

# BOOK REVIEWS

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## I. PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

### 1. *Sociological*

**Work and Wealth: A Human Valuation.** By J. A. Hobson, Author of "The Industrial System," "The Evolution of Modern Capitalism," etc. New York, The Macmillan Company, 1914. 367 pp. \$2.00 net.

Mr. Hobson's former works have given him a high standing as an authority on Social Economy, and prepared his readers for further serious and illuminating work. The readers of this volume will find their expectations realized.

He begins by pointing out the lack of agreement as to any definite and generally accepted standard or criterion of social progress. He proposes and uses in this discussion "Organic Welfare" as such a criterion. The phrase is defective because of its indefiniteness. It is obviously capable of a very broad or a very narrow interpretation. He uses it himself in a broad meaning. He maintains that "in building upon a foundation of organic concepts, one is no longer properly exposed to the suspicion of ignoring or disparaging the psychological phenomena which constitute man's spiritual nature." Such a standard is all right, provided one does really include in its meaning the spiritual nature of man, and emphasize with due proportion the spiritual factors of man's nature. One may, after a careful reading of the book, feel as this reviewer does, that Mr. Hobson has not given it this proportionate emphasis, although it is granted that he does not neglect it.

After establishing his standard of value, he proceeds to discuss our economic life, first, as to the productive processes. In

general he divides the various activities of men into two broad classes—those which are creative, which in themselves are interesting, which afford a field for personal achievement and which, therefore, afford of themselves satisfaction to the workers; and those which have the character of routine, which are dull and uninspiring, which afford no field for the expression of the personality and therefore have in them little or no satisfaction for the worker. The serious *human costs* of production are found in the latter. These forms of work do not in themselves minister to “organic welfare,” except to a quite limited extent; while the creative forms of activity do. It is obvious that, under our present system of distribution, the economic or money compensation does not coincide with the human cost—especially is that true in the creative and routine forms of strictly industrial effort. In this matter thorough-going reform is needed. Those forms of productive activity which are of the character of routine should be brought under social control; those of a creative character should be left to individual initiation and control.

In the second place the author proceeds to the discussion of consumption, an aspect of economic life which has been greatly neglected by economists. He calls attention to the fact that the modern man is becoming more and more narrowly specialized as a producer, being limited to a single process in the making of some single class of articles, while he becomes more and more broadly generalized as a consumer, enjoying in a larger measure the consumption of an ever larger range of consumable goods produced by other workers in all parts of the world. He emphasizes the need of a more scientific understanding of the relative value of articles for consumption, and the exclusion or prohibition of articles which do not produce “organic welfare,” and also some method of social control over the advertisement and methods of promoting the sale of articles for consumption. There are many articles which are or should be of universal use, while others represent individual taste.

It is to be regretted that such a penetrating and able discussion should be marred by the author’s insistence that society is an organism after the exact analogy of a biological organism,

having a being, a personality distinct from the personalities of individual human beings. It introduces confusion into an otherwise remarkably clear and illuminating discussion of a great theme. The book suffers much from this theoretical difficulty. The theory of a social organism which has interests and aims of its own, apart from the interests of its individual constituents, is a piece of pure metaphysics, and is without scientific value, or basis in fact.

C. S. GARDNER.

**The Anti-Alcohol Movement in Europe.** By Ernest Gordon. Fleming H. Revell Company, New York, 1914. 333 pp. \$1.50 net.

**The Question of Alcohol.** By Edward Huntington Williams, M.D., with Dr. Henry Smith Williams contributing the final chapter. The Goodhue Company, New York. 1914. 121 pp. 75 cts. net.

**Shall I Drink?** By Joseph Henry Crooker. The Pilgrim Press, Boston, 1914. 257 pp. With 16 full page charts. \$1.00 net.

These books constitute a late, but small, part of the literature of the world-wide Anti-Alcohol Movement brought into general recognition in this country for the first time by the European war. Mr. Ernest Gordon's book has been called "The temperance sensation of the hour." It is a startling exposition of the conditions on the continent of Europe which forced the fight against alcohol, and a vivid description of the resulting campaign as it has been carried on in the universities of Europe, in the armies and navies, among Socialists, labor unions and workmen in general, especially in its educational features, and the heroic measures resorted to by the campaigners. It is an absorbing story vividly told, and abundantly verified by quotation or reference.

The pro-alcohol, or anti-prohibition, contention, not to say argument, is presented in *The Question of Alcohol*. To read the book is to be convinced that the authors were employed, or preferred, not so much to write up fairly and honestly "The question of Alcohol," as to write down the prohibition policy, temperance education in public schools, and the opinions of the ablest scientists concerning the nature and the effects of alcohol.