

material and moral ruin of nations professedly fighting for the betterment of that same human race.

E.C.

SOCIAL SECURITY. Edited by William A. Robson. (Allen and Unwin; 15s.)

Despite the length and detail of the Beveridge Report, and the publication of the Memoranda supplied by various organisations, the problem of social security can only be appreciated if it is viewed in its historical setting and as concerning all the separate existing social agencies. There can be no doubt that the book under review provides just such a context. The First Part deals with the present position and is prefaced by a chapter on principles, contributed by the Editor. The general picture which emerges fully justifies the charge that 'the medley of authorities is chaotic, illogical and inefficient,' and leads inevitably to the Second Part, which is a detailed appreciation and analysis of the Beveridge Report and the effects it would produce. Here a certain unevenness develops, for although Mrs. Clarke foresees some of the difficulties of administration, there are others which are glossed over or omitted, while Dr. Stark Murray in his chapter on a National Medical Service is altogether too vague and too sweeping.

While the Government has made no pronouncement on its plans with regard to Social Security, the debate about the value of Beveridge's proposals still proceeds. They can neither be accepted outright as the new Jerusalem, nor rejected outright as the arrival of the Servile State. For those who wish to judge for themselves, this collection of essays is undoubtedly of great value and can be recommended particularly to discussion groups for their libraries and to all serious students who are interested in social insurance.

J. FITZSIMONS.

A BATSFORD CENTURY. Edited by Hector Bolitho (Batsford; 10/6).

No single publishing firm has done more in the last four years of disruptions and destruction to preserve the spirit and the scene of the well set up and the staid England of the past than the firm of B. T. Batsford, Ltd. In spite of the deterioration of material their books have never been shoddy or unattractive. They deserve well of the future England. And now we can understand their secret: for their roots dig into the soil of England for a hundred years. Their foundation was well and truly laid when Bradley Thomas Batsford emerged from his apprenticeship in the 'Art or Mystery of Book-selling' to set up his own shop in High Holborn in 1843. Hector Bolitho, sometime biographer of royalty, has turned his attention to the biography of a family firm in editing this Centenary Record and the result of the co-operation of the editor and publisher is one of their happiest books full of interest and of a pre-war style of beauty.