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The Land and the Commonwealth by T. E. Marks; J. Hugh Edwards

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of the total supply in 1893-96 to 35 per cent. in 1906-11, though in 1907-08 the proportion reached nearly 40 per cent. Imports of barley have increased from 30 per cent. in the earlier period given to 46 per cent. in the later period. The consumption of rye, for all purposes, has fallen between the same periods, from 334 lbs. per head to 317 lbs., while that of wheat has increased from 174 lbs. per head to 184 lbs. The live-stock returns also present special interest.

H.D.V.

4.—*The Land and the Commonwealth.* By T. E. Marks, with an Introduction by J. Hugh Edwards, M.P. xxv + 314 pp., 8vo. London : P. S. King and Son, 1913. Price 5s.

The present "land campaign" of the Government is likely to give rise to the publication of a number of books, controversial or impartial, of ephemeral or more lasting value, dealing with agrarian reform. That before us belongs to the former class. We are prepared by the unreserved admiration of Mr. Lloyd George's "genius for constructive statesmanship" expressed by a Welsh member of Parliament in the introduction to find that the "opulence of information" and "mastery of detail," which are there ascribed by Mr. Edwards to the author of this book, have been devoted in the main, if not exclusively, to the cause, be it good or bad, of partisan polemics. Mr. Marks certainly puts his points with no lack of vigour or directness : but, although he tells his readers in one passage that he has tried to take impartial views, the weakness of the flesh has evidently in this as in so many instances been too much for the willingness of the spirit. It is possible that some of those who consult these positive pages may feel, with his introducer, that the essayist "locates the vulnerable spots," which doubtless exist, as in all human institutions, "in the ramparts" of the present English "system of land tenure." But the military simile indicates appropriately the tone and temper of the book. They are the reverse of judicial. Mr. Marks admits indeed that there may possibly be some fair landlords in the country, and that the leasehold system in the towns has helped the suitable development of urban property in some respects, and that in our projects of reform we must not destroy the good when we remove the bad. But such concessions are in effect immediately withdrawn when they have grudgingly been made. The general impression left and intended to be left, unless we misread the purpose of the writer, is one of wholesale final condemnation, in which merits are of necessity ignored or minimised, and failings are perforce emphasised and magnified. Mr. Marks states, it is true, that his conclusions are supported by his own personal experience as a manager of landed estate, and that he had anticipated for himself the main conclusions reached by the Land Inquiry Committee. But from first to last he is an impassioned advocate, who feels no more doubt about the folly or knavery of his opponents than of the absolute certainty and rectitude of his own case. His book may not improbably give pleasure to his friends : it cannot satisfy or content the detached

bystander. It is in fact full of the *parti pris* which fans controversy rather than advances knowledge. It is at the best an *exposé* and not an investigation of a system ; nor consequently are its facts or its opinions very new.

L.L.P.

5.—*L'Évolution du Commerce du Crédit et des Transports depuis cent cinquante ans.* Par B. Nogaro et W. Oualid. 444 pp., 8vo. Paris : Felix Alcan, 1914. Price 5 francs.

In this interesting survey the joint authors review the development of commerce, in contrast with that of industry, during the last century and a half. That the period to which they bring their study down is recent may be demonstrated by the reference to aerial navigation contained in their account of the means of transport, and by the inclusion of the "gold-exchange standard," of which India has been furnishing a successful but not solitary illustration, in their description of the development of that monetary mechanism which is an indispensable tool of trading transactions. The division, never perhaps very easy to accomplish, and often ineffectively achieved, of the labour of preparation and composition between the dual writers of a single book has been made satisfactorily in this instance by the assignment to one of the subject of the evolution of commerce and transport in its general character as a whole, and to the other of the discussion of the more special characteristics of the systems of money and credit. But this distribution of topics is to some extent crossed in the treatment of fiscal policy. For there, while Professor Nogaro is responsible for the examination during the period extending from the middle of the nineteenth century onwards, M. Oualid, of necessity perhaps, comprises in his general review of trade and transport in the earlier time a statement and a criticism of the tenets and the practices of the Mercantile System.

The book follows a chronological order with five separate sections. In the first the condition of affairs at the close of the *ancien régime*, in the second the position during the revolutionary period and the beginning of the nineteenth century, in the third the state in the middle of that century, in the fourth the organisation of commerce at the end of the century, and in the fifth and last the present aspect of trade and trading matters, are successively described. Although France receives, as is natural, the preponderance of attention, other countries are included in the purview ; and the English student will note with appreciation and advantage the informed and opportune references to the incidents and movements of our business history. The plan of the whole work is clear and suitable, the proportions assigned to the several subjects treated seem to us judicious and appropriate, and the narration is at once accurate and attractive. The authors appear to have conceived and executed their useful task with ability and pains. They show, for instance, how the development of commerce, which was at the first the more conspicuous, had to yield the primacy to the astonishing growth of an