

Bouquet has told very readably what is really the most exciting and fascinating story in the world, and he would be the last to wish the reader not to do some thinking of his own upon it. But unfortunately the danger of such books as this in such series as this is that they may encourage the taste for effortless generalisation which is so popular a substitute for thinking. At least so far as Christian (and to a degree Hebrew) religion is concerned, there are presuppositions underlying some very confident assertions in this book which should be taken with more than a grain of thought.

A. E. H. SWINSTEAD.

THE BURIAL OF CHRIST. By Professor Rahilly. (Cork University Press; 2s.)

Professor Rahilly, of Cork University, has given us a study on the Gospels and the Holy Shroud. Though the title of the book gives no clue to its thesis, the thesis is summed up thus:—

‘ . . . the Gospel accounts of our Lord’s burial leave a great number of details quite unsettled. The Evangelists deal only with the essential facts preceding the Resurrection

‘ It is therefore quite untenable to assert in the name of exegesis that we possess such a full account of all the events connected with the treatment and entombment of Christ’s body that we can, without further investigation, reject any alleged evidence that presents itself.

‘ A relic such as the Shroud of Turin must be examined on its merits ’ (p. 57).

We are of opinion that this moderate and scholarly thesis has been proved by Professor Rahilly. The wise limitations of his thesis are given in the following words: ‘ Perhaps—like the so-called Shroud of Cadonin, now shown to be an eleventh-century Mohammedan shawl—the Turin Shroud may one day be proved to be unauthentic. It is a question for Science and not for exegetical reasons ’ (p. 57).

A remark of Professor Rahilly suggests something of an investigation and reply. He says: ‘ The fact remains that Mary did not keep it ’ (*i.e.* the remainder of the alabaster box of ointment—*muron*). The use of *muron* is worth investigating; we give all the references.

We must never overlook the fact that almost every line in St. John’s Gospel is designed to fill a gap or resolve an ambiguity left by previous gossellers. If then our Lord’s defence of the Magdalen’s lavish outpouring of precious ointment is ambiguous in Matthew and Mark, St. John’s clear account settles the ambiguity. Judas, who seems to wish to save at least the remainder of the precious ointment still in the alabaster vase, is told to leave it (or her) alone, because she is keeping it against His burial.

Now this keeping of the remainder against His burial is precisely what is implied further on by St. Mark in the words: ‘ Mary Magdalen . . . bought sweet spices that coming they might anoint

Jesus' (Mk. xvi, 1). There is no mention of buying 'ointment' (*muron*). Yet they seem to have had this ointment, because St. Luke, writing after St. Mark, assures us that on their return from Calvary the women 'prepared spices and ointments' (*mura*) (Lk. xxiii, 56). A suggestive confirmation is found in St. Mark's statement: 'Mary Magdalen and Mary the Mother of James and Salome bought sweet spices that coming they might anoint Jesus' (*aleipso-sin*). This word is used only eight times in the Gospels. In six of the eight it is used of St. Mary Magdalen anointing our Blessed Lord. In five of the six, explicit mention is made of the ointment (*muron*). St. Mark is the only Gospeller who explicitly tells us the motive impelling the holy women to go to Calvary on Easter morning. St. Matthew merely says the women went to see the tomb.' St. Luke and St. John are silent about the motive.

In speaking of the four Gospel accounts of the burial, has not Professor Rahilly overlooked the evidence, when writing, 'What St. John adds to the Synoptists is the phrase *with the spices*'? (p. 26).

St. John has added two important facts:

(1) Whereas the Synoptists agree in saying that Jesus was wrapped in a 'Sindon' (the singular), St. John says that He was wrapped in 'Othoniois' (plural). This is the more significant because St. John alone describes these death-wrappings after the Resurrection, and carefully distinguishes these 'Othonia' from the 'Sudarium.'

(2) St. John very significantly adds: 'as the manner of the Jews is to bury' (Jn. xix, 40).

The Pharisee Nicodemus was careful to see that Jesus had a full ritual burial; and not just a hurried placing in a cave-tomb.

A point of historical interest has been overlooked by Professor Rahilly; and even by Dr. Beecher (*The Holy Shroud* by the Rev. P. A. Beecher, M. H. Gill, 1928), who has quoted documents without seeing all their significance.

Both Professor Rahilly (p. 54) and Dr. Beecher agree with the now commonly accepted opinion that the *Sudarium* mentioned by St. John is not the Shroud (Sindon). But Dr. Beecher quotes from four Lives of St. Nino, the Apostle of Georgia. We will give a typical extract from one:

'They found the linen early in Christ's tomb; whither Pilate and his wife came. When they found it, Pilate's wife asked for the linen and went away quickly to her house in Pontus, and she became a believer in Christ.

Some time afterwards the linen came into the hands of Luke, the Evangelist, who put it in a place known only to himself. Now they did not find the Shroud (*Sudari*), but it is said to have been found by Peter, who took it and kept it, but we know not if it has ever been discovered.'

The Armenian version, as translated by F. C. Conybeare (*ibid.*,

p. 72), gives substantially the same account, except that Conybeare accurately translates *Sudari* as 'napkin.'

St. Nino's witness is of first importance owing to the date and circumstances of her life. She died in 338 presumably beyond middle age. She was niece of the Patriarch of Jerusalem. For two years she 'served the Amenian Niaphori of Dvini, reading continually of Christ's 'sufferings on the Cross, of His burial, resurrection and garments, of His linen Shroud and Cross' (Beecher, p. 164).

VINCENT McNABB, O.P.

THE FEAST OF THE PRESENTATION OF THE VIRGIN MARY IN THE TEMPLE: An Historical and Literary Study. By Sister Mary Jerome Kishpaugh, O.P. (Catholic University of America Press, Washington, D.C., 1941.)

This study, presented as a thesis for the doctorate in philosophy, will be of interest chiefly to the liturgiologist. The writer first examines the accounts in the apocryphal Gospels of the story of the Presentation and then traces the cultus in the Eastern Church. It is claimed, on the evidence of Père Edmond Bouvy and Père Simeon Vailhé, two nineteenth century scholars, that the feast was first commemorated at Jerusalem, although not formally introduced into the Western Church until 1372. Anglo-Saxon calendars of the eleventh century reveal a liturgical festival known as the *Oblatio S.M.V.*, which is in substance the Eastern feast of the Presentation, and mention of a similar feast is found in a Hungarian twelfth century calendar. In England the feast became popular and frequent references to the story are found in early English literature, liturgical drama, etc. The spread of the cultus on the continent was mainly due to the efforts of Philippe de Mézières (1327-1405), a crusader from Picardy. The feast was suppressed by Pope St. Pius V as being of apocryphal origin, but was reintroduced and extended to the Universal Church by Pope Sixtus V in 1585. The thesis is well documented, scholarly and provided with a fairly extensive bibliography and with an index. At the same time one asks whether such scholarship could not have been devoted to a subject of greater importance both from the liturgical and the historical point of view.

K. E. POND.

PERSONALISM AND THE PROBLEM OF EVIL. By Floyd Hiatt Ross. (Yale Studies in Religion No. 11; Yale University Press; Humphrey Milford; 6s.)

The author of this essay is assistant Professor of Religion at the University of S. Carolina. He describes personalism as an idealistic system of philosophy which first found expression in the writings of Borden T. Bowne of Boston in the early part of this century.

Personalism denies the existence of extramental or 'impersonal' reality, and accepting as the only 'reals' the person of God and