

REVIEWS

MEDIAEVAL STUDIES

We have already pointed out in previous notes the great service which a thorough knowledge of the Arabian philosophers may render towards a fuller appreciation of mediæval thought. An obvious difficulty against this, however, lies in the obscurity and ambiguity of the philosophical language adopted by the Arabian thinkers; for often under the same expression one discovers a great variety of meaning, not only in different branches of learning, but even in the treatment of the same subject by various writers.

In order to meet these difficulties, and to introduce us to Avicenna, the Prince of Arabian philosophers, as he was called by his contemporaries, Mlle. A.-M. Goichon has translated into French his letter on *Definitions*.¹ It is no easy task to translate into a modern language a philosophical work of Avicenna, let alone such a concise and arduous one as the treatise under review. However, it will be found that she has achieved her object on the whole with great fidelity. But not only has Mlle. Goichon presented us with a good translation, she has accompanied the text of each definition with a good commentary taken from the different works of Avicenna himself, in such a way that each definition forms the object of a short but clear and precise monograph. We fully agree with the great Arabist, Miguel Asin Palacios, in his preface: "The double commentary of the writer is a model of critical and historical research, which will help to place Avicenna in the place due to him in the history of philosophy, and especially of Islamic philosophy" (p. xii).

Durandus of St. Pourçain, *Doctor resolutissimus*, the Dominican dissentient from the Thomistic School, edited thrice his Commentary on the Sentences owing to the replies given to his attacks on Thomism. One of the fundamental points of dissent is his theory of knowledge. A *Quaestio de Natura Cognitionis*, hitherto unknown in the first redaction, completely omitted in the second, and rewritten by Durandus in the third, had been published, six years ago, by Professor Joseph Koch from texts assembled out of the commentaries on the sentences of Peter de la Palude, O.P., one of the chief opponents of Durandus and one from whom he quotes a great deal in his own works. Having now discovered in MS. 91 of the *Domgymnasium* library of Magdeburg the *lectura Durandi* on the Second Book of the Sentences in its first redaction, Dr. Koch gives us a second revised edition

¹ A.-M. GOICHON: *Introduction à Avicenne. Son Épître des Définitions. Traduction avec Notes. Préface de Miguel Asin Palacios.* (Bibliothèque Française de Philosophie; 3^e série.) (Paris; Desclée de Brouwer; pp. xxxvii—217. 35 frs.)

of the *Quaestio*.² To this he adds a Quodlibet of Hervaeus Natalis de Nedellec against Durandus, and a disputation between the *Doctor Resolutissimus* and an anonymous defender of Aquinas' doctrine. These are three questions of the utmost importance for a just estimate of Durandus' psychology. Dr. Koch's previous work on Durandus has shown him to be an authority on the subject.

Robert Kilwardby, O.P. (1279), Archbishop of Canterbury and Cardinal, was mainly known, until a few years ago, for the condemnation at Oxford, in 1277, of certain Thomistic theses. Lately however he has attracted the attention of mediævalists as one of the most authoritative witnesses in the conflict between the old so-called Augustinian and the new Aristotelian School. But practically nothing, besides some few extracts, has been published of his writings. Dr. F. Stegmüller, who has already written an interesting study on Kilwardby's life and works, has now given us an important Question from the *Commentary on the Sentences* on the nature of Theology.³ This commentary, Kilwardby's chief theological work, was written between 1248, when he succeeded Richard Fishacre, O.P., as Professor of Theology, and 1261, when he was elected Provincial of the English Province. At the same time there were teaching in Oxford Adam Marsh or de Marisco, the first Franciscan professor, Thomas of York and Richard Rufus, and at Paris, Albertus Magnus, St. Bonaventure, St. Thomas and Peter de Tarentaise. Hence the importance of this Question which throws light on the problem as it was discussed at Oxford. The edition is made from the only extant MSS. at Merton College and Worcester Cathedral. The quotations are verified and references to Richard Fishacre, O.P., probably his master, and Alexander of Hales, O.F.M., are given in full. A short biographical sketch precedes the text.

These two little books fully maintain the high standard set by the other pamphlets of this series. DANIEL A. CALLUS, O.P.

NOTICES

MEDIEVAL SOCIALISM. By Bede Jarrett, O.P., M.A. (Burns Oates; 2/6.)

This short and excellent book was first published more than twenty years ago in a famous 6d. series called the *People's*

² DURANDI DE S. PORCIANO, O.P.: *Quaestio de natura Cognitionis* (II Sent. [A] D. 3. Q. 5) et *Disputatio cum anonymo quodam necnon Determinatio Hervei Natalis*, O.P. (Quol. III, Q. 8), ad fidem MSS. edidit D. Dr. Josephus Koch. Editio altera emendatior. (Opuscula et Textus, VI.) (Münster: Aschendorff, 1935; pp. 78. RM. 1.20.)

³ F. STEGMÜLLER: *Roberti Kilwardby, O. Pr. De Natura Theologiae*. (Opuscula et Textus, fasc. XVII.) (Münster: Aschendorff, 1935; pp. 56. RM. 1.10.)