

say.' That she is so often right, even in the detail of the phrases, is a measure of the spiritual sympathy of this book.

The illustrations, fourteen, black-and-white from wood-cuts also made by Caryll Houselander, seal the unity of the theme. Stark and dark at first glance, they grow on you as the meditation sinks in. Even the Fourth Station, where our Lady is made taller than our Lord, is a perfect vehicle of the thought and feeling of the text.

GERARD M. CORR, O.S.M.

NEW LIGHT ON THE PASSION OF OUR DIVINE LORD. By Rev. Patrick O'Connell, B.D. (Gill; 7s. 6d.)

Father O'Connell gives us the story of the Holy Shroud of Turin and collates its evidence of our Lord's sufferings with the details given in the visions of St Bridget of Sweden, the Venerable Maria d'Agreda, Anne Catherine Emmerich and Teresa Neumann. There are ten illustrations, of which one is of the Crucifixion in accordance with these five sources of evidence. A stirring of devotion by means of a mental and visual representation of what happened—such is the purpose of the book. It will surely be attained for most readers. Imagination shrinks from the details of the Passion. This book dwells on them.

Two things attract a serious reader of such a book: Is the Shroud genuine? Is it reliable as a source of points for meditation on the Passion? Father O'Connell takes it as a sort of fifth Gospel and argues strongly for its absolute certainty. Here he is persuasive, but a clearer presentation and arrangement of the evidence and the illustrations would be required to bring conviction to the critical reader. His strongest argument is, after all, the fact that over twenty years of intensive study by impartial scientific workers have shown the supernatural character of the Shroud. In the words of Pope Pius XI: 'The Holy Shroud of Turin is still mysterious, but it is certainly not the work of any human hand. This, one can now say, is demonstrated. We said mysterious because the sacred object still involves many problems, but certainly it is more sacred than perhaps any other; and, as is now established in the most positive way, even apart from any idea of faith or Christian piety, it is certainly not a human work.' It follows that we may safely use it in our reconstruction of the scene on Calvary. The resultant impression of what our Lord suffered is shocking beyond words. The additional details from the mystics can be ignored. They do help, but they also distract. The Shroud itself is a book of the sufferings of Christ, evidence pathetic and eternal of his immeasurable love for us.

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