

BLACK FRIARS

and folly of our society ' which is the driving force behind Mr. Shaw. He scarcely does justice, however, to the great literary and dramatic powers which make Mr. Shaw's plays live.

P.D.F.

SOME ERRORS OF H. G. WELLS. By the Most Rev. Richard Downey, D.D., Ph.D., LL.D. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne; 1/-).

This new edition of Archbishop Downey's criticism of the *Outline of History* is a compact summary of the chief errors in the fields of anthropology, zoology, biology, the historical records of the Old Testament and the origins of the Christian religion, the history of philosophy, the history of the Church, as they bear on Catholic belief. The many inaccurate conclusions to which Mr. Wells arrives in the light of the vast field he surveys and the theories his material endeavours to substantiate, are treated by his critic simply, convincingly, and with an erudition gathered from those specialists whom Mr. Wells has chosen to ignore. For the student especially no more convenient pamphlet has yet appeared to show how confused and blurred a picture the *Outline* really is, and the danger of a bird's eye view on the history of man.

W.A.

THE MENACE OF FASCISM. By John Strachey. (Gollancz, 5/-).

Until quite recently one was tempted to see only a simple dichotomy in the future social programme of the world; the choice lay between a society organised on Christian principles and one based on Communism. A third type, that of Fascism, has now appeared with menacing significance. In Mr. Strachey's view it represents the triumph of Capitalism over the misdirected opposition of the Labour movements. Its 'Corporate State' exists, he claims, on paper only; and the veto on the workers' right to withdraw their labour is its single realisation. Professedly against big business, it is in reality financed by the great capitalists and bankers (Jewish and non-Jewish) who obtain the support of the ruined middle classes by fantastic promises. It proposes to plan, but cannot. To plan would necessitate the control of the means of production in the interests of the common good, whereas Fascism continues the system of self-regulated production for private gain, motivated by prices. Further, its insistence on the absolute sovereignty of the State, its hatred of internationalism and the necessity of finding markets for its capitalist enterprise must *inevitably* lead to war. Mr. Strachey analyses the fortunes of the Labour movement in Germany since

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the Revolution, and maintains that its disastrous collapse was due to the refusal of its leaders to face the fundamental issue and seize the means of production when again and again they had the chance. At heart they were capitalists who did not wish the system away and surrendered easily to its latest saviours. He sees a similar danger in England unless the Labour Party radically changes its policy and observes the beginnings of the new regime in the wage cuts, the Means Test, the Trades Disputes Act and the Trenchard scheme for a militarised police force officered by men of the governing class.

It is an interesting and forceful analysis of the present situation. We do not agree that Communism is the only alternative. But it is clear that Catholics will have to be very much alive if they wish to preserve those liberties which, as citizens of a democratic country and maintainers of Christian freedom they have hitherto assumed as inviolable.

A.M.

THE TRUTH AND ERROR OF COMMUNISM. By H. G. Wood.
(S.C.M. Press; 4/-.)

Fundamentally the preservation of our civilisation rests upon the Catholic Church. No other organisation in the world can stand up to the challenge of Communism with any hope of success. Naturally Mr. Wood, who is a Quaker, does not shout that truism from the housetops. Quite possibly he would indignantly deny it, but it is implicit in his book; for he is never tired of stressing that Communism is a religion at issue with 'Christian opinion,' demonstrably false in that two of its main premises, Historical Materialism and Marx's application of the Hegelian Dialectic to World History neither correspond with the historical evidence at our disposal nor provide a key for our present problems.

Moreover, being an intelligent man, he realises that you can only fight a false Religion with True Religion: but as he appears to regard all the various Christian sects as equally possessed of the Truth, the task of mobilising this varied array is likely to be difficult.

A cursory glance at Capitalism convinces him that it is merely a rusty and useless weapon: certainly the idea of a big business man dying to save the Stock Exchange seems a major improbability; and the Capitalist System as an end in itself, as Mr. Wood would agree, is hardly worthy of unswerving devotion. But this book offers no solution; its last chapter, called *Towards a Christian Social Policy*, is a plea for 'Christian British Labour': all parties, according to this new policy, must sink their differences and lend each other 'fraternal' aid: 'the op-