



















the Roman Church ; by numerous Consistories and State Ministers of Religion in Lutheran lands ; by leading English divines and, most emphatically, by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, which placed her on the same evil eminence as Arius, Socinus and Arminius, requiring all candidates for the ministry to repudiate her errors. Hundreds of ministers of the Church of Scotland now living have publicly disowned "Bourignonism."

Yet her life and doctrine have passed out of common knowledge. Although she is mentioned in all important Church Histories, none of them explain the prominent position which she once occupied. The standard treatises on Mysticism refer to her vaguely, contradicting one another upon essential matters, and essayists who theorise on the religion of the eighteenth century use her name unwarrantably to illustrate and confirm their theories. The present writer was led to read her works and investigate her fortunes by a desire to reconcile conflicting

and confusing statements made by authors of repute, and was drawn onwards by the discovery of some singular events in her career involving important causes and persons. He publishes the results of his quest in the hope of saving other students from the need for minute research, and of making a slight contribution to a department of religious history which has recently asserted a claim to attention.

Her career is significant historically. In the latter half of the seventeenth century the life of the Reformed and the Roman Churches was at a low ebb. Dogmatism, superstition and secularism were in possession, and it is instructive to see how a serious and vigorous mind came to abandon all definitely Christian dogma and to indulge in extravagances. Light is thrown upon the position and the attitude of the celebrated quietists who were her contemporaries, and also upon the prevalence of revivalism, mysticism and rationalism in eighteenth-century religion.

General readers may, it is hoped, find some interest in the adventures of the narrative and in its exhibition of an independent and original character in picturesque surroundings. They are recommended to omit or to read lightly the Introductory Chapter, which is required in order to make clear to students the place which her doctrine occupied in Church history.

Cordial thanks are due to Rev. Dr. D. W. Forrest for valuable suggestions, to Rev. Dr. C. G. McCrie, who has been kind enough to revise the proof-sheets, and to another un-failing helper.

1909.