

REVIEWS

Most of the schemes are good and practical, and a useful bibliography is given after each section. But here another problem presents itself: a bibliography and 'no books'! If any one feels that the Guild is doing good work but regrets that he cannot take an active part in it he could not do better than help with the formation of a library. This is particularly important in poorer districts. Will some benefactor come forward?

H.P.

SOCIOLOGY

THE REVOLT AGAINST MECHANISM. By L. P. Jacks. Hibbert Lectures, 1933. (Allen & Unwin, 1934; 2/6.)

These two lectures are on the theme that mechanism is a good servant but a bad master. To-day mechanism has the upper hand, but the world is becoming aware of this and, being conscious of it, tends to revolt. There are signs of this revolt in education, philosophy, science, and society in general. Unfortunately we have become mechanically minded and look for salvation to schemes of control that are themselves mechanical. Mechanism is opposed to creative life, the highest form of which is religion. Religion therefore is the great hope, but mechanism is always tending to control religion too, whereas it should be no more than its 'resisting medium.' The old opposition between religion of authority and religion of the spirit leads Dr. Jacks to exaggerate the blessings of religious confusion, but his list of the effects of mechanism on religion on p. 70 forms a very valuable scheme of self-examination even for Catholics. Dr. Jacks names Ruskin, Morris, and Samuel Butler, as heralds of the much-needed revolt. But Carlyle's essay, *Signs of the Times*, appeared in 1829 and a closer parallel to the Hibbert Lectures of 1933 could hardly be found.

A.E.H.S.

MONEY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE. By the Rev. F. H. Drinkwater. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne; 2/6.)

We have been listening almost unceasingly of late to the pronouncements of the professional economists both in attack and defence of the present system, and it is refreshing as well as valuable to hear the views of a layman on such matters. Father Drinkwater has no inherited prejudices to fight against; his point of view is the point of view of a clearthinking and disinterested parish priest, and if we consider how few economists or financiers are either disinterested or clear-thinking, and how fewer still are parish priests (or even Christians) his advantage over them in discussing the social aspects of their science can scarcely fail to be recognized.

BLACKFRIARS

Money and Social Justice is a collection of essays upon the more just administration of a monetary system, and as a glance at the contents table will show it treats of the subject in a large variety of connections, Modern Usury, Money and Slum Clearance, The Gold Idol, Money and Education, Money and Marriage, are examples of the chapter headings, and though the shortness of the individual chapters may give the book a somewhat scrappy appearance it is important that these chapters should be taken all together—just as the Papal Encyclicals upon which they are very largely based must be taken together if we are to get a proper understanding of the Church's direct teaching upon social questions.

'A monetary system' (says Father Drinkwater in effect) 'is something artificial—man made. There are no natural or "inexorable" laws attaching to it and it is entirely within the power of man to alter it if in any circumstances it shows itself defective.' Father Drinkwater does not attempt to prove that the present system is intrinsically defective; he merely states it as a rather obvious fact. It is true that he could hardly hope to prove it in a book of this size, but it is perhaps a weakness that he assumes in his readers a little too close familiarity with the arguments which can be brought forward to support his attitude.

It is not necessary however to have a complete understanding of (or even agreement with) the writings of Major Douglas for it to be quite clear that it is the monetary department of the economic system which is letting us down. Productive capacity is higher than ever before in the history of man; the desire to consume is certainly no lower; it is the ticket system whose function it is to bridge the gulf between producer and consumer which alone is wanting; the struggle to-day is no longer between capital and labour, but rather between industry and finance.

It may be argued that this phenomenon is the business of an economist rather than a moralist (for it is in the latter capacity that Father Drinkwater is writing) were it not that the existing state of affairs comes into conflict at certain points with some of the most fundamental of the Church's social principles. The integrity of the family is being disregarded, and in a world flowing (at the present time only too clearly overflowing) with milk and honey, the very means of subsistence are denied. Wages are forced down for the benefit of debenture holders, and in order to provide interest to bankers on money which they have created by the stroke of the pen the rents of new tenements are fixed so high as to leave in some cases under four shillings

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