

of a wealthy and noble family, and as a wedding-gift presented the couple with 'a casket containing 10,000 golden doubloons, and in spite of the precarious state of the papal finances followed this up with further grants of money'. He also rented to Luigi on favourable terms much of the reclaimed land in the Pontine Marshes. The huge Palazzo of the duke of Braschi, as he was now styled, described by Pastor as 'a monument to nepotism', was attacked and nearly blown up in 1794 by a hungry mob, exasperated by rumours that the pope's nephew had made a considerable amount of money by dishonest speculations in grain. Even if Luigi merited all the opprobrious criticisms made against him, ingratitude certainly held no place amongst them, for he ever remained deeply attached to his uncle and did all that lay in his power to help him in the distress of his last years. As for Pius VI, surely the long martyrdom he suffered paid the price of his natural weakness for his kindred.

In an effort to appease the emperor Joseph II, whose mania for interfering in things ecclesiastical bordered almost on the insane, Pius VI made a journey to Vienna, the first undertaken by a pope beyond the Italian frontier for nearly five centuries. His act of condescension met, however, with scant reward and Joseph continued in his persecution of the clergy and religious until his death in 1790. The efforts of his nephew Francis II to carry on his repressive policy were arrested by the events consequent on the French Revolution. During the early days of this movement Pius VI did all he could to assist Louis XVI in his distress, although the French crown had long shown itself bitterly opposed to the Holy See, and even Louis had let himself be bullied by his government into accepting its anti-papal laws. Eventually the pope himself was engulfed in the whirlpool of the revolt and his states became a prey to the revolutionary army under Buonaparte, whose forces occupied Rome and carried Pius prisoner to France, where he died in confinement in the citadel of Valence on August 29, 1799. For five months his body lay embalmed and coffined but unburied in the chapel of that fortress, because the French Directorate forbade its being carried back to Rome. At length, in January 1800, Napoleon, who had become as First Consul the sole ruler of France, ordered the remains to be interred in a vault in the local cemetery with full military honours, but forbade any religious ceremony at the graveside and barred all clergy from attendance. When however he judged it politic to make a friend of the new pope, Pius VII, he allowed the body to be exhumed and transferred to its present resting-place in St Peter's.

WALTER GUMBLEY, O.P.

LA PENSÉE RELIGIEUSE DE LEON BLOY. Par Marie-Joseph Lory. (Bruges; Desclée de Brouwer.)

Léon Bloy provokes, in his critics and readers, a strong reaction—be it one of hostility or admiration. It is therefore almost impossible for any

critic to be impartial, and even more impossible for a reviewer to preserve absolute equanimity of judgment. M. Lory's book however is perhaps as impartial as any book on Bloy could be: if anything, it is even too impartial. In this comprehensive and well-written work, the author examines the factors involved in Bloy's life of spiritual conflict. He shows how Bloy's real energies in the earlier part of his life were so orientated towards prayer and his zeal for God, that he was unable to deal with the struggle of earning a livelihood as journalist and *littérateur*. Yet, paradoxically enough, his concern with writing and his artist's temperament made him totally unsuited to live the ascetic life under monastic discipline, and led to a great deal of the misery in his stormy existence. M. Lory virtually condemns Bloy's theological views and dismisses the greater part of Bloy's exegesis as ill-informed or even childish. The real value of Bloy's work and thought is to be found elsewhere for, during the latter part of his life, his character became transformed by prayer and he emphasised the wonder and mystery of the supernatural order. In spite of the extreme positions he took up, he had considerable insight into the problems of his period and laid his finger on the characteristic sin of the nineteenth century, that of avarice and materialism, showing it against spiritual values which had become obscured or forgotten. His violent, and sometimes obscene, abuse was a means of shocking his fellow Catholics out of their sloth, and the clergy out of their inaction and indifference. One may feel that M. Lory has at times saved Bloy from himself and has minimised his worst excesses, but he does give us a clear, well-documented and interesting work. A full bibliography, chronology of Bloy's life, and indexes are included.

M. HAVARD-WILLIAMS

NIETZSCHE; ou L'Histoire d'un Egocentrisme Athée. Par J. C. Lannoy.  
(Desclée de Brouwer; Frs. belges 145.)

For Dr Lannoy's erudition there can be nothing but praise. He has evidently studied Nietzsche's writings with the greatest attention and has examined more of the voluminous literature about Nietzsche than most people would care to face. The result is an exact and well-documented study of the philosopher's development and of the succession of his works. Where the book is not altogether satisfying is in a very different respect from that of scholarship; it is in the author's attitude to his subject. Dr Lannoy's categories are those of the rigid moralist untempered by psychological sympathy; *orgueil* and *égoïsme* seem to be made the whole explanation of Nietzsche.

That pride and self-centredness were prominent in Nietzsche, especially on the surface, is only too obvious, but he would not present the interest that he does present if they were all that needed to be said about him.