BOOK REVIEWS

A WORK THAT IS PROFOUND BUT NOT DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND*

Moral philosophy is not an easy subject but it can be made simple and interesting. This Mr. Lambek has succeeded in doing. But though it is vastly thought-provoking the reader must dig for himself and this is perhaps a necessity for all philosophic thinking.

The author has indicated the danger of the abandonment of self-control, and rejects with proper emphasis a philosophy of life which seizes upon the pleasures of the moment regardless of a regulated moral motive.

Here is what he says on this subject:

"Every day of our lives we sacrifice something in order to gain an advantage later on; but, as it is the individual himself who determines what he will sacrifice, who judges between the cost and the gain, it cannot be said that the moral demand is imposed upon him from outside. It grows up within the individual, and can only be described as a part of the Me, an inner coherence lending it strength and harmony, a consummation of its being."

So much for the influences that should control the conduct of the individual. The author now passes on to a consideration of the social consciousness and its development, and the principles underlying an equitable society. It may be gathered that he starts right in this inquiry for he begins by saying, "Equality is the natural state." Elsewhere he says, "The central point in moral justice is the principle of social equality."

Again we quote:

"The principle of coherence in the production of values demands that the same person who sows the grain shall also reap the harvest."

He lays down four rules for the government of society, among which is that the gifts of nature to mankind should be shared by all. "The values existing in nature can neither be produced by the members of the community, nor can they rightfully be acquired by anybody as his private possession because the values had no former owners from whom he could acquire them."

There are wise words on the subject of competition, income and inheritance taxes, regulation of prices, etc. He also says: "To prohibit interest on capital must be considered a violation of the right of ownership."

We are grateful for this book. Every sentence is weighted with thought. Even where he says: "All is not done by seeing that the annual ground rent is paid into the exchequer; it is also necessary to arrange for the proper use of the revenue, so that it is employed for the benefit of all," we will not quarrel. He does not miss a single point in the great debate to which he has made this very valuable contribution.—J. D. M.

*"Government by the Principle of Moral Justice," by C. Lambek. Paper, 96 pp. Levin & Munksgaard, Copenhagen, and Williams & Norgate, London.

AN ATTRACTIVE BOOK*

In "Twenty Million Dollars Every Day" (the amount of taxes on production paid by the American people) Otto Cullman has presented economic principles in a condensed and interesting form.

He insists that "Consumers, not producers, dominate industry," and that taxes on production to the amount of twenty million dollars every day seriously cripples purchasing power. He further insists that legitimate governmental activities result in market values, and that if the government would collect these sums for its own use, instead of allowing them to be appropriated by private parties in the form of ground rent, it would no longer be necessary to burden industry with the twenty million dollar daily tribute.

In such event he argues that governments would live on their own earnings, and that private producers would enjoy, untaxed, the results of their various enterprises. This would make goods cheap, and thereby enormously increase the purchasing power of the people. In fact, the entire product of industry, including both private and public income, would appear on the market as purchasing power, thus creating a demand that would absorb all available labor, and raise wages to the highest possible point.

In this connection, he quotes the National Association of Purchasing Agents to the effect that prices in general have not been reduced during the last century; the explanation being that as improved processes have been introduced, that normally would reduce prices, taxes and ground rent have advanced in equal or greater ratio, thus preventing the general enjoyment of the increased productive power. Mr. Cullman therefore urges that: "The machine age has checkmated itself with mass production by failing to secure equivalent consumption at the same time."

The book should be of material aid in convincing supporters of "capitalism" that there is a serious defect in customary capitalistic methods that all clear thinking men and women know are threatened with destruction by private monopoly—not by communism which, in and of itself, is an entirely negligible matter.

It is to be hoped that the book will have a large circulation among business men, to whom its appeal is frank, open and good natured.

JOHN Z. WHITE.

*"$20,000,000 Every Day, A Plan for National Recovery," by Otto Cullman. Cloth, 67 pp. Price $1.00.

BOOKS RECEIVED AND TO BE REVIEWED

Conference Papers at the Edinburgh Conference on "Land Value Taxation."

History of the Movement in Denmark by Fru Signe Bjorner.

AN EXCELLENT REFERENCE BOOK

The New York Red Book for 1934, edited by James Malcolm, contains portraits and biographies of State officials; returns of national, city and State elections; population of the States; 1930 census by States and counties; new amendments to the State Constitution; a list of former State officials from the beginning of the State Government; home ownership in the United States, and a history of the State Senate.

The volume is an excellent reference book for the press and those interested in governmental affairs.

Correspondence

AGREES WITH OUR CRITICISM

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

In the last number of LAND AND FREEDOM I notice a letter from Mrs. H. J. Bailey, of Omaha, Neb., censuring the editor for too severe criticism of the President, and especially for sending a copy of the letter addressed to Sleepy Garment Mills, Centerville, Mich., to the President. I think the editor did the right thing. The President is surrounded by advisors who tell him only what they think he wants to hear and it is right that he should get the opinions of others.

I think we will hear much harsher criticism before 1936.

Del Piedra, Calif. S. W. WATERS.

IS SINGLE TAX INTERDICTED?

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

I went down and talked before the Mayor on the proposition of a one per cent tax on land, without considering improvements. I also stated that many people have forgotten Henry George, the man who ran for Mayor of the City of New York. LaGuardia replied he hadn't forgotten and he often thinks about him. I told him that many of his cabinet are in favor of Single Tax but they did not talk about it before they were appointed to office as they thought it was not the time, and since being appointed to office they do not talk about it because it would not be becoming, and that the real explanation, however, is that they did not have the courage then, and they do not have the courage now. I thought it best not to ask the Mayor whether he personally believed in a tax on land. I think now I should have, and here's a curious ending. Not a single newspaper mentioned I had ever spoken or that I had proposed a tax on land. The same