

**The France I Know.** By Winifred Stephens, Author of "The Life of Madame Adam. E. P. Dutton & Co., New York, 1919. 255 pp.

Miss Stephens received part of her education in France and made repeated visits to France during the war. She is a gifted British woman who writes delightfully of the real France of the home. It is refreshing to read her pages and not have flaunted before one the glare and glitter of the Paris boulevards and cafes. The France of Miss Stephens is the France that has astonished Germany and that has won the admiration of the world, the France that we all love. The book is a charming one.

A. T. ROBERTSON.

**The Church and Its American Opportunity.** Papers by various writers read at the American Church Congress in 1919. New York, The Macmillan Company, 1919. x--235. \$1.50.

This congress brought together in New York, April 29 to May 2, a notable group of the most prominent Episcopal leaders, bishops, canons, theologians, professors, etc., to discuss a series of topics of vital significance to their church in the world epoch of the hour. Evidently pains were taken to have each topic discussed from the different standpoints represented in the influential thinking of church leaders. For many months regular meetings of the committee arranging for the congress were held "when men of differing churchmanship and differing temperament \* \* \* sought to decide what are the most important problems before the church, and what men are best qualified to bring out the convictions from the extreme right to the extreme left which are known to exist within the loyalty of the church." Seven topics were chosen and the volume carries three papers on each, except one, representing advanced, moderate and conservative views on the given topic.

One would think this an extremely interesting and rather confusing outcome for members of the Episcopal communion. To one of another body of Christians the work is full of fascinating revelations of the present state of experience, belief and aims of the church which represents, more than any other in our country, the ideals of aristocracy in religion. This reviewer, being a thorough-going democrat in all his ideas and ideals, has read this series of addresses with eager interest and Christian sympathy, feeling that he was getting a revealing view of the inner experience and thought of earnest men whose interpretation of our common faith lies at the other end of the field.

The seven topics selected as presenting "the most important problems before the church" at this critical time are very instructive, especially if we take account of the relative space given to each topic

and to several groups of subjects, and if we also think of subjects not included in this list of "most important problems". In one group of related subjects we find, "Shall We Retain the Old Testament in the Lectionary and the Sunday School?" to which 18 pages are devoted; "Essentials of Prayer Book Revision", 41 pages; "Necessary Readjustments in the Training of the Ministry", 36 pages; "The Functions of the Episcopate in a Democracy", 29 pages. This group deals mainly with the ecclesiastical side of the church's life and interests. It includes four of the seven "problems" and 124 pages in a total of 219.

Next in the measure of attention are the two "problems" of "The Obligation of the Church to Support a League of Nations", 27 pages; "The Need of An American Labour Party", 35 pages. "The Effect of the War on Religion" is discussed through 33 pages.

Without exception, the papers represent ability, culture, thought and moral earnestness. The last mentioned topic is first in order of arrangement, and for the general reader the most useful.

The excessive concern over ecclesiastical, clerical, liturgical and generally of formal aspects of religion indicates a lack of fitness for grappling vigorously with the most vital problems of the day; and a non-Episcopal reader finds it by no means easy to sympathize with the inability of most of the writers, of whatever wing of the church, to subordinate the formal to the vital. This proved a great surprise to the reviewer.

The final section, the three papers on "The Functions of the Episcopate in a Democracy" make it evident to a democratic mind that the lovers of the Episcopate cannot even comprehend the democratic idea. No one of the papers even approaches a genuine democratic position. That representing the High Church Attitude is thoroughly aristocratic and English in its entire thought and evidently has no real sympathy with even political democracy. The moderate paper is politically democratic but ecclesiastically aristocratic to the core. The liberal is a genuine political democrat and an ecclesiastical hybrid, democratic in ideas of general administration of the grace of salvation and sanctification.

One is pained to find that this representative committee, composed of no fewer than twenty most prominent clergymen of the church, did not find that general Christian education, missionary effectiveness, evangelization of America are among "the important problems" in the "American Opportunity" of "the Church".

One can commend this book as one of most stimulating interest and helpful suggestion. It would be difficult to find a collection of papers of higher literary quality. Only two of the papers are difficult reading on account of poor rhetorical construction. It is a notable production.

W. O. CARVER.