

upon them: 'If, for a moment, I dwell on these murders and atrocities . . . it is to express a wonder, which as yet has hardly been given adequate expression, that the performance of such deeds could have aroused so little comment . . . It is little more than two years since these thousands of our fellow Christians were tortured and killed—and our attitude to their sufferings is as remote as to those of the victims of the Emperor Nero . . . Surely Christian people, who put Christianity before politics, should long ago have made up their minds to one thing. They may not support General Franco or desire to see a totalitarian *régime* in Spain—that is a perfectly understandable position—but at least they will not, either by word or act, support the side that has abolished religious liberty and whose supporters have been responsible for crimes to which in modern history it would be difficult to find a parallel.'

ESMOND KLIMECK, O.P.

#### HISTORY

EUROPEAN CIVILIZATION. Edited by Edward Eyre. Vol. VII.  
The Relations of Europe with Non-European Peoples. (Oxford University Press; 21s.)

It has been the primary function of this series to provide a supplement to more conventionally English histories. Perhaps this has never been better fulfilled than in this final volume. It contains at least one contribution of lasting and independent value; 'The European Frontier' by Douglas Woodruff, and although the other articles are not of the same scope, none of them fall below a definite level of achievement. Father Erris O'Brien naturally writes on Australia and New Zealand with an authoritative and objective clarity, while Portuguese, Italian, German and Belgian colonization are described by a Portuguese, an Italian, a German and a Belgian in detail and with a pleasant patriotism. Their articles, even through an occasional naïveté, form an admirable corrective to the inevitable insularity of outlook of so much English colonial history. The standpoints may often be divergent and the emphases contrasted. But it is an achievement of modern editing that the volume as a whole becomes a unity.

It is to be regretted that *The European Frontier* could not have appeared earlier in the series, for it is the most fundamental article provided by any contributor precisely since it does so much to clarify the meaning of the term 'European' in the phrase 'European civilization.' To Mr. Woodruff the period

falls into three movements : The Saracen frontier, the discovery of the Mongols, and the passing of the frontier consciousness. The last two sections gain a new value through his analysis of the psychological impact of Mongol and Osmanli on European consciousness and from the width of his horizon ; it is pleasant to find an historian who can synthesise in a single chapter the economic significance of Ragusa and the cultural significance of Fynes Morison.

Mr. Woodruff's quotations are admirably chosen to convey that sense of 'otherness' which marked the relationship of the West to Mongol and to Turk, yet it is still difficult to determine the meaning of the word European as applied to the medieval Western World. It is patent that it did not correspond to modern geographical divisions. Yet certainly it would not seem to be a synonym for the Faith. It was the very *raison d'être* of Prester John that he was no European, and it would be impossible to compress the Party of Union at the court of the Palaiologoi into the same cultural context as the Angevins. There is much to recommend the theory developed by Professor Pirenne in *L'Expansion de l'Islam et le commencement de Moyen Age* ; the impact of Islam on the eighth century post-classic world as the immediate cause of a medieval culture and a new self-conscious unity. On such an interpretation the frontier consciousness analysed by Mr. Woodruff would remain a primary factor in the making of Europe. Yet it was a frontier emphasised by contrasted economic systems and marking racial and cultural boundaries as well as religious. The medieval Europeans were perhaps those who had inherited not only the doctrines common to the whole Christian Empire, but the theologies of Ambrose and of Augustine, the half-submerged traditions of the Western municipalities and of the 'foederate' on the Rhine. If some such hypothesis were accepted it might justify those in the medieval West who had a frontier consciousness for the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem which they could not extend to the Empire of Byzantium. It might also help to justify historically those to whom the concept of a frontier seems inapplicable to the concept of Christendom.

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