

War. But he keeps on manfully, thinking and writing, and now has republished the volumes of 1931 and 1939 with the latest of 1953, re-named on a suggestion of J. M. Keynes.

Adequately to review the three together is manifestly impossible; adequately to review the last, even, in a short space, is impossible, for Mr. Woolf is a discursive though interesting writer, who is almost thinking aloud as he writes, and within his general system he is unsystematic. In his first volume he examined the ideas of "democratic psychology" which were explicit or implicit in the 18th Century and the two great revolutions, American and French, that burst its conventional system asunder; in the second he goes on to the ideas of the European revolutions of 1830 and the contemporary reform crisis in England. He is concerned with the fundamentals of democracy, the clash between political and economic democracy, which is one of our most devilish problems.

In his third volume he is driven, inescapably, to examine the authoritarian systems of Italy, Germany, Russia and the Roman Church; and this he does, making his own standpoint quite clear—the standpoint of one who was born into an exceedingly comfortable and well-off English middle-class milieu in 1880, has been concerned almost all his conscious life in and with politics, and has moved from "radicalism" to socialism, and yet remains a liberal, with a fast hold on the liberal-rational convictions which began to become dominant in so many men of goodwill and clear thought in the 18th Century. He is not, as so many of them were, an easy optimist. He decides that totalitarian dictatorship, of any sort, is not a viable form of government for our century. But is democracy possible, a society based on freedom?

Mr. Woolf finds another volume still necessary. He is not a professional historian and not a professional psychologist; but I think that anyone who wants to know what it is all about could do many things much worse than read through these books. The rational and liberal mind has not been exhausted yet and (this reviewer agrees with Mr. Woolf) we deride its political principles at our peril.

—J.C.B.

ASIA AND THE WEST

NORTH FROM MALAYA, by William O. Douglas; Victor Gollancz, English price 16/-.
MEN AGAINST THE JUNGLE, by Ritchie Calder; Allen and Unwin, English price 15/-.

THESE two books may well be read in sequence. Mr. Justice Douglas, of the Supreme Court of U.S.A., is now widely known for travel books that contain a good deal of political wisdom mixed in with the reports of an observant and—because of his nationality—rather privileged traveller. The present volume covers his journeys in Malaya, the Philippines, Vietnam, Burma, Formosa and Korea, and is therefore of immediate topical interest. There is much pungent criticism of the Western nations, but particularly of French policy in Vietnam, which he concludes is "feeding the flames of Communism." He sees rather different problems in each of the areas visited, but his principal theme is that everywhere in Asia people are more against imperialistic capitalism than they are in favour of Kremlin Communism. The hope for a peaceful understanding with

(continued on next page)

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