

EXTRACTS

RELIGIOUS SISTERS have had their needs considered by a recent assembly of the Cardinals and Archbishops of France. The assembly issued some very pertinent recommendations:

To PRIESTS. In order to redeem the opinion which too many of the faithful and Christian families entertain on the subject of the religious vocation for girls the priest himself must be convinced of the excellence of religious perfection. It would seem possible to give some special course on this subject in the seminary.

The clergy ought in particular to remedy the consequences of an excessive propaganda regarding the legitimate spirituality of Christian marriage; they should not hesitate to teach the superiority of virginity consecrated to God over the married state.

The priest is obliged by duty scrupulously to respect a true vocation to the religious life and not to deflect it for the sake of the parish or of Catholic Action movements.

In deciding a woman's vocation the parish priests, chaplains of Catholic Action, confessors should have before their eyes the excellence of a life entirely consecrated to God by the practice of the evangelical counsels, as well as the advantages and security offered in the life of an Institute, regular or secular, canonically approved by the Church.

The clergy both regular and secular should show esteem for, devotion towards and appreciation of congregations and communities of nuns; it is a matter of honour to defend them against the criticisms which are often levelled at them through an unjust misunderstanding of the facts of religious life.

They must not forget that it is from the priest that the sisters expect an accurate understanding of the obligations as well as the privileges of their state of evangelical perfection.

In particular the clergy are bound to consider their collective and individual responsibility in respect of the sisters and the obligation that is theirs to fulfil their duties imposed by canon law with exactness—superiors, confessors, chaplains and preachers.

The ministry in so far as it concerns the sisters is to be esteemed as a special and particularly delicate ministry, which cannot be fulfilled without preparation and attention if serious harm to the souls is to be avoided. In this respect the following points may be recommended:

- (1) One priest or several in each diocese to specialise in this subject both for the spiritual needs of the sisters and for the instruction of the parish clergy in so far as they provide ordinary or extraordinary confessors and conferences to the nuns.
- (2) A place of importance be reserved in all publications designed for the pastoral clergy for clarifying and assisting in this ministry for the sisters.
- (3) A more active participation with the regular clergy, who

are well acquainted with the practice of religious life and who are often closely associated by a common foundation or spirit with congregations for women.

(4) Finally the clergy should know how to bring the nuns into the full current of parochial life and not to leave them deprived of the apostolic responsibilities which the clergy are more disposed to confide to lay personnel.

These recommendations were followed by others for Superiors of the religious congregations and communities themselves. We hope to quote this second part in a subsequent issue of *LIFE OF THE SPIRIT*. But the text is to be found in the current *Supplement of La Vie Spirituelle* (August 1949—Blackfriars Publications, 5s.).

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CROSS AND CROWN is 'a Thomistic quarterly of Spiritual Theology', edited by Dominicans of the American Province of St Albert and published by Herder. An immediately attractive feature is its cover, with a simple heraldic device in two colours. Two numbers have appeared, and they go far to justify the Editor's aim, which is 'the presentation of the principles, conclusions and applications of spiritual theology according to the traditions of the Thomistic school in a manner that will have appeal and interest to all who value their interior life' (from the Editor's *Apologia*, which errs however in its kind reference to *THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT* as 'a splendid quarterly').

Father Garrigou-Lagrange underlines the significance of this new review in his article in the first number:

I was . . . intrigued by the name of the new review and the desire to know what type of magazine it could be. On learning its ascetical-mystical nature, I was profoundly moved by this Christian paradox, that the New World, prosperous and, as has often been said, materialistic, so energetically dedicated to material things and to marvellous productions of technology, is now starting in pursuit of things far higher than its skyscrapers, more precious than its gold and minerals: in a word, it is more specifically interested in spiritual things.

It will give some idea of the scope of *Cross and Crown* if one indicates some of the contributions to its first two numbers. 'Man's Response to the Trinity' is an article in the familiar style of Fr Gerald Vann, 'The Poor and their Fears' are considered by Fr Walter Farrell and 'Psychological Aspects of the Struggle for Perfection' by Fr Menendez-Reigada. In the June number Sister Mary Jeremy writes on 'The Golden Legend' and 'A Perspective of Obedience' is the title of an essay by Father Lumberas, professor of Moral Theology at the Angelicum in Rome. But *Cross and Crown* is not concerned entirely with the speculative aspects of spirituality,

and 'Mystic of San Esteban' is Fr Jordan Aumann's account of his fellow Dominican Fr John Arintero, author of *The Mystical Evolution in the Development and Vitality of the Church* and himself, it would seem, advanced in mystical union. He died in 1928 at Salamanca, and the preliminary steps towards his possible beatification have already been begun.

The range and authority of the contributions to *Cross and Crown* are alike remarkable, and the new periodical is yet another sign that American Catholics, with their great energy and material resources, are beginning to realise their responsibilities not only in the establishment of the Church as seen by men but in a deeper appreciation of that contemplative life without which Faith itself must perish.



BOOKS RECEIVED

- Bloomsbury Press.* Ferdinand Valentin, O.P.: *Tango-Tonga*, 6s.
de Boccard. Albert Caraco: *Le Livre des Combats de L'Ame*, 350 frs.
Burns, Oates and Washbourne. Donald Attwater: *Lives of the Saints*, 15s.; Joseph Francis: *The Laws of Holy Mass*, 7s. 6d.; F. R. Hoare: *Gospel of St John in Current English*, 6s. 6d.; C. J. Wilmot, S.J.: *The Priest's Prayer Book*, 12s. 6d.
Chronique Sociale de France. Joseph Folliet: *Les Chretiens au Carrefour*, Vols. I and II, 150 frs., and 180 frs.
Duckett. M.M. Merrick: *Thomas Percy, Seventh Earl*, 15s.
Lethielleux. Jean Pirot: *Paraboles et allegories Evangeliques*, 750 frs.
Mercier Press. M.M. A. M. du Cœur de Jesus, O.D.C.: *A Soul of Silence*, 2s.; Father Gabriel, O.D.C.: *St Teresa of Jesus*, 10s. 6d.
Phoenix House. William Langland (new version by Nevill Coghill): *Visions from Piers Plowman*, 12s. 6d.

LIFE OF THE SPIRIT

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