

were one acquainted with the general philosophic outlook of the author a certain amount of obscurity would be dispelled. For those who are already sufficiently acquainted with the study of Ethics, the book will present some useful features, and, in many cases, the analysis, if laborious, is interesting and could prove stimulating.

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LE STIMATE DELLA PASSIONE. By Ignazio Bonetti. (Rovigo, 1952; n.p.)

Fr Bonetti, a member of the 'Stimatini Fathers', has written a short history of the origins of that devotion to the Five Wounds to which his order is dedicated which contains much valuable information; and although his exceptionally wide reading in medieval sources and modern critical studies seems not to have included much of the devotional literature of England, his book none the less has much to teach students of English spirituality in the Middle Ages. Early in his work he pays tribute to Gougaud's *Celtic Christianity* in his assertion that in such ancient Anglo-Saxon manuals of prayers as the Book of Cerne, the Book of Nunnaminster and MS. British Museum Royal 2A xx we have almost the first memorials of the deep and wide influence which Irish monastic spirituality was to exercise upon Latin Christendom, particularly in the evolution of extra-liturgical prayer: and presently he quotes one prayer from the Book of Cerne, 'My lord Jesus Christ, I adore thee stretched upon the Cross and crowned with thorns. I pray thee that thy wounds may be a medicine to my soul', and another from the Royal manuscript: 'Most merciful Jesu, who didst extend thy hands upon the wood of the Cross, stretch out to me the hand of thy mercy. With the spear of fear and love transfix my heart of stone, thou who didst suffer thy holy and venerable hands upon the Cross to be transfixed with nails. Take from my hands and from my heart each wound of wickedness, O lord Jesus Christ who didst suffer thine innocent hands to be nailed upon the Cross—'. Such quotations serve as a striking corrective of the old-fashioned view (and the author acknowledges his debt to Thurston in this respect) that devotion as we now know it to the Passion only begins with St Bernard and St Francis, and that we should look for its origins to the East. Bonetti also pays a much-needed tribute to the immense influence of Bede's writings upon later medieval spiritual writers. As it moves towards the later Middle Ages and modern times the work covers more familiar ground and loses some of its interest, and in treating of medieval German Dominican spirituality it is not always perfectly accurate; but it is to be commended for the exceptional justness with which it reconsiders St Francis of Assisi and finds him no longer first in time but still pre-eminent in the quantity and the quality of his devotion to the Passion.

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