

police resources of the government are sufficient to keep the peasant masses inert.

Dr Dallin is particularly interesting in his treatment of the system of slave labour. In origin it combined Western ideas of corrective treatment with the penal tradition of Tsarist Russia: today it provides that reservoir of mobile labour which a materialist industrialism demands. On page 127 there is a notably revolting quotation from an English journalist. 'It was at Ryazan that we saw something which, had I seen it at home, would have filled me with indignation and disgust, but which, because its victims seemed not to care or object, was no concern of mine.' He then describes a convoy of women prisoners. Dr Dallin gives his readers the various estimates of the amount of slave labour at the disposal of the Russian state. Polish estimates suggested fifteen million. Another report says: 'Soviet officials contradicted sharply the statement that the figure was above twenty million, but they did not object to a figure within the limit of twenty million'. The section on slave labour is the most important part of the book, and its social and economic implications deserve careful consideration.

T. CHARLES EDWARDS.

WORLD OFF DUTY (Contact Publications; 5s Od.)

The latest Contact book surveys, with all the technical skill we have come to expect of this brilliant series, the use of leisure. Mass-Observation penetrates into the mysteries of 'Saturday night' in a hundred homes, the career of Thomas Cook is considered, reports of holidays come from Guatemala and the Isle of Wight, from Cyprus and the Alban Hills. Miss Sackville-West analyses the pleasures of travel and Arturo Barea is provocative about the Spanish mind. Disparate elements coalesce in the glossy pattern, streamlined but saved from perverseness by the observant drawings of Edward Bawden and Osbert Lancaster. You may disagree with some of the opinions: too clever, too sure, too brightly in the know. But in a world of seedy substitutes here is a book that is quite simply a joy to look at. And even the advertisements are a sight for eyes sore with austerity, and probably explain why a *de luxe* model costs only five shillings.

I.E.

IS THE CATHOLIC CHURCH ANTI-SOCIAL? Coulton v. Lunn. (Burns Oates; 12s. 6d.)

No, Cassius, No: think not thou noble Roman,
That ever Brutus will go bound to Rome.
He bears too great a name.

(*Julius Caesar*, v. 1.)

It must have been in such a spirit that Dr Coulton entered upon his last controversy, and the outcome, this book, is a Philippi in its cross purposes and its suicidal tactics. For the title bears no very obvious connection with the contents, in that irrelevancies are frequent and omissions are notable. But the general policy adopted

by Dr Coulton is ruinous. In effect he breaks his sword and runs on his opponent's point.

According to the terms of the debate, Arnold Lunn had the right of closing the discussion. The last word in controversy is considered to be so important that in criminal action, for example, counsel for the defence will sometimes waive his right of presenting witnesses in order to gain that advantage. When that concession has to be made, it is plain common sense so to handle one's case as to minimise the power of the closing arguments. In this debate the contestants agreed to restrict themselves to 50,000 words each, and the opening letters were of reasonable length. In his second letter, Dr Coulton brings his quota up to 46,000 words, leaving himself only 4,000 words in which to reply to 43,000. This is not a concession. It is simple suicide. Graciously, Lunn offered his opponent an extra 10,000 words, but in the event they were not used with the economy which the hopeless tactical position demanded.

Dialectic is not an indispensable part of an historian's equipment, and indeed Dr Coulton's case has an artlessness which is attractive and strong. But he must know the value of historical argument. Froude likened history to 'a child's box of letters with which we can spell any word we please'. Today, Froude is somewhat neglected and few would subscribe to his dogmatic assertion that 'one lesson, and only one, history can be said to repeat with distinctness: that the world is built somehow on moral foundations'. Yet he is too great to be wholly despised. For Coulton, he has written in vain. The ordinary reader knows little of history, and less of its limitations. If this is to be revealed to him in the course of an historical debate, he is more than likely to feel sceptical and resentful of all such arguments. When, for example, Dr Coulton cites a formidable catalogue of facts to show that the Church has not opposed slavery and Lunn equally weighty arguments to show that she has always objected to it, the average reader is left much where he was before about the Church and slavery, but thinks rather less of the value of historical research. But it is vital for one who bases his case on history to preserve the authority of his own study; and to use history like a case-book, as Dr Coulton does, is to win a doubtful point at the expense of one's whole position, like a duellist who snaps his blade in winning a little ground.

There is a great deal in this book to repay careful reading and analysis. The vast complexity of civilisation is thrown into clear relief by the issue of the disputants. Dr Coulton had time to revise this book before his death, and so it remains to us an authentic message.

For Brutus only overcame himself
And no man else had honour by his death.

(*Julius Caesar*, v. 5.)

ROMUALD HORN, O.P.