

FOR several years now, Paul Tournier has been in the van of the movement for 'personalist' medicine, a medicine in which the doctor not only seeks to analyse the causes of a disease but tries also to understand the *meaning* of the disease to the patient. A doctor, in Tournier's opinion, should not only prevent people from dying but also help them to live. In order to do this Tournier searches the Scriptures—so as to be more open towards the meaning of illness and death. The results of his searches are to be found in *A DOCTOR'S CASEBOOK IN THE LIGHT OF THE BIBLE* (S.C.M. Press, 16s.).

NIELS STENSON, the seventeenth-century Danish geologist and convert to the Faith, is attracting the devotion of Catholic scientists who wish to see him canonized. One of the conditions for canonization being *fama sanctitatis*, Gustav Scherz (who edited Stenson's letters) has written a short pamphlet to show that Stenson has constantly enjoyed this *fama sanctitatis*: *IM RUF DER HEILIGKEIT* (Herder, Freiburg).

EXTRACTS

THE Dominicans of the German Province are opening a Conference and Study House next door to their Provincial House of Studies—it is called Walberberger Institut. The Father Director, in a letter to the Editor, has outlined one of his courses which will be of special interest to English and American readers: 'My idea is that we are arranging here at Walberberg a course of lectures of about 10-14 days for English Catholics (or non-Catholics if they are interested in œcumenical work). This course of lectures is meant to give those attending an idea of the life of the Church in Western Germany. I am not thinking of one of the usual sort of rallies for "international understanding" at which, as experience shows, very little is achieved as regards the purpose of the meetings. No, the idea is to admit only English-speaking people and to give them introductory talks on Catholic life in Western Germany. Perhaps there will be many English Catholics who, as in past years, would like to spend their holidays in Western Germany. At the end of their holidays (or, better still, at the beginning) I should like to invite them to come to Walberberg in order to give them the opportunity to obtain first-hand knowledge of every aspect, so far as this is possible on such an occasion, of Catholic life in Western Germany. If I speak of the life of the Church in Germany then I mean it in a wide sense, so that one could include talks on the social question, on the Liturgy, cultural task of the Church among other topics. Walberberg being situated in the vicinity of Köln and Bonn and the industrial parts of Germany (the Ruhr region) with a very active

Catholic population seems to be particularly suited for this purpose. Besides the introductory talks and discussions there could be many excursions, visiting of factories and the various forms of Celebration of the Liturgy (with the congregation taking part in the Liturgy as we like it in Germany) and other activities. There would still be a sufficient amount of time for recreation, etc. As regards the expenses, we could try to keep them low, so that there would be almost no expense besides the fare and the fee for food and lodging.'

Those interested in this scheme should write to:

Der Direktor,
Walberberger Institut,
Dominikanerkonvent,
Walberberg, Kr. Bonn,
Germany.

IN THE January number of *Tijdschrift voor Geestelijk Leven*, there appears the results of a questionnaire on the utility of the journal. The editors were very pleased with the results and were able to say that 'it is clear to all our readers that the *Tijdschrift* is a periodical dealing only with matters concerning the spiritual life, and not with anything else'. Upon examination it was found that during the past years more than fifty per cent of the articles concerned religious, and, upon suggestions made, the editors promise to give more space to the spiritual life as concerning lay people and secular priests.

This intention seems to have been carried out immediately in the January issue. The first article—an excellent one—deals with the relation between the natural and the supernatural lives, or, in the words of the author, 'how it is that grace is a sanctifying, that is, a "hallowing", grace.'

THE DECISION regarding the priest-workers in France was ably defended by the Archbishop of Aix in his *Lettre Circulaire* to his clergy, dated 11 February. In it he makes it clear that the concern of the Pope and Hierarchy was to preserve the spiritual vitality of the priests who were entrusted with a mission which could so easily lead to a preoccupation with the material. The Archbishop writes:

There are priests whom the Church wishes to give to the world of the workers. She sends them thither to carry out in their midst the mission of the priest, to establish here the Kingdom of God. She does not send them to become factory workers or to become involved in militant worker activities. She authorized them to take jobs to the degree that that would help them to live in the conditions of the workers, and to fulfil the priestly work in the world of the workers. . . . This idea had gradually to be modified. Soon the workers had thought it their duty

to take active parts in the Syndicates and other movements. By degrees many of them became so occupied with these commitments that the priestly mission seemed to take second place, or at least its efficacy was compromised. Some of them risked a confusion between their apostolic action and her temporal commitments. . . . They seem to be men of a class, whereas the priest remains the man for everyone even when he is sent specially to some in particular.

At the same time the life of prayer of many of the priest-workers seems to have been compromised. They were led to suppress the recitation of a greater part of the breviary, often the whole of it, and habitually. Of late many frequently omitted the celebration of Mass. Perhaps they took care to preserve their union with God by prayer in their daily life. But the priest cannot renounce his mission to maintain the official prayer of the Church; one of his principal functions is to pray in the name of all the people, for the living and for the dead. It is hardly necessary to insist on the intensity of prayer required to preserve the priestly spirit.

The Archbishop also points out the essential function of the priest as a man of peace. He must therefore shun anything like class warfare.

The christian cannot accept the idea of a struggle in the spirit of hatred and violence. Such a struggle runs counter to the Gospel law of charity, it contradicts Christianity in its very essence. Forbidden to every christian, it is with greater reason forbidden to the priest who is by vocation a man of peace, one who is above all barriers of class or race, to effect reconciliation among men, to help them to understand how to gather all in Christ.

Quite evidently the new movement in France required the direction of authority if it was to preserve the supernatural vitality which gives it its effectiveness.