

## REVIEWS

The reader will not find here any complete summary of events of Church history. This volume for example tells nothing of the history of St. John the Apostle or of the Johannine tradition that developed in Asia Minor, and nothing of the work of St. Jerome or of St. Augustine. But the outline if incomplete is not distorted. The book compares in character with the common introductory text-book as a scholarly essay might compare with an encyclopaedia article. Scholarly the book certainly is, and with scholarship that is alive and is Catholic in spirit. And providing as it does the foundations of a sound knowledge of Church history it may be called an excellent book of introduction.

Christianity is shown in relation at all points or at grips with living intelligible forces. Judaism here is not the wretched foil that our text-books would often show it as being, but the great and tragic 'pedagogue' unto Christ. And the pagan religions are seen in their true character and importance. The pagan philosophies too: Stoic, Platonic, Neoplatonic. The exposition carefully and humbly attempted of the character of the Christian religion is admirably suited to the requirements of a historical understanding of the Church.

The narrative history is clearly, in places brilliantly told. It is a serious defect however that no adequate impression is given of the spiritual life that the Church continued to live throughout the dark period of heresy and schism. But in atonement for this there is a grim lesson to be learned concerning the inherent necessity of the papal office in the Church. This last section of the book will greatly help towards the proper understanding of the sense in which Catholic Christianity may yet be called Roman; and as the book concludes one is left to look forward eagerly to that unfolding of the explanation which the second volume will provide.

Parenthetically, gratitude should be expressed for the provision of several useful chronological tables and a map of the Roman empire; but on the other hand protest must be made against the practice whether of anonymous quotation or of quotation without reference to the source; and finally it may be hoped that in future editions of this book no important character may be introduced without notice of his date.

R.K.

THE HOLY SHROUD OF TURIN. By Arthur Stapylton Barnes, M.A. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne; 7/6.)

Those of us who have known a thirst for objective reality which no mere imagining of an 'ideal type of beauty' may satisfy, a longing for the sight of Christ's human face, may be

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predisposed thereby to accept the evidence in favour of the authenticity of the Holy Shroud at Turin. Guarding, however, against any undue influence of desire by which 'a devoted will may bend the understanding,' we may say that the arguments set forth by Mgr. Barnes appear wholly convincing. They are archeological and scientific rather than historical and literary, but they are crowned by the corroborating testimony of Christian art.

Mgr. Barnes shows the anomalous position of the disputants in the argument that ensued shortly after the exposition of the relic in 1898, when the negative character of the image was first discovered. Agnostics like M. Yves Delage, professor of biology at the Sorbonne, contended for its genuineness, which churchmen headed by Canon Chevalier denied. The affirmation was based upon experiments carried out by French scientists, showing that partly by contact, partly by vaporous emanations, a human body could produce upon a linen sheet treated with aloe, a negative image analogous to that made by light on a sensitive photographic plate. The opposing side relied in the main upon an episcopal document, apparently of the fourteenth century, which stated that the shroud at Lirey, identified by all with the shroud now at Turin, was only a painting.

Re-examination of the shroud made possible by its exposition in 1931, has shown beyond doubt that the image on it cannot have been the product of a fourteenth century artist, nor indeed of pigments of any age. The image must have been made by a human body, and that the body of Christ; for the fantastic supposition that a mediaeval criminal had been tortured and put to death in the same way as Christ for the sake of producing an image of his physical sufferings undergone in the Passion, apart from more cogent reasons, could not conceivably account for the beauty and majesty of the face on the shroud.

The author regards the historical evidence or the lack of it in this case as of secondary importance. He shows that though there are lacunae in the continuity of the relic's history, yet these appear to be not so great but that they may be leaped over with safety; indeed, we are driven to such a procedure by the compelling force of the testimony of the object.

Within the seventy pages that form the book there are fascinating side excursions into various matters: the Russian Cross, St. Louis' relic of the Crown of Thorns, Byzantine crucifixes, Roman excavations and what not, all throwing light upon the shroud and illumined by it in their turn. Some of the explanations are ingenious and claim to be no more; not one of them is without interest.

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The illustrations are on the whole good, although the glossy paper on which they are printed is artistically regrettable. They are large and sufficiently clear to awaken in the reader the desire to have the really beautiful official photographs that have been made at Turin.

M.E.K.

**FLEE TO THE FIELDS** : a symposium by various authors. (Heath Cranton; 5/-).

This book presents for the first time a compendious account of 'the Faith and Works of the Catholic Land Movement.' It is of importance because, although the immediately practical value of the work being done is already widely appreciated, the direction of its faith is less commonly understood.

There would appear to be two schools among supporters of the Movement. One school admires it as a heroic attempt to better the lot of such Catholic jetsam as may be discarded by the economic tide—the tide of which the ebb and flow is called a Trade Cycle. The second school regards it as something of more positive and permanent value, and declares that the restoration of the English peasantry is a great crusade, not inspired alone by immediate necessity. This school includes, of course, all Catholic Distributists, including those who abhor all machinery, and whose clothes are always made by hand. And it will be pleasant to many and surprising to most to find that the Movement here declares officially for this second school.

Many interesting facts come to light. For example, imposing authorities are cited 'as having proved that the principles of machinery were known to the ancient Chinese and Greeks, and deliberately rejected by an intelligence which foresaw the outcome of their application to industry.'

Concerning the vexed question of machinery, a very wise chapter has been contributed by Mr. George Maxwell, and nobody who would appreciate the position of the 'fanatics' in this matter should fail to read it. It should also be pondered by those with dreams of Culture for the Masses, and the ultimate supersession of human labour.

A distinction too seldom drawn is that between poverty and squalor. Thus slum-dwellers to-day are extremely poor (at least in a materialist sense), and they exist under conditions of extreme squalor. The chief difference between the authors of this book and other social reformers who still believe in human liberty, is that they work primarily to remove squalor from the world, there being but little on the land, and are less certain about the undesirability of poverty; while others think only in