

# Book Reviews

## A Social History

THE WAY OUR PEOPLE LIVED, by W. E. Woodward. Dutton. \$3.95.

IN 1936, Mr. Woodward, with his "New American History," won for himself a host of admirers by making vivid and exciting what most historians before him had, unfortunately, made lifeless and dull. His history was not new. It was better-written, more thrilling, more honest and, therefore, more refreshing and real.

His present work is new. In it you will search in vain for a single page devoted to politics, wars, presidents. You will find, instead, three centuries of American life as it was lived from day to day by the common man. The book is sub-titled "An Intimate American History" and that is exactly what it is, told in story form in eleven chapters covering every major section of the nation, beginning with "Boston Three Hundred Years Ago" and ending with "New York in 1908."

The manners and customs of each period, what and how the people ate; what they wore, the houses they lived in, how they traveled, and how long it took them—all this and more is related in story form. Each chapter is centered around a different character, with just enough of the "story" of that individual told to keep alive the reader's interest in the vast storehouse of facts presented on almost every page. That story device in less skillful hands would become tiresome. Mr. Woodward knows how to use it effectively.

A measure of the entertaining and informative nature of the book is the frequency with which the reader is tempted to read aloud some new and amusing fact. For example:

"In early colonial times in New England ministers were forbidden by law to perform the marriage rites, but the young people might be married by almost any officer of the law or even by a captain of the militia. . . . There were only a few presents, for the relatives of the marrying couple were the only persons supposed to give them."

"Grapes grew wild in great profusion, but there were no apples or pears until the seed was brought across the ocean and planted on American soil."

"Until John Howe of Derby, Connecticut, invented a pin-making machine in 1832, ordinary pins, so plentiful today, had to be made by hand. The workman would cut a piece of wire, fashion the pin, give it a point and put on a head which was a most difficult operation. . . . The accounts of George Washington show that he paid from five to seven pence apiece for the pins used by his family."

"In 1750 there were forty-one professional hairdressers in New York, and all of them were kept busy."

Mr. Woodward's book is chock-full of precisely this kind of homely and important information about daily living which the ordinary history scarcely ever mentions. It is particularly unfortunate, therefore, that its usefulness in classrooms must, of necessity, be impaired because there is no index. While the thirty-two pages of illustrations collected, in the main, from the famous Bettmann Archive, are a fitting supplement to the 397 pages of text, they cannot make up for the lack of an index.

LEO HUBERMAN

*Director of Public Relations and Education, National Maritime Union of America*

## Parole for the Mentally Ill

FOSTER HOME CARE FOR MENTAL PATIENTS, by Hester B. Crutcher. The Commonwealth Fund. \$2.

PLACEMENT of selected mental patients and mental defectives in selected homes, under the supervision of state hospitals and state schools respectively, ought to become as universal and accepted as the placement of children in the foster homes that are superseding orphan asylums. Sometimes, depending on the kind of patient, family care has definite therapeutic value and leads to discharge; sometimes it is merely custodial; but always it is a humane, practical and, in the long run, economical way to empty beds in overcrowded institutions.

Miss Crutcher's concise but comprehensive book on the subject must, surely, be definitive for a long time to come. It is hard to think of any question she leaves unanswered, any phase of family care—from preparation of the community to values for the caretakers, from suggested forms and procedures to the pros and cons of colony and district systems, from various methods of financing to suitable recreation for patients. She is qualified to write authoritatively: as director of social work of the New York State Department of Mental Hygiene, she has had many years' experience with the most extensive system of family care in this country, and she has observed and evaluated family care systems abroad. An appendix outlines family care methods in the ten states that now have such provisions.

Miss Crutcher writes with both her heart and her head. From the opening incident—a party for a few women patients who had been fifty years in a state hospital—through the case histories near the end of the book, there is warm sympathy. The happiness and well-being of the patients is the mainspring of discussion of any phase

of her subject. At the same time, she appraises the carrying out of the family care system and frank recognition of its incidental difficulties and drawbacks. The case histories, each illuminating some phase of family care, some particular type of patient, have the fascination of so many short stories. They are as honest about failures as about successes.

Bedeveled by that curse of all writers in English, the lack of an indefinite pronoun, the author uses the masculine pronoun for social workers, mildly jolting to readers accustomed to encountering an overwhelming proportion of women in the profession. The style, however, is smooth and highly readable. For a professional audience, the chapter sequence is absolutely logical. For lay readers, it is regrettable that a technical chapter on administration comes so early in the treatment. These, however, are merely perfectionistic criticisms—the kind introduced in a review lest it seem too indiscriminating. The book is a "must" for anyone interested in the mentally ill or mental defectives. It is also a "must" for anyone who cares about people and their welfare. It should be required reading for state legislators and for taxpayers.

Washington, D. C. EDITH M. STERN

## Fighting the Poll Tax

DEMOCRACY BEGINS AT HOME—THE TENNESSEE FIGHT ON THE POLL TAX, by Jennings Perry. Lippincott. \$3.

AS the Second World War draws nearer its conclusion, many people will inevitably turn their attention to the dangers facing democracy within our own country. Jennings Perry, fighting editor of the Nashville *Tennessean* who, because of his mood, indignation, and social consciousness, will remind many readers of the "muckrakers" of the Lincoln Steffens-McClure era, has written a book for this time, an interesting book and—it is hoped—one that is prophetic of a resurgence of true democracy throughout the nation.

"Democracy Begins At Home" is the story of a newspaper and its fight against Fascism and corruption in the guise of "bossism." That, in Tennessee, means Ed Crump, and Crump maintains his grip on the state because the Poll Tax has resulted in restricting suffrage to a small minority of the potential electorate.

In the thrilling struggle which has lasted four years (and must still go on, because a Crump controlled State Supreme Court has declared the Anti-Poll Tax law to be unconstitutional) various men stand forth: Silliman Evans, who came from Texas to buy the *Tennessean* as a business investment and found himself leading a crusade for democracy; Boss Crump, perhaps the most absolute political boss in the nation, a politician who provides a fairly efficient government but who

threatens to stifle democracy completely; Sheriff Biggs, who could "out-boss Crump" in his own district and who knew no scruples and no greater loyalty than that to Ed Crump; Governor Cooper, a little man who tossed like a chip on the waves of the struggle.

Mr. Perry goes back into Tennessee history to show both the origins of the Poll Tax, as a restriction on suffrage, and its effect on citizen interest and participation in government. In prose which is always readable and sometimes beautiful, he tells, step by step, of the campaign to awaken the people to a realization of what they had lost. In the closing chapter, "America Irredenta," he turns the beam of his keen observation onto the national struggle, in Congress, for defeat of the Poll Tax.

To the historian this book is, and will long continue to be, important. But all readers will find it interesting. It is more than history and it is more than entertainment. It is a case study in democracy, a beacon to guide us through the murk of intolerance, of racism, of stupidity, and of the political indifference which has been an after effect of most great wars.

RALPH ADAMS BROWN

Sp. (T) 1/c-USCCR

### How to Keep Fit

HEALTH FOR THE HAVING, by William R. P. Emerson, M.D. Macmillan. \$1.75.

THIS book should interest everyone, but particularly persons who are in or approaching middle life. It is replete with practical suggestions for healthier and happier living. A careful self analysis, using the author's chart for "Health and Food Habits," will prove most revealing and helpful—if the faulty health habits it points out are corrected.

The book includes fifteen short chapters. The titles are "How Well Are You?", "What is a Physical Fitness Examination?", "Underweight," "Overweight," "Is Your Blood Pressure Rising?", "How Good Are Your Health Habits?", "Are You Starving Amidst Plenty?", "Are You Habitually Overdoing?", "Are You Keeping Young?", "Health Questions and Their Answers." The last chapter "Save Life: Your Own," summarizes the essential points discussed in the preceding.

The author points out that only 20 percent of our people have optimum health. Among our most serious faulty health habits, he maintains, are failure to take rest periods before or after eating, fast eating, eating when fatigued, and lack of exercise and sunlight. In referring to these and other bad habits, particularly as they relate to the degenerative diseases, he says: "By correcting these faulty health habits in our daily program of living, it is possible to increase our life ex-

pectancy after middle life from ten to twenty years and, what is of greater importance, to prolong the period of our activity and efficiency for a similar length of time."

The appendix includes a table giving 100 calorie portions of various foods and showing their protein, fat, and carbohydrate content.

Probably the most important contribution which this book makes is to point out that nutrition is not a separate entity unto itself, but must be considered in relation to our whole regime of living.

CARL E. BUCK, DR. P. H.

Field Director

American Public Health Association

### A Successful Struggle

I WANTED TO SEE, by Borghild Dahl. Macmillan. \$2.

ONE who reads this book hardly knows which he is to hold in higher regard—the author's long courageous, indomitable effort to make good in life, to experience life in all its radiance and joy, to share to the full in all that was interesting, despite an ever overhanging dark cloud of near-blindness; or her ability to tell vivid, gripping stories of small episodes in her experience. The account is an autobiography which revolves about the struggles to be normal and useful and to win honorable success in childhood home, in school, in college, in graduate work, and finally in a position of respect and influence in the community.

The author possesses several qualities which favored her in her long battle: an unusually resourceful mind, a home training that represents America at its best, and the attention and devotion of certain highly competent eye doctors. The author was willing to do anything, to go to any lengths, to keep or improve her sight; and we are no less happy to know that at the last her long efforts are crowned with success. The book ends with a paean of thanksgiving, in which we fervently join.

We have had inspiring stories of blind persons who have fought their way to victory; but here we have one of the few stories of a partially sighted person who had problems of her own, and who came out with laurels upon her brow.

Professor of Sociology

HARRY BEST

University of Kentucky

### Hospital Administration

THE HOSPITAL IN MODERN SOCIETY, by Arthur C. Bachmeyer, M.D., and Gerhard Hartman, Ph.D. Commonwealth Fund. \$5.

THIS large volume of readings, collected primarily from the transactions of hospital associations and current hospital magazines during the period 1930 to 1940, was assembled especially for students of hospital administration who are preparing to enter the field professionally.

However, it should likewise be useful to the hospital administrator or the associate department head who desires to "broaden his understanding" of the underlying problems and principles of hospital management.

The 145 articles by ninety-eight authors are arranged in twenty-nine chapters. They contain a historical review of hospitals, discussions of hospital service from a community viewpoint and of various phases of hospital operation, and consideration of health insurance and public health. Among the phases of hospital operation to come under discussion are: medical staff organization and relationships; nursing education and nursing service; operating room; obstetrical service; X-ray service; out-patient department; special services, medical social service; clinical and pathological laboratories; pharmacy; medical records; admitting and discharge; financial control; legal aspects; hospital construction; plant maintenance; purchasing; food service; housekeeping; laundry management and linen control; personnel relations; and public relations.

The editors, well known as hospital administrators and educators of hospital administration, do not pretend that their book is "an exhaustive compilation of all the significant material in these fields." Neither do they offer it as a textbook from which one may learn the techniques of administration. The book, however, does afford a springboard of perspective into more intensive study. Therefore, of special significance are the lists of references for further reading following each chapter.

Books published in the field of hospital administration are rare. This worthy collection of articles fills a distinct need and is a "must" on any list of those building even a small library in this field.

JAMES A. HAMILTON

New Haven Hospital

### Value of Laughter

KEEP THEM LAUGHING, by Edna Geister. Harper. \$1.50.

EDNA GEISTER tells us her job is to recharge human beings "with a new appreciation of themselves and the life they live, through laughter."

Here she recounts some of her group work experiences in a public school, as a recreation worker during World War I, in Hawaii, in church social programs, on the mainland and overseas during World War II.

She leaves this reader short of complete satisfaction because she tells, in only a few cases, precisely how she made them laugh. Such detailed guidance, I suppose, appears in the half dozen other books she has written.

WALTER F. GRUENINGER



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**NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING—1790 Broadway** at 58th St., New York. Ruth Houlton, R.N., Gen. Dir. Advisory Service, statistics, monthly magazine, Public Nursing.

**NATIONAL TUBERCULOSIS ASSOCIATION—1790 Broadway, at 58th St., New York, Dr. Kendall Emerson,** managing director. Pamphlets of methods and program for the prevention of tuberculosis. Publications sold and distributed through state associations in every state. American Review of Tuberculosis, medical journal, \$8.00 a year; and Monthly Bulletin, house organ, free.

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ATLANTA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK  
247 Henry St., S.W., Atlanta, Ga.

BOSTON COLLEGE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK  
126 Newbury Street, Boston 16, Mass.

BOSTON UNIVERSITY, SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK  
84 Exeter St., Boston 16, Mass.

BRYN MAWR COLLEGE, Bryn Mawr, Pa.  
Carola Woerishoffer Graduate Dept. of Social  
Economy and Social Research

UNIVERSITY OF BUFFALO SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK  
25 Niagara Square, Buffalo 2, New York

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, Berkeley 4, Calif.  
School of Social Welfare

CARNEGIE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY  
Department of Social Work, Pittsburgh 13, Pa.

CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA  
School of Social Work, Washington 17, D. C.

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO, Chicago 37, Ill.  
School of Social Service Administration

UNIVERSITY OF DENVER, Denver 10, Colorado  
School of Social Work

FORDHAM UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SERVICE  
134 East 39th Street, New York 16, N. Y.

\*THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK OF THE UNIVERSITY  
OF HAWAII, Honolulu 10, Hawaii

\*HOWARD UNIVERSITY, Washington 1, D. C.  
Graduate Division of Social Work

INDIANA UNIVERSITY, Indianapolis 4, Indiana  
Training Course for Social Work

\*LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY, Baton Rouge 3, La.  
School of Social Welfare

THE RAYMOND A. KENT SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK  
UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE, Louisville 8, Ky.

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK  
28 North Franklin Street, Chicago 6, Ill.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN, Curriculum  
in Social Work, 60 Farnsworth Ave.,  
Detroit 2, Michigan

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA, Minneapolis 14, Minn.  
School of Social Work

THE MONTREAL SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK  
3600 University St., Montreal, Canada

NATIONAL CATHOLIC SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SERVICE  
2400 19th Street, N.W., Washington 9, D. C.

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA, Lincoln 8, Neb.  
Graduate School of Social Work

THE NEW YORK SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK  
of Columbia University  
122 East 22nd Street, New York 10, N. Y.

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA, Division of Public  
Welfare and Social Work, Chapel Hill, N. C.

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY, Columbus 10, Ohio  
School of Social Administration

\*UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA, Norman, Oklahoma  
School of Social Work

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA, Philadelphia 3, Pa.  
Pennsylvania School of Social Work

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH, Pittsburgh 13, Pa.  
School of Applied Social Sciences

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SERVICE  
SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY, St. Louis 3, Mo.

SIMMONS COLLEGE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK  
18 Somerset Street, Boston 8, Mass.

SMITH COLLEGE SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL WORK  
Northampton, Massachusetts

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, Los Angeles 7  
Graduate School of Social Work

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO, Toronto 5, Canada  
School of Social Work

TULANE UNIVERSITY, New Orleans 15, Louisiana  
School of Social Work

\*UNIVERSITY OF UTAH, SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK  
Salt Lake City, Utah

\*STATE COLLEGE OF WASHINGTON, Pullman, Wash.  
Graduate School of Social Work

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON, Seattle 5, Wash.  
Graduate School of Social Work

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY, St. Louis 5, Missouri  
The George Warren Brown Dept. of Social Work

KANSAS CITY BRANCH, The George Warren Brown  
Dept. of Social Work, 5228 Charlotte St.,  
Kansas City, Mo.

WAYNE UNIVERSITY, Detroit 2, Michigan  
School of Public Affairs and Social Work

WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY, Cleveland 6, Ohio  
School of Applied Social Sciences

\*WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY, Morgantown, W. Va.  
Department of Social Work

COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY, Richmond 20, Va.  
Richmond School of Social Work,