

BLACKFRIARS

which, it is shown, is an idea implicit in the Catholic tradition from the earliest times, and made implicit by countless Catholic authorities long before it was exploited by international Masonry or put into partial effect by Woodrow Wilson. How effective, throughout the ages, has been the pacific mission of the Vicars of Christ themselves is also made manifest in the course of this book.

Deep gratitude is due to Mr. Eppstein for this painstaking work, and to the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace which has facilitated its publication. It may be hoped that it will be found possible to publish an abridged edition. It is high time that its contents were made accessible to all and that the Catholic tradition of the law of nations was preached from every pulpit and fearlessly maintained and expounded in the Catholic press. It is a splendid heritage, and this book should shame us of our shame of it.

VICTOR WHITE, O.P.

WHY NOT END POVERTY? By Rev. F. H. Drinkwater. (Burns Oates; 3/6.)

"I have said it before and I say it again." Mr. Belloc's words might well form the motto of Fr. Drinkwater's new book, and indeed of any utterance made by monetary reformers in these days. The collection of essays under review is a sequel to *Money and Social Justice*. Both the form and the general tone of the two books is the same; nevertheless those who have read the one should not feel themselves excused from looking at the other.

The form will suit those who like to take their medicine in small doses, and perhaps the shortness of the individual essays helps to give them the very readable quality that they have. At the same time it makes them appear rather fragmentary, and one could wish for a little more solidity about the whole. As for the tone, it is prompted by a clear view of our present social conditions and a clear understanding of the economic conditions which have produced them. It will be objected, of course, that Fr. Drinkwater is not an economic expert and has no right to meddle with such affairs. Such an objection can be refuted only by the truism that the economic system is not a watertight compartment in which only its own technicians are allowed to interfere. Our present system is a bad means to a worse end, and those who have the social and moral well-being of their people at heart cannot afford to stand by and connive at it.

The events of the past year have made it almost inconceivable that President Roosevelt will not be re-elected. It is therefore strictly true to say that the financiers are beaten. Both in England and America the control of prices, which was their chief

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card, has been taken from them. But the difference between England and America is this: there, in practice if not in theory, credit creation has passed into the hands of the government; here, this second phase has yet to come to pass. We still live under a system where money is bought and sold as if it were a commodity, where it is issued only in the form of a debt, and in order to bear interest to certain individuals who issued it. In these circumstances Fr. Drinkwater is probably right to lay most stress upon the question of interest charges and of the private creation of money. His chapter on usury, entitled *The Second Deadly Sin*, is particularly worth reading. Being only half a dozen pages long it cannot aim at any complete solution, but it is by far the best sketch of the problem that the present writer has seen.

Another remarkable chapter deals with the objections of distributists such as Mr. Belloc, who say that we ought to think in terms of property rather than of income. Mere monetary reform, they say, will not abolish the Servile State. We must have redistribution of property if any measure of freedom is to be enjoyed. In this they are right, but Fr. Drinkwater implies, if he does not actually state, the obvious retort. At present both large and small owners are in the hands of High Finance. Before any redistribution is possible it is necessary for the nominal owners of property (and not their creditors) to become the actual owners. This position is fast being reached in America, but it is not so here. It must involve the disestablishment of the money-power, and so in this case, as in so many others, monetary reform is the immediate thing for which to fight. It is not an end in itself but the necessary preliminary of more important and fundamental reforms. "If," as Fr. Drinkwater says, "we blindly follow the behests of the usurers, there will be nothing left for us to plead but the excuse that was offered by Cain—and not accepted."

OXFORD AND ASQUITH.

THE AGRICULTURAL DILEMMA. (P. S. King & Son; 2/6.)

The one fact above all others which stamps these dreadful years of unemployment through which we pass is surely the fact of technological unemployment, i.e. that it is in the nature of the machine that it displaces human labour. We are over-industrialized as a nation: what wonder that the natural remedy has seemed to many to lie in the direction of de-industrialization, i.e. in a back-to-the-land movement?

To all such the *Report of an Enquiry*, organized by Viscount Astor and Mr. B. Seebohm Rowntree, must come as a salutary invitation to pause and reflect "that the number of workers required to produce a given quantity of goods is being reduced