

SAINT BRIDGET OF SWEDEN. By Johannes Jorgensen. Translated from the Danish by Ingeborg Lund. (Longmans; 2 vols, 25s. each.)

Considering that Jorgensen first projected this great work as far back as 1902 and completed the second volume as recently as 1943, we cannot complain at having had to wait a mere eleven years for this excellent translation. St Catherine of Siena, Saint Francis of Assisi and now Saint Bridget: what a debt the Danish scholar has placed us under, and what a literary achievement is his!

In this last work he naturally follows the line of Bridget's *Revelations*, those almost unending series of volumes which when first published at Lübeck in 1492 ran to 864 folios. They form to all intents and purposes an almost complete autobiography of the saint, but are difficult enough to estimate. After Cardinal John Torquemada had examined the 123 suspected propositions drawn from them and had submitted them to the Council of Basle (1434), he declared them free from error, but the same Council suggested nevertheless that they should be corrected by some competent theologian. Benedict XIV, speaking of these and other revelations, said that it is not obligatory or even possible to give them the assent of Catholic faith, but only human faith in conformity with the dictates of prudence which presents them as probable or worthy of pious belief; and speaking of Bridget's revelations in particular he declared that the ambiguity of the theological phrasing should be leniently and piously interpreted.

Indeed, some of the revelations present difficulties, more especially where she takes the individual popes to task. Her visions of the fate of Clement VI are terrifying enough, as also are those of Innocent VI, with which however Jorgensen does not deal. The much-valued history of the Avignon Popes by Mollat does something to clear away the difficulty. Mollat finds no reliable evidence against the morals of Clement, pointing out that the accusations rest entirely on the statements of his opponents, such as the untrustworthy Petrarch, possessed of an almost ungovernable hatred for the exiled pontiffs. For exiled they were in fact, owing to the utter impossibility of living in Rome with anything like security.

As was to be expected, Jorgensen's description of the saint and the story of her life are beyond praise.

WALTER GUMBLEY, O.P.

POLITICS IN POST-WAR FRANCE. By Philip Williams. (Longmans; 35s.)

This is not an easy or exhilarating book to read. In some 400 large pages Mr Williams has described the way in which the Fourth Republic works. He presents his extremely detailed knowledge both of institutions and personalities very clearly, though sometimes he refers to