the 'classical' macrophysical world, similarly the *possibility* of

miracles makes us open towards the supernatural. The only criticism is that the reader is rather left in the air at the end, pondering on the possibility of miracles.

We are not left in the air, however, by another very recent publication, *Das Land der stummen Millionen* (Katzmann-Verlag, Tübingen, DM.7.80). We have to thank Klaus Ackermann, the editor, for having composed this mosaic of Soviet life out of his own and his fellow-prisoners' experiences in Russia. In one reader, at least, this sober, careful testimony to everyday Soviet life has produced more conviction than any other he has yet seen. So many aspects of Soviet life which seemed contradictory are made intelligible by Ackermann's editing. The story is not without its humour—as, for instance, when we learn that the Russian translation of Hewlett Johnson's book carries an introduction, explaining how the Red Dean's bourgeois background prevents him from striking the party-line exactly! Then there is the grim side; the British reader cannot help noticing parallels between Soviet and British bureaucratic insanity; and we are left in no doubt that the Soviet Leaders are preparing their subjects for war. A sad tale made sadder if one turns to the treasures of Orthodoxy set before us in *Die Ostkirche* (W. Spemann-Verlag, Stuttgart, DM.10.80). The Archbishop of the Orthodox Church in Germany, Seraphim, has written the first section, on dogma; the second section deals with the church's history; the third section, a wonderful account of Orthodox spirituality, comes from the pen of Professor Tschetwerikow. Professor Tschetwerikow's account needs to be followed up by Gurjew's article in the August *Stimmen der Zeit*, for Gurjew shows in a heartening way how the Staretz continue to keep Christianity alive, even in Soviet Russia.

How Christianity was kept alive in young German hearts under National Socialism is effectively demonstrated in *Licht über dem Abgrund* (Herder-Verlag, Freiburg, DM.6.80, an anthology on the part played by women, edited by Dr Gertrude Ehrle). Although we must agree with the editor that 'the veil is always the token of any great womanly mission', and that the very hidden nature of their mission makes some contributions to the anthology sound very much the same, nevertheless there are pages enough to move you to tears. In particular I should like to see an English translation of pp. 145-151 in which a young nurse describes how she tried to radiate purity in the military hospitals where she served—sometimes as the only woman amongst men. As one who spent quite a time in military hospitals, I take leave to doubt whether the young lady herself realises quite how much her pure intentions meant to her patients. What an old head she has on her shoulders! And how many practical tips she offers for Catholic girls in similar occupations!

D.N.