

Blackfriars

Gwynn would have us believe? To achieve a vast circulation is not evidence of producing a good article; otherwise the paper with the biggest circulation would generally be the best; which manifestly it isn't. Catholic progress, numerically, in the last hundred years in England is very great, and Mr. Denis Gwynn rightly makes much of it. But lest complacency intrude its smug countenance the departures from the Faith in that hundred years are too considerable to be forgotten. The 'lapsed' Catholic will often return—to lapse is not to apostatise. The apostate Catholics—clerical and lay—are not enumerated in our statistics, but we all come across them at times. The ex-Catholic priest, married and hostile to the Faith; the ex-Catholic layman now with the enemy—who has not met them? There is, of course, nothing new in apostasy. It has occurred from the beginning and will therefore probably continue till the end of time. But its exhibitions have been conspicuous in recent times, and are to be distinguished from the 'leakage' which Mr. Gwynn discusses in his most readable narrative. A great chapter in the history of our own days is this narrative of the 'Second Spring' in England, and a happy sequel to the volume on Catholic Emancipation. It is a book to be read not only in England, but throughout the Catholic world.

J.C.

CAPITALISM AND MORALITY. By Lewis Watt, S.J. (Pp. 150
3/6 net. Cassell.)

Father Lewis Watt is Professor of Moral Philosophy at Heythrop, and faithful guide and counsellor of the Catholic Social Guild. But the people to whom this book is addressed are neither students at Heythrop nor Catholic guildsmen; they are persons engaged in business, who will have none of the intrusion of Christian morals into the affairs of the market place. The dilemma of the fifteenth-century writer—'He that practiseth usury goeth to hell: and he that practiseth it not tendeth to destitution'—remains, and cannot be met by exhortations to be moral; no matter how wise or true the advice of the exhorter. The Catholic money-lender to-day (and every investor lends money hoping for interest) desires dividends. If these dividends can only be produced by paying less than a living wage to the labourer, does the investor protest? Capital is ever seeking to win higher and higher profits, so that the tendency is always for wages to sink to the level of subsistence. Hence the 'development' of fresh fields and pastures new in Africa and elsewhere where the heathen can live on far less

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than the British workman. Hence, also, the indentured and 'forced' labour required of the African, and the compulsory service enjoined upon him. Morality may deplore these proceedings, and Catholic priests (with Protestant missionaries) may point out the evils that result from the setting up of slavery. The capitalist goes on his way unheeding, and the Catholic shareholder does not enquire into the methods of the trader, but takes and enjoys the dividends. Who can reconcile the conflicting interests of the shareholder and the labourer? The business of the managing director is to produce dividends. He is the agent of the shareholders. The less the wages—provided they do not fall below what the labourer can live upon—the better, from the shareholders' point of view. The business of the trade union is to secure the best terms it can for its members. What can be done when the payment of a living wage means the disappearance of the dividends? Are Catholic shareholders to whom, as to non-Catholics, Father Watt speaks, ready to declare that the living wage is the first claim on industry, and to put their own interests in the second place?

At the present time we have the disturbing phenomenon of the capitalist perpetually clamouring by advertisement for purchasers for novelties, and at the same time urging that wages must be lower. The labourer is to buy more on less money. It can't be done. Another element in the muddled economic situation is the utter absence of morality in the nature of the articles produced. 'Will it pay?' is the question asked, not, 'Is it just?' To devise a new toy or a new poison, and then to persuade by flamboyant advertising that we need the article—and the trick is done. The countryside may be ruined by the foul work of the capitalist—who will stop him? If Father Watt can get even Catholic shareholders, or Catholic stock-brokers and Catholic company directors to prefer morality to the methods of the gambling table, he will achieve much. But who willingly 'tendeth to destitution'?

J.C.

THE SPIRIT OF CATHOLICISM. By Dr. Karl Adam. Translated by Dom Justin McCann, O.S.B. (Sheed and Ward; 7/6.)

In this book Dr. Adam aims primarily, not at defending Catholicism against attack, but at enabling the enquirer to understand what it really is. In words which Dr. Adam quotes (p. 12), Harnack, one of the greatest Protestant scholars of the age, has witnessed to the ignorance that exists: 'Of the Catholic Church, the greatest religious and political creation