

the aridities of our own learned men. And such works are not written in Latin.

DANIEL A. CALLUS, O.P.

HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY.

PROVIDENCE AND HISTORY. By J. V. L. Casserley. (Signposts, No. 11. Dacre Press; 1s.)

This excellent little book is a credit to the series, of which it is the eleventh, produced by members of the Anglican Church under the title of Signposts. It strives to give some indication of what a Christian should make of the history of mankind. It is granted that Christianity cannot teach us new facts of human history, but in as much as it tells of three facts which transcend history—the Creation, the Incarnation and the End of the World—it can teach much about the interpretation of history. ‘Apart from it the visible phenomena of history can certainly be seen, *but not understood*; accurately recorded, but not comprehended or interpreted.’ The presence of the Church of Christ in the world and its real temporal mission are repeatedly insisted on, but ‘the active presence within history of a Reality which transcends history is not a theme with whose fulness the historian as such is equipped to deal.’ Materialistic, fatalistic and cyclic interpretations of history are recounted and disposed of, and those modern aberrations conveniently included under the term ‘fascism’ are castigated. The author issues one warning which is full of salutary truth: ‘It is not the function of the Gospel to stabilise the West. The Gospel could stabilise the West, and please God it shall, but only a West which turns to the Gospel selflessly and loves it for itself alone.’ One might be inclined to quarrel with some of the paradoxes on page 63, but not without running the risk of appearing captious. Altogether it is really an admirable little book and very well worth reading. It is sure to do much good.

N.P.B.

RUSSIA, a Penguin Special. By Bernard Pares. (Penguin Books, pp. 256; 6d.)

It is not easy to compress the thousand years of Russia’s history into a slender book of some 250 pages, yet Professor Pares has achieved this with a measure of success and given a general outline of the political and social life of Russia throughout the centuries. Naturally the book is not infallible, and some inaccuracies are surprising in view of the writer’s knowledge of the country. Thus, as an instance, to say (p. 73) that ‘all was happy and confident’ under the reign of Czar Alexis troubled by