

The second part of the book is devoted to the revolution worked time and time again in the Church by St Augustine, St Dominic, St Francis, St Ignatius and St Teresa. This part leads on naturally to an explanation that although the revolutionary nature of Christianity can be illustrated by picking out such highlights, the revolution itself is a continuous one so that the whole history of the Church appears as an unfolding of the successive phases of a continuous revolution.

This revolutionary nature of the Church, its evangelical spirit, needs to remain faithful to its initial orientation because it can easily go astray. Yet while this danger does exist it does not justify checking the revolutionary spirit. Side by side with the reforms of the prophets must be mentioned the work done by councils, the development and the enrichment of the heritage of theology, philosophy and liturgy. Each of these developments owes its origin to the revolutionary spirit and the Church, on pain of sclerosis, must always be sending new blood through its arteries.

As the Church faces the world today this new blood is very necessary. The author finds no real cause for discouragement as he examined the present position, but the need is always there for the new blood—in this case among the laity as well as among the clergy.

R. P. WALSH

**EARLY FATHERS FROM THE PHILOKALIA.** Selected and translated from the Russian text by E. Kadloubovsky and G. E. H. Palmer. (Faber & Faber; 35s.)

The *Philokalia* is a collection of the writings of the Eastern spiritual fathers, edited by the Metropolitan Macarius of Corinth and a monk of Mount Athos, Nicodemus, and published in 1782. (It is interesting to note that the copy of the first edition in the British Museum was presented by the Hon. Frederick North, younger son of the Lord North who was received into the Orthodox Church in Corfu in 1791.) A century later Bishop Theophan Govorov, 'the Recluse', translated the work into Russian, re-editing and considerably enlarging it. It was from this Russian version that Mr E. Kadloubovsky and Mr G. E. H. Palmer produced the volume of *Writings from the Philokalia on Prayer of the Heart*, published by Messrs Faber & Faber in 1951 and noticed in *LIFE OF THE SPIRIT* at the time. And it is from the same *Dobrotolubiye* that the same translators now give a further selection of spiritual writings in general. Of the nine writers represented, St Antony the Abbot, St Isaac the Syrian and St Maximus the Confessor are at least familiar names; the others are less well-known: Mark the Ascetic, Abba Evagrius, Nilus of Sinai, Abba Dorotheus and an unidentified Theodore. All these lived long before the Church in the East and the Church in the West had so disastrously fallen apart; but

the translators add, as well as a passage on unceasing prayer from the original editors, a few pages from Gregory Palamas, the fourteenth-century hesychast, which are not the least interesting in the book.

But if any section stands out above the others, it is the Four Centuries on *agape* of Maximus the Confessor. The translators surely are right in calling them 'one of the most profound and beautiful works in all Christian writing'. These series of short paragraphs contain much that the veriest tyro knows, and much more that is far beyond him: but the spirit behind them, the simplicity of expression, rendered into straightforward and unhackneyed English, give them the impact almost of a revelation. 'Pure spiritual milk' indeed, encouraging in the very reading that state of passionlessness to which Maximus, as a good Easterner, so often recurs. But the Centuries are not the whole of the book, and there is not a page that does not repay attention and encourage thought.

The previous selection from the *Dobrotolubiye* was widely and warmly welcomed; it is to be expected that this second instalment will be equally successful. The writers were in the main addressing themselves to monks; but it is pretty clear that, *mutatis mutandis*, they were also talking to everybody: 'Through the loving-kindness of our Creator there are very many ways to salvation, which convert souls and lead them to heaven', is a reminder given more than once. The reader is struck again and again by the 'contemporariness' of these ancients, and by the relevance of their teaching to the needs of Christians today: not least perhaps in this, that they expound an adult doctrine in an adult way ('adult' does not mean 'highbrow'), and they respect the mind and responsibility of their disciples. Here is nothing mechanical, no 'short way' or 'easy method': Christian life is made to appear what it is—a most difficult undertaking, for anybody. But 'actions pleasing to God are assisted by all creation' (Mark the Ascetic).

D.A.

CHURCH AND STATE FROM CONSTANTINE TO THEODOSIUS. By S. L. Greenslade. (S.C.M. Press; 7s. 6d.)

These are the Frederick Denison Maurice Lectures for 1953, delivered in King's College, London, by the Van Mildert Professor of Divinity in the University of Durham. They form a very compact little monograph (supplemented by tables and a select bibliography), that traces the emergence of the Dualistic Theory of Church and State from the *de facto* and tacit recognition of Constantine's position by the Church in East and West after the Edict of Milan in A.D. 313, down to the clear ascendancy that the Church had established in the West (though not in the East) by the end of the fourth century.