

to perfect God's nature as God himself had ordained. But it did not remain detached for long and Professor Morey's last chapter on the realistic movement of late Gothic shows the gradual triumph of the material once more, nature claiming perfection and demanding the enslavement of art. This return of the pagan idea was of course not noticeable since its beginnings lay in the glories of Giotto as well as the ethereal perfection of Donatello. But the worship of nature was showing itself. It is difficult to remain detached for long.

The author of this book would not perhaps subscribe to the above analysis, thus set out starkly, but throughout his many descriptions of works of art and his tracing of influences and development this process of purification and union and ultimate relapse stands out. We cannot easily describe the variety and width of this book. It is a delight to read and to look at though the many line drawings in the text which supplement the 180 plates are sometimes rather too sketchy.

CONRAD PEPLER, O.P.

**THE ENGLISH CLERGY, AND THEIR ORGANISATION IN THE LATER MIDDLE AGES.** By A. Hamilton Thompson, C.B.E., M.A., (Oxford University Press; Cumberlege; 20s. 6d.)

The greater the integrity of the student the more confusing does the recorded history of England in the 14th, and more especially the 15th, centuries appear. Even more apparent is the inadequate handling which the evidence has received hitherto. The close of the middle ages, it was supposed, gave birth to a way of life which had no part in them; to a middle class vocal and in English, empirical yet poetical, courageous and constructive; above all 'rising'. The truth is that the last two centuries of the undivided Church in England are badly mapped out. The secular Chroniclers give no ample guide, and the schools of monastic historians faltered and withered away. In contrast to this deficiency in the central theme the records of royal and local officials are mountainous, and, until thoroughly sifted, will support any thesis the unwary care to apply; while the vivid patches of such evidence as the Paston letters or the gossip of Gascoigne illuminate more than they enlighten, because, for all the rich personalities conveyed, they are isolated and offer little comparison.

It is in such a context that Professor Hamilton Thompson's publication of the Ford lectures for 1933 are most valuable. He has taken the relatively narrow field of research in the structure of the later medieval Church in England. It has necessitated the handling of a tremendous amount of material largely unpublished, from which he has selected a long appendix of useful instances. It is wary, but not unimaginative scholarship. Every judgment he utters is based firmly and distinctly on objective evidence. Out of it there emerges an intelligible shape; not, to be sure, a tailor-made hierarchy, but a series of forms widely used and generally recognisable.

Himself steeped in the standards of conduct in the everyday medieval Church which a bishop's register, or Bishop Alnwick's Court Book reveal as the minimums we must expect, the writer treads firmly on any attempt to judge in the uncertain light of decorous contemporary deportment. Neither is he shocked when the wrath of a canon explodes in church at prayer, nor will he allow an age proud in its democratic claims to assume that 'Archbishop Courtenay or Cardinal Beaufort obtained bishoprics merely because Kings called them cousins, but because their talent marked them out for preferment even at an early age'.

With the true humility of one who recognises the limitations of work so important to himself, the writer laments 'that we should see medieval bishops so entirely through the medium of documents and records which are official and impersonal'. In respect of individual characters we know more of the 12th century than of the 15th. It is this shortcoming which he has in mind when he apologises for treating again a 'well-worn theme', the state of the houses of religious. He gives them every black mark which they can earn in the records remaining; but then he reminds fellow-students that 'visitors framed their questions upon breaches of rule and custom, not upon points in which they were observed. We must not therefore assume that there were not individuals who in cloister "kept their feet firm and their hearts sound".'

It is on this generous note that he closes. 'The evidence of facts cannot be overlooked, but to moralise on that evidence is out of place, and the lover of truth will never hesitate when the interpretation of facts is doubtful to regard them in the most charitable light'. To the multitude of careful students who will never have his opportunities to handle the leaves of the past in such abundance, and who sometimes despair for the adequacy of their judgments, the advice is as comforting for the long view as this book is necessary to the short cut.

PAUL OLSEN

BORROWINGS IN ROMAN LAW AND CHRISTIAN THOUGHT. By Miriam Theresa Rooney, L.B., Ph.D. (The School of Canon Law, The Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C.)

This paper reprinted from *The Jurist* is a study in the history of ideas from the philosophical viewpoint showing the influence of Christian thought on law. Firstly we are confronted with the remarkable fact that Roman Law and Christianity grew up together. 'The genius for human living which marked the Roman Empire at its best, found not frustration but fulfilment in the Christian conquest of the mind'. (p. 5.) There was also an interchange of concepts by which Roman Law was utilised in the teaching of Christian doctrine. This is very clearly seen in the writings of St Ambrose and St Augustine, and of St Jerome. The codification of Justinian in the sixth century whilst containing a number of paganisms was brought out under