



—Acme.

Governor Adlai Stevenson and sons—"long since found only on the other side."

life. For many years the wife had been interested in art and literature, the husband primarily in foreign policy.

In fact, many of the New Dealers now backing Adlai Stevenson for President may discover that he does not go all the way with them on domestic issues. Pages 118 to 233 of this book are written by Stevenson. They include his most significant messages. We find that he vetoed bills fixing minimum prices for cigarettes and forbidding the sale of used cars on Sundays. Mr. Busch notes that these indicate "his views on the subject of economic restraints generally."

Noel F. Busch is a talented professional writer, yet the ample portion of the book written by Governor Stevenson compares quite favorably in style and punch with that prepared by Mr. Busch. And Mr. Busch himself, describing Mr. Stevenson's intrusion on the national scene, adds: "Wonder of wonders, he was the first major U. S. public figure in a generation who in addition to delivering a speech could even write one, a capacity long since found only in English-speaking politicians on the opposite side of the Atlantic."

Reading this passage, one instinctively measures Stevenson against Mr. Churchill. Although the American governor lacks the majesty and imperial qualities of the British Prime Minister, some parallels do exist. Both are preoccupied with foreign affairs. Both fervently indorse collective action among the free peoples. And both spring from families rich in tradition. Jesse Fell, Stevenson's maternal great-grandfather, suggested the Lincoln-Douglas debates and per-

suaded Lincoln to prepare his only autobiography. And a grandfather of the present governor, a man also with the name of Adlai Stevenson, served as Vice President during the second regime of Grover Cleveland.

But Democrats, even those endowed with exceptional ancestors, rarely fare well in Illinois politics. Mr. Busch stresses that a candidate must be exceptional himself to do what Stevenson has done. In 1948 Stevenson was elected governor by 572,000 votes. It was the largest majority in the history of the state. Truman carried Illinois by 34,000 votes. Not even Paul H. Douglas polled as many votes as Stevenson.

Mr. Busch explains some of this by claiming that Stevenson is "easily the best all-around political orator to appear on the U. S. scene since FDR." Yet there were other reasons. All at once, Illinois had a governor who was not an intimate of the boys in the Fourth Ward but, instead, was accustomed to dealing with Carlo Sforza or Philip Noel-Baker. The political game was new to Stevenson, so he didn't play it.

Illinois's 500 state troopers had been pawns of the spoils system. Stevenson ended this, once and for all. He put the constabulary under Civil Service. The Democratic precinct captains protested angrily to Arvey. Looking back on the episode, Arvey said to Stevenson's biographer: "Of course, in the long run, the Governor was right. Good government gets more votes than handing out jobs."

Whether the United States as a whole will be thus purified politically was still a moot issue when this review went to press.

Hustings' Hoyle

HANDBOOK OF PRACTICAL POLITICS. By Paul P. Van Riper. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 214 pp. \$1.95.

LET'S GO INTO POLITICS. By Raymond Baldwin. New York: Macmillan Co. 179 pp. \$2.75.

By WILLIAM D. PATTERSON

ONE of the most consistent, and most depressing, trends in American life is the declining proportion of citizens who trouble to vote, even in critical national elections. The campaign of 1880 probably did not confront the voters with issues as momentous as those of 1948, yet 78.4 per cent of the electorate went to the polls then compared with only 51.6 per cent four years ago. And James A. Garfield was elected forty years before women had won their suffrage.

The present Congress actually was elected by a minority of the American people, for less than half of the eligible voters—44 per cent to be exact—participated in 1950's mid-term elections.

This is not a healthy trend in an age when the fundamental principles and methods of democratic, representative government are being challenged around the world. The citizen must understand that in the political life of a democracy "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty" at home as well as abroad.

With another great national election facing the country this fall, the outcome of which will influence the lives of all of us, the citizen more than ever has an obligation not only to be informed but to play his part in the political process.

At this point the reader, if he is innocent of the procedures of our political parties, as unfortunately most Americans are, is entitled to ask, "But what can I do?" That is a reasonable question, and one of the best answers is, "Run to your nearest bookstore and buy a copy of 'Handbook of Practical Politics,' by Professor Paul P. Van Riper of Northwestern University; read it from cover to cover; and then act, and keep on acting at least until November. You should get some soul-satisfying results whatever your politics."

This is a guide for the individual citizen to effective political action at the grass-roots level. Professor Van Riper, it should be stressed immediately, is not interested in what or whom you vote for, but he is keenly interested in providing you with explicit, practical information about

how to find your way around the political world. And this he does with eminent success.

He has assembled an informative and stimulating handbook for anyone interested in exchanging the cynic's seat in his living room for a constructive role in the local party of his choice. It is an ably organized compendium of concrete advice, wise counsel, and detailed instructions from many sources for practical political action. Many bosses themselves could learn something from reading it. Most important of all, the individual citizen will learn how valuable his vote is and how to do something about it, starting right in his own precinct or ward with his local leaders.

It would be a useful thing to place this book in the hands of every person of voting age. It might give a lot of party bosses a headache, but it would be a great thing for America.

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THERE is a beguiling air of innocence permeating Raymond Baldwin's little book that contrasts sharply with the hard, practical experience in politics that the author actually had during his many years as a figure in J. Henry Roraback's Republican Party when it held almost unbroken control of Connecticut.

It is refreshing in its surface candor, and has an unassuming tone that is disarming in a man who served three terms as governor, was then elected to the United States Senate, and now sits as an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of Errors, his state's highest court. These honors do not come to a tyro in politics, nor to one who is inept in that complex, exacting vocation.

Yet "Let's Go Into Politics" is curiously disappointing. This is because Judge Baldwin seems to tell everything and yet tells nothing, or hardly anything, of real moment to a person seriously considering a political career or seriously concerned with the recent political history of Connecticut.

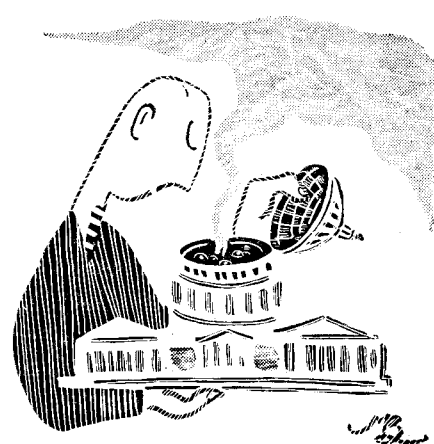
Probably this fault stems from the background of the book. It is based on a series of lectures Judge Baldwin gave to students in the Department of Government at Wesleyan University. For such an audience his treatment perhaps had to be elementary and inspirational, rather than historical, analytical, and genuinely revealing. But it is a pity that when the author decided to assemble his lectures in book form he did not forego the charming, unruffled approach he used to the college undergraduates in favor of a probing study of Republican and Democratic politics in Connecticut, and in Washington.

Much of the material is helpful and interesting, whether dealing with local, state, or national politics. Judge Baldwin discusses the first step in most political careers—getting in touch with your local district or town leader—and ranges through campaigning for governor and maneuvering for Willkie and Dewey at a national political convention. But his ingenuous manner and temperate tone dull the book's cutting edge.

It would have been most stimulating, for example, to read a careful appraisal of the role that Mayor Jasper McLevy, Socialist boss of Bridgeport, played in the first election of the author as a Republican governor, and of Baldwin's skilful strategy in that campaign against the incumbent, Wilbur Cross, Connecticut's "grand old man." Why U. S. Senator Baldwin was not appointed chairman of a special committee to study rising prices he had set up over Senator Taft's resistance deserves more of a report than the one-sentence glossing over he gives it. Judge Baldwin has sat in many "smoke-filled rooms," but he does not lay bare the tensions, tempers, deals, rivalries, grudges, and ambitions that so importantly influence the decisions on candidates, platforms, and patronage finally announced to the public. The factors that entered into his accepting an appointment to his present eminent position by a Democratic governor would have been interesting to read, along with a full discussion of the progressive-reactionary split in the Republican Party today. (Judge Baldwin, it should be reported, has been a forthright spokesman for the progressive wing of his party.)

There are many useful and interesting things that a political beginner cannot learn from Judge Baldwin's present book. But one thing he would learn: **that politics is people**, and that it pays in the long run to treat people decently and to administer the affairs of a party and the Government honestly and in the best interests of the general welfare. And the student would learn that politics **is**, or can be, a noble calling worthy of the best in any man or woman.

Finally the beginner would learn that politics is paradox. One of the finest public servants that the Republican Party has produced in Connecticut, Judge Baldwin seems to hold in affectionate esteem a ruthless old wheel-horse of a boss who dominated the party and its affairs for so many years, J. Henry Roraback. He seems to feel the same bond of party battles shared and won with this spectacular old titan that Harry S. Truman still feels for the late Tom Pendergast of Missouri.



Politics Notes

A BOOK ABOUT AMERICAN POLITICS. By George Stimpson. Harper. \$4.95. Through 529 solidly printed pages, George Stimpson plays a question-and-answer game with the meat and marginalia of American politics. Having served for years as a Washington correspondent, he has had professional occasion and an insatiable super-professional curiosity to search out the facts of our political past and our past politics. In the good tradition of journalism, Mr. Stimpson is long on anecdotes and information but very short on sweeping generalization. This being an election year, that could be a blessing.

You don't read George Stimpson page after page, sopping up one collection of facts after another. Rather, you riffle through the book, stopping at the short essay under a heading that catches your fancy. For instance, you may want to know whence came the term "political plum"; and, if so, you'll find a concise paragraph on its popularization by Matt Quay, sometime patronage-conscious boss of Pennsylvania and the G.O.P. Or, in case you don't know already, there is an adequate page-and-a-half on the Solid South.

Well-measured capsule histories of the major parties and their personalities, and the minor ones, and the tribal customs associated with their conventions are just the reading matter to have at hand during this year's longer speeches. Similarly, this summer and autumn, as you hear of the superb qualities of the candidates, reach for Stimpson and read his humorous two pages on the musical talents of several White House occupants. Here and there, it is possible to question his judgment and clarity, as his unsuccessful nine pages which attempt to differentiate between Socialism and Communism. But, over all, this is a book for relaxed read-

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