

labours; ultimately, indeed, a disgrace to the Church—so *this*, a non-Catholic might say, is Catholic theology! The only honourable course open to the publishers is to withdraw the book from circulation and see that it is submitted to the most searching revision, preferably by another hand; for as it stands, it is certainly not fit for publication.

CORNELIUS ERNST, O.P.

In the Editions du Seuil series 'Maîtres spirituels' Mme Jeanne Ancelet-Hustache has published the latest of her valuable contributions to the study of late medieval mysticism, an anthology with introduction, *Maître Eckhart et la mystique rhénane* (Paris, 1956): and this has now been published in an English version made by Hilda Graef (who has translated the French introduction but, most commendably, has gone as Mme Ancelet-Hustache did to the medieval German originals of the selected works) *Master Eckhart and the Rhineland Mystics* (London, Longmans, 1957, 6s.).

The author gives us an exceptionally well-informed if somewhat cursorily executed account of Eckhart's background. The chief omission is any mention of the German and Dutch heretics who had before him preached a Dionysian 'deification', and had on that account been condemned. Such mention would have given even further point to her insistence that the resemblances in Eckhart to pseudo-Dionysius are superficial, and that the true centre of his doctrine is his teaching of the birth of the Word in the soul, which she expounds as the doctrine of the mystical body, with valuable allusions to those places in St John and St Paul to which Eckhart went for his proofs. Though, in common with all who love Eckhart as a teacher, she is distressed by his condemnation, she is scrupulously fair in her treatment, even pointing out those places in the translated works where condemned propositions occur: but such places generally merit our close attention. Thus in the sermon *In hoc apparuit caritas* we have one such proposition, word for word: 'All that (the Father) ever gave (to the Son) in His human nature is neither more alien nor further removed from me than from Him'; but what the Bull *In agro dominico* does not say is that Eckhart goes on at once to say: 'Be as certain of this as of my life; if we are thus to receive from Him, we must be in externity, lifted above time'. We need not ask for any more striking illustration of the words of reproof which Tauler uses later to address to Eckhart's audiences, reminding them that their master had talked to them of the things of eternity, but they had misinterpreted his words as referring to this earthly life.

Yet in considering the circumstances and the terms of his condemnation, we must remember the hair's breadth which sometimes

separates his utterances from those of earlier, popular teachers who were essentially heretical: and a demonstration of this would have added to the value of this present work. It is a pity that the author does not seem to know of the most recent suggestions as to the real authorship of *The Mirror of Simple Souls*, for these might for her purposes have formed an excellent starting-point. She is indignant, rightly, against those who have treated *Sister Katrei* as a genuine work of Eckhart, but she has in her indignation lost sight of the value of this work as a document of the atmosphere of popular fervour which helped to form his style and in part contributed to his downfall.

A special word of praise must be said for the illustrations to the French edition, almost all of which have been reproduced in the English. Although in quality they are not better than we need expect in so cheap a publication, in quantity and in nature they provide a lively and eloquent accompaniment to the printed text. Two merit particular mention, scenes (there are others, not here shown) by the same artist from a Brussels manuscript dated 1352, that is, four years after the Black Death. The first shows a crowd hurrying the dead to burial in crudely-made coffins: in the second we see a procession of weirdly-garbed Flagellants headed by banners and a crucifix. It would be useful to know more than we are told here of the manuscript and the accompanying text, a chronicle; but still the painter has made this diptych speak for itself and say *Post hoc, propter hoc*.

ERIC COLLEDGE

DANILO DOLCI ET LA REVOLUTION OUVERTE. Various authors. (Desclée de Brouwer, Bruges; B. fr. 57.)

Danilo Dolci, a young architect who had shared the experience of Don Zeno's Nomadelpia, came back in 1952 to the Sicilian fishing village of Trappetto, where his father was once stationmaster. He had fourpence in his pocket and no very clear idea of how to go to work, but told people in the village that he had come to live with the poorest and do what he could so that all might live as brothers. Trappetto and its neighbouring town of Partinico are a depressed area, neglected by Church, State, and the social powers that be, ridden with unemployment, banditry, and often gruesome superstitions. Dolci studied the situation, made friends in the village, and built with more faith than funds what in Britain we would call a settlement house, which he named *Borgo di Dio*. Later he established a second *Borgo di Dio* at Partinico. In these two houses he sheltered the homeless and taught the children, introducing them to music and art: he also set up a library and adult education. Reaching out from these bases he also organized an irrigation scheme, voluntary road work, mutual aid, and pressure