

REVIEWS

of competitive enterprise and personal gain, supplementing the traditions of public service, can thus be harnessed to the chariot of the public good.'

F.A.K.B.

WAR AND WESTERN CIVILISATION. By Major-General J. F. C. Fuller, C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O. (Duckworth; 10/-.)

The name of the author is now a household one, and the fact that his profession is that of a soldier need not deter the most ardent of pacifists from the perusal of its pages. Written with a breadth of conception, vivid imagination and great clarity, the story it unfolds should on the contrary appeal to all thinking individuals whatever their profession and no matter what inclinations or ideals they subscribe to; neither should its title cause those sickened with war experiences or weary of war literature to pass it by.

The great cry of the world at present is for peace, yet peace is but the twin brother of war, and should the latter ever be circumvented, both words simultaneously disappear from our dictionaries. Is it possible, however, for war to be abolished permanently? The reader of General Fuller's book no doubt will come to his own conclusions; in fact it is one of the objects of the author in writing his book, as he tells us, to 'reflect on the experiences of the last hundred years in order that we may fashion a little candle, which will light our way through the next hundred.'

The author, writing in his inimitable style, carries us through the century dating from the Napoleonic wars to the outbreak of the European conflict in 1914, treating his subject from an historical basis. His fertile brain has striven with success to compress the economic, political and military progress of that century into the small compass of some 270 pages. The deductions he makes are all of very considerable interest. From the foundations of Nationalism, which he attributes to 'Napoleon the Liberator,' he conducts us historically through what he terms the periods of National incubation, consolidation and expansion to the final tragedy of National consummation during the years 1914-1918.

On this tragedy he contends that the foundations of Internationalism have been laid. The reader will be disappointed if he imagines that General Fuller, having reached this point, offers any real hope of the abolition of war as an instrument of policy or as an outlet for the expression of man's pride and passions. On the contrary he has courage to admit that his book ends, as it begins, in chaos. He is insistent to explain, however, that it is not the end he desired, but that for lack of wisdom in man,

BLACKFRIARS

the end which Destiny has agreed upon. He closes his work by saying that 'War is a God-appointed instrument to teach wisdom to the foolish and righteousness to the evil-minded.'

There is much in this last sentence that might be pondered over by serious-minded Catholics. Prominence, of late, has been given in the press to the expressions of eminent politicians and divines who voice the vital necessity for a real spiritual uplift from all classes in a combined effort to try and solve some of the grave perils that now beset the world.

A study of works like the one under review should be a help and enlightenment to all those who hold similar views and who seek from a study of past events material to circumvent future perils. If we are to believe, as well we may, that lack of wisdom has been ever one of the main causes for the scourge of war, then ultimately its abolition may well come from a better understanding of spiritual values, and from a greater knowledge of the Almighty giver of wisdom.

'For God loveth none but him that dwelleth with wisdom. For she is more beautiful than the sun, and above all the order of the stars; being compared with the light, she is found before it. For after this cometh night, but no evil can overcome wisdom.'

General Fuller may not subscribe directly to these sentiments, yet he echoes their substance when he refers to the spiritual decay of modern times and to this age as one of saurian materialism. A thinking soldier and a broad-minded writer, he discerns the truth also when he writes 'I stand before magic, yet I see little of God.'

T.M.B.A.

DEMOCRACY IN CRISIS. By Harold J. Laski. George Allen & Unwin, Ltd.; 7/6.)

'Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates and men decay.'

Thus the poet, and thus, too, Professor Laski. But he goes further than the poet, for he thinks he knows what the remedy will be, namely a socialised state; and in this book he proceeds to discuss the results of a Socialist victory at the polls. What will be the reaction of Capitalism, personified in the privileged class, to such a victory? In discussing this subject, the author wisely draws a distinction between what should occur, and what is likely to occur. Human beings should act in all things according to reason, but very often they fail to do so, allowing themselves to be drawn now this way, now that way by their passions.