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but in general outline I think it is a fair representation of their position. As is obvious, it is an attractive theory and merits further study. To what extent it is acceptable an attempt will be made to see in a future article.

L. JOHNSTON.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

*Are we to take Daniel v, 30-31 as historical—and if so, to what does it refer?*

The best answer to this question is that which the prophet Elias gave to his friend and disciple, Eliseus, before being taken up by God: 'Thou hast asked a hard thing' (IV Kings ii, 10). The problem involved in the question is indeed a difficult one, and various solutions have been proposed. Apparently the writer is narrating historical facts, namely, the capture of Babylon, the murder of Belshazzar, last king of Babylon, and the accession of Darius the Mede to the throne of Babylon. But there is no historical evidence supporting these facts. Babylon, it is true, was captured by Cyrus, and a detailed account is given in the Nabonidus-Cyrus Chronicle, but we have no information in Accadian documents about Belshazzar's end. The last king of Babylon was Nabonidus, who is never mentioned in the book of Daniel, and Belshazzar, his son, is never called king in contemporary documents. The identity of Darius the Mede is a problem to which no satisfactory solution has yet been given. The first king of Babylon after the downfall of the Neo-Babylonian dynasty was Cyrus not Darius. A Median reign intermediate between Belshazzar and Cyrus is unknown in history.

Interpreters have tried to meet these difficulties from two opposite directions. Many non-Catholic interpreters maintain that the author of the book writing as late as the middle of the second century B.C., over three centuries and a half after the events related, had a wrong idea of the history of those times. Others, both Catholic and non-Catholic, endeavour to make the biblical narrative to fit in with all the historical information available. Some identify Darius the Mede with Cyaxares II, son of Astyages, king of the Medes. Others identify him with Cambyses, who may have been associated with Cyrus on the throne of Babylon, or with Gobryas, who was governor of Babylon, before Cyrus established himself king of Babylon. But we are not told how this change of names took place. Others prefer to regard the name Darius the Mede as a scribal error or a textual corruption.

The following considerations may help us to a correct solution :

1. The sacred writer is really narrating historical events.
2. Whatever his idea of history may have been, he cannot be made responsible for any historical error.
3. The Daniel-narratives very probably circulated in separate fly-leaves or scrolls which were put together into one book or scroll in the second century B.C. by an editor who had confused ideas of past history. The narratives, therefore, are historical, but the historical framework in which they are set is not always correct. The editor had not the gift of inspiration. This is the explanation proposed in the forthcoming *Catholic Commentary* and also by the following Catholic interpreters : J. Goettsberger *Daniel*, pp. 48 f. ; Rinaldi, *Daniele*, p. 73 ; Höpfl-Miller-Metzinger, *Introductio Specialis in Vetus Testamentum*, 1946, pp. 484 f.

P. P. SAYDON.

Royal University, Malta.

*What is the meaning of Matt. xviii, 19-20 (cf. John xiv, 13-14 ; xv, 16 ; xvi, 23-24) ? Cf. the encyclical 'Mediator Dei' § 19 (C.T.S.). What is asking in the Lord's name ?*

In Holy writ the word 'name' has a far profounder meaning than is usual in English, and may be used (if one may resort with great reserve to our modern jargon) to cover the whole personality. Hence so much emphasis on the actual giving of a name. One may note also such an expression as 'my name is in him' (Exodus xxiii, 21) ; the angel has full authority to stand for God. In the same way what is asked or done in Christ's name represents (or should represent) His request and His action. In two former articles in *SCRIPTURE* ('The Mystical Body of Christ', July 1948, and 'Members of Christ', October 1948), I tried to set forth the intimate individual and corporate unity of the Christian with Christ such as they should be. 'It is no longer I that live', writes St Paul, 'it is Christ that liveth in me. So far as I live now in the flesh, I live in (or perhaps better, through) the faith of the Son of God' (Gal. ii, 20). Every thought and word and deed of the Christian should be less his own than that of Christ working in him through His Holy Spirit (cf. Rom. viii, 12-17). Thus when we are truly asking in Christ's name, it means that He has entirely taken possession of us, and the Father cannot refuse the Son. St John, indeed, records words of Christ even more overwhelming than those of St Paul, as though we were

one with Father and Son as they are one with each other—extra persons of the Blessed Trinity, if one may say so with profound reverence (John xvii, 21–23). Thus, if we were asking fully in the name of Christ, there could be no refusal.

But St Paul, as above quoted, also writes of faith. He writes of faith, not restricting the term to its present theological definition, but such as he knew it in the concrete with all its effects and accompaniments, including, for example not only *fides* in the strict sense, but also *fiducia* (confidence and hope) and *fidelitas* (faithfulness and charity). And that is the way in which Holy Writ usually speaks of faith; I think that I Cor. xiii, 13 is the only passage where there is question only of the theological virtue as such, distinguished as it there is from hope and charity. St Paul often writes in the same concrete way of original sin, embracing all that it has brought in its train, and of the Mosaic Law, such as it was practised in his time, under the direction of the scribes and pharisees.

It is not a part of the theological virtue of faith as such that it should be able to move mountains (cf. Matt. xvii, 20; xxi, 21; Mark xi, 23; Luke xvii, 6; I Cor. xiii, 2). Such miraculous power is a 'charismatic' gift, not directly sanctifying souls but helping them to believe in God's power and goodness. But where the theological virtue (belief in God revealing) is strong, and has all that in the concrete normally goes with such strong faith, miracles may more easily result. The fullness of faith is liable to produce such results, like the fullness of 'the name'. But we must not conclude that these are hard conditions, unlikely to be fulfilled, and so lose all confidence in prayer; against this we must set (e.g.), Matt. vii, 7–11. Nevertheless, in answer to a difficulty the full import of Scripture must be set forth. In our own time, indeed, it seems to be the function of 'the Little Flower' to show that prayer is answered; and certainly she has a marvellous way of delivering the goods, of scattering her roses.

C. LATTEY, S.J.

*Heythrop College, Chipping Norton, Oxon.*