

## REVIEWS

a week for sustenance. Such conditions call for nothing short of heroic virtue in those who have to endure them, and it is not unnatural that we often find the call unanswered; it is a call that we have no right to make.

Yet all this could be changed so easily if more people understood a few simple facts about the nature of money and the monopoly of credit by which its quantity is governed. To those unacquainted with the New Economics, *Money and Social Justice* may seem a mere tirade against the money-lenders: it is by no means this, and the constructive proposals which are implied, if not stated throughout the whole book may be studied and examined in any work representative of the more technical side of the question.

What Father Drinkwater has said has been said before by such as have not been blinded or deceived by the jargon of 'sound finance.' I sincerely hope that it may be said again, for it cannot be said too often.

OXFORD AND ASQUITH.

## LITURGY

BYZANTINE ARCHITECTURE AND DECORATION. By J. R. Hamilton.  
(Batsford; 18/-.)

It is only of recent years that the importance of Byzantine life, thought and art in the history of civilization has come to be realized in the West. In England the neglect is largely due to the view propounded in Gibbon's great history which made Byzantium synonymous with functionless ceremonialism and decadence. We now know that it was a culture of an advanced and extremely vital type which for centuries withstood the influx of barbarism. In particular, Byzantine art is of the very first importance in the development of Christian art, and from a liturgical viewpoint the Byzantine Church typified by Sancta Sophia is the supreme architectural expression of the Christian religion. A great debt is due to the researches of Strzygowski in this matter, however debateable some of his conclusions may be, and there are innumerable monographs by other writers. Mr. Hamilton's book has taken advantage of these and of his own investigations, and he gives us the first synthesis of the whole sphere of Byzantine architecture in a manageable and attractive form. A preliminary chapter provides a survey of the rise and history of the style and of its characteristics issuing from a fusion of Hellenistic naturalism and the hieratic art of Syria. Then follows a useful chapter on the constructional principles of a Byzantine church. 'The characteristic and essential feature of a Byzantine church is a dome covering a space which is a square.' The rest of the book is devoted to studying the spread

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of Byzantine architecture in the various countries of the East, its arrival in the West through Italy into France where its influence is still vital in the great Romanesque churches. There are many excellent photographs and plans : and in its completeness and thoroughness the book may literally be described as indispensable to any serious student of architecture. A.M.

HOW TO BUILD A CHURCH. By Benedict Williamson. (Ouseley ; 10/6.)

This title suggests that the book is meant to supersede the architect. This is not so. It is a general guide to both priest and architect, for it outlines the most important requirements and principles which must be uppermost in the planning of every church. Following St. Charles Borromeo, who issued instructions on church building for the diocese of Milan, the author deals briefly with style, material, plan, foundation-stone, façade, baptistery, altar, etc., for the most part clearly, assisting his exposition with a number of useful illustrations.

Many points here insisted on are of value, such as the need for solidity, light, ventilation, roomy sacristies, and spacious altars. But the most refreshing aspect of the book lies in the author's unhesitating adoption of the modern style of building. The revivals and copies so common in England are set aside as completely dead. The direct and simple style embodying the inspiration of the modern age has been adopted in many places on the Continent for ecclesiastical architecture. This book will have achieved much if it succeeds in shaking the pertinacity with which English-speaking countries cling to the moribund Gothic and Classical styles for all religious purposes.

The author, however, discloses a strange anomaly when he discusses painting and sculpture. He inveighs without qualification against the so-called 'distortionist' art, and sets up as a model a weak type of modern art descended from Pre-Raphaelitism. Consistency demands that his characterization of the modern style—'simplicity, solidity and dignity,' and 'a dependence upon line and form rather than upon detail' (pp. 123-4)—should be applied equally to sculpture and painting. A visit to a modern church on the Continent complete in all detail with non-photographic, simple, symbolic statues and stained glass, compel the feeling that these are in keeping with the church and inspired by the same living style.

The treatment of the subject matter is perhaps too brief and sketchy, resulting in overstatement and omission. In fact, the book shows signs of being written in a hurry. But anyone having some acquaintance with differences in style and plan in churches will find this a very practical book. C.P.