

REVIEWS

MEDIAEVAL STUDIES

The English translation of the second volume of Professor De Wulf's *History of Mediaeval Philosophy*¹ has been eagerly expected. It deserves the same praises that we gave to the first volume; and it is even more welcome since it deals with the most important and brilliant period of that philosophy, the thirteenth century. A preliminary chapter gives us the background, setting up the cultural state of the society of the period, and describing the three main factors to which was chiefly due the striking development of that golden age of Scholastic Theology and Philosophy: the creation of the universities, the institution of the mendicant Orders, and the introduction to the Western world of philosophical works unknown before. These three factors had a converging influence: the universities became the centres of intensive teaching—Paris and Oxford were the meeting places of all those who were interested in speculative thought; the mendicant Orders produced a great number of masters—the Dominicans and Franciscans gave the greatest of all, Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventura and Duns Scotus; the new literature, Aristotle, Avicenna, Averroës, Avicbron, promoted study and discussion and introduced fresh problems. The first to make use of the new literature was Dominic Gundisalvi (who surely belongs rather to the twelfth than to the thirteenth century), Alfred the Englishman, Alexander Nequam, "men of transition," as they are rightly termed, who linked up the Arabian and Jewish world with Scholasticism, the forerunners of the great systematic thinkers. Then follows an account of the great Masters themselves, grouped according to their status or intellectual attitude and tendency, from the first Secular Masters of Paris, William of Auxerre, Philip the Chancellor, William of Auvergne, to Gonsalvus of Spain and Duns Scotus, whose activity belongs strictly to the fourteenth century. And here we make acquaintance with those famous Doctors, regulars and seculars, French, Flemish, Italian, Spanish, German, and with their sharp controversies. In a concluding chapter an attempt is made to synthesise the various doctrines: Augustinianism, Latin Averroism, Thomism, Latin Neo-Platonism, and to examine whether, in spite of the many divergencies between masters and groups of masters, and above the controversies between different schools and tendencies, there was a common patrimony, a doctrinal homogeneity in the great lines of thoughts.

¹ M. DE WULF. *History of Mediaeval Philosophy* translated by E. C. Messenger, Ph.D. Vol. II. The Thirteenth Century. (Longmans, pp. xii-379, 17s. 6d.)

Many changes and additions have been made in this new English edition based on the sixth French edition. Several sections have been written anew; the rest have been entirely revised and brought to date where there was need. Without entering into details, particularly with regard to the not few controversial points raised in the last chapter, we may confidently say that the improvements introduced make this book a standard work. I do not think, however, there is any probability that Grosseteste is the author of the treatise *De Anima* published by Baur among his works. Later studies have shown that Adam of Buckfield and Adam of Bouchermefort are not two distinct masters but one and the same; Grabmann himself seems to be now convinced of their identity. It seems a great pity that a long section on the new Latin translations of philosophical works has been omitted in the English translation; it would seem that the English reader either is thought incapable of appreciating its value, or is expected to purchase, besides the English, also the French edition.

"The purpose of this volume is to present a large body of available information about a group of mediæval authors, the writers of thirteenth-century England" (p. vii).² The need for such an attempt has been felt for quite a long time, and Glorieux's *Répertoire des maîtres en Théologie de Paris au XIII^e siècle* has shown us how it could be successfully achieved. This dictionary contains about 350 writers listed under their Christian names, the only real name by which they were then known. Completeness, of course, cannot be claimed, and it is hardly to be expected even in the most perfect of this kind of works. However, in spite of its many good qualities and of the real help which this book will afford to students, it does not, I am afraid, fill the gap, and is somewhat disappointing; chiefly so when dealing with philosophers and theologians, who after all form the main bulk of thirteenth century writers. It is quite clear that the author is not familiar with mediæval philosophy. Several items are extremely irritating; many references have not been verified; confusions creep in quite frequently; the *Incipits* of manuscripts are sometimes incomplete or inaccurate; there is a lack of uniformity in the use of sources and quotations; in short, the whole book betrays a certain hastiness in its composition. The information on Dominican authors is particularly poor and shows a very imperfect knowledge of the sources of Dominican history, though, I confess, works on English Dominican history

² J. C. RUSSELL. *Dictionary of Writers of Thirteenth Century England*. (Supplement No. 3 to the Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research). (Longmans, pp. x-210, 7s. 6d.)

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are not so numerous as on the Franciscans. To give one of two instances, it suffices to glance at Adam of Bechesoueres, Adam of Buckfield, Alexander of Hales, William of Hothum, to realise how the information may be misleading. Dr. Russell seems to be unaware that latest research has thrown serious doubts upon the English nationality of Richard de Mediavilla; hence Pelster's identification is less than probable. Roger of Marston deserves something more than the mere notice that he "was the author of some scholastic questions" (p. 145). This list can be easily multiplied. That the author's familiarity with Latin place-names leaves room for improvement is suggested by the fact that Strasbourg is referred to as "Argentine." Of course, I do not mean to say that there is nothing in this book deserving praise; some items are well done (cfr. John of St. Albans, John of St. Giles) and even as it is, it will help many beginners, if they know how to use it. But in order to be of real value, it has to be thoroughly revised, if not entirely rewritten. Dr. Russell with the informations at his hand can do it; and we expect it from him.

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THE WINDSOR TAPESTRY. Being a Study of the Life, Heritage and Abdication of H.R.H. The Duke of Windsor, K.G. By Compton Mackenzie. (Rich & Cowan; 16s.)

"Those devoted to that Prince will always believe that he was treated unfairly throughout his reign; but if justice had been accorded to him when his reign was over, they would have held their tongues." (p. 540.) The "detestable campaign—victualled by self-righteousness, guilty fears, petty revenge, bruised vanity, and distorted jealousy, and armed with scandal, lie and innuendo" has loosed Mr. Mackenzie's tongue with an effectiveness which may be surmised by the embarrassment of the reception accorded this book by the Governmental and conformist press. He makes no claim to impartial judgment, his brief is for the defence. But his counter-indictments are terrible, and demand that the accused should reply. An immense amount of research, learning, wit, reason and passion has gone to the making of this book. Perhaps the contemporary powers and publicists will be able to continue to find pretexts for disregarding it; the historians of the future certainly will not be able to do so.

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