

Book Reviews

the religious psychology of the Russian people has been 'captured' by the militant atheism of Karl Marx's philosophy. Marx's disciples, by diverting the religious instincts of the Russians, have energized the dry bones of Communism into a living, aggressive organism whose crusading enthusiasm can find no rest until the whole world is converted. This is the mission of the Proletariat, the new Messiah of triumphant Communism. 'The Marxist theory of a catastrophe of capitalist society is nothing else but faith in the certain coming of the Last Judgment. Revolutionary Communism has a very strong eschatological element in it.' 'In the Russian Revolution a meeting of two messianic consciousnesses took place, that of the proletariat and that of the Russian people.' When men are filled with burning enthusiasm for a cause, they will readily break the shackles of historical tradition, for the day and the hour of triumphant judgment are at hand.

These essays afford a most cogent analysis of the 'religious' character of Russian Communism, and clearly delineate the danger that faces a Europe that is weak and divided. 'The future belongs, whatever happens, to the working classes, to the workers; it is inevitable and it is just. And all depends on what their spirit will be: in whose name will they renew life, in the name of God and of Christ, of the spiritual principle in man, or in the name of Antichrist, of divinized matter, in the name of a divinized human collectivity, in which the very image of man disappears, and the human soul expires? The Russian people have stated the problem before the whole world.'

NO. 7. THE DRIFT OF DEMOCRACY. By M. de la Bedoyère.

The English-speaking world in its present crisis is still inclined to put its trust in democracy as a political and social panacea. Is democracy, as we know it to-day, sound enough to provide a solution to our difficulties? Mr. de la Bedoyère, in a sound and constructive critique, points out the weakness of democracy to-day. 'We are witnessing its apparent decline and its replacement by the dictatorship of strong men, of the press and of business interests. The nourishment which so long fed it, that is, the religious tradition, has run short; the sentimentality that replaced it has been found to have little body-building powers, it grew thin, feeding on itself, and it is now fighting a losing battle against enemies who are strong, if unworthy.' 'Democracy rests in theory and in practice on the character of each and every person. . . . All depends in the long run on the quality of the citizen. . . . There is one in-

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fluence which . . . is deliberately weakened by the prevalent philosophies and by the ideals of modern life: it is the inner life.' 'The conditions of economic life must tend to make a man a cog in a machine which he can hardly understand, let alone help to direct. This cannot be substantially changed, and if there is to be a re-wakening of the inner life, it must be despite and in the face of this special difficulty.' Reforms through external methods will not cure the ills of democracy: it will only find its cure in the religion from which it sprang. 'And among the religions of the West, who can doubt that Catholicism alone is capable of obtaining the allegiance and sympathy of the modern man? Many are willing to accept its teaching, but the main hope of a stable political order and a right understanding of the ends of political life must lie, at present, in the chance that not only will many accept the dogmatic teaching of the Church, but that many more will be persuaded that its contribution to the intellectual and moral outlook is at least as important and as worthy to be examined as that of any other authority, however modern and however confident.'

T. A.

PROJECTS IN THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG CHILDREN. By Hilda K. F. Gull, M.R.S.T. (McDougall's Educational Co.)

We are necessarily more interested in the principles of a new method than in its programme. Miss Gull has given us an entire chapter on 'Underlying Principles.' We take the following: 'The project system of education is founded upon the most natural and also upon the most educational method in the world.'

'Taking into account the dynamic nature of human beings it strives to enlist for educational ends those inner drives and urges which prompt man to think constructively and to search for the knowledge needed in order to attain his aim.' (p. 18).

This is no doubt an excellent principle. But as it is common to all the modern educational methods, we are not enlightened. Moreover the presence of the words 'drives' and 'urges' is a little frightening.

Our fears reach their full-tide when we go on to read: 'The School is set up by Society for this purpose because the increasing demands made upon the individual by a highly civilised community necessitate adequate and systematic preparation in youth. In less strenuous times the Home was able to provide a suitable education; but the experiences there gained were hap-