

Book Reviews

Pick of the Crop

READINGS IN SOCIAL CASE WORK, 1920-1938, by Fern Lowry. Columbia University Press. 810 pp. Price \$3.50 postpaid of *Survey Midmonthly*.

BETWEEN the covers of this volume are seventy-four papers and addresses by different authors dealing with social case work: its underlying philosophy, its processes, its functional relationships to other fields of social work, the professional considerations that apply to it, and its relation to the community. The arrangement is original and logical. It is interesting to note the old terms "investigation," "diagnosis," "treatment," appearing once more as division subheadings.

The volume is designed primarily as a source book for students and teachers of social work. Since four fifths of the articles come from two sources presumably accessible to them—*The Family* and the "Proceedings of the National Conference of Social Work"—it may prove even more useful to practitioners who have scant library facilities. Almost any social worker will be surprised to discover how much of enduring significance he has overlooked in the course of his periodical reading.

Each article before acceptance for the volume had to answer the question, "Does it have utility or significance for the practitioner today?" This may explain the failure to find in the collection some of the articles which stand out in the recollection of older social workers. Whatever their significance twenty years back, the rapid changes in social work may have caused these articles to have only historical significance today.

However, the classic method of reviewing an anthology is to comment on the things it does not contain. What—one's own landmarks not included? For example, Grace Marcus is represented by one paper, but not by her highlight of the 1936 AASW Delegates' Conference, "Relief and the Struggle for Independence." Neither Dorothy Kahn nor Linton Swift appear in the list, though both have made signal contributions to recent case work literature. Perhaps the most singular omission of all in a volume dealing with social case work in all its aspects is that of Mary E. Richmond. The decade which remained to her after 1918 was not prolific in articles, but it did contain her memorandum prepared in 1921 for the White House Conference on Unemployment, which was practically the only document available on the subject at the onset of the depression of the 1930's. Her last address, made at Buffalo in 1927, dealt primarily with the founding of new families, but

nevertheless contained memorable advice to social case workers on the intersection of their work and that of other social forces in the community.

Is it due to accident or design that only three articles in the collection deal with modifications in practice in tax-supported social work? Is it that, exigent though this topic be, no one has had time to write articles about it worthy of a place in such a collection? Or perhaps, in considering a subject in the large and from the student's point of view, the practices that result from inordinate pressure should be minimized in discussion, lest they interfere with the production of the keenest edge on the razors which later will be devoted to cutting grindstones. For this purpose, you recall, only the best razors should be used.

GERTRUDE SPRINGER

Towns Are Different

THE CHANGING COMMUNITY, by Carle C. Zimmerman. Harper. 661 pp. Price \$3.50 postpaid of *Survey Midmonthly*.

THE idea of a pleasant time among rural sociologists, some years ago, was to spend an evening heaving definitions of "community" at each other while the innocent bystander looked on with tolerant amusement. But serious scientific advances have sprung more than once from seemingly sportive beginnings. Today, it may be said that rural sociology has "arrived," after a long period of mere matter-of-fact "surveying," because the devotees of community definition have improved both their aim and their technique. The community no longer is regarded as merely a unit carved out of a larger, vaguely circumscribed "society"; it has in modern sociology a life of its own, with processes and laws distinct from those of any other social organism.

Among American sociologists none has labored more successfully on the clarification of the community concept than the author of the book under review; and none, perhaps, has had a more varied practical experience of local rural studies to make sure that theory fits the facts.

The present work includes a great variety of detailed studies, ranging from Minnesota and the prairie provinces of western Canada to North Carolina and Missouri. Types of communities studied include the parasitic town in a summer residential area, the conservative small manufacturing town, the manufacturing town deprived of its main industry, the chance aggregation of early settlers, the prosperous farm center, the urban center of a declining rural area, the isolated hamlet, the proud old New England town, the dairy-farm center, the ship-building town, the progressive mill town,

the summer resort, and so on. However, these categories (not the author's) do not in every case indicate the chief significance of the sample. In fact, it is the special merit of Professor Zimmerman's description and analysis that he does not try to fit each community into a preconceived pattern, but brings out the diversity of traits that make up the individual community portraits. The "personality" of a community is shown to be rooted in experience, sometimes continuous over several centuries and sometimes sharply divided into clear-cut episodes.

The author demonstrates that the centralization of government and the decline of the middle class unquestionably are producing a trend toward a diminished importance of the local community in economic and political controls. Though the scope of the book does not permit him to develop the idea very far, he hints that in a democratic society this trend is decidedly dangerous. It is to be hoped that Professor Zimmerman and other American sociologists will study more exhaustively the extent to which other types of social organization, as yet imperfectly developed, may be counted upon to provide those necessary links between individual and state which the local community formerly offered.

New York

BRUNO LASKER

Life and the Normal Child

THE SOCIOLOGY OF CHILDHOOD, by Francis J. Brown. Prentice-Hall. 498 pp. Price \$2.25 postpaid of *Survey Midmonthly*.

HERE is a textbook as human and homely as a talk over the back fence. "The Sociology of Childhood" is neither a psychiatrist's holiday nor a scientific manual. It is a study of the social relationships of the normal child, his adjustment to his family, his playgroup, the school, recreation, the state and the church.

Though there is a plethora of books on children by doctors, psychologists and teachers, sociologists have in the past concerned themselves largely with the adult. Now, possibly led by the psychiatrists, we are coming to realize with Mr. Brown that: "If we can unravel the threads of social organization in childhood, we shall stimulate, at least in broad outline, a basis for social control."

The significance of such a book should be to help us understand childhood problems through an integrated picture of child life. For the teacher to see into the home, for the parent to reevaluate the school, and for both to understand the importance of the child's position in his other groups, are vital needs in the complex modern community. Although we may realize that the child who bullies his gang has probably been the victim of aggressions at home, we have not yet identified him fully with the tyrannical adult in public affairs.

The chapter on the child and the school should be a spring tonic to all teachers. The fact that education can be exciting and practical for both children and teachers has not yet been widely demonstrated. Of particular interest to parents will be the chapters on radio, movies and their influence upon children. We learn from the studies quoted by the author that movies have more influence than any other factor in the child's life except the home. As commercial enterprises, both the moving pictures and the radio are eager to please the public. The power to control these influences lies in our hands. The modern child is faced with choices requiring judgment that can be developed only through the mutual efforts of the forces comprising his environment. MARGUERITE HURREY
Harriet Johnson Nursery School

Practical Practice

METHOD AND SKILL IN PUBLIC ASSISTANCE, by Rosa Wessel. Pennsylvania School of Social Work. Distributed by Centaur Bookshop. 100 pp. Price \$1.50 postpaid of *Survey Midmonthly*.

IN this second volume of the *Journal of Social Work Process* the Pennsylvania School of Social Work has made a distinctive and timely contribution to the field of public assistance. Five out of the seven articles are drawn from theses presented by students at the school. The others are by Dorothy Kahn and Kenneth Pray. The introduction by Rosa Wessel is one of the most valuable contributions in the volume. The articles are well written, packed with significant thought-provoking material and rich with illustrations. They are especially valuable as a record of practice and education in a city which had continuity of leadership in both public agency and school throughout the critical period from 1932 to 1938.

The book should be of interest to administrators for its clear definition of the function of a public agency; to supervisors and visitors, for the light which it throws on practice and the realities of the day-to-day job; to the layman, because it reconciles efficiency and the need to account for wise expenditure of money, with skill in safeguarding human values; to auditors, because it should help them understand the function and skills of social workers. The emphasis on human values is particularly needed now when the public assistance world is full of mechanical devices and routines, and clouded with assumptions that applicants are "chiselers" until proven otherwise.

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At the end of the first article, "The Foundation and Framework of Practice," Miss Kahn, with her usual skill, states

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the principles upon which the Philadelphia practice of public assistance has been based. The keynote of the book is given in these two sentences:

"As we examine and attempt to articulate philosophy, method and procedure in the manner here used, we find elements not only in the public assistance situation itself but in the whole fabric of its administration, which depart so far from the methods of private social work as to create a new set of concepts and to make an original contribution to the practice of case work. The articulation of these concepts and the persistent painstaking development of these and other methods in this expanding field are a challenge and an opportunity for the social workers of this generation."

JOSEPHINE C. BROWN

School of Social Work, Catholic University of America, Washington, D. C.

Conflict and Paradox

NAZI GERMANY—ITS WOMEN AND FAMILY LIFE, by Clifford Kirkpatrick. Bobbs-Merrill. 353 pp. Price \$3 postpaid of *Survey Midmonthly*.

THE author gives a painstaking picture of his subject, drawn from manifold sources, carefully listed, and from personal investigations carried on during a year's residence in Germany. While one sometimes may regret his choice of material or a particular emphasis, his conclusions give a correct picture of the paradoxical situation of women in Germany today.

National Socialism is a masculine movement which differentiates sharply between men and women. According to its theory, women are limited to "reproduction," "womanly work," and "the home." The attempts to transform this theory into practice have resulted in cutting women off from intellectual pursuits and responsibility for leadership

and in furthering marriage and reproduction, but not in restricting them to "womanly work." Under the pressure of a war economy, women have been geared into the vast economic machine like all other German citizens. Thus under economic necessity, the clear-cut sex differentiation of Nazi theory breaks down.

LOUISE W. HOLBORN

Cambridge, Mass.

... and How It Grew

PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT SERVICE IN THE UNITED STATES, by Raymond C. Atkinson, Louise C. Odencrantz and Ben Deming. Public Administration Service, 482 pp. Price \$3.75 postpaid of *Survey Midmonthly*.

PUBLIC employment service has become an important and permanent factor in the economic organization of this country since the passage of the Wagner-Peyser Act in 1933. Before that time, public employment offices had been in operation in various states but there was nothing which could be called a national organization. The present nation-wide coordinated public employment service owes its growth, in the first instance, to the vast public works and work relief projects throughout the country, and, more recently, to the passage of unemployment compensation legislation containing provisions for its administration through public employment offices. These two factors, although they have been responsible for the rapid growth of public employment service, have also resulted in limiting development of its primary function, private placement, because of the size and difficulties inherent in these two programs.

This volume presents a comprehensive analysis of the problems and the techniques, administrative and procedural, for meeting them. It is not on the defensive or, perhaps better, offensive, as was true of earlier studies, but it assumes the acceptance of public employ-

ment service as an integral part of government. Nor is the presentation academic. It is based on an extensive field survey undertaken in 1936 and further studies during the first half of 1938, after the beginning of unemployment compensation activities, embracing the examination of nearly 200 officers. It is the first comprehensive work since the "bible," "Public Employment Offices" by Shelby Harrison and associates, published eighteen years ago and is a worthy "new testament," embracing the substantial changes which have occurred during this period. The authors are to be congratulated on a volume which should be of equal value to the staff of public employment services and to students of the problem of unemployment.

New York RICHARD P. KELLOGG.

Push and Pull

CITYWARD MIGRATION: SWEDISH DATA, by Jane Moore. University of Chicago Press. 140 pp. Price \$2 postpaid of *Survey Midmonthly*.

PEOPLE leave the farm for the city because they are both pushed and pulled in that direction. The push—population pressure—is expulsive; the pull—enlarged opportunity—is attractive; the total is an economic force of great power which many rural-born youths find irresistible.

But not all. What this author calls the "sociology of habit" is also present, operating as a deterrent. To some it is stronger than the urge to migrate. To others it only delays or deflects the inevitable movement.

This volume reports the study of the operation of this force among certain Swedish migrants who finally reached Stockholm after abandoning rural life. It is interesting to note how the old home patterns affected their progress from farm to city, causing sojourns for varying periods in town or village before

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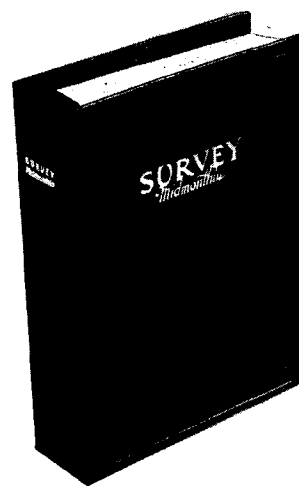
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New York **RUSSELL H. KURTZ**

Housing Experience

EUROPE RE-HOUSED, by Elizabeth Denby. Norton. 284 pp. Price \$3.50 postpaid of *Survey Midmonthly*.

THE author's eight years of practical work in slum clearance and rehousing projects in London, and a year's study of low rent housing on the continent bear fruit in this book, made possible by a Leverhulme fellowship. It offers a clear statement of housing conditions which confronted post-war Europe and a lively account of how the countries (Sweden, Holland, Germany, Italy and France) have tried to improve them. The final chapter offers specific suggestions as to how England, in particular, can profit by a study and application of the experience of these countries.

The foreword by Walter Gropius,

now chairman of the department of architecture of Harvard University, adds to the importance of the volume. Dr. Gropius offers the suggestion, applicable in the United States as well as in England, that an Institute of Building Integration should be created "in which manufacturers would cooperate with authorities, architects, engineers, contractors, trade unionists and consumers to further the common good; where all the existing institutions for public and private research and building practice could exchange their experience and results and also acquire a better insight into the difficulties of correlated problems; where the interrelation of everything concerned with housing would be the major task, set above the innumerable special problems involved in housing."

LOULA D. LASKER

Five Brothers

BROTHERS IN CRIME, edited by Clifford R. Shaw. University of Chicago Press. 364 pp. Price \$3 postpaid of *Survey Midmonthly*.

THE latest approach to the problem of crime prevention is suggested here by concrete illustrations of effective rehabilitation obtained by an intensive and continuous program of therapy. Also suggested is the marked limitation of the individualistic method of treatment as applied to cases of delinquency in which the behavior problem is a function of social processes, community-wide in their scope and influence. The volume is the product of the research and corrective

agencies of Chicago, all assisting the division of the criminologist of the Illinois Department of Public Welfare.

The cases of five brothers were studied over a period of fifteen years with satisfactory therapy for six to ten years. Yet despite these long periods of therapy the startling facts remain that the five brothers among them spent fifty-five years in correctional and penal institutions, were arrested eighty-six times, brought to court seventy times, confined in institutions forty-two times, placed under probation or parole forty-five times. The cost of their incarceration in institutions was \$25,000. They stole forty-five automobiles and were responsible for burglaries involving from \$3 to \$26,000.

With each of the five brothers social factors are more important than personality traits in influencing their behavior; their lawbreaking must be accounted for by the thrill of adventure and the easy reward of stealing. The answer to the problem as given by one of the boys in his bargaining proposition with society is, "All I need is a good job with a good salary and then the state of Illinois can check another boy off its hands as reformed."

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