

sufficient evidence of its truth.

Even if Kasper's reading of the evidence has more to be said for it than I am ready to allow (and that is certainly possible), I cannot believe that the issue is anything like as clear-cut as he presents it. Paul in Rom. i, 3f. 'is *clearly* saying that Jesus does not first become Son by reason of the resurrection' (p. 174); 'talk of the Son being sent by the Father *clearly* presupposes the pre-existence of the Son' (ibid.); 'the early post-apostolic church was *fully aware* of the trinitarian structure of Christian salvation' (p. 249); 'monotheism has *always* been a political program as well as a religious' (p. 307). However true the substantive affirmations expressed by those sentences may be, the overconfident words that I have italicized seem hard to justify. A tentativeness in argumentation and claim may be a disappointment. But consistently to fail to acknowledge it where it is appropriate is to distort the true picture and to suggest a misleading conception of the situation in which Christian faith finds itself.

To challenge in these ways the adequacy of Kasper's argument is not to deny the value of much that he wants to emphasize about the Christian understanding of God. But at this point too he is inclined to claim too much. Thus in the final paragraph of the chapter on "Jesus Christ, Son of God", he recalls the problem he had set out so well at the beginning and writes: "This 'sympathetic' God as he reveals himself in Jesus Christ is the definitive answer to the question of theodicy, the question on which theism and atheism alike founder. If God himself suffers, then suffering is no longer an objection against God" (p. 197). The suffering of God may be, as I believe, a necessary condition for any response to the problem of suffering, but it is surely too cavalier to present it as a fully sufficient response.

The translation is a considerable improvement on that which was made of Kasper's earlier book, *Jesus the Christ*, but we still meet such ugly neologisms as 'mediatizing' (p. 162) and 'giftness' (pp. 225–6). The proof-reading is extremely careless—not just wrong letters but wrong words (e.g. for 'most' read 'not' (p. 93), for 'tactic' read 'tacit' (p. 169), for 'and' read 'the' (p. 177), for 'of' read 'by' (p. 224) etc.). Ordinary misprints are far too numerous to list. For all my disagreement with the argument of the book, it sets out its case in a clearly ordered and systematic way. It deserved better production than it received.

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UNION WITH GOD, by Desmond Tillyer. *Mowbray*, 1984. Pp. 111. £3.75.

This book offers a very bland and schematic exposition of the doctrine of St John of the Cross, aimed confidently at the general reader. It is based on the most schematic of all St John's works; no use at all is made of the poems, and the author is quite untroubled by any suspicion that maybe St John was not a very good commentator on his own poems.

Tillyer provides some useful notes on some of the terminology used by St John, especially his psychological terms; but the reader's confidence is somewhat diminished by the author's apparent ignorance of the meaning of "ligature" and even of the classic list of the cardinal virtues (which he extends to include the theological virtues).

The author seems blissfully unaware of the theological problems posed by his systematic account of "the mystic way". Indeed, he rather encourages the suspicion that the whole thing rests on two very dubious propositions, namely that *abusus tollit usum* and that *gratia tollit naturam*. His rather half-hearted attempt to evade the second of these propositions is less than convincing; he is, for instance, less than cogent in claiming that St John does not disparage emotions as such and then quoting (without further comment) a text in which St John, on the face of it, is precisely disparaging emotions.

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