

Their meaning is—as another reviewer of *The Russians and Their Church* has pointed out—that there were more and better things in the Union of Brest than Polish politics and ecclesiastical scheming; for men and women do not voluntarily give their lives or suffer persecution and exile for the sake of 350-year-old clerical intrigues and the political dodges of foreigners. Just as there are some things that Catholics can learn to their profit from the non-Catholic East, so there are things to be learned by Russian Christians from their Catholic brethren: among those things is the meaning of œcumenicity and unity. The Catholic must recognize as his brethren invisibly in the Church all men of good will in good faith, “Jews, Turks, infidels and heretics.” Are “uniates” alone excluded from *sobornost*?

DONALD ATTWATER.

LA THEOLOGIE DE L'ÉGLISE de saint Clément de Rome à saint Irénée, par Gustave Bardy (Editions du Cerf; 120 frs.).

A valuable addition by an eminent patrologist and historian to the “Unam Sanctam” series published by the French Dominicans. It will add little to what is already familiar to the expert, and its judgment on controverted issues is mostly conventional and sober, but it provides a comprehensive, inspiring and synthetic account of how the Church was viewed and how her life was lived in post-apostolic times.

V.W.

ATTACK UPON “CHRISTENDOM,” By Soeren Kierkegaard, translated by Walter Lowrie (Oxford University Press; 15s.).

“This is Kierkegaard’s last work, and almost the last to be translated.” We may be thankful indeed that it was not by these bitter and sometimes shallow polemical diatribes that Kierkegaard was introduced to us in England as he was in Germany.

Of course there is a great deal of truth in them; truth which is still a challenge to complacent Christians and to “defenders of Christian civilization.” Kierkegaard in his later days saw more and more clearly what Christianity is not; it is less certain that his almost obsessional preoccupation with contemporary hypocrisy and “twaddle” had not obscured even his own previous insight into what it is. It would be easy for a theologian to reduce many of his more extravagant utterances to perfectionist heresy and for a psychologist to suspect paranoia. It is trite but necessary to point out that he had driven both his opponents and himself on to the horns of a dilemma which could not be resolved outside the Catholic Church.

V.W.

THE ABBE EDGEWORTH—1745-1807. By M. V. Woodgate. (Brown & Nolan; 7s. 6d.).

Our grandfathers were very familiar with the name of Edgeworth of Edgeworthstown. For two members of that family had won considerable prominence for themselves—Richard Lovell Edgeworth, the busy bustling versatile inventor who just missed being a genius, and who sank into Byron’s “worst of bores, a boisterous bore”; and

his daughter Maria Edgeworth, that most didactic of novelists, and author of moral and improving tales and educational books innumerable, the typical early Victorian governess minus any orthodox religion. There was, however, another Edgeworth, a cousin of theirs, and far less clever than they, whose not very long life was in the main highly inconspicuous and most hidden, who yet for a brief space attained world-wide fame and will be remembered so long as history continues to be written. He is the subject of this biography, the priest who at the willing risk of his own life stood on the scaffold beside Louis XVI and helped his King to die a splendid and a Christian death. It is well there should be a new *Life in English* of this admirable man. The last such appeared in 1913, and is we imagine long out of print. And new material has come to hand since then. The best pages of this book are those which contain the Abbé's own simple and artless but most moving story of his ministrations in the prison of the Temple, the King's last Mass and Communion, the drive through the endless crowded streets, the scaffold and the guillotine. It is notable that the Abbé Edgeworth makes no mention of his oft-alleged final utterance, that "sublime benediction" cited by Sir A. Alison and by Thomas Carlyle: "Son of S. Louis, ascend to Heaven!" And indeed modern historical criticism has ascribed the phrase to the imagination and inventive genius of a clever French journalist.

The volume under review is too short to quote from. But we may mention that one or two characters emerge from it with a greatly enhanced reputation, notably the exiled Bourbons at whose sad shadow-court in Courland amid poverty and ice and snow the Abbé spent his last years. They were ever his grateful appreciative friends.

One section of the Abbé's *Life* is quite new to us—the curious story of his father's conversion, an instance of a beneficed clergyman of the Church of Ireland becoming a Catholic a hundred years before the Oxford Movement. And most singularly that conversion could be traced back in its beginnings to a conversation with an unnamed Anglican Bishop: "Are you not shocked at the idolatry of the Mass?" asked Mr Edgeworth. "No, sir," was the answer; "they worship not the Host but Christ whom they consider to be therein. You cannot term that worship idolatry." Almost word for word Dr Johnson's well-known reply to a similar question near half-a-century later!

ROBERT BRACEY, O.P.

HILAIRE BELLOC. By Robert Hamilton (Douglas Organ; 5s.).

The realization that the author of

"Matilda told such dreadful lies

It made one gasp and stretch one's eyes

has also written a *History of England*, *The Servile State*, *Milton*, *The Four Men*, and a hundred other books on disparate subjects has caused Mr Hamilton to seek in this brochure the basic principle that inspires Belloc and his books. "If I have done nothing more than