

Away with Poverty

PROHIBITING POVERTY, by Prestonia Mann Martin. Rollins Press, Winter Park, Fla. 131 pp. Price \$1.75 postpaid of *The Survey*.

THE value of Mrs. Martin's book is that it goes straight to the heart of our contemporary social messiness. She would "prohibit" poverty. She believes—and doubtless has every reason to believe—that it can be done. Anyone less courageous might have hesitated to make the particular proposal that she offers, for, having made it, she will be dubbed utopian and dismissed with a shrug of realistic shoulders. Many a time in the past, however, the utopian has turned out to be the most hard-headed of realists and the realist but a sentimentalist covering his beloved habit-systems with a mask of reason. Not everyone will go the full way with Mrs. Martin, but no one can read this little book without a mind-stretching that releases a more vigorous sense of the possibilities inherent in the present situation.

Most significant of all is her clear demarcation of the limits of the most crucial aspect of our present problem. That most crucial aspect centers in man's relation to the indispensables of life—food, shelter, clothing, protection against ill health, transportation, education. Our present barbarity, she holds, lies in the fact that, although we are, as a society, fully capable of providing the subsistence-necessities to all, we permit millions to remain on the level of sheer destitution. She would turn the enginery of society toward the solution of this primary problem, and she would do it by the enlistment of the whole youthful man- and woman-power in the production of the indispensables. Her plan, which in some of its detail recalls William James's "moral equivalent for war," visualizes what might be called a limited collectivism: collectivism in the realm of indispensables, individualism in the realm of the dispensables or luxuries.

But it would be unfair in a few words to describe a proposal closely reasoned and fascinating in its presentation. In these days when we are, for the most part, presented with the choice between the preservation entire of the principle of individual enterprise and the casting of it out completely, a discussion which acknowledges the value of the collective principle in certain regions of life and of individual enterprise in others has the value of a kind of Hegelian synthesis of opposites. It may be that the mutual exclusiveness of our prevailing "either-or" is to be overcome by this view of a "neither-and-both." We live in a day when the social-economic lid is off. Many silly and pestiferous proposals are issuing out of our Pandora's box of perplexities, but there are issuing, also, proposals that turn our minds in wholesome new directions. Mrs. Martin's book, I believe, belongs in the latter category.

H. A. OVERSTREET

College of the City of New York

Verum, Pulchrum, Bonum

WHAT WE LIVE BY, by Ernest Dimnet. Simon & Schuster. 303 pp. Price \$2.50 postpaid of *The Survey*.

"WHERE we live or how we live is of little consequence. What is all important is to live." This is one of the concluding sentences in this book, which every one who read and profited by Abbé Dimnet's *The Art of Thinking* will wish to read.

It is a sane and lovely essay on the art of living, greatest of arts. If any one should ask the author, "Is life worth living?" he would answer, "Yes if it is good life," and in this book he tells us how to make life true, beautiful and good, and goes far to convince us that with whatever untoward outward circumstance, we may make our lives equal to that standard.

The book is in three parts and the third, headed *Bonum*, Beauty in Life, is the most compelling, especially to us social workers. As he says, "It purports to be a guide to our self-perfection but it is in reality a manual of happy living." He believes there are "three states of mind which with a little practice we can enter at our will: 1, Keen interest in truth even of a purely intellectual character; 2, working for any of the nobler objects possible to mankind, that is to say, what this book calls collaborating with God; 3, forgetting our own interest and devoting ourselves to the welfare or happiness of others."

Abbé Dimnet's spirit is deeply religious but his religion is not one of repression nor reluctant sacrifice but of active joy. True he seems to have a high appreciation of the mystics, if he is not one himself, but who can be even a humanitarian agnostic in the world of today, without harboring some traces of mysticism or being lost in hopelessness?

The chapter on Love is the wisest disquisition on that much discussed subject I have ever seen in print, and would seem to have come from a happily mated man rather than from a celibate.

The book is running over with adages which cry out for quotation, but *The Survey's* limits for its reviewers forbid. I most heartily commend it, especially the third part, to my fellow social workers, most of all to those of them who are hungry for a satisfying faith which their intellect will allow them to accept.

ALEXANDER JOHNSON

The Outlook for Russian Wheat

AGRICULTURAL RUSSIA AND THE WHEAT PROBLEM, by Vladimir P. Timoshenko. Food Research Institute (Stanford University, California). 571 pp. Price \$4 postpaid of *The Survey*.

IN many ways Mr. Timoshenko's book should have a sobering effect on those who are inclined to be carried away by the extravagant claims of Soviet admirers regarding the immediate future of agricultural production in the Soviet Union. In general it may be said to be a scholarly, technical and comprehensive view of the problems faced by Russian agriculture. It will be somewhat of a surprise to many, for instance, to learn that as far as European Russia is concerned, the Soviets must contend with a considerable degree of agricultural overpopulation. Despite the immense size of the U. S. S. R., some 8,245,000 square miles, the amount of tillable land is relatively small—approximately 8 percent of the total area. In the larger part of the country, the winters are too long and too severe to permit the growth of crops; other large sections are too arid or too isolated. In the principal grain-growing regions, the Ukraine, the North Caucasus and the Volga regions, the density of population dependent upon the soil is from two to six times as great as in comparable agricultural portions of the United States, and the possibility of a marked expansion in the sown area is held to be very small. Only in remote sections of Siberia is there said to be any appreciable amount of arable land wholly unused, while even there the feasibility of mass colonization is severely questioned.

In view of the rapid growth in population, the author feels that there is little chance of the Soviet Union developing an export of wheat comparable to that of Czarist Russia, a conclusion that seems amply justified. One's confidence in the accuracy of his generally gloomy picture of agrarian prospects in Russia is somewhat disturbed, however, by the very obvious fact that Mr. Timoshenko does not approve of the Soviet régime. While there are said to be excellent reasons why this study was carried on entirely in this country without the benefit of first-hand investigation, it is inevitable that this should prove a serious handicap. No consideration is given, for example, to the recently discovered process of "yarovization" whereby the range of certain crops is immeasurably widened and the prospects of productivity greatly

enlarged, although this information was available in Russia long before its formal announcement at the Sixth International Congress of Genetics at Cornell University last August. Despite such serious limitations, however, the book may definitely be recommended to serious students of Russia's problems.

Foreign Policy Association

MAXWELL S. STEWART

What Leisure for Everyman Means

LEISURE IN THE MODERN WORLD, by C. Delisle Burns. Century. 302 pp. Price \$2.50 postpaid of *The Survey*.

MR. BURNS defines at once the large increase in leisure to which society is fated; the increased human energy left after the day's work; the variety of modern opportunities for leisure. Among the results he notes a much wider range of social contacts for all; an interclass and international common content of experience never before approached; a resultant social democracy; a fuller range of interests for all; more rapid assimilation and change of ideas than ever before in history; new experiments, customs and conventions based on equalitarian leisure; greater opportunity for discovery and development of personal capacities; a new basic attitude toward work and leisure, summed up in "the new generation does not believe that its leisure is for the sake of work." Still further, enlarged democratic unfatigued leisure has transferred to the "leisure of workers" those interests and responsibilities which have heretofore been borne by the "leisure class"—"movements," societal control, government, the arts, "civilization."

All this must modify public policy. The state must constantly decrease the hours of work—"We can afford abundant leisure for all"; education must give more attention to preparation for leisure—"If education, in school or after, leaves men and women with no interest at all, with nothing they want to do apart from what they must do, then it has failed to fit them for life"; there must be community provision for leisure, and on no minimum basis either. "Public provision should be made for the enjoyment by every member of a community of the whole of the 'good life'." . . . This implies a practice that aims at giving the charwoman the opportunity to hear Beethoven, not in order that she may do more work, but because she is a woman."

Mr. Burns has imagination and keen observation; he has written a readable, arresting book on a subject even more important tomorrow than today. "The place of leisure in the life of those who work for a living is the problem of the modern world, which is fundamental in discussing the future of civilization. . . . Civilization may depend for its roots upon the way in which work is done; but it depends for its finest flower upon the use of leisure."

ROY SMITH WALLACE

National Recreation Association

Conflict and Behavior

THE NATURE OF HUMAN CONFLICTS, or *Emotion, Conflict and Will: an Objective Study of Disorganization and Control of Human Behaviour*, by A. R. Luria. Translated from the Russian and edited by W. Horsley Gantt. Liveright. 428 pp. Price \$4 postpaid of *The Survey*.

THIS is an excellent exposition of the laboratory method in the clinical field. The presentation of a more or less uniform technic is supported by an adequate exposition of the methods with case studies. Luria demonstrates the factors entering into the conflict processes as well as the nature of conflicts bound up in effects which disorganize behavior through their direct connection with the motor field. The author's general viewpoint is that the mechanism of conflict plays a chief role in the disorganization of human behavior and he believes that delays in the excitatory system of activity may easily lead to disturbances of behavior.

The neurodynamics of neuroses are studied in terms of types of body organization, one stable and one labile. Disorganization of voluntary behavior involves an inability to create stimuli or to subordinate them. Direct attempts to control behavior lead to negative results; mastery is achieved only by indirect means.

The strength of the volume lies in its stress upon the totality of personality, with the intellect viewed as a vital factor in the development of what is ordinarily regarded as voluntary action. Human behavior is regarded as a direct growth and not merely as the result of an accumulation of experiences. Biological man is modified by his cultural activity. The cultural functions are not isolated in psychological processes but permeate the whole activity and structure of behavior. The analysis of cultural mechanisms becomes the key to understanding the simple neurodynamical processes.

As a presentation of his mode of investigation, Luria offers a book of significance and value. He seeks to probe objectively the mechanism underlying much of human unhappiness. The section of the volume dealing with artificial conflicts shows quite definitely that the specific organization of a higher psychological function is explainable only as one includes a study of the neurodynamics of behavior.

American psychologists and even social workers can gain much from this well-organized systematic discussion of the nature of human conflicts:

IRA S. WILE, M.D.

New York City

How to Organize Health

COMMUNITY HEALTH ORGANIZATION, edited by Ira V. Hiscock. Commonwealth Fund. 261 pp. Price \$2.50 postpaid of *The Survey*.

THE attempt to develop quantitative, objective standards and programs for municipal health service has now been carried on by the American Public Health Association for more than ten years and with somewhat remarkable success. This work is not only a substantial contribution to the cause of public health but also perhaps points the way in which other governmental functions could with profit be analyzed. The present volume is a revised, enlarged and extensively modified new edition of Professor Hiscock's earlier book, published on behalf of the Committee on Administrative Practice of the Association in 1927. It outlines in detail the necessary community organization for a city of 100,000 population, including public and private agencies, and covering communicable disease control, control of tuberculosis and venereal diseases, maternity and child hygiene, school hygiene, milk and food control, sanitation, laboratory service, public-health nursing, hospital and out-patient services and popular health instruction. Under each of these topics there is an outline, based on the exhaustive studies of the Committee, of the detailed services which actually should be rendered and of the personnel and budget required.

Professor Hiscock has given a clear and complete picture of the essentials of community-health organization which should be constantly on the desk of every worker in this field. Furthermore he has infused his discussion of technical administrative problems with a philosophical grasp of governmental problems and with an awareness of underlying community needs which should commend his work to other social workers as well as to those specifically concerned with public health.

C.-E. A. WINSLOW

School of Medicine, Yale University

When Justice Takes to Politics

TRIBUNES OF THE PEOPLE, by Raymond Moley. Yale University Press. 272 pp. Price \$2.50 postpaid of *The Survey*.

IN this volume the man who has become one of the inner circle of President-elect Roosevelt's advisers and who is professor of public law at Columbia University, tears the mask off the magistrates' courts of New York City. To large numbers, he points out, these courts are the custodians of justice, the tribunes of the people; and yet their work is shoddy and their atmosphere unwholesomely political. Professor Moley reviews various surveys of these courts and efforts to raise their standards, but his volume deals largely with the results of the Seabury investigation and therefore pictures the courts as they are today. He makes the categorical statement that in the selection of magistrates through the years the political machine has followed

the policy of giving as poor a quality of appointments as public opinion will permit. Scandals associated with bail, organization of the courts, framing and other abuses uncovered in connection with the Women's Court—these and other phases of the work of the courts are analyzed. Roughly, half of what goes to support the courts, he says, finds its way either to political work or to waste and inefficiency. Before real improvement can come "the authority that rules politics in New York City must bend low before the altar of self-renunciation." And the candid observer cannot "yet discern even the portents of such a miracle."

Trenton, N. J.

WINTHROP D. LANE

Victims of the Great God Style

TRADE-UNION POLICIES IN THE MASSACHUSETTS SHOE INDUSTRY, 1919-1929, by Thomas L. Norton. Columbia University Press. 377 pp. Price \$5 postpaid of *The Survey*.

THE shoe-workers' unions in Massachusetts have had to struggle for a decade with the problems of a shrinking market for their labor and increasing pressure on wages in a highly competitive industry. Dr. Norton tells the story of this struggle in Brockton and Haverhill. Each of these cities watched its shoe industry slowly decrease in size during the 'twenties, while the unions fought to maintain wage scales considerably above those of nearby competing centers.

Although the Haverhill union differed radically from that in Brockton, both organizations looked to arbitration within the framework of the trade agreement as a necessary evil, to be flouted on occasion but to be relied upon generally, since no other method of adjusting piece-rates and working rules was possible in an industry completely at the mercy of the great god Style.

The economic factors which ruled the situation are carefully explained with abundant statistical data to illuminate the text. The analysis of arbitration board decisions is done with as much thoroughness as the decisions themselves allow: only those who are in the cast of the play can know what occurs offstage, and the spectator must take what he sees for granted. Arbitrators' decisions usually contain the truth; if they fall short of containing the whole truth, the picture which is drawn from them may be a bit distorted, but the artist is not to blame.

The author proves that a carefully documented and highly specialized study can be interesting reading. He has made an excellent contribution to the growing body of literature that deals with collective bargaining in American industry.

Duke University

JOHN P. TROXELL

Ethics for Schoolboys

THE ART OF BEHAVIOR: a Study in Human Relations, by Frederick Winsor. Houghton Mifflin. 203 pp. Price \$1.75 postpaid of *The Survey*.

IN this book the author offers for the use of all boys of high-school age a discussion of ethics which he has found intelligible and interesting to the boys of Middlesex School. It must, therefore, be judged according to the measure of its probable usefulness to boys of this age out of every social class. This reviewer has not found, as the author has, that sex is a subject usually adequately treated in school as a matter of hygiene and physiology. His own experience with schoolboys, on the contrary, leads him to feel that a lack of understanding of the ethical problems inherent in sex is the cause of so much failure in later life adjustments that no book purporting to handle the question of ethics for the young may properly avoid sex matters.

The treatment of what one may call the "domestic" virtues is admirable. The average boy will understand and be impressed by the argument that truth-telling, with reservations which the author points out, is necessary for the functioning of society; and that unselfishness benefits its practitioner by making him immune to many common fears and anxieties.

But the discussion of the ethics of our community life lacks realism. The most important part of the picture seems left out if we do not consider the origin of racketeering in the willingness of many respectable people to make use of racketeers, or if we worry about the low standard of civic ethics without asking whether this did not arise from the standard of business ethics

which John T. Flynn and others have shown is equally low. And the present state of Europe makes it seem ironic to say that "the nations of the world are beginning to realize that even international disputes ought to be settled according to the principles of justice, not by brute force."

I. M. BEARD

Bethel, Conn.

Dissipated Heritage

THE CHANGING CULTURE OF AN INDIAN TRIBE, by Margaret Mead. Columbia University Press. 313 pp. Price \$4.50 postpaid of *The Survey*.

ALTHOUGH this study was designed, in the main, to disclose the changing status, interests and attitudes of women in a Plains Indian tribe, practically every aspect of life on the reservation is discussed. The picture is appalling: what has happened in this little corner of the Mississippi Valley is not that an overripe culture has crumbled at the first impact of a more vigorous or modern one; nor is it the incidental disorder which often attends—in the experience of many of our immigrant groups, for example—the adaptation of a social system to new conditions. But, owing to the ever shifting artificial barriers which an uncertain government policy of interference has placed in the way of such readjustment, the cultural heritage has simply been dissipated; and these Indians are now worse off than they were in the earlier stages of contact.

The author does not formulate this thought; but one gathers that the decay of our own culture which now dominates the scene is the most serious factor in the situation; and that race pride, though it slows up the process of adjustment, is, when combined with trained intelligence, the most hopeful of the forces left.

American Council, Institute of Pacific Relations BRUNO LASKER

The Two New Mooney Books

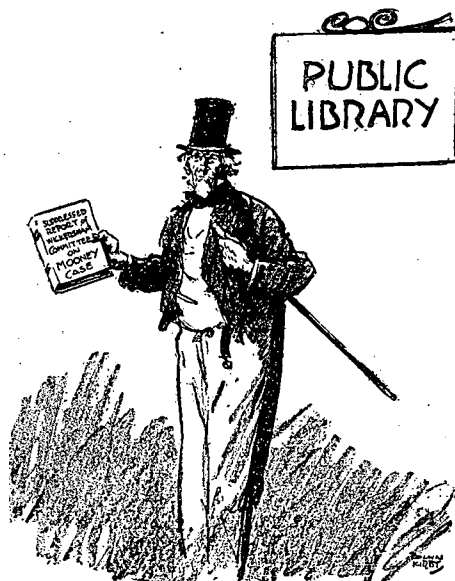
THE MOONEY BILLINGS REPORT. Suppressed by the Wickersham Commission. Gotham House. 243 pp. Price \$1.50 postpaid of *The Survey*.

WHAT HAPPENED IN THE MOONEY CASE, by Ernest Jerome Hopkins. Brewer, Warren, Putnam. 258 pp. Price \$2.50 postpaid of *The Survey*.

THE suppressed Wickersham Report on Mooney, now published, together with Hopkins' book, also just published, really give further information to this well-known case. The report, put out by private funds, gives us the type of information that was undoubtedly before Governor Rolph at the time of Mayor Walker's famous trip to California. The legal analysis is both efficient, clear and convincing in accordance with the standards familiar to all lawyers. Though there is little doubt as to where his sympathy lay, the book reveals a most searching probe for the truth in each step in the handling of the case by the police,

and most clear proof of their lack of regard to the ordinary standards set up at the time of the Magna Carta. The question remains whether this book will be interesting or enlightening reading for the lay reader. To me as a lawyer this seems open to question.

Hopkins' book was written, I presume, with a knowledge of the report and shows a desire to popularize for the lay public the type of analysis and the method of presentation so effectively appearing in



Rollin Kirby in the New York World-Telegram

There, by thunder, I'll get the truth at last!

the Commission's report. I may say for myself in regard to the Hopkins book that even after reading the report, I found it difficult to put down the most engaging as well as the agonizing picture given in the book. Here, with the strict regard for the truth of details, there is a chance for picture sketches of the actors, sufficient details to make them real people about whose lives one is tremendously concerned.

To explain this idea further I would like to point out, for instance, how Mooney and his wife are shown giving their experiences in labor work, their manner of living, and their interests, so as to make you wish to know their connection with the Preparedness Parade and their possible relation to the bomb explosion. To me this information was very enlightening because, like most people of my generation or younger, I was not old enough at the time of the explosion to get a clear picture of the ramifications.

To return to the Wickersham Report, the time analysis in this book showing the relation of the alleged alibi of Mooney to the situation was extraordinarily effective and this was brought out more strikingly by showing the different testimony given by the state's witnesses at different periods in the case. Also, Billings comes out as a real person, a labor sympathizer and organizer, in a way that I had never understood before. He seems a most pathetic and at the same time interesting illustration of the courage and progressiveness of the younger generation.

I recommend both volumes without qualification to readers of *The Survey* as books in which there appears a very complete and fair picture of one of the *causes célèbres* of our times.

New York City

SUSAN BRANDEIS

Evil Shadow Over Childhood

THE CHILD AND THE TUBERCULOSIS PROBLEM, by J. Arthur Myers, M.D. Charles C. Thomas, Pub. 230 pp. Price \$3 postpaid of *The Survey*.

TUBERCULOSIS has its vulnerable spot. The tubercle bacillus in killing its human host destroys itself. It can continue its existence only by repeated migration to other persons. Our best strategy, therefore, says Dr. Myers, is to prevent the invasion of the uninfected person by the tubercle bacillus. Some argue that a slight infection tends to immunize the individual against serious disease. With such a truce, whereby the human race agrees to put up with the perpetual parasitism of the tubercle bacillus, he has no patience.

The childhood period is the pivotal point for the modern attack. Infection takes place most frequently before the twenties are reached. Moreover infection, if it has taken place and early damage has been done, can easily be discovered in children with the aid of modern instruments of precision such as the tuberculin test and the x-ray. Myers has gathered the latest and best knowledge about tuberculosis in children and has enriched it with his own wide experience. With his gift for non-technical description of scientific subjects, he traces the ramifications of the disease through the social fabric, particularly the family. His relentless pen, reinforced by ingenious diagrams, describes the wrecking effects of the tubercle bacillus once it has crossed the threshold of the household. But that same pen pictures the most hopeful way out mankind has ever known. It inspires us to believe that "one of the greatest evils shadowing all children may some day be lifted."

In the last chapter, *The Program for the Future*, the author summarizes the social forces necessary to lift the shadow. The new program includes no revolutionary or startling ideas but demands, in addition to the tried and accepted procedures, a widespread testing of children in order to screen out those who require special supervision and treatment before symptoms appear.

The nurse, the social worker, the teacher, the health worker need the background and the specific knowledge which is here so well blended; particularly in these evil days when thousands of children are being threatened because the allies of tuberculosis, malnutrition, crowding, depression of spirit, are in the saddle.

National Tuberculosis Association H. E. KLEINSCHMIDT, M.D.

RUN OF THE SHELVES A DESCRIPTIVE LIST OF THE NEW BOOKS

PLANS FOR CITY POLICE JAILS AND VILLAGE LOCKUPS, by Hastings H. Hart. Russell Sage Foundations. 27 pp. Price \$1.50 postpaid of *The Survey*.

A POSTHUMOUS volume of plans and architects' drawings which, if it could be brought home to the conscience of those responsible for local lockups, might do away with one of the crying scandals of the United States.

WOMEN'S WORK UNDER LABOUR LAW. A Survey of Protective Legislation. International Labour Office. P. S. King & Son, Ltd. 264 pp. Price \$1.50.

A STUDY of "the chief problems affecting women workers which have given rise to protective legislation, and examples of the solutions tried in various countries." The report points out that "those legislative solutions, like all human endeavors, are merely relative and temporary in their character. . . . Whereas certain problems affecting the employment of women will always be with us—for example, the fundamental problem of maternity—others develop with the social conditions out of which they arise."

PSYCHIATRY AND MENTAL HEALTH, by John Rathbone Oliver, M.D. Scribner's. 310 pp. Price \$2.75 postpaid of *The Survey*.

DR. OLIVER presents the Hale Lectures of 1932, given at Western Theological Seminary. He, as a pastor, a psychiatrist and a medical historian, offers a simple, frank exposition of the problems in which ministers may be of service to their parishioners. The book aims to supplement theology in order that pastors may aid more practically the victims of life's problems in finding a better adjustment. It is an interpretation of sick souls and their fears, their struggles and their temptations. The viewpoint is primarily and uniformly religious.

THE CURATIVE VALUE OF LIGHT, by Edgar Mayer, M.D. Appleton. 175 pp. Price \$1.50 postpaid of *The Survey*.

FROM sunlight through window-glass to the many varieties of sunlamp, Dr. Mayer traces clearly and briefly what we know of the curative value of light and what remains to be proved. For some of the conditions he describes and by some of the methods that he explains in simple terms light has proved a brilliant success. On the other hand he believes that "the use of light in all forms as a tonic agent has been greatly overdone" and that its effectiveness in preventing and treating colds still awaits demonstration. This advice of the consultant in light radiation to the American Medical Association Council is a straightforward guide to the layman trying to find his way through fads to facts.

MANY MOONS AGO AND NOW, A Course on North American Indians for Juniors, by Katharine E. Gladfelter, 157 pp.; CHILDREN OF THE GREAT SPIRIT, A Course for Primary Children, by Frances Somers Riggs and Florence Crannell Means, 153 pp.; NEW JOY, A Course on China for Juniors, by Carolyn T. Sewall and Charlotte Chambers Jones, 154 pp.; OFF TO CHINA, A Course for Primary Children, by Helen Firman Sweet and Mabel Garrett Wagner, 146 pp.; CHINESE CHILDREN OF WOODCUTTERS' LANE, by Priscilla Hollon, 68 pp.; all Friendship Press. Each volume \$1 cloth, 75 cents paper bound.

EACH year the effort of the missionary movement to produce textbooks for use in church schools that will awaken in American children a sense of friendship for the children of other races and nations achieves a little more success. This year, the above collection of new study books—to which might be added others that address themselves to senior groups—invites an interest in our North American Indians and in China. One notes the emergence of a liberalism in the appraisal of non-Christian faiths that was not present in the earlier missionary literature but that became inevitable as soon as it was desired to produce an appreciative attitude toward foreign cultures. One also notes the increasing skill with which every possible resource of project teaching is drawn upon to help the least imaginative teacher in this work; besides stories and songs she will here find games, cooking recipes, directions for making costumes, and the like. The stories are not all uniformly well told: in some of them there is still too much sentimentality. The illustrations are all good—except in one of the little books where they represent Chinese children obviously younger than the story-writer had in mind.

COMMUNICATIONS

Evidently We Are Read

TO THE EDITOR: It might interest you to know that I have received dozens of requests from various parts of the country for the pamphlet, *What Shall We Discuss at Our Next Conference*, which you listed in your November 1932 issue of *The Survey*. I wish to thank you at this time for mentioning this pamphlet in your paper.

BENJ. L. WINFIELD
Jewish Children's Home, Newark, N. J.

Pragmatia Ahoy

TO THE EDITOR: I feel that the article, *A Pragmatic Experiment with Taxes*, in the December Graphic number of *The Survey*, justifies my persistency as a member of Survey Associates, Inc. It was a long time coming, but when it arrived it was good.

I cannot quite agree with the sentence under *The Gist of It*, "His [Harold S. Buttenheim's] articles and editorials are intensely practical, but now and then he takes wing for a flight into the blue, as in the delightful trip to Pragmatia." As one who is accustomed to dealing with causes and effects in attempts to solve engineering and commercial problems, I am fully convinced that this article is one of the most "intensely practical" articles Mr. Buttenheim ever published. It would, in my opinion, be far more proper to designate the vast majority of the so-called practical discussions of social and economic activities as "flights into the blue." Such, for instance, are the proposed plans of providing employment by public works which are to be paid for by increasing taxes upon thrift, industry, enterprise and on incomes derived from the performance of the service functions.

There are two criticisms which I trust I may be permitted to make. The first is that Mr. Buttenheim unfortunately uses the term "land tax," which is utterly misleading. Had he said land-value tax, it might have called for some explanation, but certainly it would not have been misleading. Farmers are opposed to land taxes, although the evidence is very clear that no class, save the landless laborer, would be so greatly benefited by the substitution of the land-value tax for all other kind of taxes. You doubtless read Mary Heaton Vorse's article on farm conditions in the Corn Belt in the current *Harper's Magazine*. This might properly have been entitled, *American Plan of Liquidating Our Corn Belt Kulaks*. Our method is just as effective as the Russian and tends to have the same ultimate results. Our American socialist reformers have enthusiastically praised the introduction of mass-production methods on the communist farms. They apparently are entirely ignorant of the fact that Tom Campbell made the most disastrous failure in the annals of American wheat growing by his mass-production methods in Montana. Although he had special advantages in extraordinarily cheap land, some of it Indian land under ridiculously low leases, his unit costs were always higher than the unit costs on the well-managed individual farms in Montana.

My second criticism is based on the implied criticism of "the sacred tenets of the 'lazy fairies'—the mysterious 'law,' so-called, of supply and demand." The law of supply and demand is exactly as mysterious as the law of gravitation and it works just as truly and inexorably as does the law of gravitation. In both cases the phenomena resulting from the working of the law are entirely dependent upon the environment. The law of gravitation, the working of which makes it possible for a steel vessel to float, also causes that vessel to sink when the sea-cocks are opened. Water, acting in accordance with the law of gravitation, may grind our corn or destroy our homes, depending entirely upon the environment in which the falling water acts. "Young men in a hurry," who are dissatisfied with the social and economic phenomena resulting from the inexorable working of the law of supply and

demand, find fault with the law instead of using their minds to discover how our social and economic environment can be altered so that beneficent phenomena will be the natural result of the working of this natural economic law. Laissez-faire is not to be judged by the phenomena which have resulted from our failure to adopt its principles. The fact is that laissez-faire has never been tried and, obviously, it cannot be tried when freedom to produce is denied through the monopolization of land values, including all natural resources. Neither can it be tried when revenues for the support of government are obtained by robbing those who perform the service functions by taxing their incomes or any products produced by their labor, for obviously such taxes curtail freedom of action and in many cases are absolutely prohibitive.

I should be interested to learn whether your readers generally consider this article "a flight into the blue" or an "intensely practical" presentation of truth.
WARREN S. BLAUVELT
Hudson Valley Fuel Corp., Troy, N. Y.

TO THE EDITOR: If the term "land tax," as Mr. Blauvelt believes, conveys a misleading idea to Survey readers, my use of it was indeed unfortunate. I wanted a well-balanced contrast to "sales tax"; and for this purpose the two words, "land tax," seemed more effective than the three words, "land value tax."

As a matter of fact, however, I wonder if *The Survey's* host of intelligent readers do not, like Mr. Blauvelt, understand fully that no rational advocate of a land tax would base such tax on the acreage instead of on the value of the property assessed. Otherwise, why not insist similarly on the term "sales value tax," lest it be assumed that the sale of a bushel of potatoes would be taxed as much as a bushel of diamonds? Or adopt the term "income ability tax," instead of "income tax," in order to make clear that all incomes are not taxed on the same percentage basis?

Mr. Blauvelt in his second criticism uses a telling comparison between the law of supply and demand and the law of gravitation. It seems to me, however, that an important distinction is overlooked by those who believe that laissez-faire would work to perfection if we would only try it. Whereas gravitation is a wholly impersonal, inanimate force, the law of supply and demand depends for its workings on the widely varying appetites and aspirations of human beings, and on their multitudinous ideas as to how best to satisfy these appetites and aspirations. And these are not innate, inevitable ideas either; they are constantly being influenced by education, religion, fashion, advertising and a host of other human forces. This being thus, I cannot be optimistic enough to hope that we can ever so organize society that laissez-faire will have untrammelled sway—or that under such sway human beings would with inevitable wisdom pursue their own welfare and the common good.

But, anyway, I value greatly Mr. Blauvelt's commendations and criticisms, and wish I could believe that most of your readers would be as willing as he is to advocate the adoption in America of Pragmatia's system of taxation.

Editor The American City, New York City

HAROLD S. BUTTENHEIM

Foster Day Care

TO THE EDITOR: Gretta Palmer's statement, quoted in the *So They Say* column in *The Survey* of December 15, 1932, really merits a statement from our organization. There is a plan in operation which provides satisfactory day care not alone for poor children, but for those of "white-collar fathers and silk-stockings mothers." Foster day care was first advocated by Mrs. Berthold Strauss in 1926 and put into operation by The First Day Nursery five years ago this month. Since then, the movement has gained considerable impetus. This plan has been adopted outright by four day nurseries in this city and by one each in Elmira, New York, and Canton, Ohio. Columbus plans to use it for special cases. Toronto is deeply interested and hopeful of adopting it as an extension of their established service when finances permit. Richmond, Virginia, started foster day care the first of last October for a limited group and found the demand for that