

interested in the subject of applying scientific methods to problems in political and social science can afford to overlook the book. If not in all respects sound, it is brilliant, stimulating and provocative of constructive thinking.

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*Die Russische Agrarreform.* By W. D. PREYER. Jena, Gustav Fischer, 1914.—xiv, 415 pp.

Dr. Hourwich in his *Economics of the Russian Village* and Professor Simkhovitch in his *Feldgemeinschaft in Russland* have given us a picture of that unique survival of a by-gone age known as the *mir* or village commune. From these two works the western world learned also of the new economic forces that were undermining the ancient institution of communal land ownership. Professor Preyer takes up the thread where the two authors left it and concerns himself almost entirely with the great agrarian reform which is revolutionizing the system of peasant land-ownership in Russia and will, when it is completely carried out, make the *mir* a thing of the past. The book is of more than academic interest to this country, for we have a similar problem in the transition from tribal to industrial land-ownership among the American Indians; and the part played by the Peasants' Land Bank cannot fail to interest those who are concerned in the success of the recently established Farm Loan Board.

After reviewing the conditions created by the abolition of serfdom in 1861 and the economic differentiation of the peasantry which followed it, the author devotes a chapter to a description of the attitude of the different political parties toward the land-reform question at the time of the Revolution of 1905. With the exception of the Conservative party of landlords, all parties united in a demand for the expropriation of the lands owned by the crown and the landlords for the benefit of the peasantry, and the preservation of the *mir*, the chief point of difference between the Liberals and the Socialists being that the former wanted the landlords to be compensated for their land, while the Socialists advocated confiscation.

It was the late Stolypin's wanton disregard of public opinion that directed the revolutionary land reform along entirely different channels. His policy was prompted by a desire to create a conservative class of peasant land-owners. The author tells us how Stolypin accomplished his end by promulgating the measure as a Czar's ukase in 1906; how he dissolved the second Duma when it refused to sanction the uncon-

stitutional act and how by a bold *coup d'état* he disfranchised a great body of voters and so changed the electoral law as to elect a more conservative and more complaisant (third) Duma which adopted his bill in June 1910, after spending two and a half years in perfecting it with the aid of experts.

The mere enactment of the law does not suffice, of course, to turn a commune into a body of independent land-owners and the description of the law itself and of its administrative realization fills the greater part of the book. The author describes the huge machine created for carrying out the reform. It included the formation of a Central Commission of high government officials at Petrograd, of a Provincial Commission for each province, consisting of eight appointed officials and two elected, one nobleman and one peasant, and of local commissions, one for each county, composed of twelve members of whom one-third is appointed by the government, one-third is elected by the local zemstvo, and one-third, by the peasants.

The legal, economic and engineering work required in the complete re-arrangement of thousands of villages and millions of peasants' holdings is stupendous. Some conception of the magnitude of the task is gained from a few figures cited by the author. It is to be noted that Stolypin put the ukase in effect immediately upon its promulgation so that it was in effect for three and one-half years before being enacted by the Duma in perfected form. In the first years, 1906-1912, there were created 47 provincial commissions and 463 county commissions employing over 5000 experts in 1910. Some twenty million acres of land were surveyed and detailed plans worked out for their parcellation among nearly one million peasant families living in over 49,000 village communes. The work of parcellation is not merely physical. It calls for the appraisal of every strip of the scattered holdings of each peasant and their consolidation into one as nearly equivalent piece of land as possible, the difference in value being paid in money. Entire villages are broken up, and so far as possible the American type of isolated farms is introduced. This involves the physical demolition of villages, the construction of new houses, the building of new roads, the digging of wells, the fencing of farms etc. Literally, the face of the country is being made over. Last, but not least, the government, being greatly interested in the success of the reform, is attempting to make radical changes in obsolete methods of cultivation by creating thousands of demonstration farms and agricultural experiment stations in coöperation with the local zemstvos.

To increase the area of peasant lands, the government is conducting a

gigantic land-buying operation through the Noblemen's Land Bank and is reselling the land to the peasants through the Peasants' Bank. In five years (1906-1910) following the inauguration of the reform the Peasants' Bank purchased over fifteen million acres of land from noblemen, of which it resold nearly one-half to peasants on easy payments, extending over a period of thirty-four and one-half years and more, besides loaning over 447,000,000 rubles to peasants on mortgages which enabled them to buy direct from landlords nearly eleven million acres additional land, the repayment of the mortgages being extended over a period of from thirteen to twenty-eight years.

In view of the enormous amount of work which the carrying-out of the reform requires, it is far from completed. But enough has already been accomplished to mark it as the boldest step and biggest economic measure ever conceived and carried out by a government. Its final realization and the epoch-making consequences it is bound to bring in its train in the largest agricultural country in the world will well bear watching.

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NEW YORK CITY.

*The Development of Transportation in Modern England.* By W. T. JACKMAN. Cambridge, at the University Press, 1916—Two volumes, xv, vii, 820 pp.

Even from the Pitt Press at Cambridge—the press of the University—it must be quite a long time since there was issued a book on history or political science so carefully and generously documented as Mr. Jackman's study of the development of transportation in modern England. The pages which carry the text number 665; but of this total number of pages one third is occupied with footnotes, mostly amplifying the text. The appendices comprise 84 pages; and the closely printed bibliography extends to 62 pages. A framework on these spacious lines—footnotes, appendices, bibliography and an ample index—suggests a comprehensive and exhaustive treatment of the subject; and Mr. Jackman's treatment—it may be said at once—is fully in keeping with the framework of his book.

Neither Scotland nor Ireland is dealt with by Mr. Jackman. He is concerned solely with the development of transportation in England. But his conception of modern England is not narrow or restricted; for what may be described as the main story of the book begins at the close of the fifteenth century, and the story is carried down, always with much detail, to 1850, by which year there had been many amal-