

Russian Rule in Poland

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(Reprinted from "Our Sunday Visitor,"
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THE killing of Polish priests and laymen by the Reds of Russia who invaded that unfortunate country has received but little publicity in the daily press. It is difficult to learn to what extent such persecution is being carried on. Latest reports to reach us tell of the shooting of an archbishop, six bishops and ten prominent Catholic laymen. That there have been other killings is certain. Unfortunate, too, is the likelihood that such persecution will continue under Red rule.

Stalin has not discontinued persecution of religion in Russia. That he can be expected to follow a similar policy in other territory which he will rule is certain. The following from the London Tablet gives an idea of the sufferings of Christians in Russia:

"In a conference on the religious state of Russia, Bishop Seraphim, primate of the Russian church in Germany, stated that there are two misconceptions about the state of religion in Russia: First, that religious life has disap-

peared from Russia; and second, that freedom of religion and conscience exists in the country.

"In reality, the Russian population remains deeply religious, and even liturgical worship, though reduced to its simplest form, has by no means been abolished. The real reason is that Bolshevism has been unable to replace Christianity by any satisfactory philosophy of the world.

"On the other hand, the anti-religious struggle goes on as virulently as ever. As all church property belongs to the state, churches are being closed as a mere matter of course. Thus, in 1938, Odessa and Minsk saw their last churches closed to all worship. In May, 1938, no fewer than 250 priests were arrested and shot. At Easter in the same year, one hundred priests were deported. Ten metropolitans, archbishops and bishops were arrested in the month of January, and six of them were shot. More recently, five archbishops and one priest were executed. The usual pretext was that these men were German or Japanese spies or that they had sabotaged railways or munition factories."