

REVIEWS

ligions are seen as the to be expected evidences of tentative fulfilments of exigencies which the grace of Christ, which perfects nature, itself supremely fulfils.

A book to read : for its sensitive vision and its lesson in that tolerance which is the humility of truth.

L.S.G.V.

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL

CIVITAS DEI. By L. Curtis. (Macmillan; 10/6.)

It is regrettable that the author of this book should have chosen for his title the name of the most famous work of one of the greatest of Christian thinkers. There is a certain courtesy to be extended to the creative writers of the past, and that courtesy is infringed when, as in this case, the new writer uses the old title to head a work whose ideas its author would have abhorred. Mr. Curtis's book belongs to the genre of 'Outlines' of mankind's development from the apc to modern Oxford. Mr. Wells wrote his outline for the grocer; Mr. Curtis writes his for dons. We infinitely prefer the version for the grocer; it is less pretentious. It would be tedious to follow Mr. Curtis on his long pilgrimage to the ultimate values of the spiritual dawn. It would be hard to keep one's temper. What are we to think of a writer who in this period of immense and tragic crisis solemnly offers us at length the ineffective figure of the Liberal Jesus? What are we to think of a writer who presumes to give his book the title of 'Civitas Dei' and then utters his precious remark about St. Augustine: 'The Church as so conceived (*i.e.*, by Augustine) is Judaism freed from its nationalist limitations assimilated to the Roman Empire and based on authority, and is thus the antithesis of the Commonwealth of God as conceived by Jesus.'! After this one may pause to take breath. Has Mr. Curtis ever heard of Karl Barth? The two should meet: Mr. Curtis's next book might be interesting.

A.M.