Wealth and Moral Law. By E. Benjamin Andrews, D.D.

The lectures included in this little volume raise and discuss the
largest and most troublesome of social issues. The book is true to
its title. Trusts, corporations, gambling, justice, socialism and the
single tax, each and all, are regarded from the economic and from
the moral standpoint. The distinctively moral remedies predomi-
nate; and though they run dangerously near to that familiar com-
monplace, "Get the right sort of behavior and no problems will
remain," yet there is not a dull page in the book. As in the other
writings of Dr. Andrews, no trait is more constant than a certain
moral fearlessness in dealing with his theme. Intellectual sympathy
also never fails him. Whether he deals with the Marx socialism or
the single tax, there is always a distinct friendliness in stating what
may be finally rejected. If this is a possible weakness, it is also a
source of real strength.

The book contains no stated theory of the relation which morals
sustain to economics, but it is everywhere assumed that the relation
is constant. There is hardly a concrete issue raised which is not
made to depend ultimately upon the sort of character available to
control the issue. "Give us the right kind of men and any scheme
will work." With a host of conservative writers this has come to be
a very dreary commonplace, in spite of its truth. No higher tribute
can be paid to Dr. Andrews than to admit that he wholly rescues it
from dullness. "We must get character first before any important
social changes can take place," is just now the stop-gap argument,
ignoring wholly all that change of organization may imply as a
character-creating force.

The author is very careful to make large allowance for this by his
general remedy — regulation, as against laissez faire upon the one side
and socialism upon the other. It is made clear that bold and yet
prudent regulation of social evils must at least be fairly tried before
the socialistic program can have serious hearing. Principles are in-
deed laid down which would seem to put the author into permanent
antagonism with anything like scientific socialism, as "economic
merit" is found to inhere in wage-earning, interest-earning and
profit-earning forms of private property. The Marx type of socialism
is refuted chiefly by showing reasons why the cost-of-production
theory will not hold. Average labor cost, or any of its multiples,
is shown to be far less certain as a measure of values than the
rough decisions of the present competitive tests.
With Fabian socialism the author has far more sympathy, although upon the main issue a sharp difference appears.

The presupposition of this doctrine [that of the Fabians] is in favor of state industry. I would take precisely the opposite ground. Let us retain the immense advantages of individual initiative with the accompanying results of maximum enterprise and inventiveness, wherever such initiative is not erected into an abuse of society. Let us resort to state agency only when, and so far as, this is rendered necessary by the power and disposition on the part of individuals and private corporations to maltreat the public at large.

It is denied further that this would lead to the same practical results as the Fabian program, it being implied rather that experience will show very questionable results from too wide an activity on the part of the state.

**John Graham Brooks.**

Cambridge, Mass.