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I.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM MODERN CRITICISM.

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In view of the many conflicting claims made for and against modern criticism it is not an easy task to point out the lessons to be learned from it. For, on the one hand, it is claimed that it breeds infidelity and scatters the seeds of doubt, while, on the other, it is maintained that modern criticism removes the remnants of superstition and implants into the mind of the persevering student a fullness of hope and trust and a firmness of faith unattainable in the old school of thought. All that is needed is that search after truth be continued beyond the elementary stage. What one student sees as lessons learned may be very repugnant to another. For this reason we venture to make a few preliminary observations.

(1) No one school of thought has a monopoly of revelation or of the truth. This should lead to more general liberality and less spirited antagonism, as we may be as far out of the way as those we condemn. (2) Modern criticism has gained its right to live. This is an axiom, and not a proposition to be proved. In the light of history it were as preposterous to attempt to either prove or deny that the whole is greater than any of its parts as to venture to prove or deny the legitimacy

IX.

THE MONASTICISM OF THE MIDDLE AGES.

BY PROF. DAVID S. SCHAFF, D.D.

The Middle Ages furnish no more imposing phenomenon than monasticism. At the side of the absolute papacy, the crusades, the universities, the cathedrals and scholasticism, it stands forth as one of their distinctive features. And with all those other movements the activity of the monk was efficiently associated. He was, with the popes, the chief promoter of the crusades. He was among the great builders. He furnished the chief teachers to the universities and numbered in his order the profoundest of the schoolmen. The most brilliant periods of the papacy and the glory of monasticism were contemporaneous. When monasticism was experiencing its deepest humiliation, the Middle Ages were drawing to a close and its august institutions crumbling under the impact of the atmosphere of a new order of things.

If it be compared with the monachism of the earlier period of the church, the mediæval institution will be found to equal it in the number of its great monks and to exceed it in useful activity. Among the distinguished Fathers of the Post-Nicene period who advocated monasticism were Gregory of Egypt, Athanasius, Basil, Gregory of Nyssa, Ambrose, Augustine and Jerome. In the Middle Ages the list is certainly as imposing. There we have Anselm, Albertus Magnus, Bonaventura, Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus among the schoolmen, St. Bernard and Hugo de St. Victor, Eckart and Tauler among the mystics, Hildegard and Joachim of Floris among the seers, the authors of *Dies iræ* and *Stabat mater* and Adam de St. Victor among the hymnists, Anthony of Padua, Bernardino of Siena, Bertholdt of Regensburg and Savonarola among the preachers and, in a class by himself, Francis d'Assisi.

Of the five epochs in the history of monasticism two belong to the Middle Ages proper. The appearance of the hermit and the development of the eremite mode of life belong to the fourth century. Benedict of Nursia of the sixth century, and his well-systematized rule marks the second epoch. The development of the Society of Jeus in the sixteenth century marks the last epoch. The two between are represented by the monastic revival starting from the convent of Cluny as a center in the tenth and eleventh centuries and the rise and spread of the mendicant orders in the thirteenth century. Cluny was the chief reforming force of Western Europe for more than a century until Gregory VII., proceeding out of Cluny, began in 1050 to regenerate the papacy and set it on an altogether new career of prominence in the affairs of the church and the world. After that time Cluny still continued for a while to be the rival of Rome as a religious force. And then the sister order of the Cistercians continued to influence piety and the cause of civilization for a considerable time after Cluny itself had lost its original energy. In the course of its history, Cluny furnished three popes, Gregory VII., Urban II. and Paschal II. and the antipope Anacletus II. Gelasius, driven from Rome in 1118, found refuge within its walls and there he died lying on ashes and there he was buried. The cardinals who elected his successor, Calixtus II., met in its halls. Kings joined with popes in doing it honor. Four of its abbots were canonized. Its basilica was the finest in the West after St. Peters. There the long and tender poem so full of Christian hope was probably written, *Urbs Zion*, from which "Jerusalem the Golden" and other kindred hymns are taken. There Abaelard, wearied and humbled, found his last refuge and a kindly treatment, overlooking all errors and sins, from Peter the Venerable. Its rule stimulated such men as William of Hirschau in 1077, who made Hirschau in Swabia the model convent of southern Germany.

The Cluniacs belonged to one of the four main monastic families of the Middle Ages, the Benedictines. So did the

Cistercians, whose first convent in the marshes of Citeaux, founded in 1098, became the center of large groups of convents throughout Western Europe. To them Bernard, afterwards abbot and founder of Clairvaux, belonged. With wealth and fame the monks of Cluny became lax in the observance of their rule. And the *carta charitatis*, the rule of love, adopted by Stephen Harding and the monks of Citeaux, once more emphasized the strict observance of the rule of St. Benedict, which combined manual work with services of piety. They effected a more compact organization of its houses than was in vogue among the Cluniacs. The attack of St. Bernard upon the loose habits of Cluny is famous in the annals of monasticism. He held up the simple life at Citeaux, though to be sure, as he said, there was no excess of spirituality among the Cistercians, "who filled their bellies with beans and their minds with pride." Nevertheless, the Cluniacs were to be condemned for their self-indulgence in meat and drink, their small talk and jocularities. Dish was added to dish at the table, eggs were served, cooked in many forms and more than one kind of wine was drunk at a sitting. Candelabras and altar cloths were elaborate. Gold and silver were freely used. One of their number, he (Bernard) had seen attended by a retinue of sixty horsemen. In spite of this arraignment Peter the Venerable, the noble abbot of Cluny, was not angered, but wrote back that he and Bernard belonged to the same Master, were the soldiers of one king and confessors of one faith. As different paths led to the same land so different conventual customs might lead to the Jerusalem above. Cluniacs and Cistercians should admonish one another in love.

The other three main families of mediæval monks were the Augustinians, the Carmelites and the two great Mendicant orders. The history of the Carmelites, founded in 1156 on Mt. Carmel during the Crusades, has been marked by much internal division and bitter controversies with other orders. As against the Dominicans they used to claim special right to the rosary, but Pius IX. and especially Leo XIII. in his frequent encyclical

cal, from 1883 on, commending the use of the rosary, has emphatically ascribed its first use and the revelation of it to Dominic. There is no doubt, however, about the scapulary as being a distinct institution of the Carmelite order. That outer garment, given by Mary, insures the wearer deliverance from purgatory the first Saturday succeeding his death. So at least John XXII. solemnly declared in 1322 in the famous bull *Sabbatina*.

The Augustinians had a character between the secular cleric and the strict monastic. This is true of the Augustinian canons, not of the Augustinian friars to whom John of Stautpitz and Luther belonged. The so-called rule of St. Augustine, which they both followed, appeared first in the twelfth century. It served the purpose of the priests belonging to the large churches or forming the cathedral chapters. These clerics, at first living apart though ministering in the same church, felt strongly the tendency to a communal life in which all should sleep in a common dormitory and eat at the same table and have a common dress. We find here and there groups so living together in the twelfth century, and they came to be called *canons regular* in distinction from the *canons secular*, a distinction which, Denifle says, does not appear before that century, as in fact the terms themselves do not appear before that time. There was no close organization between these different groups of canons. The Augustinian friars lived in convents strictly as monks.

Augustine left no rule, and the rule which is ascribed to him was a fiction. His example, however, gave a pattern for the semi-monastic communities of canons. He had his clergy living under one roof and eating at one table. The Premonstrants and other orders adopted the Augustinian rule.

The Carmelites, Augustinians and the numerous other orders followed the monastic impulse of the age. The two great Mendicant orders, the Franciscans and the Dominicans, gave a new monastic and religious impulse to their age. Scarcely ever in religious history has so powerful an impetus been given

to the religious life as was given by them, say from 1210, the date of St. Francis' first rule. In their first period they quickly obtained the esteem of scholars, princes, popes and people. Dante praised them. Men, like Grosseteste of England, welcomed their advent as the dawn of a new day. Louis IX., the Crusader, would have divided his body between them. It is true that it is matter of doubt whether the good services which they rendered in their first years are not more than counterbalanced by the ill activity and example of their latter years before the Reformation. They came to be the chief representatives of obscurantism. They offered obstruction to all progress. Their convents became synonyms of idleness and useless living and they aroused the well-merited hostility of the secular clergy by their extravagant assumption of privileges, conferred of pope though they were.

There can, however, be no question that the appearance of Francis d'Assisi and Dominic of Spain was one of the momentous epochs of the Middle Ages. Monasticism was started on a new career and the two orders fulfilled well the double mission of strengthening the papacy and counteracting the heretical sects which were making their appearance through Western Europe. It is, however, not to be understood that the methods adopted by the Franciscans were in the mind of the good founder of the Franciscan order. That order was manipulated by the papacy even while Francis was still living and a character given to it which was against his mind. It was the purpose neither of Francis nor of Dominic to revive existing orders nor to revive the rigor of rules half obeyed. They were heralds of new methods to meet new conditions. Francis was bent on leavening the world, upon transforming society, by new obedience to what he regarded as the simplest rules of the Gospel on the part of the people as well as a clerical class. It is probable he had it not in mind to form an order. The devotion of these two orders, especially the Franciscans, to practical ministries in society was so novel a phenomenon that people looked on in amazement and

the old monks resisted. From the day when St. Anthony went to the desert, the monkish ideal was to flee into solitude. The monk wanted to get away from men and their corruptions. The Black and Gray Friars, as the new monastics were called, went into the beaten pathways of the great world and the busy market places of the cities. They made open warfare upon the world without, as well as upon the sin within their own bosoms. They had an ear for the complaints and an eye to the struggles of the tempted and oppressed. "Of one thing," says Trevelyan in his "England in the Age of Wycliffe," "the friar was never accused. He is never taunted with living at home in his cloister and allowing souls to perish for want of food." Of course, he is speaking of the more degenerate days.

Passing away from the history to general characteristics, the mediæval convent appears as a very different institution from the cell of the ancient anchorite. The spirit is still ascetic but not altogether morbid. The monk is not always a recluse, dwelling in inaccessible seclusion. He does not abandon himself wholly to an artificial scheme of religious ritual carried on apart from the world's utilities. Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274) distinctly combines the active with the contemplative in the monk's life. It must be remembered, however, that he wrote after the establishment of the Franciscan and Dominican orders. The mediæval monks were the Puritans and the Methodists of their day; the Pietists and Evangelicals. All of these classes of Christians have this in common, that each stood in his age for an efficient religion.

The times were favorable for the development of monastic communities. If this is the age of the laic, that was the age of the monk. Society was unsettled and turbulent. The convent offered an asylum of rest and of meditation. Bernard, in his *de conversione*, calls his monks "the order of the Peaceful." Feud and war ruled without. Every baronial residence was a fortress. The convent was the scene of brotherly coöperation. It furnished to the age the ideal of a religious household on

earth. The epitaphs of monks betray the feeling of the time. *Pacificus*, "the peaceful"; *tranquilla pace serenus*, "in quiet and undisturbed repose"; *fraternæ pacis amicus*, "friend of brotherly peace"—such were some of them.

There were in reality only two careers in the Middle Ages, the career of the soldier and the career of the monk. It would be difficult to say which held out the most attractions and rewards, even for the present life. The well-ordered convent offered an incessant drill, exercise following exercise with the regularity of clockwork; and though the enemy was not drawn up in visible array on open field he was a constant reality. Barons, counts, princes joined the colonies of the spiritual militia, hoping thereby to work out more efficiently the problem of their salvation and to fight their conflict with the devil. The Third Lateran Council, 1179, bears witness to the tendency to restrict admission to the monastic vow to the higher classes by forbidding the practice of receiving money from persons desiring admission. The monk proved to be stronger than the knight and the institution of chivalry paled before the institution of monasticism.

By drawing to themselves the best spirits of the time, the convent became in their good days hearthstones of piety and the chief centers of missionary and civilizing agency, from the tenth well into the thirteenth century. When there was little preaching, the convent preached the most powerful sermon, calling men's thoughts away from riot and bloodshed to the state of brotherhood and religious reflection. The motto *aratro et cruce*, "by the cross and the plow," stood in their case for a reality. The monk was a pioneer in cultivating fields, and after the most scientific fashion then known, and taught agriculture, the culture of the vine and fish, and the breeding of cattle. He built roads, trained architects, painters and sculptors, wrestled with the deep problems of theology and philosophy, copied manuscripts, and when the universities arose the convent furnished them with their most renowned teachers. The work done by men like William of Hirschau,

Bruno and Norbert of Germany, Bernard and Peter the Venerable of France and St. Francis of Italy cannot be left out in any account of the onward progress of mankind. Much as we may decline to believe that monasticism is a higher form of Christian life, we must give credit to these men or deny to a series of centuries all progress and good whatsoever.

So popular did the monastic life become that religion seemed to be in danger of running out into monkery and society of being transmuted into an aggregation of convents. The Fourth Lateran Council under Innocent III., 1215, met the demand for measures to repress the luxuriant increase of distinct orders, and in its thirteenth canon forbade the establishment of new orders. But no council was ever more ignorant of the immediate future. Innocent was scarcely in his grave before the Franciscans and Dominicans received full papal sanction at the hands of his successor, Honorius III.

It was in the eleventh and twelfth centuries that the important change went on, whereby all monks received priestly ordination. Before that, it was the exception for a monk to be a priest. Extreme unction, however, had been performed in the convent and also absolution administered by unordained monks. This Dr. Lea has sufficiently shown. With the development of the strict theory of clerical sacerdotalism, these functions were forbidden to the unconsecrated monk, as by the Ninth Œcumenical Council, 1123. The synod of Nismes, thirty years earlier, 1096, thought it answered objections to the new custom by pointing to Gregory the Great, Gregory of Tours and St. Augustine as cases of monks who had priestly ordination. The movement in the convents to take a more active part in social affairs was resisted by œcumenical councils, as for example, the Tenth, of 1139, which forbade monks becoming physicians and jurists.

Such demands and prohibitions did not indicate any depreciation of the monastic life. On the contrary, it was praised as the highest form of earthly existence. The convent was compared to the land of Canaan and described as the shortest and

surest road to heaven. The secular life, even the life of the secular priest, was compared to Egypt. The passage to the cloister was known by the dignified term conversion and the monks as converts. Bishop Otto of Freising, of the imperial family of the Hohenstaufen, in the course of a protracted panegyric of the monastic life, says that the monks "spend their lives like angels, in heavenly purity and holiness of life and conscience. They live together, one in heart and soul, give themselves at one time to sleep, lift up as by one impulse their lips in prayer and their voice in reading. They join together night and day in work with such unwearied diligence that they look upon it as godless, except during the few hours given to rest on hard beds, to allow time to pass by without occupying themselves with divine things. Yes, they go so far, that while they are refreshing the body at the table, they listen to the reading of the Scriptures, showing that even then they care more for the interests of the soul than for those of the body. They give up their own wills, their earthly possessions and their parents, and, following the command of the Gospel and Christ, constantly bear their cross by mortifying the flesh, being all the while full of heavenly homesickness."

There are probably no more attractive descriptions of earthly peace in the writings of the mediæval writers than the descriptions we have of Bernard's convent of Clairvaux. In his "Life of St. Bernard" William, abbot of St. Thierry, describing a visit to Clairvaux, says he saw "there a new heaven and a new earth. The golden age seemed to have revisited the world. At the first glance, as you enter, after descending the hill, you could feel that God was in the place, and the silent valley bespoke, in the simplicity of its buildings, the genuine humility of the poor of Christ dwelling there. The silence of the noon was as the silence of the midnight, broken only by chants and the noise of garden and field implements. No one was idle. And yet, though there were such a number in the valley, each seemed to be a solitary." The novice Peter de Roya wrote from Clairvaux that "there the monks had found a Jacob's

ladder. Their song seems to be little less than angelic and much more than human. It seems to me that I am hardly looking on men when I see them in the gardens with hoe, in the field with forks and rakes and sickles, in the wood with axe, clad in disordered garments—but that I am looking on a race of fools without speech or sense, the reproach of mankind. However, my reason assures me that their life is hid with Christ in the heavens.” This enthusiastic advocacy of the monastic life may be explained in part by two causes, the turbulent conditions of society in that day and the lack of careers to serve as a stimulus to human enterprise, but only in part. There was underlying all the sincere quest of the soul after religious satisfaction.

There is scarcely a letter of Anselm in which the superior advantages of monasticism are not emphasized. It was not essential, he declared, for one to become a monk to reach salvation, but who, he writes, “can attain salvation in a safer or nobler way, he who seeks to love God alone or he who joins the love of the world with the law of God?” He loses no opportunity of urging laymen to take the vow. He appeals to his kinsmen to become his kinsmen in the spirit, *conspirituales* as well as *consanguinei*. Bernard was not satisfied until he had all his brothers behind cloistral walls, and finally declined longer to see his married sister until she gave promise to take the veil. Kings and princes desired to be clad in the monastic habit as they met death. Even that great foe of the papacy, Frederick II., it is said, died clad in the garb of the Cistercians. At Morimond, Otho, son of the Margrave of Austria, stopped over night with fifteen companions, and was so impressed by the sound of the bells and the devotions of the monks that they prayed to be received into the brotherhood. Henry, son of Louis VI., was so moved by what he saw at Clairvaux that he determined to take the vow.

Severe enough were the conventual rules for those who practiced them. St. Bernard, it is said, prayed standing day and night, and his knees, made infirm by fasting, and his feet by

standing, were no longer able to sustain his body. His diet was bread and milk or a concoction of herbs. The monk's treatment of the natural relationships of life followed the abnormal pattern set by the old anchorets. The attitude of Bernard to his sister has been spoken of. Francis d'Assisi, not only treated his father with what we would regard as conduct unworthy of any son as he went forth into the monastic life, but is loudly praised for aiding Clara, the founder of the Sisters of St. Damian, and her sister to escape from their unwilling parents that they might take the vow.

The miraculous belonged to the monk's daily food. He was surrounded by spirits. Visions and revelations were frequent. Companies of devils were roaming about at all hours of the day and night, in the air and on foot, to deceive the unwary and to shake the faith of the vigilant. Peter the Venerable gives a graphic picture of how these restless foes pulled the bedclothes off from sleeping monks and, chuckling, carried them to a distance, how they impudently stood by making fun while the modest monastic attended to the necessities of nature, and how they threw the faithful to the ground, as at night they went about through convent precincts making "holy thefts of prayer." Cæsar, of Heisterbach, in his book on miracles, joins with Peter in recording the pranks and misdemeanors of these fell foes of the mediæval recluse.

The assaults of the devil were especially directed to induce the monk to abandon his sacred vow. Writing to a certain Helinand, Anselm mentions the four kinds of assault he was wont to make. The first was the assault through lusts of the pleasures of the world, when the novice, having recently entered the convent, began to feel the monotony of its retired life. In the second he pushed the question why the monk had chosen that form of life rather than the life of the parish priest. In the third, he pestered him with the question why he had not put off till late in life the assumption of the vow, in the meantime having a good time, and yet in the end getting all the benefits and the reward of monkery. And last of all, the devil

argued why the monk had bound himself at all by a vow, seeing it was possible to serve God just as acceptably without a vow. Anselm answered the last objection by quoting Ps. 76: 11 and declaring the vow to be in itself well pleasing to God.

It was well understood that convent walls did not of themselves make men holy. Jerome, Gregory of Nyssa and especially Augustine had said the same before. Ivo of Chartres (d. 1116) condemns the monks who are filled with the leaven of pride and boast of their ascetic practices, referring to such passages as Rom. 14: 17 and I. Tim. 4: 8. The solitudes of the mountains and forests, he says, will not make men holy, who do not carry about with them rest of soul, the Sabbath of the heart and elevation of mind. Peter the Venerable wrote to a hermit that his separation from the world would not profit unless he built a strong wall against evil in his own heart and that that wall was Christ the Saviour. Without this protection, retirement to solitude, mortifications of the body and journeyings to distant lands, instead of availing, would bring new temptations, only more violent. Every mode of life, lay and cleric, conventual and eremitic, has peculiar temptations of its own.

Gifts of lands to the monastic institutions, especially during the crusades, were common. He who built a convent was looked upon as setting up a ladder of ascent to heaven. Most of the monastic houses which attained fame began with humble beginnings, and severe discipline. The colonies were placed often in lonely regions, places difficult of access in valley or on mountain or in swamp. So it was with Chartreuse, with Citeaux, with the convents along the wild frontiers of north-eastern Germany. The Franciscans set a different example by going into the cities and haunts of population. The beautiful names, often assumed, showed the change which was expected to take place in the surroundings, such as Bright Valley, Good Place, Happy Meadow, Crown of Heaven, and Path to Heaven. Walter Mapes, the Englishman, writing in the last of the twelfth century, lingers on the fair names of the Cistercian con-

vents which, he says, "contain in themselves a divine and prophetic element, such as House of God, Gate of Salvation," etc.

With wealth, came the great abbeys of stone, exhibiting the highest architecture of the day. The establishments of Citeaux, Cluny, the Grande Chartreuse and the great houses of England were on an elaborate scale. No pains or money were spared in their erection and equipment. Stained glass, sculpture, embroidery, rich vestments were freely used. A well-ordered house had many parts, chapel, refectory, calefactory, scriptorium, hospital. Not one structure, but an aggregation of buildings, was required by the larger establishments. Cluny in 1245 was able to accommodate, at the same time, the pope, the King of France and the Emperor of Constantinople, together with their retinues. Matthew Paris says Dunfermline Abbey, Scotland, was ample enough to entertain, at the same time, three sovereigns without inconvenience the one to the other. The latest conveniences were introduced into these houses, the latest news there retailed. A convent was, upon the whole, a pretty good place to be, from the standpoint of worldly well-being. What the modern club house is to the city, that the mediæval convent was apt to be, so far as material appointments went. In its vaults, the rich deposited their valuables. To its protection the oppressed fled for refuge. There, as at Westminster, St. Denis and Dunfermline kings and princes chose to be buried. And there, while living, they were often glad to abide, as the most notable place of comfort and ease they could find on their journeys.

The conventual establishment was intended to be a self-sufficient corporation, a sort of socialistic community doing all its own work and supplying all its own stuffs and food. The altruistic principle was supposed to rule. They had their orchards and fields and owned their own cattle. Some of them gathered honey from their own hives, had the fattest fish ponds, sheared their own wool, made their own wine and brewed their own beer. In their best days the monks set a good example

of thrift. The list of the minor officials in a convent was complete from the cellarer, to look after the cooking, and the chamberlain, to look after the dress of the brethren, to the cantor, to direct the singing, and the sacristan, to care for the church ornaments. The custom began in the eleventh century of associating lay brethren with the monasteries, so that these institutions might, in all particulars, be completely independent. Nor, it may be said, was the convent always indifferent to the poor. But the tendency was for it to center attention upon itself rather than to seek the regeneration of those around about its walls.

Like many other ideals, the ideals of peace, virtue and happy contentment and the ideal of holiness aimed at by the convent were not reached, or if approached in the first moments of overflowing ardor, were soon forfeited. For the method of monasticism is radically wrong. Here and there, no doubt, the cloister was "the audience chamber of God." Contemporary history gives the names, to say the least, of no better men than the names of monks. But arrogance, idleness and loose morals invariably followed prosperity. If Otto of Freising gives unstinted praise to the cloisteral communities, his contemporary, Anselm of Havelberg condemns the idleness and gossip of monks which he found within and without convent walls. Elizabeth of Schönau and Hildegard of Bingen, prophetesses of the convent in the twelfth century, rebuked much that was far from being ideal in the lives of monks and nuns. There is a *chronique scandaleuse* of the monastery as dark and repulsive as the *chronique scandaleuse* of the papacy during the pornography and under the last popes of the Middle Ages.* The convent of Brittany over which Abaelard was placed as abbot, and of which he tells us in his biography, reveals a rude and shocking state of things. After 1300 things got to be worse. Teachers of the universities like William of St. Amour (d. 1270) had scathing words for monkish arrogance and profligacy.

* Albert Hauck gives a number of instances of the moral degeneracy of German convents in his "Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands," Vol. IV., pp. 401 *sqq.*

gacy. Did not a bishop during the Avignon captivity of the papacy declare that from personal examination he knew a convent where all the nuns had carnal intercourse with demons? The revelations of St. Bridget of Sweden (d. 1375), approved at the councils of Constance and Basel, reveal the same low condition of monastic virtue. Nicolas of Clemanges (d. 1440), wrote vigorous protests against the decay of the orders and describes their decay in darkest colors, their waste, gluttony, idleness and profligacy. He says a girl going into a convent might as well be regarded as an abandoned woman at once. It was true, as Cæsar of Heisterbach had said in a homily several centuries before, "religion brought riches and riches destroyed religion." Pure as the motives of the founders and a multitude of the inmates of convents undoubtedly were at the first, the ideal was a one-sided one and involved the fruitful germ of selfishness, the care for oneself by seclusion of self from one's fellowmen. If the institution of monasticism came to be the synonym for superstition and the irreconcilable foe to human progress, it was because there is something pernicious in that method of attempting to secure holiness. The monks crushed out the heretical sects and set themselves against the renaissance. They became the chief champions of the papacy and Franciscans were the active promoters of rebellion and discord against Frederick II., against whom and whose house the papacy had declared irreconcilable war. They became the pope's agents in England and elsewhere for extorting papal revenue and for weakening the power of the episcopate. Chaucer's description of the prior was taken from the life of his age—

"He was a lord full fat and in good point."

And yet we would do wrong to forget the services which the monastery did at a certain period in the history of mediæval Europe or to deny the holy purpose of their founders. It will not do for one age to condemn another for the methods it pursued in meeting its own problems. Nor would it be generous to deny the great obligation of the church at the present time to the monasteries for preserving the older literature both

classic and ecclesiastical and preparing theological volumes, hymns and rituals which still contribute to our thought and church service. A contemplation of the imposing spectacle of mediæval monasticism should stir the church to humbleness of spirit and to zeal in the prosecution of her work to-day. We study the movements of the past, not to find fault, but to learn and become better equipped for grappling with the problems of our own time.

LANE SEMINARY, CINCINNATI, O.