

REVOLUTION AND PAPACY. By E. E. Y. Hales. (Eyre and Spottiswoode; 30s.)

'What a grand subject for a history the Popedom is! The Pope never ought to have affected temporal sway, but to have lived retired within St Angelo, and to have trusted to the superstitious awe inspired by his character and office. He spoiled his chance when he meddled in petty Italian politics.' Thus Coleridge, on July 12, 1827.

Mr Hales, in whose debt we all stand for the stimulating study of Pio Nono which he published in 1954, has now given us the prelude to this pontificate in an account of those all-important years between 1769 when Clement XIV ascended the Papal throne on what was very nearly an understanding that he would dissolve the Society of Jesus, and 1846 when the controversial pontificate of Gregory XVI came to a close. We have now a clear, well-documented account.

We have, however, something more. We have a cool and objective account of exactly that period in the history of the Papacy and of Europe when the *mise en scène*, inherited in part from the Middle Ages but principally the work of the Counter-Reformation, began first to crack and then to collapse. As a study in the practical relations of Church and State in a period of violent flux the book could scarcely be bettered. All the problems are there; as they had to be met and answered by busy and preoccupied men during a succession of crises. To take a single example, how often have we been told that the Papacy should have got rid of the Legations. We have, I think, had to wait for Mr Hales to make the all-important point that without the Legations the States of the Church were not economically viable.

The book has been somewhat unreasonably criticized by one reviewer because the author has not surrendered some of his space to enable him to tell again in detail the story of Lamennais, ground which has already been sufficiently covered for the time being by Dr Vidler. Instead, Mr Hales has been able to give us—what was badly needed—a satisfactory and convincing picture of Pius VII, a study which for sustained interest could scarcely be bettered.

He is, it may be argued, less successful with that not invariably sympathetic pontiff, Gregory XVI. That, politically speaking, Gregory XVI backed the wrong horse is undeniable; and it is a serious charge for a temporal ruler to be compelled to face. That he is necessarily difficult for the average Englishman to understand is obvious; and he is a ready-made target for the liberal and anti-clerical writer. Today in 1960 the brief *Impensa Caritas* of February, 1831, and *Superiori Anno* of June, 1832, come to the ordinary reader as something of a shock. As the flower of Catholic Poland went to the gallows, to Siberia, or to Paris, it was cold comfort, one feels, to speed them on their way with a homily on the importance of civic obedience. How much, one would like to know, was Gregory's action influenced by the memory of Potocki's *Journey to Darktown*, and Novosiltzov's denunciation in 1821 of Polish Masonry as 'the chief source and brother of all secret societies'?

It is an example of the scrupulous fairness of Mr Hales's book that he is careful to make the point that, since democracy was in practice impossible

in the States of the Church, the Papacy was heavily handicapped when dealing with it elsewhere. It is Mr Hales's main criticism of Gregory XVI that he did not wish, as Pius VII had wished, to come to terms with the consequences of that new wind of change which was blowing across Metternich's Europe.

All this is true and to the point, but Mr Hales insufficiently emphasizes the point that psychologically it was more difficult for Gregory XVI to do what the saintly Pius VII had succeeded in doing. Take Keble's sermon, *On the Danger of Sympathizing with Rebellion*, preached on January 29th, 1831, or Pusey's sermon, preached on November 5th, 1837, *On Passive Obedience*: they show that good and learned men in England thought very much as did Gregory XVI. Or take Henry Nelson Coleridge's account of Coleridge's political position, in his preface to the *Table Talk*: however ultimately deplorable Gregory XVI's position may have been, it was intellectually and morally respectable in 1831—at any rate by English standards. 'He [Coleridge] was neither a Whig nor a Tory, as these designations are usually understood; well enough knowing that, for the most part, half-truths only are involved in the Parliamentary Tenets of one party or the other. In the common struggles of a session, therefore, he took little interest. . . . But he threw the weight of his opinion—and it was considerable—into the Tory or Conservative scale, for these two reasons: First, generally, because he had a deep conviction that the cause of freedom and of truth is now seriously menaced by a democratical spirit, growing more and more rabid every day, and giving no doubtful promise of the tyranny to come; and secondly, in particular, because the national Church was to him the ark of the covenant of his beloved country, and he saw the Whigs about to coalesce with those whose avowed principles led them to lay the hand of spoliation upon it. . . . The Reform question in itself gave him little concern except as he foresaw the present attack on the Church to be the immediate consequence of the passing of the Bill.'

The principles which secured the allegiance of Keble, Pusey, the elderly Coleridge and the young Gladstone were not disreputable; and, *mutatis mutandis*, in the Italian and Papal context of Gregory XVI they deserve more appreciation, perhaps, than Mr Hales has allowed. But this is, comparatively speaking, a small point. What Mr Hales so amply shows is the intricacy of the situation with which the Papacy was faced in consequence of the Temporal Power. It was all very well for Coleridge, for instance, to remark casually from the heights of Highgate that the Papacy would be more influential without the States of the Church; but, as Mr Hales makes abundantly clear, the practical problem of their disposal at that time was all but insoluble—even had Gregory XVI in fact wished for it.

To turn to another point, the book is particularly valuable in the way in which it makes comprehensible to a twentieth-century reader the eighteenth-century 'Josephist' mentality. One can now appreciate, as perhaps one could not before, Napoleon's 'Imperial Catechism'; and one can see so clearly that, as Mr Hales puts it, 'it was important to be a monarch if you were to argue with monarchs': it was this which was the essential justifica-

tion for the States of the Church. As the kings began to move off the European stage, the way was left clear for the Vatican state of the twentieth century.

'What a grand subject for a history the Popedom is!' Here we have a book which matches its subject.  
T. CHARLES EDWARDS

THE HISTORIC REALITY OF CHRISTIAN CULTURE. By Christopher Dawson. INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. By Herbert Butterfield. (Routledge and Kegan Paul; 12s. 6d. each.)

Both these books attempt to approach the contemporary crisis in culture with a Christian mentality. Neither is long enough to give a whole picture or a whole answer, but some suggestive ideas are presented. One is relieved to find the backward-looking and the 'other-worldly' corruptions of Christian thought *vis-à-vis* the modern world roundly rejected. Professor Butterfield suggests that we should learn diplomatic lessons from the past, and maintains the tolerance inherent in the Western tradition, even when faced with 'totalitarianism'. Unfortunately, I think, he never really stands critically outside this tradition, and thus, when advocating a new international outlook on the part of Christians, comes near to confusing Christianity with Westernism. Christopher Dawson realizes the depth of Western secularism, and the godlessness it implicitly shares with Communism; both forms of atheism hasten to their fulfilment like, one might say, Brunetto Latini in Dante's hell going back to his torment—'and he ran as one who wins and not as one who loses'. It is the moral of this quotation which Mr Dawson misses, and this is the shortcoming of his outlook. He falls for our Christian myth that progress is a bogey and forgets that both liberal and socialist cultures are in fact achieving, and will continue to achieve, their ends. Therefore we cannot, as he implies, count modern culture as a negative factor in our attempt to create a Christian culture; for the disciples of Rousseau and Marx stand to God much as did the ancient Greeks and Romans, and their philosophies must be 'baptized', even if they scream as the water goes over their foreheads.

Both of these authors exhort us to embark on a Christian effort to permeate the modern world in all its aspects, and Christopher Dawson suggests a new study and consciousness of the achievements of Christian culture in the past. One of the paths of permeation is surely a deep and modern philosophy of history. Professor Butterfield approaches this problem, but his inability to restate or review the individual-environment impasses, or go further than suggest the possibilities of a science of politics, is disappointing. Christopher Dawson goes deeper in his perception, rather along Vico's lines, of the unity and basic ingredients of all cultures, in his stimulating chapter on the six ages of the Church, and in his sound conclusion that Western culture is becoming world culture, which provides, perhaps, a providential opportunity for the faith that once inspired it. But all this is only a start to the vast Christian task of seeing world affairs, past and present, as they really are in terms that are not their own.

ANTHONY BLACK