

*Divino Afflante*, and it is only on occasional points of theology and exegesis that Catholics will have to part company with the author. It will be a happy day when a similar blend of 'true learning and solid piety' becomes evident in the general run of popular Catholic writing.

S. M. ALBERT, O.P.

COMMUNION THROUGH PAIN. By Mary Jackson. (Blackfriars Publications; 6s. 6d.)

Our Lady's reiterated command for repentance and penance has inspired this series of meditations, intended primarily for those for whom 'the introduction to reality by pain has begun'.

Suffering is a predicament and a challenge. It involves us 'most poignantly and most personally in the "vast aboriginal calamity" which is original sin' (p. 1), challenging us to face up to and to accept all the implications of this situation, in both its personal and its cosmic aspects. And the generous acceptance of the challenge of pain may involve us in the even more painful challenge of holiness through the way of contemplative prayer.

Mary Jackson wrestles with the problem with the help of poets and theologians, and her conclusions have value not only for those whose day is measured 'from one dose of medicine to another' (p. 55), but for anyone who realizes that 'there is nothing so potent and precious in God's hands here below as man's free and loving suffering gathered into the heart of God' (p. 84). Particularly striking is the explanation of our Lord's words: 'take my yoke upon you'—that he had in mind the double ox-yoke still used in primitive countries, with the animals yoked side by side. Although he has gone on ahead, he is our companion in the way pulling along with us, and communion with him through the long nights of pain of soul or body is meant to issue in the consummation of union in a mystical death from which springs a new and unending life. All this flows from God's work in us at mass, which must be so 'stamped on us like a seal' that our whole life is one ceaseless communion and sacrifice, a permanent rendezvous with the Beloved Hero.

Chronic sickness can so easily mean chronic depression and frustration. It is heartening to find it presented as the stuff of holiness and a call to close union with God.

S. M. ALBERT, O.P.

JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM. By Dorothy Dohen. (Geoffrey Chapman; 8s. 6d.)

Dorothy Dohen, a well-known American journalist, was for four years editor of the magazine *Integrity*. Her earlier book, *Vocation to*

*Love*, was published in five languages. This one is a joy to read, and it should prove a gift to anyone who is trying to bring home to lay-folk the reality of their call to holiness and the possibility of its achievement by means of the ups and downs of their ordinary daily life.

Each chapter is complete in itself and one is hard put to choose between them: silence, prudence, the cross, hope, group action as a help to holiness. Each topic is treated with a lightness of touch which makes for easy reading, yet it is the *sana doctrina* of St Thomas and the mystics which is so pleasantly put across in terms of the relationships and experiences of every-day living.

The final chapter on daily heroism looks at St Thérèse of Lisieux as 'a heroine to make heroism possible without making it less heroic, to make sanctity imitable without causing it to be less holy, to make the love of God attractive by stripping it of all extraneous dramatics and showing it as it is in itself' (p. 87). In an age in which it requires heroism to live an ordinary Christian life, she shows the tremendous power of love 'even if it is love hidden in great desire and revealed only in little things' (p. 96).

But is this the *first* age to demand such heroism? Perhaps Dorothy Dohen does not know about England in the penal times.

S. M. ALBERT, O.P.

VOCATION TO LOVE. By Dorothy Dohen. (Sheed and Ward; 10s. 6d.)

The lively review *Integrity* was both a product and an instrument of the lay apostolate movement in America. A zealous and radically Christian outlook, good editing and layout, and a touch of satire at the expense of the world, the flesh and the devil, all helped to make an unusual and valuable Catholic review. Dorothy Dohen was one of its regular contributors from the beginning, and its editor for several years—a task which must surely have required faith and courage, as well as editorial ability.

This book consists of articles which originally appeared in *Integrity*. They deal with various topics; how a Christian should face a practical problem (poverty, loneliness, frustration) or live up to a difficult ideal (detachment, joy, peace). Miss Dohen does not underestimate the difficulties, but neither does she minimize the obligations of the Christian. She assumes we know that we are all called to be saints, and that nothing less will satisfy us. One theme keeps recurring throughout: that love (or charity—both words are much misused) is the fundamental basis of the Christian life. Miss Dohen's clear vision of this principle gives her book a unity seldom found in a collection of articles.

The metamorphosis into book form is not altogether gain: anyone who read these articles in the original context will miss the satirical