

The compiler gives us a short extract for each day of the year. Unfortunately, no method or order is followed in the selection and all the passages but one are taken from either the *Introduction to the Devout Life* or the *Treatise on the Love of God*.

One cannot help comparing this present work with the *Daily Readings from St Francis de Sales* published by the C.T.S. in 1911 and now out of print. There the passages were chosen with some regard for the liturgical seasons of the year and also from the whole gamut of St Francis's works. Still, Fr Smith's volume does supply a need. The spirituality of St Francis de Sales is eminently suitable for the present day. None can encourage or hearten as he can. Every word is pregnant with meaning and living with that seed of devotion the 'Doctor of Devotion' could not help sowing in every line he wrote. 'There is nothing finer, stronger or more impressive', said Pius IX one day, 'than a sentence of St Francis de Sales.'

As for the translation: the author has used that of Dom Mackey, O.S.B., for the *Treatise*. The extracts from the *Introduction* seem to be taken—with some slight alterations—from an American translation edited by Fr Reville, S.J., and published in 1923.

VINCENT KERNS, M.S.F.S.

THE ARMOUR OF CHRIST. By Bernard Kelly, C.S.Sp. (Clonmore and Reynolds; 8s. 6d.)

Starting from man's utter dependence on God as creature, and his adoption by grace to sonship and a share in the divine life, the author goes on to examine each of the theological virtues and how they may strike deeper root in us. Basing himself on this general framework he shows the need for and the place of other kindred virtues. This allows him to give a fairly full picture of the Christian life. The whole is then seen not merely as the life of the Christian, but as Christ himself. 'I live now not I; but Christ liveth in me!' The book is rounded off with a chapter on 'Mary, Mother of the Christian'. Fr Kelly has given us a clear exposition of the life of the virtues written in a pleasant and readable style. He seems to suggest on p. 67 and elsewhere that papal encyclicals are infallible. And though they are of great importance it is perhaps a little exaggerated to say they 'are of much the same importance to us' as the Scriptures. (ibid).

A. D.

LA REVELATION DE LA GRACE dans St Paul et St Jean. By Paul Denis, O.P. (La Pensée Catholique, Liège; n.p.)

This short book will be useful as an introduction to the N.T. theology of grace and to modern French writing on the subject. The author claims no originality but gives ample references to his sources. A brief preface sharply contrasts the characters of the two Apostles, and the two patristic currents, Latin and Greek, they may broadly speaking be held to have originated. The bulk of the

book deals with St Paul's teaching on grace. His own conversion has, of course, emphasised for St Paul his former slavery to the Law and grace's liberating power; above all, its 'graciousness', his own demerit, and God's mercy. Not that his doctrine is a mere reflection from his own experience; but he is the type of the convert, experience provides his text, he desires passionately to share it with others. A chapter 'La Grace du Père' analyses clearly the work of grace. Its initiation is ascribed to the Father; its stages are: God's purpose or decree, depending wholly on his good pleasure; foreknowledge; predestination, of which the direct object, the author is inclined to think, is grace and adoption in this life rather than glory in the next. All this in the order of God's intention. In that of execution follow vocation, election: the latter both the Father's eternal free choice before the foundation of the world, and also the choice in time of those who respond to the Gospel. Grace is manifested and transmitted to man in Jesus Christ; man redeemed is united to God in him. Here intervenes the idea of the Church, the true People of God, the assembly of those who share the divine life of Christ. In this section P. Denis follows closely the Abbé Cerfaux, in *La Théologie de l'Eglise suivant St Paul* (Edit. du Cerf, 1948). For him, the expression 'Body of Christ' as applied to the Church is derived exclusively from the Eucharistic Body, shared by the faithful, symbol and realisation of their unity. 1 Cor. 10, 17, for example, is rendered, 'Because there is but one eucharistic bread (of which we all partake), we are all one body'. Believers, thus sharing in Christ's own life, now live in him. They are mystically identified with his physical Body. The author will not allow that the 'Body (sōma) of Christ' in *St Paul* ever denotes a moral body, a society, a mystical Body different from the physical Body of Christ. It is with the latter that Christians are mystically identified and of which they are the members. Here, following Cerfaux, P. Denis frankly parts company with the traditional exegesis, at least as old as St John Chrysostom. One should compare P. Prat (*Théologie de St Paul*, 1923, t. II, pp. 341 sq.), who finds in St Paul himself that distinction between the physical and mystical Body of Christ which P. Denis will have it is a later development. Under the heading 'La Grace du St Esprit', the role of the Holy Ghost is not to confer adoption and life in Christ, but to move Christians to live and pray as sons, to enlighten them as to the mysteries of God, to distribute God's gifts for the benefit of the brethren. Dwelling in their souls, he completes the work of sanctification. The account of St Paul's theology of grace is concluded by a useful chapter on Justification. The Catholic teaching is contrasted with the juridical conception of the Rabbis, where God merely bears witness to the just man's observance of the Law; and with the Protestant interpretation of St Paul, where man is declared just by God apart from works. But in fact, while justification is indeed

God's free gift, not man's desert, it yet works a veritable renewal in the soul.

St John's teaching on grace is dealt with clearly but too briefly. The Word of God, imparting to men the life and light which flow from God's prevenient love, accomplishes the work of redemption and revelation. Men, thus become children of God, begotten of God, must respond by faith and a return of love. These leading ideas are developed in two short chapters. There is little attempt to correlate the teaching of St John with that of St Paul; none to synthesise the two. St John is almost a mere pendant to St Paul. The author indeed insists that St John has lived in the intimacy of our Lord, that his picture of Christ is extraordinarily concrete; but he realises perhaps too little that St John's doctrine, developed though it is by life-long meditation, must really be placed, as P. Rondet has recently pointed out (*Gratia Christi*, Paris, 1948, p. 43), before that of St Paul, that it takes us back to the source of Christian revelation and we hear Christ speaking by the mouth of the beloved disciple. One may hope that Père Denis, with his gift of clear and concise expression, will give us a fuller account of the theology of St John.

DOM J. HIGGENS

ST ATHANASIUS ON THE PSALMS. A Letter to a Friend. Rendered for the first time into English by a Religious of C.S.M.V. (Wantage). (Mowbrays; 1s. 6d.)

The word 'gem' has lost its charm but we may be forgiven once in a life-time for saying that this little treatise of St Athanasius is a gem of spiritual literature. It falls into three main divisions: the psalms as uttering the sentiments of Christ or speaking of him; the psalms as the expressions of our own needs and sentiments; and thirdly, a brief and very telling epilogue on singing the psalms.

The translation is excellent, free, but where we have tested it, accurate. The publishers and the translator (an Anglican nun of Wantage) are to be congratulated for making available in this attractive booklet a first class example of the ancient Christian interpretation of the psalms.

J. D. C.

WHAT JESUS SAW FROM THE CROSS. By A. D. Sertillanges. (Clonmore and Reynolds; 8s. 6d.)

A new edition of Fr Sertillanges' scholarly meditations comes at an appropriate moment when many eyes are already turned to the Holy Land, and after reading much of Israeli, Transjordan and other political views it is reassuring to share the outlook of Christ upon the land of contradiction. Fr Sertillanges possesses the deep learning which clothes the bones of history in flesh and sets before our eyes three-dimensional figures such as can make our prayer live. An excellent Lent book and a book for every day's prayer.

G. A. M.