

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

on the local landowners and authorities. Little by little he chipped away the wall of despair that has traditionally prevented people in Sicily from helping themselves. Over three or four years he brought the people new hope and confidence and above all a new ideal: the ideal of the Gospel as something not locked in a book, but lived and therefore understood.

There are two morals to this story, and both are in this book. The first can be read in the contribution by Dolci himself and by two fishermen of Trappetto who tell his story as they saw it. It is the story of Antigoni, of Cardijn in the slums of Brussels, of the English settlements and community associations, of community development in India or Africa. At the root of every really successful social change lies education, and of more than a purely intellectual kind. It must be education based on life, inspired by a high ideal and a true understanding of and respect for personality and community, resting on persuasion and not violence: education which, as Dolci says, puts the greatest things within reach of even the least among the people. Such education cannot be on a mass scale. It comes down, in the last resort, to one man and a little circle around him. And for that reason it can be started, as Dolci or Cardijn started it, by one man going among the people alone, with no kind of mandate or support: which is at once the easiest and the most difficult way of all.

But secondly, basic education and community development, like every other good thing, can be twisted into a heresy. Dolci has been very directly influenced by Gandhi, and has himself used, very successfully, the technique of the fast unto death. He has also had the misfortune to be interpreted by another contributor to this book, Professor Aldo Capitini of Cagliari. I suppose one cannot object to Capitini's calling Dolci's activities a total choral revolution, though it makes them sound like a younger brother to the revival of Gregorian chant. But one can certainly object, as Fr Journet does at the end of the book, to the pacifist, utopian, naive philosophy which Capitini unnecessarily claims to be implied in what Dolci has done. The other thoroughly objectionable character in this book, though in quite a different *genre*, is the self-satisfied French girl guide whose views on slumming in Partinico figure as Chapter I.

MICHAEL P. FOGARTY

FROM FASHIONS TO THE FATHERS. Hilda C. Graef. (Newman Press; \$4.00.)

It is difficult to understand what impels a person to put into print the story of his or her own life. Perhaps in our own days it is simply the prodding of publishers and the thought of the royalties held out as a