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preaching of God's people. The Church's preaching is primary. This fundamental principle of Catholicism should not be weakened or lost sight of, for it is also a fundamental principle of the Bible. Secondly, by keeping in mind that this is a *liturgy* of the word, something in which the whole community participates. The accent is on corporateness, rather than on mere evangelical proclamation. Thirdly, by remembering that the liturgy of the word is (or ought to be) orientated towards participation in the sacrament.<sup>1</sup> It can be argued that the philosophy behind the sacraments—at least in St Paul's writings—is, like the *Logos* of St John, that of the Greek world; that both the *Logos* of St John and the sacraments (known to the Greek Church as *mysteria*) represent communications within this world of the absolute; that, therefore, whereas the 'word' entails a *Begegnung* or encounter with God by faith, the sacrament entails a *communion in the divine reality*. This being so, one could say that both 'word' and 'sacrament' complement each other, the one involving an encounter by faith, the other culminating in a supernatural experience or communion. In other words, there is only *one* liturgy, in which the 'word' and the 'sacrament' each has its role.

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## REVELATION AND GNOSIS

This is an attempt to integrate scriptural data and scholastic tradition, by considering an apparent scholastic inadequacy, a New Testament paradox and a possible scholastic solution.

I have surveyed the biblical data on revelation,<sup>2</sup> and arrived at certain conclusions from them without making more than passing reference to what the scholastic theologian has to say about revelation; and that passing reference was only to suggest that such a definition of revelation as Garrigou-Lagrange proposes in his manual of apologetics

<sup>1</sup> Thus the *Constitution* (no. 56): 'The two parts which, in a certain sense, go to make up the liturgy of the Mass, the liturgy of the Word and the eucharistic liturgy, are so closely connected with each other that they form but one act of worship'; also no. 48: '(Christ's followers) should be instructed by God's word and nourished at the table of the Lord'. Even no. 35, 4 ('the celebration of the Word of God is to be encouraged, especially on the vigils of solemn feasts') is prefaced by the covering clause at the beginning of no. 35: 'in order that it may be clearly seen that *in the liturgy ritual and word are intimately linked . . .*' cf. Ml. Schmaus, *Die theologische Ort der kirchlichen Verkündigung*, Festschr. J. Pascher, Munich 1963, pp. 286-96.

<sup>2</sup> cf. *Revelation in the Bible, Scripture*, 1963, pp. 1-6 and 103-9; 1964, pp. 16-21.

*De Revelatione* is inadequate to the facts. I have since felt that this is an unsatisfactory method of treating a theological matter. We should do all we can to bridge the gap between biblical studies and scholastic theology instead of widening it. And that is what I am going to try and do here on the subject of revelation.

An authoritative starting point is of course the Constitution of Vatican I on the subject.<sup>1</sup> This simply declares that God has revealed Himself and 'the eternal decisions of His will', and states why: it is because He has destined man to share in divine good things which altogether surpass the understanding of the human mind. The scholastic theological tradition behind this dogmatic statement can best be observed in the *Summa Theologiae* Ia, q. 1. In a.i of that question St Thomas states that it was necessary for human salvation to have some teaching through divine revelation. Quoting Isaias 64:4, he argues that to achieve the end destined for man—the things God has prepared for them that love Him—man has to know about it first; the end has to be known beforehand. Therefore, as man cannot discover it for himself, it has to be shown or revealed to him. Thus revelation is a means of giving this advance information; it is a teaching, an instruction about divine things.

These divine things in which human salvation consists are ultimately nothing else than God Himself, who, as St Thomas puts it, is the subject of the science of revelation, the subject of theology. But how is God going to be given to man as his final end and bliss except by being shown or revealed to him? Man's destiny is to know as he is known, to see God face to face; and this can only come to pass by God's revealing or unveiling His face—*ut te revelata cernens facie, visu sim beatus tuae gloriae* as the possibly pseudo-Thomas says in the hymn *Adoro te*. Thus an advance knowledge of man's end by means of that revelation which consists in divine teaching or instruction, and which is the foundation of theological science, is subordinate to a direct knowledge of God also by means of revelation—a revelation which consists simply in manifestation, epiphany, apocalypse. This, I think, is really what St Thomas is saying in Ia, 1, ii, where he states in his dry Aristotelian terms that the sacred teaching<sup>2</sup> is a science dependent on principles known by the light of a higher science, viz. the science possessed by God, and the blessed who see God face to face.

It is in q. 12 that he discusses this final and direct knowledge of God enjoyed by the blessed. The only point I wish to make here is that he does so in terms of light and sight. We talk of the beatific *vision* and

<sup>1</sup> Dz 1785, 1786.

<sup>2</sup> *sacra doctrina*; St Thomas's usual expression for 'theology': he sometimes uses it, in a most significant way, as a synonym for *sacra Scriptura*.

the *light* of glory. In other words, the absolute revelation of God, by which He conveys that direct knowledge of Himself in which man's final salvation consists, is conceived of as His showing Himself to us, not as His speaking to us. And this visual manifestation by which we are to be given direct knowledge governs the oral or auditory manifestation by which we are more naturally given precognition of that end, taught and instructed about it. This latter mode of revelation, however, which is revelation in the common meaning of the theologian, is not just preparatory to the final beatific revelation ; it is a derivation from it and a participation in it.

All St Thomas is doing here, as a theologian, is representing and handing on, clarified but neither diminished nor augmented, the Church's doctrinal tradition. And on a first appraisal of this tradition there appears to me to be one notable *lacuna* in it ; there is no distinction made between the mode of revelation in the Old Testament and in the New. There is only this very illuminating correlation made between temporal revelation and eternal, or earthly and heavenly, parallel to the correlation between grace and glory. The *lacuna* I have mentioned will be apparent if we compare this doctrinal tradition of the Church as summarised by St Thomas with her liturgical tradition as manifested in Advent and Christmastide texts. I choose texts simply to illustrate, not to demonstrate this liturgical tradition.

A prominent Advent text is Ps. 80 ; the psalmist is asking God to reveal Himself, and he identifies the divine self-revelation he asks for with our salvation : 'Thou that sittest upon the Cherubim, manifest thyself before Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasses ; stir up thy might, and come to save us'. The concepts of shewing and saving are treated as parallel, as also in the thrice repeated refrain of the psalm, 'Shew us thy face and we shall be saved'. The Greek words of the LXX represented by *manifest thyself* and *shew* are *emphanēthi epiphanon*. In other words, the psalmist is looking for salvation in a divine *epiphany*. He, presumably, was thinking of a temporal salvation from enemies, to be achieved in a temporal epiphany of divine power. But we use him liturgically, by an 'analogy of faith', to pray for our ultimate and eternal salvation in an ultimate and eternal epiphany.

Then we pass from Advent to Christmas-Epiphany and celebrate the answer to this prayer—surely the final answer. A characteristic Christmas-Epiphany text is the *Nunc dimittis* : 'because my eyes have seen thy salvation ; a light for the revelation of the gentiles,' etc. Again we have the parallel, signifying a kind of identification, between saving and revealing. But this time all in the past tense : *my eyes have seen* ; the thing is accomplished. In other words, the liturgy seems to make a very clear distinction, by its very celebration of

Advent and the revelation feasts of Christmas and Epiphany, between the preparatory Old Testament state, in which the epiphany is desired but not given, being only prepared for by instruction, *torah*<sup>1</sup> and prophetic word; and the definitive New Testament state, in which the epiphany has been granted, and incidentally *torah* and prophecy are fulfilled. On the other hand, the liturgy seems to merge, and indeed scarcely to know how to distinguish, the New Testament state and the ultimate beatific state. In terms of St Thomas's *doctrinal* tradition, the liturgy would appear to have a onesidedly eschatological grasp of revelation; and in terms of the *liturgical* tradition St Thomas's description of revelation as an instruction or teaching (*torah*) about divine things to give us advance knowledge of them could be characterised as excessively Old Testament, or rabbinical in quality.

Our problem, then, is to find a proper category for New Testament revelation, distinguishing it on the one hand, with the liturgical tradition from Old Testament revelation, which belongs to the category of oral instruction; and on the other hand, with the doctrinal theological tradition, from the final beatific revelation, which belongs to the category of direct visual manifestation. The place to look for it is naturally in the New Testament itself. But in order to find a clue to whereabouts in the New Testament we should look, let us begin by asking ourselves how the doctrinal theological tradition might have come to lack any adequate distinction between Old and New Testament revelation. The mere fact that this distinction is still so clearly presented by the Roman liturgy suggests that the theological tradition has lost it somewhere along the line.

Now very early on in the Church's history there were people, the Gnostics,<sup>2</sup> who made the biggest possible distinction between the two by characterising Old Testament revelation as bad, being the work of an evil demiurge, and New Testament revelation as good, being the manifestation of the supreme Father through His son. Here is what St Irenaeus says about Marcion, about A.D. 180: 'Next came Marcion, shamelessly blaspheming him who is proclaimed as God by the law and the prophets; calling him a maker of evils, a lover of wars, fickle in his opinions and self-contradictory.' But Jesus, he says, is from the Father who is above the god that constructed the world; . . . and when he appeared in human form to those who were in Judaea, he scrapped the law and the prophets, and all the works of that god who

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew word traditionally translated 'the Law'; but it really means instruction.

<sup>2</sup> An almost generic term for a variety of semi-Christian sects, whose common feature was that they offered salvation through esoteric knowledge (*gnosis*).

made the world—whom Marcion also calls the Cosmocrat (*Adv. Haer.*, I, 27, 2).

Irenaeus' reaction against this specious view was pretty thorough, and it is possible that since his time the Church's theological tradition has suffered from an excessive repugnance of gnosticism, overstressing the unity of the two testaments, understressing the radical break between them. But Marcion's view of the matter was at least plausible, and presumably Gnostics like him had at least a grain of reason on their side. Perhaps if we examine what the New Testament has to say about *gnōsis* we may find a clue to the specific category of New Testament revelation which we seek.

Since *gnōsis* is nothing but the ordinary Greek word for 'knowledge', it will not always be employed—or indeed often—in a pregnant gnostic sense. So there will be no need to examine all the instances of its use in the New Testament. But if we set out the evidence supplied by a concordance, it may help us to decide where to look. This evidence is rather like the geological survey which oil prospectors require in order to help them decide where to drill their exploratory bore holes. The survey does not tell them where oil is to be found, but only where it would be most sensible to look for it. *Gnōsis*, then, occurs 29 times in the New Testament; 23 of these are in the Pauline epistles. It does not occur at all in the Johannine corpus. In the Pauline epistles it occurs 10 times in 1 Cor., 6 in 2 Cor., 3 in Rom., and once each in Eph., Phil., Col. and 1 Tim. So the place to drill our bore hole will clearly be 1 and 2 Cor.

But before we do that, let us remind ourselves once more that *gnōsis* is only the ordinary Greek for 'knowledge', and that we cannot therefore study its use realistically without also doing a survey of the corresponding verb 'to know'. The relevant statistics for the related verb *ginōskō*<sup>1</sup> are as follows: In the four gospels it occurs 114 times, 55 of them in Jn. In nine Pauline epistles it occurs 48 times, 32 of them in Rom. and 1 and 2 Cor. Compared with this it occurs in 1 Jn. alone 24 times. When we look at the other verb for 'to know', *oida*,<sup>2</sup> we find roughly similar proportions: 151 times in the gospels, 81 of them in Jn.; 68 times in seven Pauline epistles, 56 of them in Rom. and 1 and 2 Cor.; and 15 times in 1 Jn. So our first bore holes should be sunk in Jn. and 1 Jn. In view of the fact that the noun *gnōsis* is not used in these works at all, this particular statistical indication is of peculiar interest. It suggests that the author was more than usually interested in the subject of knowing, since he talks about it so much more

<sup>1</sup> *To know*; from the same root as our English word.

<sup>2</sup> It originally meant *I have seen* (or something similar). It is related, in root, to the archaic English verb *I wot*.

frequently than other authors ; and that all the same he deliberately avoided using the ordinary word for knowledge. The inference is that by the time he wrote it, it had ceased to be simply the ordinary word for knowledge, and was being used in a special pregnant sense by gnostic-like heretics ; *gnōsis* was already a theologically dirty word.

In any case I do not have the space to present the results of a sounding in 1 Jn. ; but I can here only affirm my conviction that they strongly support what conclusions one can arrive at from an examination of Pauline texts in 1 and 2 Cor. The style of the two theologies is of course very different ; but when one compares them on points of substance one invariably finds them complementary, not discordant with each other.

Let us start then with 2 Cor. 4:6 : ' For it is God, who said light shall shine out of the darkness, that has shone in our hearts, for the *gnōsis* of the glory of God in the face of Christ to give light there.' This is the conclusion of three paragraphs which I think we should take as a whole, from 3:1 to 4:6. It is devoted to making the strongest possible contrast (short of Marcion's error) between Old and New Testament revelation ; between the letter that kills and the Spirit that gives life ; between a dispensation of death and a dispensation of life. At the immediate superficial level St Paul may possibly have had in mind the difference between a revelation contained in *Scripture*, written in ink (3:3), of which the scribes and doctors of the law were the ministers, and a *viva voce* revelation committed by Christ to the apostles and by the apostles to the churches, a revelation continually being replenished, so to say, by utterances of the Spirit. But this would be an *ad hoc* or *ad hominem* kind of distinction, which could scarcely survive the consignment of the New Testament revelation to canonical Scripture as well.

At a more profound level the apostle is thinking of the difference between the law, typified by the decalogue engraved on stone (3:3), and the new law, which is the Spirit poured out in the heart ; between revelation as a confrontation of God with the outer man through a mediator, and revelation as God's direct unmediated divinisation of the inner man. This is a distinction with a long theological history ahead of it, which will point us shortly to the *Summa*, Ia IIae, 98-105 on the old law and 106-8 on the new.

St Paul next goes on to contrast the two in terms of Ex. 34:33 as a veiling with an unveiling. Unveiling, revelation, becomes the proper New Testament term. In 3:16-18, a really extraordinary passage, he speaks as though we already saw the glory of the Lord, as though New Testament revelation were without distinction the final revelation of the last day. The only qualifications to this are in the verb *beholding*

(Douai), literally, *looking as in a mirror*,<sup>1</sup> hence not quite immediately face to face ; and in the accusative of respect, *the same image*,<sup>2</sup> the image in terms of which we so behold the glory of the Lord, and which a few verses later on we are told is Christ. To paraphrase and gloss the passage : by turning, with our faces unveiled, to the Spirit, by looking at Christ the image of God as at an image in a mirror, we are accordingly transformed and behold the glory of God the Father ; we enjoy a direct encounter with the divine Trinity, which means that we enjoy what the blessed enjoy in heaven. The same idea is repeated in 4:4-6 ; when the gospel of Christ the image of God is preached, there is a new creation of light ; the light of the *gnōsis* of the glory of God in the face of Christ shines in our hearts. It is interesting, incidentally, to note that the NEB translates *gnōsis* here by 'revelation' ; a significant piece of targumic interpretation.

So much for the positive value of the term *gnōsis* in St Paul's use of it. Other Corinthian texts which could be examined in support of it are 2 Cor. 6:8, 8:7 and 1 Cor. 12:8, 14:8, where *gnōsis* is listed among the charisms of the Holy Spirit. But now let us look at the reverse or sinister side of the coin. *Gnōsis* is not a wholly positive, wholly good word for St Paul. Not being a gnostic, and being acutely aware of that pride of intellect which is the characteristic gnostic vice, he also uses the word in a derogatory manner. Let us look at 1 Cor. 8:1-13 and then at 1 Cor. 13.

8:1-13 : First *gnōsis* is contrasted to its disfavour with charity—because it swells heads. But then immediately it is conceded that there is a knowing as one ought to know, an unpretentious knowledge. However, the truly valuable kind of *gnōsis*, the one secured by charity, is that which consists not so much in knowing as in *being known* by God. As far as what we know goes, the essence of it, from which derives our knowledge of the nothingness of idols, is our knowing the Father and the Son ; cf. Jn. 17:3, also what St Paul says in 2 Cor. 3:18, 4:6. But even this knowledge can be vainly held, and so held can damage a more ignorant brother.

1 Cor. 13, as far as *gnōsis* is concerned, simply amplifies what we have just seen. The ultimate bliss will consist in perfect knowledge, in knowing *as I am known*—revelation ; here it is obscured by being partial and in a glass darkly—cf. the *beholding as in a mirror* of 2 Cor. 3:18. Meanwhile the valuable thing is 'to be known by him', and it is love that really secures us to the object of beatifying knowledge. In this chapter the partial, imperfect nature of any *gnōsis* is stressed. As well as being compared to its disadvantage with charity, it is also

<sup>1</sup> *katotrizomenoi*.

<sup>2</sup> *tēn autēn eikona* ; it is not quite correctly translated 'into the same image' by Douai.



compared with faith, first on a par with it, as two things which are equally useless without charity (I3:2); then at a discount (I3:12, I3) —*now* I know in part . . . but *now* there remain faith, hope and charity.

To conclude then from our examination of St Paul's use of *gnōsis*, he acknowledges that New Testament revelation, final, absolute, quite different from Old Testament revelation though it be, does not for all that carry us out of the Old Testament relationship to God. We still have to make do with the faith, hope and charity that were required of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. We *know*, but only in part. Perhaps the great difference is that now we *are known*, as men were not known under the old covenant; that is to say, we have been taken into a divine intimacy of personal relationships, opened to us by the sending of the divine persons, which was not granted of old. But our grasp on this new situation (which is the final, heavenly, beatifying situation) is still only of the same kind as the grasp of the Old Testament man on his old, provisional, earthly situation of having 'formal treaty relations' with God; a grasp of faith, not of sight. The bearings of faith's object towards us have changed, and so therefore have our relationships with it (him, them)—we are called no longer servants but friends, sons in Christ, etc.; but the character of the faith required of us remains unchanged.

Finally, to turn once more to St Thomas, is there anywhere in his presentation of the Church's theological tradition a *locus* into which we could fit, or which we could enrich by this Pauline grasp of the *paradox* of New Testament revelation? I say Pauline, but I repeat that I am sure it is equally Johannine, indeed apostolic. As I suggested earlier, the best place to look is likely to be the treatises on the old and new laws, Ia IIae, 98–108. The articles on the old law are, I imagine, the most ignored in the whole *Summa*, being presumed to have quaintness value only. This is a great pity. The value of these articles is that they really are a concentrate of the whole patristic tradition on the subject as St Thomas inherited it—and of patristic exegesis too. Here Scripture is really and manifestly providing him with his theological data, and his patristic authorities are really interpreting these data, and all he contributes is a lucid and systematic arrangement of the material.

We must remember, of course, that his concern is with old and new *law*, not with old and new *revelation*, except incidentally. That he never, as far as I know, discusses this topic *in se*, is a weakness he has inherited through the tradition (according to my guess) from Irenaeus. From this great man onwards, the almost exclusive interest of theologians in making comparisons between the old and the new was

*moral*; comparisons between old and new *law*. That is, they were more concerned with the history of the moral demands made on man by God than in the history of the divine self-manifestation offered to man by God. This was due to an overstress on the excellent anti-gnostic principles that it is the same God we find in the Old and the New Testament; and that God is changeless in Himself, and all changes in the divine-human relationship are at the human end. But to concentrate, as the post-Irenaeus tradition has tended to do, on the moral quality of these relationships is to colour man's New Testament status too much with a quality more appropriate to his status under the old dispensation.

Even within these restricted terms of reference St Thomas and his patristic authorities—chiefly St Augustine—do much to emancipate the new law from mere morality, to which the moralists so perseveringly enslave it. Indeed, he says it is not properly and primarily speaking law—i.e. a code of precepts—at all; but it is the 'grace of the Holy Spirit through the faith in Christ';<sup>1</sup> hence it is 'built-in law' rather than written law.<sup>2</sup> As such, as the grace of the Holy Spirit poured forth in our hearts, it justifies, whereas the old law written on stone did not; but in so far as the new law is *secondarily* contained in written teachings and precepts, then as such (as what precisely the moralists are interested in) it no more justifies than did the old law, and if we are not careful can become the letter which kills, in opposition to the Spirit which gives life (106, i).

In this whole double treatise, however, there is only one text that bears directly on our subject of revelation. It is 101, ii: 'whether the ceremonial precepts of the old law are figurative'. Well, St Thomas answers his own question, they are concerned with the worship of God, and that worship will vary with man's state. Now there are three basic states: (1) the state of future bliss, and here there will be no figurative exterior worship, but sheer essential praise of God, since the human mind will behold 'the very substance of divine truth'.<sup>3</sup> Thus one infers that man's state is governed by the manner in which God is known (i.e. by the quality of revelation given) and so there is (2) the state of the old law. Under this 'there was neither a manifestation of the divine truth in itself, nor had the way for attaining it yet been opened up'. So the exterior worship proper to this state was figurative not only of the 'ultimate reality to be manifested in the heavenly fatherland',<sup>4</sup> but also of Christ who would be the way to it. Finally

<sup>1</sup> *gratia Spiritus Sancti per fidem Christi.*

<sup>2</sup> *lex indita contrasted with lex scripta.*

<sup>3</sup> *ipsam divinam veritatem in seipsa.*

<sup>4</sup> *veritas manifestanda in patria.*

there is (3) the state of the new law, in which this way has already been 'revealed', so our New Testament worship is only figurative of the 'glorious reality to come which has not yet been revealed'.

So far he has done little more than emphasise the distinction between heavenly and earthly revelation which we elicited from a study of a few texts in the *Ia pars*; except that here he has limited his use of the word 'reveal' to the further divine manifestation given in Christ under the New Testament. But then he concludes with what is to me the crucial quotation and comment: 'And this is what the Apostle says (Heb. 10:1), The law has a shadow of the good things to come, not the very image of the things: as though to say, since a shadow is less than an image, that the image belongs to the new law, the shadow to the old.'<sup>1</sup> There, I think, St Thomas gives us the three revelation terms or categories which we have been looking for: *umbra*, *imago*, *veritas*, shadow, image and substance or ultimate reality. *Veritas* is being used in such a strong Augustinian or Platonist sense here that 'truth' is scarcely adequate for it. It would seem then that in examining *gnōsis* in St Paul we were barking up the wrong tree. But at least it will be recalled that we did flush out the term image while we were doing so. To complete the work, I suppose we should go back and study that term in more detail. In any case these three words specify the object revealed at different stages, rather than the manner of revelation.

St Thomas, however, having casually given us our three terms, does not proceed to develop them. In particular he makes no comment on the relationship between *imago* and *veritas*. But the paradox of New Testament revelation lies here, that in Christ the image or *eikōn* of God and the divine glory we are given the substance or truth of God itself. In this article St Thomas talks of Christ the way, but does not consider how the text he is alluding to<sup>2</sup> goes on to mention Christ the truth. The image does not just point to the substance of the divine truth, it contains and conveys and *is* that substance. Yet at the same time it still has about it the obscurity of the shadow; it is an image seen enigmatically in a defective glass. The knowledge, the *gnōsis* that our possession of the image gives us has therefore two sides to it: (1) it is glorious and ought to be beatifying—indeed in principle and potentially it is so; (2) it is imperfect and partial, and unless accepted as such it will puff us up and end by stultifying itself. It is therefore most necessary for our salvation that we men of the New Testament should accept and

<sup>1</sup> The key phrase is the last: *tanquam imago pertinet ad novam legem, umbra vero ad veterem.*

<sup>2</sup> Jn. 14:6.

acknowledge in our present state some of the limitations of the Old, while not allowing those limitations to enslave us to the law and the letter that kills.

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### BOOK REVIEWS

Edward K. Taylor, *The Catholic Religion*. Catholic Enquiry Centre, London 1964. pp. 197. 7s 6d

This is a course of twenty booklets issued by the Catholic Enquiry Centre to provide an explanation of the Church's life and belief. The outline followed is similar to that of the leaflet series which this course replaces, but the material has been completely rewritten and—what is of greater importance—there has been a radical change in the approach to and the presentation of Catholic belief.

The Christian message is basically the Gospel, the 'Good News' of our Salvation through Christ's death and glorification and through Pentecost, Baptism and the Eucharist. The faith is essentially the story of God's dealings with us, His People, as they are recorded in the Scriptures and are continued in the liturgy. The author's concern with this fundamental 'kerygma' is evident in his fine treatment of the person of Christ, the Cross the Resurrection, the Holy Spirit and our Lady.

The article on Marriage is also promising, mentioning, as it does, the value and dignity of sexual union as an expression of and a growth in married love. Mention could perhaps have been made of the 'sacramental' value of married life and love—and particularly of intercourse—as a means of growing in holiness. There are still traces of the old idea that the grace of matrimony is nothing more than a deterrent against the temptations to impurity and a help in the difficulties of the married state.

Where the book does disappoint is in its treatment of the Fall, the Mass and the Parousia. The Fall is always a sticky theological wicket. It is only intelligible in the context of man's struggle to live the life of holiness and his realisation that such a life is impossible without the gift of the Spirit of holiness. Set in the context of a philosophical consideration of creation and the dignity and destiny of man and isolated from its Scriptural framework, the Fall becomes to a great extent meaningless. It is doubtful whether philosophical considerations of