

Christen im Schatten der Macht by Hans Brandenburg, Brockhaus, Wuppertal, 1974, 206 pp. English translation : to be published by Mowbrays in 1976.

Christen unter Hammer und Sichel by Winrich Scheffbuch, Brockhaus, Wuppertal, 1972, 200 pp. English translation : **Christians under the Hammer and Sickle**, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1974, 220 pp., \$2.95.

Both these books are directed at a wider audience, with the laudable aim of bringing the history and present situation of the Baptists and other evangelical revival movements in Russia to the attention of as many people as possible. I believe that Scheffbuch has been more successful here : from the outset he made no claim to be writing an academic book.

Brandenburg on the other hand set out to write, as the sub-title says, a history of the revival movements in Russia. His book is therefore chiefly dedicated to the last century. With great love of detail, the author describes the birth of the first "Stunde" (Bible study hour) in the village of Osnova near Odessa after 1860, and the spread of this pietistic revival movement in the neighbouring villages and later in other south Russian provinces. Brandenburg has a predilection for biographical details and the often strange turns in the lives of great missionaries ; this is also evident in his presentation of the second source of evangelicalism in Russia, as he sets before the reader vivid pictures of the Bible circles in the highest society of St. Petersburg, gathering around Col. Pashkov and the princely Lieven family.

The author rightly emphasizes the supra-confessional nature of the revival meetings and of their social activities. In particular, the "stundists" in south Russia were in the beginning by no means anti-Orthodox and thought of themselves as a movement within the State Church. It was through police action and a bureaucratic missionary zeal on the part of the Orthodox clergy that they were forced out of the Church. Towards the end of his book, Brandenburg looks at the considerable publishing activity of the Baptists and Evangelical Christians between 1905 and World War I, also after the Revolution in the years 1922-28. This makes it painfully clear how much greater were the possibilities for distributing religious literature in the 1920s than today. The hunger for Bibles and religious literature has grown considerably since then.

The great weakness of Brandenburg's book consists in the fact that in his historical study, he does not use either the considerable Russian literature on the subject before the Revolution, or recent Soviet research, or up-to-date Western works. This is therefore not so much a history of