

starvation. The last of our medieval kings—Richard of Bordeaux—done to death at thirty-two, as Bolingbroke his successor is the first of royal usurpers of the throne of England. A pathetic figure, Richard. Haunted by the fate of Edward II, and devoted to his memory; like Edward befriended by Dominicans. Mr. Steel stresses the neurotic weakness displayed by Richard in the last year or two of his short life.

Relations of king and barons can be more adequately judged after consideration of Mr. Steel's survey than in the works of earlier historians. Emphasis is laid properly on the disintegrating influence of the papal schism, on the general employment of English bishops as higher civil servants. The 'great' statute of *praemunire* made at the Parliament of 1393 turns out on examination to be 'not so important after all,' and the reason for contemporary annalists not even mentioning it is explained.

Finally, the reign of Richard II is the wonder time, 'the last great effort of the English Middle Ages,' in art and architecture; with the youthful king himself, 'a connoisseur of building, sculpture, painting, books and music, as well as of plate, jewellery and dress,' here by Mr. Steel's patient scholarship reinterpreted 'as the essentially medieval product of a medieval generation.'

JOSEPH CLAYTON.

HISTORY OF THE POPES. From the German of the late Freiherr von Pastor. Translated by Dom Ernest Graf, O.S.B. Vols. 33, 34. (Kegan Paul; 16s. each.)

The appearance, in these days of rigid literary restriction, of a fresh instalment of the English version of Pastor's great history is surely a considerable event, and will be hailed with pleasure by the student. It is a pity that the publishers give us no indication of the number of volumes yet to be issued before the work is completed. But we imagine that at least three more should come to us, since the German original carries on the story to the death in exile of Pius VI in 1799.

Those sections under review cover the period 1700-1740, and are concerned with the Pontificates of Clement XI (Albani), Innocent XIII (Conti), Benedict XIII (Orsini), and Clement XII (Corsini). The translation is generally on a high level, and only very occasionally do we meet with obscure phrases, and odd words that are scarcely English.

Clement XI, to whose long reign of twenty-one years the earlier volume is entirely devoted, might have been numbered among the great Popes, had his lot been cast in happier and more fortunate times. As it is, his was on the whole an unhappy Pontificate for the Church, and a crucifixion for himself. The disputed succession in Spain had led to a European war, in which the Pope found himself (as Pastor puts it) continually between the upper and the nether

millstone, and he was never able to get extricated from his difficulties. He had to face the revival of Jansenism in France (to which question alone the historian devotes nearly one hundred and fifty pages of the present work), and to deal with the eternal disputes concerning the 'Rites' in China and in India. He failed—perhaps no one could have succeeded—in every direction; yet he did his duty manfully to the last and won general admiration. As a temporal Sovereign, Clement was not unsuccessful, while he ably headed the general efforts against the still threatening Turkish power. As a patron of art, architecture, and learning he stood in the first rank. And as a missionary Pope he was full of vision and zeal; his activity made itself felt alike in the Near East, and in China, Persia, and America.

Clement's successor, Innocent XIII, had a Pontificate of scarce three years' duration. His difficulties were much the same as his predecessor's, but he did a good deal in his short time, and died loved and respected, especially in the Papal States, where he had improved economic conditions.

Benedict XIII (interesting to us as the last Dominican to attain the Papacy) was Pope for the next six years. In some ways he resembled St. Pius V, but without his genius or statesmanship. A stern ascetic and reformer, a true Bishop in the antique style, almost a Saint, he lacked (we are told) the necessary knowledge of the world and those qualifications which would have fitted him for the duties and anxieties of the Head of the Church. Devoted to exacting and lengthy ecclesiastical functions sometimes lasting many hours, consecrating hundreds of churches and altars, incessantly holding visitations, synods and ordinations, he habitually left all the business of government to his ministers, so that the wits were able with some truth to speak of the 'perpetual vacancy of the Holy See.' The result was that his child-like trust was shamefully abused, and his Pontificate almost ruined by the unworthy Cardinal Coscia, in whom the Pope had placed a confidence almost beyond belief. 'Benedict,' said perhaps the greatest of his successors, 'had not the first idea of government.' 'For his was the evangelical simplicity of the dove, not the guileless prudence which is needed for escaping the snares of human malice.' Nevertheless, his reign was by no means altogether ignoble, and his people (while at his death they tried to tear in pieces his miserable favourite) pitied and loved him.

The last section of the second volume is devoted to the Corsini Pope, Clement XII, who accomplished much during his ten years, although for the last eight of them he was totally blind. He, like the earlier Clement, was troubled with European wars, Jansenism, and Gallicanism; he too was busied with the Missions all over the world; he too was a most munificent patron of literature and art. Rome even yet is full of the traces of his presence, and in history he comes near to greatness.

Such are the matters dealt with by Pastor. Everything is graphically told and carefully documented, often from entirely new sources; and the historian continues his custom of vividly describing (almost in the form of a diary) the fluctuating fortunes of the Conclaves which preceded each election. This is always an exciting, if not always an edifying, feature of his work.

ROBERT BRACEY, O.P.

CHARTIST PORTRAITS. By G. D. H. Cole. (Macmillan; 15s.)

As Mr. Cole remarks, there is still no satisfactory history of Chartism; nor does this book pretend to be other than its title announces. Yet those who know Mr. Cole's skill in the field of social history will expect that his new work will provide much valuable matter lacking in the existing histories. And they will not be disappointed. This is particularly noticeable in the biographies where he breaks new ground, writing of Stephen, Oastler, and Harney; while he has unearthed much fascinating material in the lives of Fergus O'Connor and Bronterre O'Brien, in the latter case making use of a still unpublished Life by Dr. Alfred Plummer.

Mr. Cole has cast his net wide, both geographically and politically, ranging from the gentle Lovett to the part-mad O'Connor, from the Tories, Stephens and Oastler, to the extreme Left as represented by Cooper, who had a vogue as a poet and from being a Rationalist lecturer became a Baptist preacher. This last is typical of nearly all the personalities in the book; their lives are full of unexpected turns and should enthrall even the general reader who is not much moved by the struggle of a hungry people.

For it is true, as the writer shows, that the chief motive power of Chartism insofar as it was a popular movement was the hunger of the people. True there were many, even among its leaders, who came in to push their own particular nostrums for society, as Attwood the currency reformer, or to combat some particular abuse, as Oastler, who denounced the working of the Poor Law and of the factory system, offering, for example, to teach children how to sabotage the looms with their grandmothers' knitting needles! But these came and went, and by 1850 mass starvation had gone too, with the result that energies were transferred to the task of building up the Trades Unions.

By his method Mr. Cole brings out the extraordinarily mixed character of Chartism. It was really many movements in one, each centring round a personality, the Charter being a convenient umbrella to cover them all. Marxism arrived too late to provide any ideological background and was only taken up by Harney and Ernest Jones, the last of the Chartists and the first English Communist.

As usual, Mr. Cole tries to give a completely economic explanation of the history he records, and as usual the facts are too much for him, and in spite of himself the sheer humanity of the Chartists