

REVIEWS

HISTORY

PIERRE D'AILLY AND THE COUNCIL OF CONSTANCE. A Dissertation by John P. McGowan, C.M., S.T.L. (Catholic University of Washington; n.p.)

In 1377 Pope Gregory XI brought to an end the seventy years sojourn of the Papacy in Avignon by returning to Rome. His death in March of the following year found the French Cardinals in a very unquiet mood, and when the succeeding pontiff, Urban VI, proved himself anything but amiable to them, they in the following September, having acknowledged and obeyed Urban as Pope for upwards of five months, elected one of their number as anti-pope under the title of Clement VII. This opened that most painful period in the history of the Church known as the Schism of the West which endured until the election of Martin V at the Council of Constance in 1417. During these thirty-nine years Popes died and were succeeded by others at Rome and Avignon, and confusion only was the result of the well-meant efforts of the Council of Pisa in 1409 to put an end to the scandal by electing a Pope to be recognised by all. As we know, they merely added a third claimant to the Apostolic See. The Pisan Council was the outcome of the efforts of the Cardinals of both obediences to set things straight, and for this purpose they abandoned their respective masters, Gregory XII the Roman Pontiff, and Benedict XIII the Avignon pretender. The flaw in its legitimacy lay in its lack of canonical convocation.

The Pope elected, Alexander V, died very shortly afterwards, and was succeeded by John XXIII. It was however now clear to the best minds in the Church that nothing could be accomplished until all three claimants were persuaded to resign, and a new Pope elected who would obtain the united obedience of Christendom. The chief agents in persuading John XXIII to convoke the Council of Constance in 1414 were the Emperor Sigismund and Pierre d'Ailly, recently created Cardinal by John. The latter hoped that the Emperor and Council would render effective the decree of deposition enacted against the other claimants by the Council of Pisa, but now finding his own claim was liable to be called in question he hastily fled, but was pursued and made prisoner. Shortly after this Gregory XII formally abdicated the Papal Throne (July 4th, 1415), premising this by a solemn act of convocation, declaring the Council of Constance a true and legitimate General Council. John XXIII had already signed his own deposition and no one was over much worried by Benedict XIII abandoned by all but a handful of friends. In 1417 Pope Martin V, Cardinal Otho Colonna, was unanimously elected by the Cardinals and the thirty plenipoten-

BLACKFRIARS

tiaries chosen from France, Germany, England, Italy and Spain. Fr. McGowan is in error in stating that the Dominican bishop of Chichester, Robert Reade, "was one of the six leading candidates." Reade died two years before this conclave, and the English prelate who had a strong chance of the papacy was Richard Clifford, Bishop of London.

D'Ailly's fame in history comes from the firm stand he made in favour of an election before the Council went on to its measures of reform. In this opinion he was withstood by a great number of the Council Fathers and the Emperor Sigismund, but he gained his point, and assuredly closed the schism much earlier than would have been the case had the opposition succeeded in getting their way.

The whole dissertation is a very clear exposition of a question already treated times without number, but not even yet with full satisfaction. The present book (100 pages) obviously makes no claim to be the last word on this debatable matter, but it does make a definite contribution of value to the question.

WALTER GUMBLEY, O.P.

MEDIÆVAL TEXTS

EX SUMMA PHILIPPI CANCELLARII QUÆTIONES DE ANIMA, ad fidem manusccriptorum edidit L. W. Keeler, S.J. (Opuscula et Textus. Series Scholastica, XX). (Münster i. W. Aschen-dorff, 1937. RM. 1.42.)

MISCELLANEA ISIDORIANA. HOMENAJE A S. ISIDORO DE SEVILLA EN EL XIII CENTENARIO DE SU MUERTE. 636—4 de Abril—1936. Lo edita la Provincia de Andalucía S.I. con la colaboración de Escritores nacionales y extranjeros. (Rome, Gregorian University, 1936.)

Philip the Chancellor, until quite recently almost unknown, was undoubtedly one of the greatest thinkers in early thirteenth century Paris. His works have been for long time attributed to Philip de Grève with whom he was confused; but recent researches by Professor H. Meylan of Lausanne have convincingly shown that this confusion did not arise until the sixteenth century. Philip was Chancellor of Notre Dame of Paris from 1218 until his death on December 23rd, 1236. His Latin hymns reputed to be amongst the best of the century are widely known; but his *Summa* has not yet been published. The influence exercised by this *Summa* upon the theologians of the first half of the thirteenth century cannot be over-estimated. John de la Rochelle, the *Summa* of Alexander of Hales, Odo Rigaud and others, borrowed from it question after question, transcribing