

**HIGH ARE THE MOUNTAINS.** By Hannah Closs (Andrew Dakers; 10s. 6d.).

This is a novel—a piece of high writing which derives, according to previous works, from Walter Pater. A few examples will show the injustice done to Pater by the comparison:

‘His breath came in short convulsive gasps and his heart pounded against his ribs. At last, his pulses quietened . . .’

‘. . . the long, jagged ridge of blue rising against the horizon.’

‘. . . the hated name still ringing in his ears, the boy sped on.’

The book, in short, is written in a series of clichés and what might have been a fine story is obscured by this ‘fine writing,’ pretentious enough, unless the style has altered vastly since the last novel, to deceive the reviewers. But then, books like *Anthony Adverse* and *Gone with the Wind* were also thought to be great novels. L.T.

**CHRISTIANITY AND THE WORLD OF NATIONS.** By George F. MacLeod (Friends Peace Committee; 4d.).

In his powerful broadcast, here reprinted by the Friends to encourage European relief, the founder of the Iona Community dealt with the apparent cleavage between ‘heart and hand.’ Can the Church fill the vacuum left by the war? For Dr MacLeod the foundation Word of the Church is ‘Forgiveness,’ and if each individual Christian put that word into effect in Europe today the infinite power of faith would gather men together once again. A pamphlet to be pondered. C.P.

**THE FRIENDS AMBULANCE UNIT.** Sixth Annual Report. 1946 (4 Gordon Square, W.C1.).

The unit comprises some 700 young men and women, of whom in January 150 were in Germany and 120 in China. Their immense work for relief all over the world is out of all proportion to their numbers, and those interested will need this well-produced and attractively illustrated brochure to convince them of the reality of so varied and extensive and humanitarian work. Wherever men are hungry or shelterless this Quaker organization finds itself administering first-aid relief preparatory to handing over to the bigger and slower working official organizations like U.N.R.R.A. We can only wish that Catholics might emulate the Society of Friends in this matter. C.P.

**PACIFISM AS AN INDIVIDUAL DUTY.** By Rev. E. L. Allen. (Central Board for Conscientious Objectors; 6d.).

This is the first part of a reply to a reasoned attack on pacifism by Professor G. C. Field. The defendant has a fairly straight-forward task in trying to show the necessity for some absolute standards of morality. But the whole discussion reveals the maze of uncertainty the modern world has reached through its rejection of the Church’s objective moral standards. The question will never be successfully settled till the nature of the human act, the relation of means to ends, the specification of the will, and such-like are understood. At one time the Church was accused of making the end justify the means; now the paganzed world has adopted that error for its own

and it is only a few devotees of a particular issue, such as peace and war, who strive vainly to defend the true principle. These discussions will never find a ground to build on until they first deal with the whole question of morality, its nature and its value. A particular issue like pacifism on its own will not convince the world of an absolute standard of morality. C.P.

The latest PEACE AIM PAMPHLETS, issued by the National Peace Council, contain an essay on *The Two Currents in the Modern Democratic Tradition* by Christopher Dawson (in 'Democracy and Peace' by Christopher Dawson and Malcolm Spencer; 6d.). The author here adds to the largely unrecognized debt that England and the United Nations owe him for his profound analysis of political theory and history. While admitting the disastrous confusion in the use of the term 'democracy,' he refuses to despair of its meaning something specific. But distinctions are necessary, and he introduces a most valuable and necessary one. The constitutional democracy of England and most English-speaking countries is built up on a long tradition of political development, so that opposition, within or without, does not constitute a threat to existence. Absolute democracy, first realized during the French Revolution and quickly seized upon by the politically immature, rests on the idea of a general and indivisible will of the people and leads inevitably to the one-party system, to which any opposition, either within or without, is a threat to existence. Somehow these two traditions must be made to work together if there is to be peace; but the dictatorial democracy is inclined to tamper with the constitutional system of the other type, disintegrating it by the technique of the Trojan Horse. Mr Dawson thinks that if this type of aggression can be ruled out there is yet hope for the two democracies to co-operate. This essay should be given a wide public just now.

Other recent Peace Aims Pamphlets include *Germany and Europe's Future*, by Mosa Anderson (3d.); *The Third Challenge*, by J. Middleton Murry (6d.); *The United Nations Charter*, Text and Commentary by various authors (1/-); *New Model for Europe?*—a discussion reprinted from 'The Economist' (6d.).

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