

persons committing crimes meriting *ipso facto* excommunications' (p. 94, u. 4) were not, as seems to be implied, actual excommunications, but rather the means whereby the faithful were kept aware of the excommunications *latae sententiae* that they were liable to *ipso facto*.

If Mr Woodcock's book has the tentative sweep of the pioneer, Professor Jacob's *Creighton Lecture* is the restrained effort of one who is so thoroughly familiar with his ground that he can work every inch of it and yet in doing so cultivate the whole. Chichele and the Fifteenth Century is indeed his peculiar. The focal point of the present paper is the uneasy situation created by the campaign of Martin V (who suspected Chichele's loyalty) to induce Henry V and later the Council to allow papal collation of benefices to operate freely in England. Yet withal we are presented with a deep perspective of a hundred years of ecclesiastical history. And with a delicate understanding of Chichele.

LEONARD BOYLE, O.P.

THE PEOPLES AND POLICIES OF SOUTH AFRICA. By Leo Marquand. (Geoffrey Cumberlege: Oxford University Press; 16s.)

South Africa is facing the most serious constitutional and political crisis in her history. In describing so carefully the background of that crisis, this excellent book makes for a greater understanding of South Africa's problems, whose origin may be discerned within fifteen years of the establishment of the trading station at the Cape; and so an historical background is essential to the understanding of present-day South Africa. The first chapter meets this need with a brief, yet adequate, account of South African history from the time that the Dutch East India Company, a powerful, monopolistic, chartered company, established a permanent Dutch settlement at the Cape in 1652, to the general election of 1948, when General Smuts's party was defeated by a combination of the Nationalist Party and the Afrikaner Party.

Chapters II and III deal with the people of South Africa: Europeans (English- and Afrikaans-speaking South Africans), African, Coloured and Asian. The African, the black man of South Africa, individualistic and conservative, is found in every farm, factory and town. We are given a good picture of his general characteristics—his physical features, clothes, customs—as well as of the hundreds of tribes linguistically divided into five groups, and of the state of Native education. Problems arising from Native reserves and African population in urban areas, difficulties between South Africans of Dutch and British origin, the position of the Coloureds (that mixed race which resents the application to itself of the colour bar and the policy of 'apartheid' and yet looks down on the African), are considered in a very fair and balanced way.

South Africa's external affairs are discussed with great insight, and in view of the present talk of a South African Republic it is interesting to read that though there exists in South Africa a vigorous and growing feeling of national independence and pride, for the majority of South Africans this is not an anti-British sentiment. True, only a very small section of European South Africans have an emotional attachment to England, but the majority accept the fact that cordial relations with Britain and the Commonwealth are both natural and desirable.

Other chapters deal with South African government, administration, education, religion, and, finally, there is a postscript on South Africa's present constitutional difficulty. Undoubtedly this work should contribute in no small way towards a greater understanding of, and sympathy with, South Africa's many problems.

FRANCIS MIDDLEWICK, O.P.

RELIGION AND SOCIETY AMONG THE COORGS OF SOUTH INDIA. By M. N. Srinivas. (Clarendon Press; 30s.)

Professor Srinivas's theme is the way in which Coorg religion supports Coorg solidarity—solidarity within the *okka*, or patrilineal joint family, solidarity within the village, and solidarity with the rest of India. He shows this in each case by an analysis of the 'ritual idiom' of Coorgs rather than of their explicitly held beliefs. 'In any system of ritual each ritual action has its meaning, and the totality of such meanings constitutes the idiom of that system' (p. vi, from Professor Radcliffe-Brown's Foreword). Such a conception of ritual is potentially ambiguous; the *meaning* of a ritual complex, it is supposed, is to be discovered less in the intention of the performer than by a comparison of the elements in that complex with elements in parallel complexes. Consequently, what would ordinarily be called *ceremonial* action not engaging divine sanctions, is approximated to *ritual*, and the distinction between secular and religious actions is obscured. That such a distinction is to be found in Coorg culture may be seen from Professor Srinivas's own account. There is a difference between an ordinary bath and a 'ritual' bath (in Professor Srinivas's usage); but there is also a distinction between the effects of a 'ritual' bath: 'bathing in a sacred river is not only purifying in a ritual sense, but also removes the sins of the bather'. (p. 84.) This passing reference shows that such merely ceremonial actions as those of *sammanda*, the 'jural' part of the marriage ceremonies, are not simply continuous with properly ritual actions like the *mangala* part of the same ceremonies, and are therefore improperly called *ritual*: the uniqueness of the support given by religion to Coorg solidarity is obscured by a preoccupation with a functional meaning assigned to religion itself.

It is difficult to see just what intelligibility is offered by social studies functionalist in this deliberately 'objective' (p. v) sense.