

REVIEWS

fluence in Post-Reformation England) on the side of Ockham and Marsilio and the Common Lawyers.

In fine, a penetrating and in many ways an illuminating study of the life and mind of one whom we hope soon to honour as a Saint.

RICHARD O'SULLIVAN.

CARDINAL XIMENES AND THE MAKING OF SPAIN. By Reginald Merton. (Kegan Paul; 12/6.)

This life of the great Cardinal Ximenes de Cisneros is written, we are told, from a non-sectarian point of view. This in itself is an excellent ideal for the writing of history when it means that one tries to discard prejudices and judge facts objectively. Unfortunately that is just what Mr. Merton does not do. He makes no attempt to judge events in the light of the motives inspiring the people who enacted them, he does not trouble to explain these motives either in themselves or as part of a wider policy concerned with the 'making of Spain'; instead he rejects them because they do not conform to his own standards.

This defective approach to his subject is more evident in Mr. Merton's treatment of Queen Isabella than in his account of Ximenes himself. But his picture of the Cardinal is marred by his arbitrary selection of those characteristics which he himself thinks most important. Within his own limitation of his theme Mr. Merton writes competently and attractively, but the result is not really a life of Ximenes. We may not know much about the Cardinal's religious life, but at least we do know what the spiritual life means to a man as deeply religious and ascetic as he was; and we do know that such a man gains more from a 'long period of almost unbroken solitude and self-communing' than just a 'greater knowledge of himself, of his likes and dislikes, of his weakness and strength.' The spiritual life does not enter into Mr. Merton's scale of values, therefore he does not associate with it those magnificent qualities of character which he most admires in Ximenes, despite the fact that for Ximenes himself the spiritual life was obviously of more value than anything else.

Mr. Merton does not go outside the usual sources and authorities, and tells us therefore nothing new (his correction of the traditional view of Charles V's final treatment of Ximenes seems to me unconvincing). A little additional research outside the ordinary sources would have been most valuable. This picture of Ximenes would have been more complete had it contained a fuller account of the important disciplinary measures he im-

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posed in the administration of his diocese, and of his founding of the University of Alcalá and its organization.

It is when Mr. Merton attempts to fit Ximenes into the background of Spain that the weakness of his historical method is most apparent. He accuses Isabella of 'religious savagery,' and consequently condemns with scorn the whole of her policy, thus failing completely to understand the Spain she united and formed as a nation. He may dislike 'piety' in any form, but if he is writing history he ought to be primarily concerned with giving a just explanation (which does not imply approval) of the ideas of the people he is writing about. He is justified in disliking on principle both the expulsion of the Jews and the Inquisition, but he is not justified in ignoring the real reasons that brought both about, nor in attempting to minimize their importance in national policy. Both were fundamental to the Spain of the time: the expulsion of the Jews for bringing about, and the Inquisition for ensuring the permanence of, the religious unity that was considered by Isabella and the Hapsburgs to be so essential for the national unity. It would be beyond the scope of this review to enter into all this in detail, but Mr. Merton might have read with advantage Mr. W. T. Walsh's important work on Isabella, which he never mentions or refers to, either in his bibliography or elsewhere. To be non-sectarian surely means presenting both sides of the question.

One last example. One is justified in considering the Inquisition a barbarous institution, but one is not justified in misinterpreting the motives of those who worked it. To maintain that they believed that a man's soul could be saved against his will by violent means is false and ludicrous.

In view of all this it is not surprising to find a few loose statements in the book. It is misleading, for instance, to state that the Inquisition was not a new institution but a revival. The Mozarabic liturgy was not Visigothic and Arian in origin, but dates back to the earliest Christian times in Spain. And when or where did St. Thomas Aquinas ever 'specify the temperature of the furnaces of hell'?

A. A. PARKER.

MISCELLANEOUS

PREFACE A UNE REFORME DE L'ETAT. By Georges Viance. (Desclée de Brouwer.)

In this sixteenth volume of *Questions Disputées* we have an essay in pure and applied politics following in the steps of M. Maritain's *Du Régime Temporel et de la Liberté*. The theory here presented of the double relation of man as material, individual and subordinate, and spiritual, personal and transcen-