

BOOK REVIEWS

THE NATURE AND THE EFFECT OF THE HERESY OF THE FRATICELLI. By Decima L. Douie, Ph.D. (Manchester University Press, 1932. Pp. xix, 292; 17/6 net.)

Miss Douie is already known to students of Franciscan History as a contributor of recent years to the *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum*. Now she has produced a book—No. LXI of the Manchester University *Historical Series*—and a very admirable one too. In its judicious weighing up of historical documents, in its sober and balanced comment on the movements and events recorded, Miss Douie's book is a welcome change from a certain type of recent literature which uses Franciscan history as a background for personal display of dramatic talent or inventive ingenuity. Here, on the contrary, we have a book of which the purpose is not to press some personal theory or launch a thesis, but just to assay the contribution to religious experience of the Franciscan Spirituals and to trace their fortunes during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The book opens with a chapter on the origin and development of the *Spirituals*. It is brief, necessarily, but quite adequate; though we do not agree with Miss Douie's statement (p. 21) that the Spirituals 'saved the originality of the foundation of St. Francis': an arch must have *two* supports. There follows a chapter on *The Influence of Joachim of Flora*; valuable, as showing the emotional and literary background to the Spiritual movement. Then follow—and this perhaps is the best done section of the book—three admirable chapters devoted respectively to Angelo da Clareno, Olivi, and Ubertino da Casale. Miss Douie's treatment is first-rate: she opens in each case with a brief historical outline of the life, then passes on to an estimate of the man's character, influence and ideals. This latter task is not so elusive as might appear at first sight, for these three post-Bonaventure pillars of the Spirituals were prolific writers with a masterly power of self-expression; herein, as in so much else, entirely different from certain of the early followers of St. Francis, with whom, nevertheless, many are wont to class them. A word of comment on each: Angelo da Clareno wrote an *Exposition of the Rule of St. Francis*; so also did St. Bonaventure, but not with this should comparison be instituted, for it is a *legal* document and no more, but rather with the saint's beau-

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tiful *Sermo super Regulam*, which is a very different affair. In her chapter on *Olivi*, Miss Douie finds it hard to understand (p. 117) the opposition his moderate tone evoked. It is really quite simple: with all his moderation *Olivi* was sectarian, and his opponents well understood that sectarianism pressed to its logical conclusion could only lead to schism, as happened with the Clarenists, or to abandonment of the Order, as happened in the case of *Ubertino*. *Ubertino* is a most attractive character, and Miss Douie rises well to her subject, but once more we part company with her when she hails as *statesmanlike* (p. 147) his persistent advocacy of separation. The remainder of her book deals more expressly with the *Fratricelli*, and so, of course, must go at length into the conflict between Pope John XXII and the Order. The history of the dispute is carefully traced, and of great interest is the section given to *Jean d'Anneux* and his derisive strictures on the Order. The whole business was desperately an affair of words—*non nisi de vocis œquivocis*—wrote *P. Marchant*¹—*de apicibus politici juris, de verborum significationibus et interpretationibus*—yet fraught with the saddest results; for, however obscure even still, the origins of the *Fratricelli* are surely to be found therein. Miss Douie helps us along admirably, and we must refer to her book those who would follow the whole history in detail. She is a good guide, and one of the most important features of her book is the wise use she has made of the very best authorities, bringing into the handy compass of a single volume the many learned contributions to the subject continually appearing in various weighty periodicals.

There are one or two slips. To say (p. 3) that *Gregory IX* declared that the *Friars* were bound to obey only those parts of the Gospel contained in the Rule, looks at first sight as though he dispensed them from all the rest; 'bound by their profession of the Rule to those Gospel ordinances only which the Rule contained,' is what is meant. Then, because *Philip of Majorca* had, as a novice, thrown off his Dominican habit (p. 251: n. 8) he did not become thereby an *apostate*. *Hefele* was Bishop of *Rottenburg* not *Rotterdam* (p. 275); and, finally, why does Miss Douie write so often *observation* of the Rule, when she means *observance*? But these are all small points. Miss Douie is to be congratulated upon a really excellent book.

O.F.M.

¹*Fundamenta Duodecim Ord. FF. Min.* Antwerp 1657: Part II: Tit. x: p. 27.