

and welcome; but it is more of a pointer than a complete achievement. It includes an excellent foreword on the history of the attitude of the

Church towards marriage. But it excludes—at least in the reviewer's copy—pages 190 and 191.

DIANA CRUTCHLEY

A HISTORY OF EASTERN CHRISTIANITY, by Aziz S. Atiya. *Methuen and Co.*, London, 1968. 486 pp. 90s.

Most Christians concerned with the problem of unity would think of it in terms of the relations between Catholics and Protestants, or between Catholics and Eastern Orthodox, and forget that there are others who might take part in the discussions and the reunion: the survivors of certain ancient Churches of the Near East, whose theology and liturgy were expressed not in Latin, Greek or the languages of Europe, but in Coptic, Syriac and Armenian, and whose history diverged from that of the rest of Christendom during the period of the great Christological controversies and the Councils. It is therefore useful to have this long, detailed and scholarly work devoted to them.

By 'Eastern Christianity' Professor Atiya means the three Churches which accepted the Monophysite view in some degree, or at least did not accept the formulations of the Council of Chalcedon—Copts, Armenians and 'Jacobites' or Syrian Orthodox; the Nestorians or Assyrians; the Maronites who were once Monothelites but accepted the authority of Rome in the Crusading period; and that interesting offshoot of Near Eastern Christendom, the Christian community of the Malabar coast. Apart from the Maronites, he does not deal systematically with the eastern Uniate Churches, and his references to Catholic missionaries are not favourable (p. 112: 'the introduction of Catholicism into Egypt came more through politics and expediency than through candid conviction'). He also excludes the 'Greek' or Eastern Orthodox Church. This exclusion may be misleading if it gives the impression that the Eastern Orthodox of the Near East are Greeks and therefore in some sense foreign to the area: they are so in Egypt, but in the Patriarchates of Antioch and Jerusalem most of the clergy and laity are Arabic-speaking and no less indigenous than the Jacobites. It also from time to time makes the historical narrative hard to understand: for example, the main description of the British and American Protestant missions in Syria and Lebanon comes in the chapter on the Jacobites, and this will give the impression that the missionaries were mainly concerned with the Jacobites, whereas in fact they were

more concerned with the 'Greek' Orthodox and Uniates. But in another way the exclusion is justified: it enables Professor Atiya to lay full emphasis on the continued existence and vitality of these other Churches, and to show clearly that the old distinction of 'orthodox' and 'heretics' is as misleading as it is unkind: separated both by doctrinal controversy and by the rise of Islam, these ancient Churches grew apart from the rest of Christendom and developed in a way of their own; now they are growing together again, and differences of theological formulation, although important, no longer arouse such hatred as in the past.

A distinguished historian of the Crusades, Professor Atiya is himself a Copt, founded the Institute of Coptic Studies in Cairo, and has played a part in the public life of his people. His book is particularly full and well informed on his own community. Its history, faith, organization and liturgy are described with authority and a wealth of detail. There is, for example, an interesting passage about the influence of Coptic Christianity in Ireland: 'Irish Christianity, the great civilizing agent of the early Middle Ages among the northern nations, was the child of the Egyptian Church. Seven Egyptian monks are buried at Disert Uldith. . . .' Again, this description of the election of a Patriarch vividly reveals something about the spirit of eastern Christendom:

Before the final selection is made by lot, continuous services are held for three days in succession and a complete vigil is observed on the eve of the third. Names of the three candidates on little scrolls are enclosed in a sealed envelope with a fourth scroll on which is written, 'Jesus Christ the Good Shepherd'. This is deposited on the altar and opened before the congregation after the final Holy Communion by the celebrant, who is usually the oldest interim archbishop acting for the patriarch. Then an infant of about eight picks out the winning name, unless the fourth scroll emerges to indicate that none of the three is acceptable to the divine will and thus the whole operation must be repeated until the issue is resolved.

About the other Churches, Professor Atiya

writes less fully, and sometimes with a less sure touch. His chapter on the Nestorians and their expansion in China and Central Asia is learned and of great interest, but he could have said more about the Armenians, and when writing of the Maronites he shows less knowledge of Lebanese than of Egyptian history (p. 393, Bkirki is not in the Qadisha valley; p. 404, Hauran is not in south Lebanon; p. 405, the Arslans and Jumblats are leading families, not tribes; p. 410, the French mandate did not end in 1926).

All the Churches of which he writes, except that of south India, have lived for the past thousand years or more as minorities in Muslim states, and the relations of Muslims and Christians are a necessary part of his story. It may be that he is too harsh towards Muslim rulers, particularly the Turks. Of course, there

were times of persecution, and even at the best of times the lot of a powerless minority is not easy. But persecution when it came is to be explained more by local and transient causes than a settled desire to torment or to destroy: by the caprice or fanaticism of local officials; or the links of Christian communities with external powers, Byzantium or the Crusaders in the Middle Ages, western European states in more recent times; or the rivalries of the Christian communities themselves. The toleration shown by Muslims to the 'peoples of the Book' was limited, and coloured by the contempt of the strong for the weak, but it did exist. At least the eastern Churches survived the long Middle Ages of Islam; would a Muslim community have survived the Middle Ages of Catholic Europe?

ALBERT HOURANI

THE SPIRIT OF THE COUNTER-REFORMATION, by H. Outram Evennett. Foreword by Dom David Knowles. Edited, with a Postscript, by John Bossy. *Cambridge University Press*, 1968. 159 pp. 35s. net.

The publication of this book is felicitous in three ways. First there is the author; to many who knew him at Cambridge the book will be a possession through which his personality and scholarship will continue to speak. Then there is the topic. Evennett had worked for more than twenty years on this, one of the most neglected topics in this country. Finally, Dr Bossy's editing and postscript set the lectures in their proper perspective for 1968, a peculiarly difficult task which is gracefully achieved.

The book is substantially the Birkbeck Lectures, delivered by Evennett in 1951, lectures which made a great impression on those who heard them. It is composed of six chapters and the editor's important postscript; and needless to say, the Cambridge University Press has performed its part admirably in a book of distinction.

The first chapter is concerned with providing us with a new and more satisfactory definition of the Counter-Reformation, the conventional label which can sometimes constrict even more than it defines. So far from being merely a reaction, the Counter-Reformation is presented as 'the evolutionary adaptation of the Catholic religion and of the Catholic Church to new forces both in the spiritual and the material order'. 'I have not tried to present a complete or final picture, only to make a few suggestions' is the author's approach. These 'suggestions' prove to be not merely helpful but illuminating; and the general reader will find the treatment

of Paston on pages 15 and 16 particularly useful.

The second chapter treats of Counter-Reformation Spirituality, and concludes with two splendid paragraphs which focus and reinforce the conclusions of the chapter. As a piece of historical writing which combines concision, clarity, analysis and insight they could hardly be bettered. In the third chapter, which is concerned with St Ignatius and the Spiritual Exercises, St Ignatius is represented, not as the militant and romantic opponent of the general tendencies of his age but as embracing them. This view fits in with the author's presentation of the Counter-Reformation as a whole. The succeeding two chapters, on the reorientation of the religious life and on institutional reform, tie up convincingly with the general interpretation of the movement. The discussion of the new approach to the religious life will, one is sure, become required reading for anyone tackling seriously the subject of the Counter-Reformation.

For the reader whose interest is, in the main, 'political' the sixth chapter which is concerned with the new organs of Church government will probably be the most striking chapter of all. 'There is not, and there never was on this earth, a work of human policy so well deserving of examination as the Roman Catholic Church': Macaulay would have found it fascinating reading.

The book concludes with what the editor,