

**THE ROMANTICISM OF ST.
FRANCIS, AND OTHER
STUDIES IN THE GENIUS OF
THE FRANCISCANS**

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The Romanticism of St. Francis, and Other Studies in the Genius of the Franciscans by Father Cuthbert

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FATHER CUTHBERT

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THE SALUTATION OF POVERTY

From the Fresco by Sassetta in the Museo Condé, Chantilly

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BY

FATHER CUTHBERT, O.S.F.C.

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PREFACE.

To those who look upon the history of the past as something more than a subject for pleasurable curiosity, who regard it rather as a mirror of the workings of the human spirit, from which one might gain some measure of the wisdom of experience, the main interest will always lie not in the mere spectacle or stage-setting of historic personages and events but rather in the more universal principles or truths of life itself to which the phenomena of history bear witness. We really know men only in so far as we know the ideals and motives by which they act; and a man's ultimate value to the world is not so much in himself as in the ideas and ideals by which he lives. This is true whether we take men individually or as they act together in some body corporate. Moreover, the phenomena of history are of little moment to practical knowledge save as they are connected in our thought with the main current of the world's life in which the human spirit at all times finds its affinity with the past.

In this book an attempt is made to gauge the real value of the life and genius of the Franciscans in relation to the human spirit itself. It is indeed but an inchoate attempt which others perhaps will improve upon if they deem the subject of sufficiently vital interest. The revival of the study of St. Francis and the Franciscans seems to point to a more than academic interest in