

BOOK REVIEWS

The Road to Justice, by THE RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR ALFRED DENNING (Stevens & Sons Ltd., London, 1955), pp. i-vii, 1-118. Australian price 14s. 9d. (Our copy from the Law Book Co. of Australasia Pty. Ltd.)

This little book contains the text of a number of addresses delivered by Sir Alfred Denning while on visits to South Africa, Canada, and the United States during 1953 and 1954. With the exception of the first, perhaps, the titles indicate the contents: 'The Road to Justice', 'The Just Judge', 'The Honest Lawyer', 'The Free Press', 'Eternal Vigilance'.

In the first address two matters are dealt with: 'What is Justice?' and 'A Fair Trial'. The author travels but a short distance in his search for an answer to the question 'What is Justice?' Almost at the outset he asserts: 'It is not the produce of his intellect but of his spirit. The nearest we can get to defining justice is to say that it is what the right-minded members of the community—those who have the right spirit within them—believe to be fair.' This is pretty wishy-washy stuff but nothing more informing is offered.

The main burden of the writing at this stage is to insist that law is not, even to a lawyer and perhaps particularly not to a Judge, an end in itself. It is justice that is the end and only just law is to be respected. 'May I ask you also in your progress in the law, not to rely over much on legality—on the technical rules of law—but ever seek those things which are right and true; for there alone will you find the road to justice'—exhorts the author.

This general attitude to the age-old question of how to reconcile the justice of the particular case with the timelessness of justice according to law will not surprise those who have followed Lord Justice Denning's appellate court judgments. This particular contribution adds nothing to the understanding of those who have pondered the problem for themselves.

He says, however, that two great objects are to be achieved: 'one is to see that laws are just: the other that they are justly administered'. And he argues that the second is the more important of the two. The greater part of the following addresses concerns one or another aspect of the administration of law, as the titles indicate. In dealing with such matters as 'A Fair Trial', 'The Just Judge', and 'The Honest Lawyer', the author travels with a fair following wind and encounters few cross-currents. The writing is clear, attractive, and easy to read. If there is little either of matter or of argument which is not familiar to any competent lawyer, that is not necessarily a detraction. The importance of the questions discussed and the ease with which they are handled makes this little book worthwhile reading for lawyers. For laymen, the answers to many questions which perplex are to be found here presented with a clarity, liveliness, simplicity and brevity difficult to find elsewhere.

D.P.D.