

BIBLIOGRAPHIA

P. BELLARMINO BAGATTI, O.F.M., *Gli Antichi Edifici Sacri di Betlemme in seguito agli scavi e restauri praticati dalla Custodia di Terra Santa* (1948-51), (*Pubblicazioni dello Studium Biblicum Franciscanum* N. 9), Gerusalemme, 1952. In quarto, pp. XII and 280, 66 figures in text and 60 plates.

In this ninth volume of the *Studium Biblicum Franciscanum* Father B. BAGATTI, O.F.M., professor of Christian Archaeology at the Studium, gives us a detailed account of the ancient religious edifices at Bethlehem in the light of the excavations and restorations carried out there by the Custody of the Holy Land in the years 1948-51.

On March 12, 1931, a fire destroyed a building in the cloister north of the church of the Nativity and west of the church of St. Catherine. When the work of restoration was taken in hand some elements of the walled-up medieval cloister came to light. A general desire to see the ancient cloister restored resulted in a postponement of the repairs until 1948, when the Custody entrusted the architect A. BARLUZZI with the task not only of restoring the cloister but also of enlarging the church of St. Catherine. His project was approved by the Department of Antiquities and in that connection Father B. BAGATTI was designated as the archaeologist associated with that undertaking.

In digging trenches for the new walls of the church of St. Catherine, in removing later accretions in and around the cloister and in restoring and remodelling the adjoining monastic structures so many new and interesting details regarding those monuments became known that Father B. BAGATTI was stimulated to extend his investigations to other points in and around the basilica of the Nativity.

All his discoveries and his interpretation of the same, as well as a reinterpretation of many other details, form the subject of the large volume under review. In it he treats: first of the basilica and the grottoes beneath it; then of the buildings around the same: the monasteries of St. Jerome, St. Paula, the Augustinians and the Franciscans; the church of St. Catherine, the medieval cloister, a defensive tower and the ancient cemeteries; he concludes with an interesting survey of other ancient monuments in Bethlehem: the monasteries, the church and cemetery at the well of David, the prehistoric

remains at Baten, tombs with ossuaries, the Roman aqueduct, the chapel and tombs at the Milk grotto. The ancient remains at Beit Sahur, Deir er-Rawat and Siyar el-Ghanam also receive a short notice.

Regarding each monument Father B. BAGATTI first gives the literary sources referring to it and then goes into detail regarding the archaeological remains.

This work deserves the heartiest recommendation. It is the fruit of long years of careful investigation and study of material with which Father B. BAGATTI had the closest contact; he is thus in a position to give accurate descriptions of all which he saw; and since he is a trained specialist in this field his views deserve serious consideration. The detailed index at the end of the work makes it easy to find any point in which one is interested. The neat subdivisions of the text, the numerous designs, plans and photographic illustrations make it a pleasure to use this mine of information regarding the birthplace of Our Redeemer.

S. SALLER, O.F.M.