

The Jew Marx was quite clear that the form to be taken by the Jewish Thing was Communism. Yet Mr. Asch's denunciations of Communism are superlative variations of *Anathema maranatha*.

Racial Jews, like Mr. Asch, who reject both the Catholic and the Communist mission of Jewry seem to have no alternative. They are brethren of those who were asked by Jesus for their opinion of the Baptist, and had no opinion to offer.

V. McN.

HISTORY

OLD CATHOLIC LANCASHIRE (1550-1850). By Dom F. O. Blundell, O.S.B. (Burns Oates; 6s.)

With the publication of the third volume of his history of Old Catholic Lancashire, Dom Odo Blundell brings an interesting series to a close. The author would be the last to claim that his studies are 'un travail de bénédictin'; nor has he clothed them with any grace of literary style; but, at least, we can recognise that they are the fruit of considerable enquiry and research among ancient documents and modern reprints. He has drawn his matter from many scattered sources.

Ranging from the northern shores of Morecambe Bay to the banks of the Mersey, the author selects a number of the older parishes, or missions, as they used to be called, and gives us their history. In almost every case we are brought up against some old Catholic family whose stubborn recusancy kept the faith a-flicker in the district during the long night of the penal times. One has to read Fr. Blundell's pages in order to understand how the gentry served and saved the Catholic Religion in Lancashire. They afforded a home and shelter to the missionary priest, and a certain measure of protection. Tenants and poorer neighbours frequented their houses for 'prayers,' as Mass was discreetly called, and for the reception of the sacraments. They gave their children to the Church, sending their sons to Rome and Douai and the continental novitiates, and their daughters to convents in France and Flanders; all the time squaring their shoulders against the relentless pressure of recusancy fines and confiscations. From a worldly point of view it must have seemed a melancholy, even gloomy existence. But Lancashire, especially the southern half of it, contained a large number of these heroic families, whose members inter-married, and who were comforted and strengthened by the ties of propinquity and kinship; who could meet to exchange tales of hardship and suffering, or mutually to condole with one another, when the knife of persecution stabbed afresh, or when the casualty lists came home from Naseby and Worcester, 'ubi ceciderunt fortes Israel.' Protestant neighbours, too, were often practical in their sympathy. A clear picture of all these things rises from Fr. Blundell's records.

J. R. MEAGHER.