

Economics Too Exciting

The Attack and Other Papers, by R. H. Tawney.
194 pp. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co. \$4.50

For many decades Professor Tawney has been vociferous in calling the market economy such names as "economic jungle" and in vehemently asking for the substitution of planning of the Russian pattern for the "dictatorship" of the capitalists. He has been indefatigable in talking and writing about economic topics. But, lo, in one of the essays contained in this volume, he admits that he does

not study the works of economic theorists with the assiduity they deserve, for one reason—if it is a reason, and not mere weakness of the flesh—explained to her pupil by the governess in that ancient, but admirable play, *The Importance of Being Earnest*: "Do not read Mill's chapter on the fall of the rupee, my dear; it is too exciting for a young girl."

Every line of the present volume shows that Professor Tawney has been very conscientious in observing the advice of the Victorian governess. He reproduces the most outworn, a hundred times disproven socialist slogans with the utmost pretentiousness. He does not have the slightest knowledge of the irrefutable objections advanced against the socialist creeds and dogmas. He passes over in silence all the unpleasant experiences of the nationalization experiments in Great Britain as well as in all other countries. Actually what he says could have been said, and has been said, by the first generation of Fabians and was untenable and spurious already then.

Mr. Tawney is an outstanding representative of that pseudo-intellectualism that has ruined Great Britain's political institutions, its freedom, and its wealth. These literati are fully aware of the fact that they are inferior to the eminent British thinkers and authors of the nineteenth century. Hence their neurotic rejection of everything they call Victorian. They know very well that they could not hold their own in a competitive market and that they lack all the qualities required in the conduct of business. Hence their spiteful disparagement of the entrepreneur and the profit system. Unable to serve the consumers in the way the businessman serves them by offering ever better and cheaper products, they aspire to the position of a planning dictator who according to his own pleasure graciously bestows handouts upon his wards.

Mr. Tawney pretends to be a historian and has published several historical studies. But his political and social philosophy is not inspired by any gleam of historical understanding. He condemns capitalism as inhuman and un-Christian. He does not realize that a table showing the increase of England's population from 1700 to 1940 utterly explodes the pathetic lamentations of the Webbs, the Hammonds, and all their followers. The drop in in-

fant mortality and the prolongation of the average length of life are certainly compatible with humanitarian ideals both Christian and secular.

To the unprecedented improvement in the masses' standard of living Professor Tawney does not refer. Or should we consider it as a reference when he declares that

one of the trades—by no means the least profitable—of which the plutocracy is master is lion-taming by kindness?

The Soviet system which, as Mr. Tawney has learned from the Webbs, rests "on a broad basis of popular support," is, of course, not guilty of this crime of dispensing "discreet, gentlemanly bribes."

Even if one applies to this volume the low standards of contemporary British economic and social writing, one cannot help qualifying it as a poor performance. LUDWIG VON MISES

Fighting Mad

The Lattimore Story, by John T. Flynn. 118 pp.
New York: Devin-Adair Company. \$1.00

John T. Flynn is one of the hardest hitting political pamphleteers of our time. And he has found a subject eminently suited for his shillelagh in the amazingly successful conspiracy of a number of Americans of Left Wing sympathies—ranging from Communist Party members and Soviet spies to gullible dupes—to soften up American public opinion and pervert American foreign policy in the interest of the Chinese Communists.

There is a mine of detailed information on this subject in the published hearings of the Senate Internal Security subcommittee, headed by Senator Pat McCarran, concerning the Institute of Pacific Relations. The subcommittee was fortunate in possessing the services of two experts on Communist infiltration, Robert Morris and Ben Mandel. Its inquiries were relevant and to the point; they overlooked few, if any, angles of the propaganda effort that was made on behalf of Mao Tse-tung's Communist regime, a regime that has been responsible for over 130,000 American casualties in Korea and for the brutal maltreatment (including in some cases actual murder) of scores of missionaries and other Americans living peaceably in China.

But the hearings of the subcommittee are of encyclopedic proportions. They run to more than five thousand pages of closely printed testimony, fascinating reading, much of it, but too bulky for best seller purposes. Mr. Flynn has gone into this mine and quarried industriously. From this and other sources he has compiled the main points of the great China disaster. He pulls no punches and names plenty of names. He shows how the Institute of Pacific Relations, outwardly a most reput-