

by the translator is sometimes slightly different from that which is usual. This thoroughly sound book can be recommended warmly to priests, religious and layfolk, to Catholics and non-Catholics alike.

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LETTERS TO ANGLICANS. By Dom Aldhelm Dean. (Burns Oates; 5s.)

High Anglicans all have to face much the same difficulties in coming into the Church, though each one must do it in his own way. Dom Aldhelm Dean has clearly helped a number of them along this Damascus road and here publishes twelve letters which he wrote to some of them, in the hope that they may be helpful to others. He deals with all the main topics, the Catholic conception of the Church, Papal claims, the Branch theory, Anglican orders, as well as more personal difficulties, such as the feeling that a convert is in some way being unfaithful to the Church of his baptism, and that grace has been received through Anglican sacraments. Clearly all these difficulties must be met; and clearly too a High Anglican must come to a realization that any Anglican doctrine of the Church is fundamentally different from the Catholic one. At the same time, point-by-point answers to difficulties are useless unless they are seen as consequences of Catholic doctrine (with the main emphasis on this, rather than on the controversial points); and unless they are accompanied by a real sympathy for the non-Catholic position. And on neither of these two points is Dom Aldhelm entirely successful. He dwells, for instance, on the doctrinal differences within the Church of England in a way which would seem to irritate; and though doctrinal exposition is not absent, it is formal and secondary rather than vital and primary. It is of little use, for example, to produce the argument: 'the Church Christ founded was always to possess the Papacy; but only the Roman Church possesses the Papacy; therefore only the Roman Church can be the Church founded by Christ', except as summarizing a full statement of the Catholic doctrine of the Church, showing from the New Testament (that is, from grounds that Anglicans themselves accept) that Christ did indeed found an infallible Church which was to carry his salvation to all men to the end of time. The paragraphs which Dom Aldhelm summarizes in this argument do not really fulfil these requirements.

This emphasis on doctrinal principles, rather than on controversial argument, is essential because non-Catholics are often ignorant of Catholic doctrine, and it is often this ignorance which leads to their difficulties. But there is more to it than that. For it is not external arguments alone which lead a man to faith. These are both useful and necessary, but they are not the whole story. There is a difference between credibility and belief. No amount of arguments and suasions

can of themselves produce faith, for faith is the grace given by God to know without doubting, and on the authority of God himself, the truths which he has revealed. Faith is essentially concerned with things which cannot be known by unaided reason. The mind can and must be prepared for faith so far as is possible, both by showing the congruence of faith with things known by reason alone, and by showing up the flaws in the arguments against faith. But this is all in the sphere of credibility. A man may follow through all these apologetic arguments and recognize their validity, but still not have faith. He may see their strength and yet not feel himself convinced, precisely because they point towards but do not reach, truths beyond the scope of reason, to which the mind can only be raised by God. He still stands in need of the inner desire to believe, which is God's supernatural gift, and in the light of which the arguments are found convincing.

I cannot do better than refer to the excellent 'Point of View' which appeared in the July 1957 number of *THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT*, over the pseudonym 'Idiotes'. Why is one man convinced that certain events and arguments are God's work, while another man is not? It is because, at this moment, here and now, one man has a supernatural, divinely-given instinct to believe, whereas the other has not. Nothing is either said or implied about the moral state of the man who does not believe; it is simply 'that here and now one man is being led by God to faith, and the other is not'. It is not the final argument which gives faith, like the last straw which breaks the camel's back; but the readiness to follow the supernatural leading to faith, if God gives it.

If all this is so, then two points seem to emerge. First, we must not try to prove too much, nor forget which premisses Anglicans accept and which they do not. That the Pope is the Vicar of Christ is an article of faith, and so cannot be demonstrated. Anglicans will generally agree that Christ founded a visible and indefectible church endowed with his own authority, for this can be shown without much difficulty from Christ's own words in the New Testament, and from the consideration that without some divine guarantee, human error would be sure to distort Christ's message of salvation. But the further step, that in virtue of this authority the Church is infallible, and that this authority and infallibility are summed up in the successors of St Peter, is not nearly so clear in the New Testament. And so along with our exposition of the Petrine texts, we ought surely to say frankly that this is a mystery of faith which we cannot prove, though there are arguments there to support it. It is, I think, the slurring over of this distinction which accounts for the unsatisfactoriness of the paragraphs of the Letter mentioned above.

Secondly, it would seem that the proper way to prepare a person

to respond to the grace of faith, if it is given him, is not primarily to answer difficulties (though of course this must be done and done satisfactorily); but to lay before him as clearly and attractively as possible that grace will enable him to accept, and to watch for signs of his readiness to follow God's call. The concentration on answering difficulties seems to spring from a confusion of means and end; and because of the implied suggestion 'I can *prove* to you that you ought to be a Catholic', also runs the danger of simply incurring resentment.

I should be wronging Dom Aldhelm if I were to suggest that his Letters carry this implication. He would, I am sure, agree that no one can be argued into believing. But it seems to me that there is a misplacing of the main emphasis in his book which would make me hesitate to give it to Anglican enquirers.

F.R.

THE YOKE OF DIVINE LOVE. By Dom Hubert van Zeller. (Burns and Oates; 16s.)

The sub-title, 'A Study of Conventual Perfection', warns us that the book is for monks, and the preface expresses a hope that it will be useful for those who 'while living in the world, practise poverty, chastity and obedience on their own'. It will help anyone who is seriously seeking perfection. Reading the book is like watching how the monks do it, and this is instructive for anybody.

The Yoke of the Religious Life, the Yoke of Prayer, the Yoke of Community Life divide it naturally into three parts. A Benedictine ideal emerges, practical, liturgical, embracing the whole man. The author's aphoristic and forceful delineations of human nature subjecting itself to the triple yoke are full of insight and sometimes perhaps a little discouraging. He seems almost to enjoy correcting our poor human self-deceptions. It is good for the soul and perhaps a bit hard on the feelings.

'Liturgical Prayer' (pp. 104-115) is a help for anyone who says Office. It does seem to attribute a quasi-magic power to this most wonderful form of prayer, but taken all together this chapter is a deeply impressive help to the recitation of the breviary, in or out of choir. The emphasis on its *per se* value is, after all, only an emphasis.

The usefulness of this, as of other books of Fr van Zeller, is rather in the direction of examination of conscience than in the direction of the actual deepening and strengthening of one's love and life. Each chapter is like a conference to the novices in which the Novice Master pulls no punches and draws his examples from real life. Weaknesses are mercilessly exposed and the Master, being on the right side of the conference table, allows no retorts. It is coldly compelling. We can