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A History of the Irish Dominicans by M. H MacInerny

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the numbering in the analysis; in others, that the text has no corresponding numbering. Punctuation leaves something to be desired; it is fatiguing to have to read such a sentence as this (p.63): "This reading of the situation [*i.e.* Hatch's theory] was very generally accepted, and until Sohm in 1892 completed the cycle by balancing Hatch's purely mundane theory of the ministry with a theory as purely charismatic may be said in one modification or another to have held the field." But these are slight disadvantages in a work which proves itself to be a modest, as it is an eminently careful and unbiassed investigation of an important branch of Christian origins.

T. W. E. DRURY.

A HISTORY OF THE IRISH DOMINICANS. By M. H. MacInerny, O.P. Vol. I., Irish Dominican Bishops (1224-1307). (Browne and Nolan.) 10s. 6d.

In this bulky volume of over 600 pages we have only the first-fruits of Father MacInerny's researches into the history of the Irish branch of the Order to which he belongs. Four other volumes are to follow, which will deal with Martyrs and Confessors; Provincials of the Order in Ireland; Professors, Preachers and Writers; and Priorities, their Founders, Benefactors and Vicissitudes. All students of Irish Church history will await these succeeding volumes with considerable interest.

The author of this monumental work tells us that four years ago he was brought back from Australia to undertake it. Those four years must have been spent in unremitting toil. The system adopted has been to unearth every possible scrap of material from its hiding place on the shelves or in the muniment room of one of the many Libraries and Record Offices visited by Father MacInerny, and not only to use it in compiling the work, but to publish it in full. Thus any who choose to differ from the conclusions arrived at can use the material to form their own conclusions without the trouble of unearthing it for themselves.

The Dominican Archbishops and Bishops who are dealt with in this first volume are Reginald, O'Scannell and Jorz of Armagh, MacKelly of Cashel, Darlington and Hotham of Dublin, O'Sullivan of Cloyne and Lismore, Cristin of Ardfert, O'Lee of Killala, O'Connor and O'Donnaver of Elphin, O'Scoba of Raphoe and O'Currin of Kilfenora. They were not, for the most part, men of any great eminence in their day, possibly of even less eminence than Father MacInerny thinks. Yet they are not, from a historical point of view, the less interesting on that account. The history of any period is more clearly shown in the lives of the mediocre than of the great, and Ireland has suffered from having its history, both ecclesiastical and political, written by men who were mere par-

tizans, without the energy or the patience to make full study of the available material.

And on the whole we must admit that Father MacInerny has used his material well. He usually avoids filling up the gaps in his material by plausible conjectures, a fault that is only too common in this kind of work. If, to prelates of the Dominican Order he is inclined to be "to their faults a little blind," and to excuse in them those failings which he soundly trounces in others, we can easily excuse one who is writing a history of his own Order.

But there is one blot upon the work which, while failing to detract from its value as a compendium of historic material, not only causes annoyance to the reader, but also weakens his trust in the soundness of the author's judgement. That blot is the savage political bitterness which continually shows itself. One imagines, as one reads, that when the author, back from Australia, had finished a sound piece of historic work, some other person commented upon it in terms such as this:—"Oh, my dear fellow, this is far too dry. It will never be read. You have been so long away that you have forgotten what Irish taste demands. You must spice it up a bit with some good strong digs at the English and at Protestants."

And so, accordingly, it has been "spiced up." We need only give one instance. On pp. 301ff. the author has been dealing with the murder of "Little St. Hugh of Lincoln," the boy who was believed to have been crucified by the Jews in 1255. A sentence begins with the very fair statement: "Rightly or wrongly, the annalists of the thirteenth century credited the Jews of their time with a rabid malevolence towards Catholics," and there the sentence might well end, and possibly did end originally, if our theory is correct. But the author goes on to add: "and for this malevolence a later and more atrocious parallel may be found in the misdeeds of Orangemen in Ireland." While we would be the last to assert that Orangemen have no misdeeds to answer for, we must protest against this unnecessary bridging of six centuries in order to make a bitter attack, which is only supported by a general reference to "The Orange Society," a work by a New Zealand Roman Catholic Bishop. And if the parallel is complete (unless our knowledge of the English language is at fault), malevolence with which the Jews are "rightly or wrongly" credited by thirteenth-century writers can only find a parallel in that with which the Orangemen are "rightly or wrongly" credited by Bishop Cleary of Auckland, or, for that matter, by Father MacInerny himself. We hope that he will refrain in his future volumes from disfiguring a sound piece of historical work with statements which, even if they were true, are yet surely unnecessary to the history of the Dominican Order in Ireland.

JOHN L. ROBINSON.