

Book Reviews

read by all who love England and desire the betterment of their country.

On the other hand, the author does not go to the root of the matter in her suggested remedies. She does not, for instance, raise the question of the rightness or wrongness of compulsory State education, and thus does not touch on the possibility that most of the defects she notices have their origin in the unnaturalness of such a system.

Furthermore, like most modern educationalists outside the Catholic Church, she leaves out *the* important element in education—religion. On the one page on which she does mention it, it is merely to say that she has avoided it. And, a little lower down, she shows that she has no idea of what dogmatic religion means. She speaks of 'the differences and prejudices of varying forms of thought,' and only wishes that the teachers 'were passing on to the children their desire to understand the truths that they feel they have realised'—in other words, their own opinions and doubts. A form of teaching which, whatever else it may be, is certainly not religious.

This major defect mars much of what is certainly a genuine attempt at constructive reform. The standard set up is man-made and hence ephemeral. No permanent principle appears and there is no foundation upon which to build.

R. J.

A HISTORY OF THE POPES. By Fernand Hayward. Translated from the French by the Monks of St. Augustine's, Ramsgate. (Dent & Sons, 1931; cloth, 12/6 net.)

In a large volume of four hundred pages the author gives us a sort of bird's eye view of Papal history in the form of short biographies of the Popes. Based on larger works like that of Pastor, the design is satisfactorily executed, and the translation is an excellent one. It is, however, not (as claimed) quite the first work of the kind. The famous Platina of Cremona long ago wrote just such a book, although his biographies are shorter and, of course, not up to present date, and there is a good English version of this by the late Canon Benham in the 'Library of Theological Literature.' We think Mr. Hayward might have treated some of the later Popes more sympathetically than he has done, notably Gregory XVI. That Pontiff was no mere political intransigent, as here represented; he was

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not only a great enlarger of the Church's foreign missions, but he was also one of the 'Popes of the Concordats,' who reconstructed the fallen Churches of more than half Europe—yet not one word is said about this in the sketch of his life.

F.R.B.

DE SACRAMENTIS : Vol. I. *De Sacramentis in genere. De Bap-tismo, De Confirmatione*; in-8 max., 1929, pag viii-174. 7 lire. Vol. II. *De Eucharistia, De Poenitentia, De Ex-trema Unctione, De Ordine, De Matrimonio*; in-8 max., 1931, pag. iv-340. 14 lire. By P. Adeod. M. Schembri, O.S.A. (Turin : Maretti.)

This is a treatise in speculative theology. It will therefore prove of more immediate interest to the teacher than to the practitioner. The author, worthy representative of the Augustinian school, sets forth in a clear and scholarly manner, the positive teaching of the Church and offers at the same time solutions (not necessarily acceptable) of the various well-known minor problems in the speculative treatment of the Sacraments. It is natural that the author should found his work on the teaching of St. Augustine, but the horde of minor theologians whose opinions are adduced might well have given place to the weightier pronouncements of St. Thomas and the other great Doctors of the Church who are quoted all too rarely.

H.J.C.

MY RUSSIAN VENTURE. By Mrs. Cecil Chesterton. (George G. Harrap & Co., Ltd. ; 8/6.)

Soviet Russia is the Mecca of journalists, writers, snobs anxious to be up-to-date in every way, and also international business-men, great and small, eager to get away with some of the spoils of a once wealthy country. Naturally the Third International, the *de facto* Government of Russia, allows only a certain category of travellers to cross her boundary, and seldom commits the blunder of granting visas to persons whose previous knowledge of the country and its language would make them propaganda-proof. Yet these two conditions are essential for an impartial and reliable account.