

of the author's task to solve, is not so much that these features are characteristic of Jewry as that they are not always characteristic of Christianity. The solution of the problem presented by the fact that mysticism in Christendom seems often more akin to Plotinus or Sankaracharya than to anything rooted in the same Bible might illuminate many other mysteries of the ways of God.

VICTOR WHITE, O.P.

DIE STIMME DER OSTKIRCHE. By Karl Fritz. (Evangelisches Verlagswerk; DM.7.20.)

The *Evangelisches Verlagswerk* in Stuttgart is constantly providing its Catholic brethren with fresh surprises and delights, as it has done by publishing the works of Hans Asmursen and by giving us this extremely attractive and nicely produced book on the spirituality of the Eastern Church by Karl Fritz. This is a subject upon which it is so easy for enthusiasts to lose their heads, and it is a tribute to Pastor Fritz that he has retained his head along with his enthusiasm. Perhaps this is to be set down to his having spent many years in vital contact with the Eastern Churches, four of them as a prisoner of war in Russia. In consequence *Die Stimme der Ostkirche* presents those of us who are interested in Eastern spirituality (but inexpert as well) with the concisest and most readable work that we have yet encountered.

Amongst the most valuable sections of the book is that in which Pastor Fritz illustrates, by quotations, how irrelevant are the accusations of 'anarchy' which Westerners so often direct against the Eastern Churches, and how different the whole question of dogma appears in the eyes of those for whom the liturgy itself is 'lived dogma', requiring no external guarantee. That is a point which touches Catholic critics most, but it is almost the only point in the book which does hit Catholics. For the surprising feature of Pastor Fritz's thesis lies in the very trenchant observations on the poverty of the Protestant tradition as compared with the Catholic tradition. It is surprising, because a Catholic cannot help wondering how Pastor Fritz would himself state the principles which keep him from accepting the fulness of the Catholic tradition which he has so brilliantly illustrated in these pages. It may even be that his personal contacts with Roman Catholics has convinced him that the Church has abandoned the great tradition and smothered the great basic truths of the Trinity and Transfiguration beneath a heap of petty devotions and stifling sentimentality. If so, we can only say '*Mea culpa*'—and that the Church has *not* abandoned the great tradition.

DONALD NICHOLL.