

throne of Peter failed to read the lesson aright. They plunged ever deeper into politics, so that gradually the interests of the Father of Christendom narrowed until it became that of an Italian prince. The spirit of Machiavelli infected even the persons of the Popes and the Curia became a byword for insincerity and corruption. Most tragic of all, a medieval when he sinned knew that he was a sinner, but for the young Cardinal nephews sin was a word without practical meaning.

If the Church were not the Bride of Christ and the Papacy of divine institution, three such Popes as Alexander VI, Julius II and Leo X, the hog, the butcher and the trifier, would have wrecked the bishopric of Rome, but God, in judging the Church, in pulling her down 'even to her foundations', as Catherine of Siena predicted, did not change those foundations. The evil servants, the corrupt flock fell under the wrath of God, but at the same time Christ restored his Church through the saints. Even before our period ends the revival has begun, above all in Spain, but has not yet come clearly to the surface.

It is a sad and grim story, but one full of instruction. These things are permitted for the 'edification', for the building up of the Church of God, and in spite of every shame inflicted on her by her ministers the Church never forfeits her sanctity or lacks her saints. Thus we learn to distinguish between Christ's rule in the Church, the sanctity of the means through which he rules, from the weakness and sins of profitless servants. We learn how in the redemption of the world cockle is mixed with the wheat, and necessarily so as he came to bring sinners to repentance. Yet woe to those through whom scandal comes. The period stands as a great witness—a great 'Thou shalt not'—a testimony to the divine wrath; but it is equally a testimony (and here Luther's intuition failed him) to the divine presence and preservation of his people.

From this point of view we cannot recommend Fr Hughes's book too highly and the attentive reader will find in each of the sections a commentary—thank God often by contrast—on the Church life of our own days.

IAN HISLOP, O.P.

V A R I A

Admirers of the work of Charles Williams will be glad to have his novels in the new uniform edition issued by Faber & Faber. *War in Heaven* and *All Hallows Eve* have already appeared (7s. 6d. each).

The National Council of Social Service has published *Young Germany Today* (1s.), a report by a delegation of various youth organisations to the British zone of Germany.

George Goldwell Ltd have published *The Mystical Body of Christ* (1s.), a series of charts designed to illustrate the theme of Fr Denis Fahey's *Kingship of Christ and Organized Naturalism*.