

'the expression of permanent truths in the sphere of the spirit,' while the 'conundrums' of the Transfiguration and Resurrection cannot be rationalised. Like Origen with the Mosaic Law, the author would have the disagreeable interpreted 'spiritually,' as his curious habit of opposing 'spiritual facts' and 'literal fact' shows, e.g. the Infancy narratives are 'spiritual facts and of poetry-truth not prose-truth.'

To present the Gospels to the modern reader as the author has done, but without mention of the Church's part as guardian and interpreter of the sacred writings to the ordinary man (who has neither time nor equipment for critical historical valuations), without mention also of inspiration, is to leave him with the impression that the sole motive of the faith in Christ, which the author urges so sincerely, rests on a critical appreciation of the historical soundness of the Gospels.

BRUNO DONOVAN.

THE QUESTION OF ANGLICAN ORDERS: Letters to a Layman. By Dom Gregory Dix, Monk of Nashdon Abbey. (Dacre Press; 4s. 6d.).

It may be doubted whether Dom Dix has done any service to the progress of mutual understanding between Catholics and Anglicans by choosing this moment to revive controversy; but he has done so, and one can only hope that the necessity for some reply will not be mistaken for lack of sympathy.

Dom Dix is learned, and a consummate controversialist; and in a short review it is impossible to deal with his arguments in full. Nor is this necessary: the presentation is original, but most of the material goes back to the days of the *De Hierarchia Anglicana* of Denny and Lacey, which is likely to remain the standard defence of the Anglican position. It is somewhat insufficient of Dom Dix to refer to the Parker ordination merely as 'a sort of "bottleneck" in Anglican Orders'; and nowhere does he face the real issue: even granted, as the Bull *Apostolicae Curae* itself hints, that the Anglican 'form' might be sufficient in itself if used with the requisite intention by valid ministers, it remains capable, to say the least, of an heretical sense. Even to-day, to the outsider simply reading the material, the Thirty-nine Articles (whose official and binding character Dom Dix, unlike some Anglicans, seems to accept) require an exegesis of excessive subtlety before they cease to be the plain statement of Protestant doctrine of a moderate kind which a majority of the members of the Anglican Church has always taken them to be. There is a studied ambiguity about Anglican formulations of doctrine, as was made clear in a recent controversy in which Dom Dix was himself engaged; and that ambiguity determines the usage of such formularies in accordance with the actual intentions and beliefs of the present minister, rather than that of

the Church—even supposing, what is manifestly difficult or there would not be all this internal dispute about it, that the ‘intention’ of the Anglican Church is capable of accurate definition. The Elizabethan settlement was designed to be inclusive. How successfully, the whole history of the Anglican Body shows.

And, above and beyond any question of the validity of Orders, there remains a deeper issue: did not the Anglican body, by the very fact of calling itself into separate existence, thereby cut itself off from the unity of the Church? Dom Dix is not unaware of this problem; and of others also, as the sad ending of his study shows. In this work, there is little indeed of the urbane and charming impertinence which made the domestic strife of *A Detection of Aumbries* such a joy to read.

LUKE TURNER, O.P.

THE ANNIHILATION OF MAN. By Leslie Paul. (Faber; 8s. 6d.).

At first sight one might think that the title indicated a war book, whereas in fact it is a most skilful diagnosis of the many ills, at bottom spiritual, which afflict this post-Christian world and of which the present war is a culminating symptom. The title is terrifying in its pessimism, while the book itself in large measure justifies the title. First come penetrating studies of Capitalism, Marxism and National Socialism; all no doubt the sort of thing that has been done before, familiar to readers of Drucker, Rauschnig, Mannheim, Borkenau and (on Marxism) H. G. Wood, but here presented with force and with point.

Particularly well done is the section entitled *The Revolt of German Youth* where the author shows that the denial of Liberalism and Marxism led, though not inevitably, to Nihilism. Not inevitably because ‘in another age these crude and generous impulses might have led to a religious vocation, to vows of chastity, poverty and mendicancy. But the life of the Trappist solitary or barefoot Capuchin is real only if you believe in the Cross, which was just what German youth could not do. The destructive criticism of the society it was in self denying had made certain of that.’ More than the youth of Germany had ceased to believe in the Cross, though their God was Science and Knowledge rather than Blood and Soil. But the end result is the same: spiritual and material irrationality.

The remedy is to be found in Christianity, and here Mr. Paul’s sure step falters. He is anxious to be just to Christianity and its ‘failure,’ but he knows less about it and its founder than he knows about Communism and Marx or Fascism and Mussolini. May we hope for a further instalment, *The Restoration of Man*, where the nebulous will become determined, the vague give place to positive, belief issue in Faith.

J. FITZSIMONS.