

matters do not, however, prevent this from being a wise and admirable piece of work.

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GOSNELL, HAROLD F. *Democracy, The Threshold of Freedom*. Pp. vii, 316. New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1948. \$4.00.

No part of democracy as a working form of government is more important than the suffrage and representation. The countries of the Western world have been experimenting with them long enough to furnish data for collection and scientific analysis. That is the purpose of this book.

The book grew out of the awareness (experienced while teaching classes in political science) of a need for such assembled data. It is designed to fill this need. But it should have a much wider appeal. It will be useful to all architects of governments who are interested in establishing democratic control of political institutions.

The suffrage, the author finds, is one of the necessary weapons by which a group guards its political position. However, a fair share of the benefits conferred by the state does not automatically follow the granting of the suffrage. Before it can become effective, the group "must learn how to organize, how to develop leaders, how to prepare workable programs, how to disseminate information regarding these programs, and how to form winning combinations."

This leaves unanswered the major question as to whether the suffrage should be extended slowly, as experience in the use of it develops (never granting it to an inexperienced majority), or whether it should be extended all at once to a large inexperienced majority, letting them by trial and error develop the attributes that will make it a working system of government. The book would have been strengthened if the available material on this aspect had been more fully analyzed.

Nowhere in the realm of government is there more confusion than in the ideas concerning representation. We have multiple parties and two-party systems; we have

single-member districts and plural-member districts; plurality elections and proportional representation; territorial districts and functional units. Should the representative be a discretionary officer, or a delegate carrying out the popular will? Are the people competent wisely to select representatives? The theories and experiences with these and other problems are brought together and examined.

The last chapter is a short analysis of the balance sheet of democracy as opposed to other forms of government. The author finds the balance heavy in favor of democracy, though democracy in practice falls short of its ideals.

The suffrage and representation are a necessary part of modern democratic government. Frequent use is made of such expressions as, "From the standpoint of democratic principles. . . ." The author does not define what he means by "democratic principles," which in fact are subject to almost as many definitions as there are writers. A clear statement as to meanings would have given more point to the application of the suffrage and representation as parts of the democratic process.

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ROWSE, A. L. *The End of an Epoch: Reflections on Contemporary History*. Pp. vii, 324. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1948; London: Macmillan & Company, 1947. \$4.50.

Mr. Rowse's collection of essays, book reviews, political letters, and other journalistic contributions during the period 1931 to 1941 is hard to group under any one title. A good deal of it might be called simply—and justly—"I told you so," for the most interesting chapters are those in which he predicted, with Cassandralike reiteration and despair, the inevitable war with Hitler. With understandable bitterness he says in his preface, "It was impossible to make oneself heard in that period of confusion and humbug, of organized cant and all hypocrisy" (p. 2). He ranks Baldwin and Chamberlain the most inept statesmen in the whole of British history since the days when George III lost the American colonies. Yet, though a sup-

porter of the Labor Party, he can see the faults of the left as well as those of the right. Communism does not show "that basic respect for individual human life or for the necessary freedom for its self-expression that I regard as the keynote of Western civilization" (p. 19). A too rigid Marxianism interprets Marx's writings as Holy Writ, "and I am all in favor of the Higher Criticism" (p. 242).

In other chapters Mr. Rowse discusses Marxian theory, German nationalism, the weakness of the French democracy, the decline of European liberalism, and many other topics—always with candor and intelligence. He does not fall easily into any one political category. Thus, for example, he favors democratic socialism as the only way of protecting the common man against capitalists and dictators, but he has small regard for the political intelligence of the masses unless directed by wise leaders: "It is certainly the common man who is now suffering from the ardour of that belief in him, from the too close and stifling embrace of that love for him. Better the withering contempt of a Swift or a Strafford, a Voltaire or a Shaw for the common man—provided only there were some glimmer of a sense of responsibility for him, some care for his simplicity and credulity, some respect for his faith and loyalty" (p. 81). But for every individual who reads *The End of an Epoch* for its opinions, ten will read it for the combined wit, charm, and vigor of its style.

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WARBASSE, JAMES PETER. *Cooperative Democracy*. Pp. xii, 324. Fifth Edition. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1947. \$3.00.

This is the fifth edition of a book which has long been important in the field of consumer co-operation. It has become a standard reference work on the movement and one with which everyone interested in the co-operative field should be acquainted. It should be assigned reading for that considerable group among us for whom the words "co-operation" and "communism" are still synonymous.

At the present moment Parts II and III are of special interest. Part II deals with co-operation and the state. The emphasis here is on the nonpolitical character of co-operation, and the dangers of the involvement of the movement in the field of politics and the complete destruction of co-operation when it becomes an arm of government. Co-operation is democratic and grows from small local units upward; and when controls and directions come from above, it loses these characteristics. The contrast between authoritative governmental control and co-operation is clearly demonstrated. Consumer co-operation thus becomes a strong factor in the attempt to build a democratic society throughout the world, if Dr. Warbasse's views of co-operation can be made to prevail. Certainly these ideas of co-operation are diametrically opposed to state totalitarianism.

In Part III the relationship of consumer co-operation to the usual proprietary business organization is discussed. This is an excellent analysis and is especially pertinent in view of the present controversy over the extent and character of taxes levied on co-operatives. Businessmen would gain by reading this argument for the co-operative side.

Part IV is a discussion of the relationship of the consumer co-operative movement to the various labor movements and to agricultural producers. Here the conflict between producer and consumer co-operatives comes to the fore, but the author is less successful in disposing of these conflicts with a strong case for co-operation than he was with the issues in the preceding sections. The prospect for consumer co-operatives as a means of operating farms, for example, would certainly be judged as remote by most people.

Part I is the classic statement of the principles of co-operation and an encyclopedia of the accomplishments of consumer co-operation throughout the world. Part V, the concluding section, is the author's view of the place of co-operation in the future. The book richly deserves its continuance through five editions.

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