

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH AND THE SOVIET STATE. By Serge Bolshakoff. (S.P.C.K.; 3s. 6d.)

In this little book the author sets himself a task of 'giving an objective and summary account of the history of Russian Christianity before and after the Soviet Revolution.' He has very ably covered a large ground and brought into light main developments. The reader will find this a useful introduction to the complex world of Russian religious life. Parallels with the Western religious world are made every now and again, while some Russian events are given Western names. This brings more in relief certain aspects of the events, but occasionally it may create an inexact impression—as for instance in the case of the Old Ritualists, so essentially different from the British Nonconformists.

Much attention is paid to the relation of Church and State before the revolution. It was responsible for producing clergy with no sense of vocation and for estranging from the Church many liberal and educated men. One might add that this alienation was also due to the distrust with which the Church met the thought and art of the secular world, even in the case of men of undoubtedly Christian and Orthodox inspiration. The story of the recent trials and progress of Christianity in Russia, taken mainly from reliable Western sources based on Soviet documents, leaves an encouraging impression. The believers seem to have won the recognition of the Government, no longer willing to antagonise them. The Metropolitan of Moscow follows a way of adjustment to the conditions of the day not unlike the method of the Concordats concluded between the Popes and France in times of the revolution and Napoleon.

One may disagree over some appreciations, but the book is a fair one as a whole. As it always happens in thinking of Russia, the reader is inevitably led to ask himself a question of the future of Russian Christianity when—and if—it regains full freedom of education, social life, religious literature, etc. What new apologetics will be needed for Russia? How will she meet the Western Christendom? These, however, are abstract and so far irrelevant questions.

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LETTRES AUX AMERICAINS par Gustave Cohen. (Editions de l'Arbre, Montreal; \$0.50.)

The publication in both America and Canada of original works by distinguished French writers is a heartening sign for future American-European understanding. Englishmen who are concerned about the intense insularity of their country will do well to keep an eye on these publications. These letters of a university professor should help to prevent traditional Franco-American understanding, which derives from a common ideal, from being disrupted by a base and vicious propaganda.

M.S.