

THE HISTORY OF THE POPES, FROM THE CLOSE OF THE MIDDLE AGES. Vols. 30, 31, 32. By Ludwig Freiherr von Pastor. Translated by Dom Ernest Graf, O.S.B. (Kegan Paul; 16s. each.)

These latest volumes of Baron von Pastor's History cover the last half of the seventeenth century, and include the events of seven memorable Pontificates. Their German original was in the main completed before the author's death, but there were certain gaps and *lacunae* in the narrative; these missing sections have been supplied by other scholars of historical repute. It seems a pity that neither publishers nor translator give us any indication as to whether the work in its English dress has now arrived at completion or not.

The new instalment deals at great length with the Jansenist and Quietist movements, with the struggle against the absolutism of Louis XIV, and with the European War against the Turks; while incidental episodes such as the career of Christina of Sweden receive briefer but appropriate treatment. The fortunes of the English Catholics are not given in much detail, and the story of the Titus Oates plot is too cursorily dealt with. We are disappointed in the account offered of the English Dominican Cardinal, Philip Howard. Next to nothing is said about him, and what little there is is inaccurate. Howard's father was not, as stated here, Duke of Norfolk, nor he himself an English Vicar-Apostolic. The now oft-derided Macaulay would have taught the Historian of the Popes that the Holy See had no better counsellor in the difficult year of the Revolution of 1688 than Cardinal Howard, who was ever on the side of patience, calmness and moderation, and of respect for the prejudices of the English people.

As to the English translation of the History, while quite adequate and readable, it is at times distinctly odd—why need one, for example, speak of a 'clericature' when a clerkship is intended? And now and then it is so literal as to be unintelligible, as in a passage dealing with judicial reforms, when it is said that the 'course of instances' was regulated and simplified. Only a lawyer perhaps would know that this means that recourse to a higher court from one of first instance was henceforth made more easy.

ROBERT BRACEY, O.P.

THE LETTERS OF MRS. FITZHERBERT AND CONNECTED PAPERS.
By Shane Leslie. (Burns, Oates; 15s.)

This volume is an appendix or supplement to the *Life of*

Mrs. Fitzherbert which appeared a few months ago, and must be read in conjunction with it. Its own interest is not very great; frankly, it is a little disappointing. Mrs. Fitzherbert was not a particularly gifted letter-writer, and as a matter of fact there are here more letters written to her than by her. But all are valuable historical matter, and illustrate her Biography very usefully. Most of them belong to the period of her retirement and serene old age, and manifest the extreme affection and veneration entertained for her by the royal family and by an immense circle of friends. Many of her correspondents already live for us in the pages of Greville and Creevey, and speak here once again in their own inimitable way. Perhaps the most graphic letters are those of the eldest Fitzclarence, which describe the death of his father King William IV, and show how one too often regarded as a mere elderly buffoon could pass away with the most perfect dignity, so that nothing became him life so much as his leaving it.

The Letters fill about two-thirds of the book; the remainder is made up of the 'Connected Papers.' Of these, the adventures of the papers vindicating Mrs. Fitzherbert's good name and establishing the fact of her perfectly canonical marriage, papers which she carefully deposited in Coutt's Bank and which now repose in the royal archives at Windsor Castle, are of extraordinary interest. Had the Duke of Wellington had his way they would long ago have perished in the flames; the deliberate inaction of Queen Victoria, for whose perusal they were temporarily extracted, led to their fresh seclusion in the Bank vaults, the doors of which were closed to all searchers for over fifty years; but they were eventually brought to light by the direct action of King Edward VII, through whose chivalrous acceptance of these documents (says Mr. Leslie) Mrs. Fitzherbert's character and position have been cleared for all time.

ROBERT BRACEY, O.P.

NOTICES

FREEDOM UNDER GOD. By Fulton J. Sheen. (Milwaukee, Bruce Publishing Co.; London, Coldwell; 11s. 3d.)

Frankly I expected something overblown, but I found instead the argument careful and the style controlled. The blurb says that it is a bombshell tossed into the enemy's camp to explode that incredible tenet of Communism—that man has greater freedom under its promises. Well, as some of us know,