

## REVIEWS

POLISH SCIENCE AND LEARNING. A Series of Booklets edited by the Association of Polish University Professors and Lecturers in Great Britain. No. 5—Educational Issue. (Milford; Oxford University Press; 2s. 6d.).

The Polish Professors' *Educational Issue* consists of half a dozen articles on general questions, and another dozen and a half on every part of the Polish system of academic and technical schools, universities and training colleges—an impressive (if sometimes rather dry) account of all that has been achieved since the reforms of the *Commission* of 1793. Prof. Kukulski contributes a special article on these reforms and the permanent impetus they gave to the national life in spite of the political disasters that so soon intervened; uniformity, transference from the Church to the State, the substitution of Polish for Latin and of science for 'purely verbal humanistic learning' were the means used to make the system a real 'school for moral integrity and virtue.'

Of the general articles Prof. Powicke's delightful lecture on the history and genius of Oxford is the most remarkable; he holds up to the Conference of Inter-Allied Professors and Lecturers (July 1943) 'that will of the wisp, the medieval ideal of the *ius ubique docendi*.' Other articles too consider the contribution that education can make to European peace, but none have Prof. Powicke's understanding of the past; and some perhaps seem to put too much hope in 'democratic education,' 'teaching of world citizenship,' 'technics' and 'civics,' for this seems part of the modern attempt to abandon liberal education in favour of pure technique.

J.B.S.

TOWARDS A PLAN FOR OXFORD CITY. By Lawrence Dale. (Faber; 6s.).

The architectural disorder of Oxford to-day is patent and distressing. How did it come to be? This Mr. Dale makes clear in the 'analytical' part of his book (pp. 14-24), which diagnoses the historical, social and psychological conditions that engendered the present unloveliness. Can it in any way be remedied? This is the main argument, and its kernel is the building of a 'Mall' from the foot of Headington Hill to the railway stations, skirting Christ Church Meadow. Summarising its advantages, Mr. Dale says: 'The merit of the Mall is that everyone gains by it: it integrates the University and leaves it in peace; it joins up the severed town by a new and delightful link; it by-passes a large portion of the through traffic; it provides long-needed circulation; and gives the visitor and the whole community the enjoyment of the Meadow and

a new view of the dreaming spires. It civilises the Meadow in the root sense of the word and gives Oxford some "Backs." It puts St. Clement's and St. Ebbe's on the map for future development and preserves the ancient city. It is only a mile long and has only one bridge, and that over the Cherwell, and is by far the most economical thing to do.'

Writing as one with no authority in such matters, I agree with Mr. Dale on the reasonableness and desirability of the scheme. But against his too lyrical enthusiasm I would suggest in the first place that the quality of the work done is unlikely to be a continuous delight; we may learn much from Inigo Jones, but we cannot revive his workmen. Secondly, were the scheme carried out, Oxford generally would still be far from achieving the unity of—say—a typical eighteenth-century town.

Nevertheless, I wish his project well. How far his arguments will prevail with those in power is another matter. Neither Town nor University is notably pervious to reason, though the Gown likes to believe it is. The worldly-wise thing would be to talk a good deal about reason while actually stressing authority (i.e. the opinions of eminent men, English and foreign, with conspicuous degrees) and the danger of ridicule (from the eminent men aforesaid and socially important people). Such obliqueness might persuade.

W.S.

THE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OF ENGLAND AND WALES. By H. O. Evennett. (Cambridge University Press; 3s. 6d.).

It is an excellent thing that the *Current Problems* series sponsored by the Cambridge University Press should extend its hospitality to a Catholic statement on Catholic schools. Mr. Evennett has done the work with tact, thoroughness, clarity and success—given of course that the thing required here and now was to provide solid information for non-Catholics rather than material for Catholic discussion. Information there is in plenty, historical and statistical, with a lucid explanation of the present crisis for Catholic schools. ('Though the Government proclaims "Equal educational opportunity for all," its policy spells in practice "Unequal financial support for different religious views."'). There are also many skilful asides, removing, one hopes, certain common misunderstandings of Catholic things.

For Catholics themselves it is a most urgent matter that the Catholic places of education described and appreciated here should also be places of Catholic education in the fullest sense. For Mr. Evennett's purpose it would have been inopportune to examine the work and aims of our schools in the light of first principles, but he rightly allows a place for self-criticism (pp. 101-2 and 121-3), and there is food for thought in his reflection: 'In theory, at least, the Catholic faith should be able to provide that common background between