

Review of Newest Books

By H. S. ROSS

PUBLIC OPINION AND THEOLOGY, by Bishop Francis John McConnell. Publishers, The Abingdon Press, New York. Price \$1.50.

This book contains the lectures of Bishop McConnell at the Pacific School of Religion. These addresses were known as the E. T. Earle Lectureship. The purpose of the Earle Lectureship is to aid in securing at Berkeley, the seat of the University of California, as the centre of secular learning for California, the adequate presentation of Christian truth, by bringing to Berkeley, California, year by year, eminent Christian scholars to lecture upon themes calculated to illustrate and disseminate Christian thought and minister to Christian life.

The titles of some of the lectures are—The Divine Responsibility; God and Man and the Daily Task; the Individual; The Church and Society and The Book of Rebellion and Freedom.

The author discusses the enactment of law as one of the methods by which a social group might bring its influence to bear upon religious thinking. He says that notwithstanding the force of abstract thinking, we know that all thinking is colored by the concrete images which actually meet our eyes. The simple consideration that, by the progressive enactment of legislation involving more and more the main ethical principles, we do not have to look upon so many horrible spectacles as we once did has meaning for our religious thinking.

Two paragraphs from the author's introduction will give a very good idea of the spirit of this interesting collection of lectures.

"It is the object of this essay frankly to recognize the scope of popular authority in forging religious thinking. There is no evading the influence of public opinion over our ideas of the kingdom of God. Now, the recognition of the existence of a force is the first step toward keeping that force under proper control. We have not thought it necessary to say much about the obvious but most important fact that the sentiment of our own time lays more and more stress upon the right of the people themselves to increasing self-government. Politically, the battle has been fought through at least in Occidental civilization—so that the people can politically control themselves. And a more consequential warfare than that for political freedom is being fought out before our very eyes. The people are insisting upon economic freedom. In every stage of society those who hold the keys of economic power have stupendous control over the exercise of every other kind of power. The multitudes themselves are realizing this more and more. Hence, the insistence upon broadening the base of control in modern industry.

All this progressive conquest of independence means a sturdier approach to the problems of theology. There are some sound demands on the part of popular thinking to which the defenders of divine sovereignty will, if they are wise, give heed. In the advance toward larger freedom the hosts of mankind have made discoveries as to the worth of human life itself, and as to the pro-attitudes to ward human life in all its phases, which must indubitably have the most powerful bearing on theological thinking. We wish to indicate the value of some of these soldier gains for religious theory. After having done this it will be in order for us to indicate some of the limits which popular authority will have to observe in its attitude toward the problems of divine sovereignty. Or we may be allowed in these earlier chapters to think of those weightier moral and spiritual ideas for which popular authority can be expected to give its sanction in the long

run, leaving to the latter chapters a discussion of the factors which must protect these same ideals from those superficialities and excesses which sometimes mark the action of popular opinion in the short run—if the expression is permissible. Believing as we do that in the long run public opinion will settle practically everything in theology, we may, nevertheless, find that in the short run public opinion at times is to be strenuously resisted. But this is anticipating."

THE LIMITS OF SOCIALISM. O. Fred Boucke, Professor of Economics at Pennsylvania State College. The Macmillan Company, New York and Toronto.

The author discusses in brilliant fashion the following questions which socialism has sought to answer.

First, to what extent can the income of the average man be raised under socialism, as contrasted with the present individualistic regime? Second, if any marked change in national income is to be expected from socialism, in what direction will it most naturally occur, and what are the limits set to this endeavor? Third, is it true that socialism can establish a democracy in the political sense such as individualism has not as yet pretended to have realized? Fourth, is Marxian economics indispensable basis to the program mapped out by socialists, or is the refutation of such doctrine, as hitherto submitted by professional economists, a relatively unimportant step which in no wise invalidates the general outlook of socialists? Fifth, if Socialism is a theory of prosperity, what is the scientific basis for it, and, more particularly, what data has present day science to offer in support of the the thesis expressed or implied by Socialism, that a rational method for socio-economic reform exists? Sixth, what are the ultimate questions which Socialism has attempted to answer, or must feel obliged to discuss hereafter, in order to find a logical groundwork for its demands.

These and some other outstanding topics have been given consideration in the following pages and from a partly new standpoint. The fourth and fifth chapters contain foundations for all later ones.

The summary which opens the last chapter furnishes a convenient guide to some of the main points advanced and make clear the author's idea of the limits of socialism, and as Professor Boucke puts it "within which socialists hand in hand with social scientists may continue their studies, but beyond which progress is less certain and more open to the sort of criticism which up to date has injured the socialist cause."

Professor Boucke says, "The need for reform seems universally conceded. But whether it is or not, the reality of the larger problem no one can deny. It is worth while to know whether social evils have causes that we can specifically unearth and offset by remedial measures. It is important to decide whether politics is more than a game among fighting cocks. It does pique the curiosity of many good folk to see illegalities and absurd criminality flourishing in this age of enlightenment. They involuntarily ask: 'Is it unavoidable, or may we right things by using our wits?'"

He thinks that "Socialists must now agree to further amendments of their original creed, if they wish to enlist the sympathies of thinking people. Revision is wholesome according to their own teaching. Revision is a step in the onward march of civilization. Science itself is nothing if

not continual growth and redefinition of terms, whose finest fruit is the advancement of humanism.

It is therefore no disgrace for Socialism to have fallen short of its mark, but it would be sad if the lessons it first taught so brilliantly were to be forgotten by reformers to come."

Here is a courageous book. While not hesitating to state what he considers to be the limitations of Socialism he frankly and generously states that: "It compels us to take a long view of things, not a near at hand view individualistically trumped up. Socialism is stern and bold. It boasts a noble intellectual lineage, and will not be put off by flippant bouter. Complacency cannot undo the ills that are known to exist, and an appeal to national traditions will deceive none except the thoughtless ones. Socialism is neither a chimera nor a crime, though by a few it has been considered both."

THE RISING TIDE OF COLOR AGAINST WHITE WORD - SUPREMACY. Lothrop Stoddard, A.M., Ph.D. (Harvard). Author of "The Stakes of the War," "Present-Day Europe: Its National States of Mind." Publishers Charles Scribners' Sons, New York.

There are useful maps and, an instructive introduction by Madison Grant, chairman of New York Zoological Society, who has summarized the biological and historical background and who is extremely pessimistic. He thinks: "Our present condition is the result of following the leadership of idealists and philanthropic doctrinaires, aided and abetted by the perfectly understandable demand of our captains of industry for cheap labor. He also writes: "Now that Asia, in the guise of Bolshevism and Semitic leadership and Chinese executioners, is organizing an assault upon western Europe, the new States—Slavic—Alpine in race with little Nordic blood, may prove to be not frontier guards of western Europe but vanguards of Asia in Central Europe. None of the earlier Alpine States have held firm against Asia, and it is more than doubtful whether Poland, Bohemia, Roumania, Hungary, and Jugo-Slavia can face the danger successfully, now that they have been deprived of the Nordic ruling classes through democratic institutions.

Democratic ideals among an homogeneous population of Nordic blood, as in England or America, is one thing, but it is quite another for the white man to share his blood with, or intrust his ideals to, brown, yellow, black or red men.

This is suicide pure and simple, the first victim of this amazing folly will be the white man himself."

The author has for some years been convinced that the Key-note of twentieth-century world politics would be the relations between the primary races of mankind.

"Momentous modifications of existing race-relations were evidently impending, and nothing could be more vital to the course of human evolution than the character of these modifications, since upon the quality of human life all else depends." In the preface to an historical monograph ("The French Revolution in San Domingo" written shortly before the war the author stated: "The world-wide struggle between the primary races of mankind—the 'Conflict of Color,' as it has been happily termed—bids fair to be the fundamental problem of the twentieth century, and great communities like the United States of America, the South African Confederation, and Australasia regard the 'Color question' as perhaps the gravest problem of the future."

Dr. Stoddard now thinks that: "The Great War was from the first the White Civil War, which, whatever its outcome, must gravely complicate the course of racial relations."

The author gives many facts for his belief that "The most disquieting feature of the present situation is the rapidity with which the races are intermingling."

(Continued on Page 17)