

co-existence of Hinduism with Christianity, each stimulating the other in growth towards the ultimate goal, unity in the completest religious truth' (p. 34).

Presenting Christianity, with the Church left out, must be, like presenting *Hamlet* with the Prince of Denmark left out, certainly none too easy a task.

H. C. E. ZACHARIAS.

ERNEST PSICHARI. *A Study in Religious Conversion.* By Wallace Fowlie. (James Clarke & Co., Ltd.; 3s. 6d.)

This brief study of the 'French Rupert Brooke' should be read twice over, lest the reader be too irritated by a first reading to give the book its due. For although Mr. Fowlie's manner is heavy and over-emphatic he has interesting things to say and he probes the young soldier's conversion with sympathy and some discernment. Perhaps there is too much sympathy, or rather what there is of it is too little checked and criticised; there is, on the whole, too little intellectual detachment, a too scanty sense of humour. Psichari is so dramatic a figure, his conversion is so 'sensational,' he can so easily be lifted up for a sign unto the nations, that whoever writes on him should be doubly on his guard against all sentimentality, even the tiniest grain of it. Mr. Fowlie is a little too excited to be doubly on his guard. His account of the positivism and naturalism of 'the sad eighties' is spoiled by text-book clichés, and he surrenders, much too easily and most ingenuously, the human intellect to Taine and Zola, when he says, for instance, of these writers' work: 'No place is left to the idealist or the mystic, for faith gives way to reason.'

Yet it would be unfair not to praise the warmth and vivacity of this book, especially of the concluding chapters, in which Mr. Fowlie seems to speak out for himself with more independence of the commonplaces of literary history. He finds a fine phrase to indicate that 'search for light' which fills the last two books of Psichari. For Psichari was first of all an *imaginatif*; and because Mr. Fowlie has something of the same gift, he can write that 'the sentiment of space, pure, limitless space . . . is a constant rhythm in Psichari.' The young Frenchman went to Africa literally as well as metaphorically to enlarge his horizon. He thought best in the open air under a vast sky. He has now a biographer who shows signs of being, as he was, primarily a poet.

A stricter analysis of this conversion remains to be done, perhaps by someone who will identify himself rather less with

Psichari's own personal reaction against his age. Something calmer is needed. Psichari stands for, proclaims and defends, a certain ideal of the Christian Soldier; an association of ideas less widely honoured to-day probably than in 1914, when he was killed in action. He died in mid-career, at the height of his powers, his ideas alive and developing. A full-length study of these ideas would have more than a historical interest for this generation. In the meantime, Mr. Fowlie has given us a vigorous and attractive introduction.

KENELM FOSTER, O.P.

#### CURRENT AFFAIRS

SPAIN, THE CHURCH AND THE ORDERS. By E. Allison Peers. (Eyre and Spottiswoode; 10s. 6d.)

'The book I had in mind,' Professor Peers tells us, 'would have been a great deal larger than this, and I still hope that in the future the publication of a fuller study will become practicable. But I am compelled to write something now by the mass of ill-informed statements which are being made about the Church in Spain with little or no first-hand knowledge of the subject, and the sometimes equally wild statements made in the Church's defence.' Yet when we read the book itself we cannot but admire the measure in which the author has succeeded within the narrow limits of its two hundred pages in doing justice to his vast subject.

The general thesis of the book may be reduced to two main heads. Firstly, to show the injustices which have been done to the Spanish Church by propaganda during the recent conflict. Secondly, to show that the forces responsible for the persecution were not those of liberalism and anti-clericalism as in the past, but forces wearing an 'anti-clerical mask to hide an anti-God face' (p. 95). Professor Peers' conclusion under this second head is summed up thus: 'Anti-clericalism obviously provides an excellent foundation for Anarchist and Communist doctrines, and it was because there were so many anti-clericals of this type that the Anti-God movement has made, especially since 1931, such rapid progress . . . The fuels heaped upon the fires which have burnt so fiercely may have consisted in large measure of anti-clericalism. But fuel alone does not make a fire—it needs a match to ignite it. And the match which has ignited the fuel . . . is nothing less than hatred of God.' (p. 168)

But Professor Peers has, as he tells us, refrained from 'all unnecessary controversy. 'It would have been easy to hold up