

recourse to the regulation that election of a pope under the impulsion of fear was null and void. So the moment came when they no longer had canon law behind them for their decision that in them lay the power to determine that their fear had been unjustifiable and to depose the pope whom they had gone through the form of electing.

Here the narrative of fact must end so far as the origins go; yet the problems involved are apparent and must appeal even to the lay mind unversed in canon law which is of course the key to the problem in the next forty years and thereafter through the ages.

It is with a suggestion of the trend of these problems and of the thought and argument that they evoked that the book closes, with an appendix which is an apologia of Cardinal Zabarella, in which the author applies once again the method of insisting on seeing the man and his problem against the background of his age.

In conclusion it is worth recalling Dr Ullmann's Preface where he speaks of the book's deficiencies and of 'a very modest attempt'. In so far as one's interest is continually being aroused by aspects of the subject which the title of the book forbids the author to pursue to any length, the deficiencies are there; to the success of the attempt this reviewer pays willing tribute.

C. J. ACHESON

SIX CENTURIES OF RUSSO-POLISH RELATIONS. By W. P. and Z. Coates. (Lawrence and Wishart; 21s.)

This is a curiously mistitled book. The authors are at pains to expound the current Russian propaganda about Poland. As such the book is useful. It is incontestably most convenient to possess a carefully documented and consolidated presentation of this particular thesis. Unfortunately the publishers' blurb on the dust cover presents the book as a serious history of Russo-Polish relations during the last six centuries, a work of scholarship, fully documented, weighed and balanced.

This is unfair to the authors. To begin with, such a book would demand scholarship of a high order, allied with that ordered concision which comes only from a full mastery of the materials. It would, in fact, have to be History in the full meaning of the word; no longer, in Acton's phrase, a burden on the memory but an illumination of the mind.

The book is based on the old nineteenth century nationalistic thesis of a Russian unity, partly but not irreparably damaged by wicked Poles and Lithuanians, and restored by the Partition of Poland. It is the old Tsarist thesis of Pan-Slav Orthodoxy. Quotations from Marx and Engels and the sedulous interpretation of everybody and everything in terms of the Marxian dialectic fuse the old thesis with the new orthodoxy. There is no bibliography and the authorities quoted are often of the most flimsy variety.

Inevitably it is very bad history. There is, there can be, no sense of perspective or period. On page 56 the authors would appear to suppose that the Orthodox confraternities in Poland during the second half of the sixteenth century were a kind of politico-ecclesiastical underground movement carried on by Russian patriots. They are mistaken.

Again, it looks on page 31 as if the authors believed that the legal and literary language of the old Grand Duchy of Lithuania was Russian. Scholars are now, I believe, generally agreed that this particular 'Ruthenian' was in fact the Ancient Slavonic of the Eastern Church. It remained the official language of state documents down to the beginning of the seventeenth century. It was superseded at first by Latin and then by Polish. The process can be observed in official documents. At the end of the sixteenth century documents in Church Slavonic began to be signed in Polish. Then the rest of the document began to be in Polish with the legal formulas only in Slavonic. Finally in 1696, to be precise, Slavonic was dropped altogether. The reason was simple: it was given by the famous preacher Peter Skarga in 1574. Church Slavonic had become, so far as the majority was concerned, largely unintelligible. The Orthodox, the Calvinists, the Unitarians and the Catholics were all writing and publishing in Polish. White Ruthenian or, if you prefer it, White Russian in the proper sense of the word, continued of course as a familiar and colloquial speech all the way from Brest to Smolensk. To begin with it was heavily mixed with Polish words and spoken with a Polish intonation. Towards Smolensk it approximated more or less closely to the Russian of Muscovy. In some districts Polish was dominant: everywhere it was present.

The truth of the matter is that this type of historical writing is apt to prove a boomerang. The reader with discrimination or with some historical training will know in a very short time that what he is reading is not history but a crude form of advocacy. He will then grow irritable. Even with your Simple Simon it is dangerous. He may read something else.

Suppose, for instance, that such a fellow, having paid his guinea and read *Six Centuries of Russo-Polish Relations*, were to glance along the shelves devoted to books of travel in a friend's library. He sees that well-known nineteenth century book of travel by the American Bayard Taylor, *Travels in Greece and Russia* (pub. Sampson Low, London, 1859). He takes it down, opens it and, to his surprise, reads:

'In the afternoon we crossed the Bug, the eastern frontier of the *last* kingdom of Poland, although the language is heard as far as the Dnieper, and the Polish zloty accepted as currency.' They cross the Dnieper. 'On Friday we entered Old Russia—Holy Russia, as it is sometimes called in the fond veneration of the people. . . . The Jews, with their greasy ringlets, disappeared, Polish money

was refused at the stations, and the peasantry showed the pure Russian type in face and costume.'

Or suppose that he takes down some standard text book to read about Napoleon's invasion of Russia in 1812. 'On the 23rd of June the French crossed the Niemen and commenced the invasion of Russian Poland. As long as they marched through Polish territory they found no special difficulty, as the population was well-disposed; but when they reached Russia proper the difficulties of the task became evident.' (Lodge: *A History of Modern Europe*, Murray, 1913.) Simple Simon will begin to get angry. And he will be fully justified. What it comes to is this. Real history, the history of impartial scholarship, is not written in the light of the political disputes and presuppositions of today. Instead it illuminates them. Suppose our Simple Simon, instead of reading *Six Centuries of Russo-Polish Relations* had read the following, the passage from Bayard's account of his travels or the failure of the Russian plan of devastation in 1812 would have been immediately intelligible:—

'Though the majority of the subjects of the Lithuanian dukes were Russian, the Russian element failed to become dominant. The dynasty remained heathen till the middle of the fourteenth century and ultimately became Roman Catholic. Lithuania never became a consciously Russian state, and this justifies its exclusion from the present account of Russian history.' ('Russia, 1015-1462': *Cambridge Mediaeval History*, vol. vii, chap. XXI, p. 616.) The author, Mr D. S. Mirsky, is, of course, a Russian scholar. After reading that Simple Simon would not necessarily be in a position to argue for the frontier as agreed upon by the Treaty of Riga or for the 'Curzon Line': he would however have a reasonable idea of what the quarrel was about. And if, having read a little more, he decides to take one side or the other he will be a very useful ally.

T. CHARLES EDWARDS

THE EUROPEAN SPIRIT. By Karl Jaspers. Translated with an Introduction by Ronald Gregory Smith. Viewpoints No. 7. (S.C.M. Press; 2s. 6d.)

At an International Meeting held at Geneva in September 1946 Professor Karl Jaspers delivered a lecture which he gave the title *Vom Europäischen Geist*. It was subsequently published in Les Editions de la Baconnière under the title of *L'Esprit Européen*. and this was apparently the title of the Meeting at which it was delivered. The more modest title which Jaspers gave to his lecture suggests that the essay is to be read as notes rather than as a comprehensive survey, so that his limitation of his subject by the three ideas of freedom, history and knowledge cannot be taken to be complete. Fifteen years ago Karl Jaspers wrote his book 'The spiritual situation of our time' (the English version is *Man in the Modern Age*); and that book took stock of the spiritual position of Europe prior to the second world war, as similar works by Ham-