

Blackfriars

Weather,' he is excellent; reasonable and persuasive. 'The Modern Adventure' ought to be of very considerable service to the perplexed and bewildered multitudes who look for a Saviour. The title and get-up of the book, with the highly cheerful cover, should be aids to the circulation it deserves.

J.C.

THE FAIRY RING OF COMMERCE. By Commander Herbert SHOVE, D.S.O., R.N. (Distributist League, 7 Soho Road, Birmingham; 2/6 net.)

The very dedication, with its moving cry to 'all those English men and women who still love their country,' and its glowing allusion to 'old traditions of justice and fair play' and 'winding lanes and windswept downs,' warms our hearts. If the golden age (that never was in England or elsewhere) is rather more golden in the eyes of Commander Shove than the historian will allow, what of that? Forty years back the golden age, so the socialists believed, was yet to come. Anyway, Commander Shove feels acutely, even as Ruskin did in his day, that the present way of living in this country is altogether wrong; and that the dominance of a 'purely commercial class, necessarily actuated in the long run solely by avarice' having landed us in a horrible mess, we are in for a bad time until the system changes and the golden age returns with its 'society of peasant proprietors, supporting a culture which they themselves appreciate and enjoy to the extent of their individual capacities.' (Each one to his taste in this matter of devising ideal commonwealths; personally I still prefer the utopia sketched by William Morris in *News from Nowhere*).

Commander Shove has no hope in parliament or in government action—though parliament is a thoroughly English institution, as national as cricket—but looks to 'members of the professional and educated classes' (the very sort of people who go into politics and the Civil Service) to help us to effect the change 'by individual and group action.' The real difficulty is that many readers will be choked off by the mathematics and algebraical formulae that the author introduces to simplify his argument; also the diagrams illustrating the 'fairy ring of commerce' are rather tough propositions. But the book must be welcomed. It is at least a voice raised against the folly and injustice of our present state of society, bidding us repent and turn from idols, warning us to flee from the wrath to come. And it does deal with fundamentals and the necessity of agriculture and non-necessity of our devices for killing time and consuming leisure fruitlessly.

J.C.