

EXTRACTS

THE CALVINIST BROTHERHOOD of Taizé-Les-Cluny is described in the 1953 issue of the Church of Scotland's *Church Service Society Annual*. The community is situated near the original abbey of Cluny in the valley of the Grosne and numbers twelve, of whom three are pastors and three novices. These men take vows of 'poverty, celibacy and obedience', and they seem to have adopted the Catholic monastic ritual centred round the '*opus Dei*'; though one wonders how the Eucharist is celebrated:

Every morning a Eucharist is celebrated very simply according to the form of Christian tradition in the early centuries.

But the main interest of the community is the type of work which is interspersed with this monastic prayer.

Between offices, silent meals, prayer and recreation the Brothers go to their own work. One, pastor of the neighbouring Protestant parish, gets down to his pastoral work; another is engaged in theological studies; another arranges the community's liturgical life; another is in charge of spiritual direction; there are also a Brother potter and a Brother painter who go to their studios. . . . There are also the Brother farmers who cultivate the estate, and the Brother doctor who has the local country practice; the Brother mechanic whose trade is also in the district. . . . The community has founded a House for abandoned children. It is responsible for twenty-five boys it considers as sons, and for whom it has created a family life in the Manor House of the village.

This means that, although leaving the world in one sense by the vows, the whole community aims at being integrated in the life of the larger country and village community around them. If the local priest, doctor and mechanic are all to be found in a community of dedicated men in the neighbourhood the effect of the communal Christian life must be widespread. This aim surely suggests possibilities to the many Catholics who today look hesitatingly about for a mode of community life.

Another feature of this group of Calvinists, who seem to our eyes strangely non-Calvinist in their character, is the way in which they co-operate with their Catholic neighbours.

Ecumenism, preoccupation with and prayer for unity, hold a prominent place in the community. Priests, religious and Christians of all denominations go there to live for a short time in definite study of, and intensive prayer for, unity. In the country itself there are very cordial relations with the Roman Catholic clergy. The community must not, in any way whatever, indulge in a Protestant proselytism. Its sole wish is to give a living witness to Christ in the world around it.

In fact they seek to be a sign which will help each Christian to practise and live his own particular faith. This 'indifferentism' is of course charac-

teristic, but the aim and life of the fraternity remind the reader forcibly of the Community of Atonement at Graymoor, from which the celebration of the Church Unity Octave started and whose prayers and monastic life led them eventually into the Church. True depths of spirit and devotion to silence will open the inner eye to the light more surely than any argument.

A NEW CARMELITE CONFRERE, in the shape of a quarterly called *Mount Carmel*, is a welcome sign of the increasing interest in 'the affairs of the Spirit'. Strangely the first issue—Summer 1953—gives no indication as to the place or name of the publisher, and apart from announcing that it costs one shilling the editorial publishers give no help to prospective readers as to the manner of subscription. We learn from other sources that it is edited and published from the Carmelite Church in Kensington by Fr Antonine Newman, O.D.C., and we may congratulate him on gathering a good shilling's-worth for his first issue. Fr Brocard writing of St Teresa and the Counter-Reformation reminds us of the Saint's consciousness of the struggle through which the Church was then going.

I wish you to lead such lives as to merit to obtain these two favours from God. Firstly, that among very learned theologians and religious there may be many with the qualifications I describe, and that our Lord may perfect those who are less fitted, for one who is perfect can do more than many who are imperfect. The other is that when they are engaged in this war our Lord may uphold them . . . and may stop their ears in these perilous seas to the song of the siren.

St Teresa knew how much the men of the day needed sound theology. Mr Lancelot Sheppard writes of St John of the Cross's elder brother Francisco who began by acting in place of his dead father to little John and ended by serving him as his gardener in the new Carmelite foundations. Edith Stein and St Theresa of Lisieux also find their place among other articles on the Carmelite Tertiaries and the Carmelite Scapular. May this new organ of the great Order of Carmel prosper in England as the many Carmelite publications prosper abroad.

LUMIERE ET VIE (Saint-Alban-Leyse) has provided its readers with two first-class numbers: the April issue is devoted to 'Jesus, Son of God', and June to 'the Spirit and the Church'. And the same must be said of the second issue of *Bible et Vie Chrétienne* which has an important contribution by Paul van Imshoot on 'the Spirit in the Old Testament'. This florescence of biblical spirituality abroad is a most encouraging sign of the way the understanding of 'the spiritual life' is deepening.