

THE MYSTICAL THEOLOGY OF THE EASTERN CHURCH. By Vladimir Lossky. (James Clarke and Co.; 16s.)

The late Vladimir Lossky was one of the best-known Russian Orthodox writers of the *diaspora*. Unlike the majority of *émigrés* he belonged to that section of Orthodoxy which is under the jurisdiction of the Patriarch of Moscow and was able to provide information about religious life under Soviet rule. He was also able to return to Russia for a visit. On the other hand, living in Paris and paying frequent visits to England where he was well known as a lecturer, he knew the western religious scene extremely well. The work under review was first published in French in 1944. It was designed to present Orthodoxy to western Christians, Catholic or Protestant, among whom the author had a host of friends. While desiring nothing more than a *rapprochement* between Christians, Vladimir Lossky regretted any attempt to under-estimate the theological differences between them. While it remains true that political and cultural factors were largely responsible for the rift between East and West, it would be wrong to regard the great theological issues, such as the procession of the Holy Ghost or the divine energies, as being of purely academic interest. The author is at pains throughout to stress the interdependence of theology and religious life and the effect which a given position with regard to any of the great controverted questions can have on the spirituality of those who hold that position. The value of this work for those who wish to study the Orthodox viewpoint is enhanced by the fact that Vladimir Lossky was less eclectic than some other contemporary Orthodox thinkers, so that his work is based mainly on the great classics, both patristic and medieval, of eastern theology and spirituality. There are obscure passages in the work, but then some of the problems treated, especially in trinitarian theology, are very difficult. There are also some very fine passages, especially in the last chapter.

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SAINT JERÔME. By Jean Steinmann. (Cerf.)

This is a gay and imaginative little book, which portrays St Jerome with an occasionally bowdlerized charm. It is odd that it should have been written by so good a scholar as Jean Steinmann, because so much of the reconstruction is so flimsy, and there is such a curious lack of any sense of period; thus in spite of the cover St Jerome was not a cardinal in any modern sense; in spite of page 1 nothing can be learnt from Pompeii about the appearance of his father's house in Pannonia; in spite of page 16, fourth-century Rome cannot have resembled