

REVIEWS

THE STRUGGLE FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN GERMANY. By the Dean of Chichester. (Victor Gollancz; 8s. 6d.)

This book, describing in detail the conflict between Church and State in Germany, is timely. It is of the utmost importance that all of us should realise the desperate straits in which both the Catholic and Protestant Churches find themselves in consequence of the persecution they have been suffering since 1933. This struggle for freedom of conscience, and for Christianity itself, is one of the most momentous events of the present day. The story of heroic resistance in the face of determined and persistent attack is a truly inspiring one.

The Dean traces the course of the conflict in both the Catholic and the Protestant Churches, devoting about half the book to each. In both every effort was made to avoid a clash, and to take the line of conciliation, rendering unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, but as time went on it became increasingly clear that the very nature of the totalitarian state made reconciliation impossible. The whole philosophy of the totalitarian state implies that every part of the citizen's life lies within the control of the state, and the Church is but one of its functions. The state is supreme in religion as in all else.

In the Party Programme drawn up by Hitler in 1920 Point 24 declares that "we demand liberty for all religious denominations in the state, so far as they are not a danger to it, and do not militate against the morality and the moral sense of the German race." But it has since been maintained repeatedly that the Church has been incorporated into the state. Events have shown that the present policy of the government is designed rather to uproot Christianity than to control it.

In an address to the Cardinals the Pope emphasised the fact that there was "a grievous persecution in Germany—that there has rarely been a persecution so serious, so fearful, so painful, and so disastrous in its wide-spread effects. This is a persecution in which neither the exercise of force, nor the pressure of threats, nor the subterfuges of cunning and artifice have been spared." Again in the Encyclical "Mit brennender Sorge" it is said that "with cloaked and with manifest methods of coercion, by intimidation, by holding out the prospect of economic, professional, civic, and other advantages, the loyalty of Catholics to their faith is put under a pressure that is as unlawful as it is unworthy of human beings."

The persecution has taken various forms. First there was the accusation that Catholicism was political, and the existence of the Centre Party seemed to give some substance to the charge.

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The party however, was soon dissolved, and the charge still continues to be made. It has been effectively dealt with by the Holy Father.

The struggle for Youth plays the chief part in the conflict, for education is of vital importance to both Church and State. The Nazi state tolerates no rival to itself in the schools or youth organisations, and the campaign against the confessional schools is waged relentlessly. The Catholic training colleges have been mostly suppressed. The pressure against all Catholic educational establishments is steadily increasing. Labour camps and youth organisations are used to destroy all Catholic influence, in spite of the fact that the Concordat explicitly protects Catholic associations. The Church is excluded from all spheres of influence. Its activities are restricted, when not entirely suppressed, its finances are crippled, and an organised campaign of defamation against the clergy is carried on, in order to destroy their influence.

A long series of prosecutions for currency smuggling, mainly directed against the religious Orders, followed by another series of immorality trials, were intended to bring the clergy into disrepute, and to destroy their prestige. The true state of affairs was concealed by the efforts of propaganda and control of the press.

In place of Christianity, which is thus attacked and besmirched, every encouragement is given to a grotesque revival of paganism, a religion of Blood and Race, which is expounded in Rosenberg's *Myth of the Twentieth Century*. No effort is spared in dechristianising the German people. Opposition demands heroic qualities in face of the brutal repression by means of concentration camps, or prison, with or without trial, or other deterrents.

The Dean has traced this tragic story of increasing oppression and terrorism with intimate knowledge and scrupulous fairness. It should have a wide circle of readers among all who care for Christianity.

MARGRIETA BEER.

HISTORY

THE HISTORY OF THE POPES, from the close of the Middle Ages.

From the German of Ludwig, Freiherr von Pastor. Translated by Dom Ernest Graf, O.S.B. Vols. 27, 28, 29. (Kegan Paul, 1938; 15s. per vol.)

The publication in English dress of three more volumes of Pastor's great work is a real event and a decided boon to students of history. In this instalment the book quite lives up to its long-established reputation. The treatment is thorough, every fact