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Review of Sermons 2 (18-39), by I. de l'Etoile

Joseph F. Kelly

John Carroll University, kelly@jcu.edu

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all the extant (or, better, published) writings of the period that can be described as historical, but also to outline historiographic trends and to characterize individual writers and documents. Thus it is at once a basic reference work with very full index, a history of medieval historical writing, and a readers' guide to the strengths and limitations of individual documents. In all three ways, the volume is to be valued, but perhaps its greatest contribution will prove to derive from its attention to the larger trends in historiographic practice. After a first reading, one remembers most vividly Mrs. Gransden's comments on such matters as the continuing influence of Anglo-Saxon historical genres after the Conquest; the influence of romance literature; the tendency of the mendicants in historiography as in homiletics to be anecdotal, satiric, and edifying; the fact that the first urban historian has, by virtue of his transcendence of the merely local and his concern to justify his institution, much more in common with the monastic historians than might at first be expected.

Inevitably in a survey of so disparate a body of material there will be errors and omissions, and the reviewer must guard against the temptation to demand an unattainable perfection. The author herself warns that her primary aim is to describe and characterize the documents themselves and that she "cannot claim to have exhausted" the secondary materials. It is also to be borne in mind that Mrs. Gransden's earlier publications are concerned with topics in the later part of her period. It is perhaps unfortunate that the matters the present reviewer (an Anglo-Saxonist) feels competent to note are clustered in the earlier chapters. They do, however, put the reader on notice that the author is not infallible and does not always accurately reflect current scholarly opinion. At page 6, discussing Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, MS. 139, the author follows the first edition of N. R. Ker's *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain* (1941) in attributing the MS. to Hexham. In fact, Ker in the second edition (1964) assigned the MS. to Sawley—a provenance which has been crucial in D. M. Dunnville's recent reassessment of the *Historia Brittonum* of "Nennius" and its authorship. In the discussion of Bede, I can find no reference to the liveliest post-war Bedan controversy: that concerned with the authenticity of the *Libellus responsionum* of Gregory the Great. The view of S. J. Crawford that Byrhtferth of Ramsey did not write the *Life of St. Oswald*, never universally accepted, has to my mind been definitively disproved since Mrs. Gransden's volume went to press by M. Lapidge, who argues persuasively that Byrhtferth wrote the *Life of St. Ecgwin* as well. In the discussions of the *Peterborough Chronicle*, there is no reference to the important edition by Cecily Clark, linguistically oriented in its first edition of 1957 but revised in 1970 so as to be indispensable to the student of historical writing. The primary point of reference for the texts of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* seems to be the translation of D. Whitelock and others.

Allowance must be made, however, for the difficulty of assembling and keeping up-to-date the secondary bibliography for a work so broad in scope and doubtless requiring a protracted period for research, composition, and revision. Recognizing that the work has certain limitations, then, we may yet be extremely grateful to its author for her labors. *Historical Writing in England* is the only survey of a large literature and will for many years be a first point of reference as we turn to the writings discussed therein.

University of Missouri
Columbia, Missouri

MILTON McC. GATCH

Sermons, 2 (18-39). By ISAAC DE L'ETOILE. Edited by A. HOSTE and translated by G. SALET. Sources Chrétiennes, no. 207. Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1974, 350 pp. F 78.

The Cistercian Issac of Stella (†1169) was one of the foremost theological

and spiritual writers of his day. Much of his theology and spirituality can be found in his sermons, this in the tradition of the great monastic writers from Augustine and Gregory to Bernard of Clairvaux, who believed no theology to be effective which was not affective and capable of moving two very different audiences, listeners and readers. Isaac's sermons are being critically edited, with a French translation, in this distinguished series, and this is the second volume of sermons to appear. (The first volume is no. 130, published in 1967). The edition includes a full critical apparatus, insightful "notes complémentaires" at the end and a very valuable marginal index to the *Patrologia Latina* edition of Isaac's works, thus enabling the scholar to use this edition along with older secondary studies. The sermons (18-39) were written for the Lenten season; nine (18-26) are loosely based upon the parable of the Sower (Luke 8:4-18), and five (33-37) on the episode of the Canaanite woman (Matthew 15:21-28). They cover a wide range of theological and spiritual topics, far too many to list here, and a number of these are major themes of Isaac's work, such as the Trinitarian character of the soul, the created universe as the *corpus divinitatis*, and the passage of man from interior divisiveness to self-unity via union with God.

John Carroll University
Cleveland, Ohio

JOSEPH F. KELLY

Geoffrey of Auxerre: Expositio in Cantica Cantecorum. Edited by GERRUCCIO GASTALDELLI. 2 vols.: Temi e Testi, 19 and 20. Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1974, cxxxvii + 670 p. L 1700.

Geoffrey of Auxerre's continuation and completion of Bernard of Clairvaux's sermons on the *Song of Songs*, undertaken on the invitation of the Cistercian order, is a text of considerable significance, though Geoffrey himself has not generally been considered a figure of major importance. Geoffrey was obviously in a position to know the great monk of Clairvaux, having been Bernard's private secretary and constant companion from 1145 to the end of Bernard's life. As Bernard's protegee and intimate during this period he was likely to have shared often in his master's thoughts and therefore to have been able to approach the completion of Bernard's work with understanding. But Geoffrey's text acquires increased significance for its bearing on the spiritual life of the twelfth century since Geoffrey was a convert to the life of mystic contemplation from the rationalism of the schools, having been Abelard's pupil in Paris until he met Bernard. Geoffrey's text, then, provides scholars not only with a source for the study of the mystic theology of contemplative monasticism, but also with some insights into the major issue of rationalism and spirituality in the twelfth century.

Gastaldelli's edition of the text is the first printed edition, and obviously this publication will facilitate access by interested scholars to a text insufficiently studied in the past. It is particularly gratifying that Gastaldelli's introduction and critical study of the text provides an extensive and sound base on which to begin study of the work.

University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

DAVID HARRY MILLER

The Emperor Frederick II of Hohenstaufen: Immutator Mundi. By THOMAS CURTIS VAN CLEVE. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972. xx + 607 pp. £6.00.

It is difficult to think of a more fascinating personality among the rulers of medieval Europe than Frederick II of Hohenstaufen (1194-1250). Even to his contemporaries he seemed larger than life—the *immutator mundi*, the *stupor mundi*. Given Frederick's importance, it may seem odd that Professor Van Cleve's biography is the first major treatment of the emperor in English in many years. A partial explanation for the gap surely lies in the immense