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Dr Nutting has no illusions about the political and social tendencies of his own country and makes an earnest appeal to the ordinary American for a reconsideration of the ideals of personal independence, which he claims are being swamped in a welter of legislation and industrial development.

The arguments presented will be familiar to readers of Chesterton, Belloc or other Distributist writers. The author calls for what he terms a 'Green Revolution' as distinct from a 'Red' revolution; economic independence is his rallying cry, as the only means to the end of full liberty for the subject. The two systems now fighting for supremacy in democratic countries, collective socialism and unrestricted enterprise, are both shown to deny the citizen any measure of independence.

Dr Nutting urges Americans to join his revolution, which can undermine whichever of these monopolies proves triumphant. He realises that sacrifices will be necessary; many of the things which have come to be considered necessities in American domestic life would have to be discarded; the citizen would find the initial move to an area where his own food could be grown involving much hard work; but all the extra hardships would be amply justified by the reward of personal independence. If only sufficient people were willing to make these sacrifices their lead would be followed, and the large scale profit farms and highly organised industrial areas, in fact the whole fabric of modern industrial democracy, would quietly rot away, leaving a nation of small independent land owners.

The book is rather more practical than many others with similar ideals, showing a complete grasp of the problems involved in such a large-scale reform in modern standards of value. As the author points out, the advent of the atomic bomb makes a dispersal of population from industrial areas neither so impractical nor unpopular as formerly.

Whether America's decline as an industrial nation would benefit democracy at present is perhaps problematic. There seems little hope that the enemies of democracy would abandon the American industrial methods incorporated in their systems. In short, the weakening of American industrial strength, although restoring independence to her citizens, might well result in their ultimate enslavement from forces outside American jurisdiction.

MAURICE McLOUGHLIN.

VOM SINN UND WERT DER MENSCHLICHEN ARBEIT. By Eberhard Welty, O.P. (Kehrle, Heidelberg 1946.)

This is the first Dominican book to come from Germany since the war, and is a careful study of St Thomas's teaching on the nature and value of human work. The author has already written several books on social-ethical subjects, and also contributed to the first number of the new review of the German Dominicans which was noticed in our April number.

In the introductory chapter the author observes that the idea of work in the modern capitalist-industrial world is very different from that which prevailed in the Middle Ages. To work is a moral human act and not merely an economic factor: work has its proper place in human life and is not merely a marketable commodity with value in the struggle for enrichment.

The body of the book first studies the nature of work in general according to St Thomas, and then works out the theme in terms of 'manual work' necessary for the preservation of human life, and 'spiritual work' which is 'immanent' and not 'ad extra' and is primarily ordained to the search after truth. All human work receives a value when it is seen as a reflection of the work of God 'the great artist', as a 'brush-stroke painting God's image in the world' (p. 30-32). A dominant idea is that of vocation (far from the idea of the labour exchange, cf. p. 40), which plays an essential part in the make-up of society. The papal encyclicals are invoked to bear out the doctrine of private property that is a necessary consequence of man's duty to labour in order to live. St Thomas, we are told, insists on this ultimate purpose of human work, and the references to the 'mendicant problem' of the thirteenth century thereby receive a special interest. Secondary purposes of human work are the resultant self-control and the benefit to society (pp. 87 ff.).

The terms 'finis operis' and 'finis operantis' are ingeniously translated 'Werkziel' and 'Wirkziel' respectively on p. 18, the latter (the intention beyond the 'job' itself) providing the moral aim of the work. Yet there seems to me a lacuna in the study in that there is no explanation of man's labour of love according to which the craftsman does his work for the very love of the thing itself.

The author (on page 120) proposes an escape for the modern worker, harnessed to the machine and driven to monotonous and soul-destroying labour: 'Would it not be better, instead of leaving the thoughts to stray or filling in the hours with inane chatter, to make a virtue of necessity and without prejudice to the work to use the time for the contemplation of divine and ennobling truths?' But this seems too sanguine a hope. Yet, as the author observes at the end, any reform must take into account the whole of human life before God, and so bring to misguided humanity 'den erhofften und sehnsuchtsvoll erwarteten Segen'.

SEBASTIAN BULLOUGH, O.P.