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120 appears a mixed edifice described as follows: "First Presbyterian Church, located back from street. With growth of retail business on Fourth Street the space in front was built in with stores and offices. Entrance to church through building shown by sign.—Cincinnati."

"Religion blushing veils her sacred fires,"

is the line which this victim of site values forces to the lips.

FRANCIS W. HIRST

The Case for Municipal Drink Trade. By EDWARD R. PEASE.
(London: P. S. King and Son. 1904.)

MR. PEASE'S book is a serious and careful piece of argument in favour of municipalising the trade in alcoholic liquor. Such a book merits careful criticism; and the fact that Mr. Pease's book is controversial in tone, encourages the reviewer to be controversial in his *critique*, which will take up the various points in the order of the author's argument.

The present Licensing Laws do not (1) prevent the excessive consumption of liquor; do not (2) secure adequate police supervision of public-houses and prevention of drunkenness and disorder. These two points will be agreed to by everyone who has studied the question. In addition to this, the author holds that a good Licensing Law (1) should win popular confidence by responding, within limits, to popular control; (2) should directly encourage moderation in every possible way; (3) should secure to the State the whole of the special profits which the regulation of the trade creates; (4) should not only be desired by a majority of the people, but be acquiesced in by practically all classes closely concerned in it.

These four requirements are all disputable. Many laws—in fact, most laws—have popular confidence without popular control; a law which encouraged moderation in every way would, on the other hand, conflict with public opinion; the principle that the State should take monopoly profits is by no means recognised yet; and, fourthly, it is a counsel of perfection to expect a law to be acquiesced in by all classes closely concerned in it; in fact, no law which diminished monopoly profits would be acquiesced in by brewers who are themselves most closely concerned in the Licensing Laws. The author is correct in saying that our present laws do not satisfy any of his four requirements for a good law. Having stated the problem in this way, Mr. Pease argues against Free

Trade in licences, Private Monopoly (the present system), High Licence, Local Veto, and Prohibition. The next step is the most interesting in the book. In Chapter IV. we are given statistics of the consumption of beer and spirits per head in different counties, and the density of population, from which it is seen that the denser the population the greater the consumption of beer per head, whilst the consumption of spirits does not conform to this rule. Again, it seems to be the case that, as the population grows denser, the consumption of beer increases, whilst the consumption of spirits per head may diminish. The explanation of these facts, offered by Mr. Pease, is doubtless in the main correct. He says : " Alcoholic liquor is nowadays manufactured wholesale, and is carried to consumers from a distance. Hence it may be inferred that, other things being equal, a thinly populated county, where distances are great, will use less manufactured drink than a thickly populated one, and of the alcoholic drink used a larger proportion will tend to be concentrated and a less proportion diluted." In fact, it looks as if with an increasingly denser population we are likely to have an increase in beer drinking. If great efforts are made to diminish the consumption of beer this may result in an increased consumption of spirits, which would be disastrous. In fact, the main defect in Mr. Pease's argument for municipalisation is that he seems to admit that little can be done in this country to prevent the excessive consumption of liquor. If this is so, his argument that various methods will fail to reduce the excessive consumption of liquor is not an argument in favour of municipalisation. How far municipal control would secure adequate police supervision and prevention of drunkenness and disorder is again a difficult question. No doubt the elimination of private profit is an important factor, but many publicans nowadays are mere managers at a salary. The municipality would be just as anxious for profits to go in relief of rates as anyone else ; if huge profits were not made there would be a cry of mismanagement : it is a defect in the book that it is assumed that municipal control is sufficient to obtain respectable public-houses ; on the contrary, it is probably essential that not one farthing of the profits shall go to benefit the locality in which those profits are earned. Mr. Pease, as in duty bound, has no fear of the collective cupidity of our municipalities in this matter ; but it must be remembered that the public-houses would have to be bought out on a basis of capitalisation of existing profits. Marylebone has recently acquired an electric light undertaking on this basis, and no one can reasonably suggest that they will save money to the rates, as they might have

done had they originally started electric lighting before a company with its monopoly profits was in the field. It must also be remembered that the brewers would spare no money or trouble to induce municipalities to adopt a policy which would encourage drinking. Mr. Pease has hopelessly under-estimated the strength of the liquor interest ; he says, " As owners of tied houses they (the brewer and distiller) know quite well that the present *régime* is doomed, and they will be satisfied, though not professedly, with a compromise plan of compensation. They will fight for the present system, of course, but they will accept defeat with good grace." What are the facts? The brewer has triumphed, has obtained a right of renewal in perpetuity for his licence and has got free from the harassing ways of the Justices of the Peace, who were always putting pressure on him to conduct his houses decently. If the brewers can control the House of Commons, the House of Lords, and the Church, as they undoubtedly do, why should they not control municipalities? The object of a brewer is to increase the consumption of beer ; that of a distiller to increase the consumption of spirits. It is quite true, as Mr. Pease says, that bribery and corruption in Parliament are unheard of ; but the pressure of the brewers there is none the less a fact. It is difficult to see how any scheme of municipal management, where the municipality takes the profits, could be a great improvement on the existing system. Even the London County Council, the most prominent of our municipal bodies, can grossly fail to manage a lunatic asylum. As secretary of the Fabian Society, it is natural that Mr. Pease should advocate municipalisation, and he has advocated it in a book in which he shows that he has a very good knowledge of his subject. He states his case fairly ; he gives plenty of facts ; he may convince many people ; but at the critical point of his argument he seems to take too low a view of the powers of the trade, and too high a view of the capacity of municipalities.

C. P. SANGER

Les Syndicats industriels en Belgique. By G. DE LEENER. 2nd edition. (Brussels. 1904.)

THE second edition of M. Leener's book follows hard on the heels of the first. Belgian syndicates are interesting from one point of view, because they have been formed without the assistance of a highly protective tariff ; but, of course, they have much in common with syndicates elsewhere. The first part of this book is concerned with the general theory of industrial syndicates. The

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