

HAWARD, SIR HARRY. *The London County Council from Within*. Pp. 450. London: Chapman and Hall, 1932. 21 shillings.

The author of this book began his professional career as a junior clerk in the service of the Metropolitan Board of Works, the predecessor of the London County Council, in the early eighties of the last century. He rose rapidly through the various grades of the civil service and became Comptroller of the Council at the age of thirty, retiring from the municipal service in 1920 to become an Electricity Commissioner. The book is less a record of personal memories than a discussion of financial problems arising during Sir Harry's long service. Indeed, the financial aspects of administration strike one as rather obtrusive—though this is perhaps unavoidable—when one is looking for an illuminating discussion of the very notable achievements of the Council in the fields of public works and municipal utilities. There are, it is true, discussions of housing, transport, education, and street improvements, but they are almost exclusively in terms of pounds and shillings.

From the point of view of the American student, decidedly the best part of the book is that which deals with the organization of the Council and the machinery of administration generally. The persevering student will be able to extract shrewd judgments about the process of administration, but he will have to drag them from behind mountains of statistics. However, records of civil servants who really know their business are rare on this side of the Atlantic, and the professional attitude of the author is a welcome contrast to the usual yarns of public men.

LANE W. LANCASTER

University of Nebraska

MIDDLETON, W. L. *The French Political System*. Pp. 296. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, Inc., 1933. \$3.00.

Contrary to the reviewer's initial expectation, this is not just "another" Englishman's interpretation of the French political scene, with which the book market has been inundated in recent years. Mr. Middleton, formerly the Paris correspondent of the *London Times*, has provided

much more than the title of his volume suggests. True, his principal concern is to interpret the behavior of French political leaders and institutions; but he has deftly woven into his picture an analysis of those geographic, social, and religious imponderables without an understanding of which French politics remains an enigma to the foreigner—above all to the American. The chapters on "The Chamber: A Closed Arena" and "The Non-Party Statesmen," illustrated so strikingly by the careers of Poincaré, Briand, and Tardieu, are particularly marked by keen insight and mature reflection.

For the student of comparative government, the keynote of the book lies in Mr. Middleton's trenchant appraisal of the French parliamentary system. "Of its four main functions," he observes, "—the representation of the people, the defense of political liberties, law-making and the formation of stable and authoritative Governments—it has performed the first two tolerably well and the others rather badly. Its record in legislation and in the production of Ministries has indeed at certain times been so inglorious that its apologists have been driven to defend it on the simple ground that it is a guarantee against abuses of power, abuses to which other régimes are singularly more liable." Scanning the current political horizon of the European continent, what lover of liberty is there who would question the validity of such a defense?

WALTER R. SHARP

University of Wisconsin

SPENCER, HENRY RUSSELL. *Government and Politics of Italy*. Government Handbooks edited by David P. Barrows and Thomas H. Reed. Pp. xii, 307. Yonkers-on-Hudson, N. Y. World Book Company, 1932.

One welcomes this study of Fascism with genuine pleasure. At last we have a careful, comprehensive, and illuminating study, in a short compass, of all the factors which were behind the stage and on the stage in the unfolding of this great social and political drama. History and geography yield their contribution, and the whole pattern of Italian political parties is presented with great clearness. Finally,

the governmental institutions and the whole political and economic machinery of the Fascist state are described clearly and fully. There is a chronicle of the events of interest in understanding Fascism, and an excellent Bibliography.

MAX HANDMAN

University of Michigan

ULMAN, JOSEPH N. *A Judge Takes the Stand*. Pp. viii, 289, vl. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1933. \$2.90.

This book may be viewed either as an interesting volume of judicial reminiscences or as an effective answer to popular inquiries about and criticism of modern law. The points Judge Ulman make are fortified by illustrations from his own experience, and constitute a theory of judicial procedure of value alike to the layman and the lawyer. He confesses at the end that he evidently wanted to prove something, although he did not realize it in the beginning. "For running through my whole work I find reiterated insistence upon one thought. Law is alive! Law is not a cold, dead abstraction, it is a living product of many human minds. Like the minds from which it comes, law is not perfect. Sometimes it seems to stand still too long, often it falters in its march. But move it does, and forward too. Its goal is the perfect service of man's social needs. That goal lies a long way off; progress toward it is slow and toilsome. All of us must live subject to the control of law. If we know and understand its nature, something of its origin, and something of its manner of growth, the path of real progress will be made more smooth."

CLINTON ROGERS WOODRUFF

Philadelphia

LYNCH, DENIS TILDEN. *Criminals and Politicians*. Pp. 256. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1932. \$2.00.

WOOD, STUART. *Shades of the Prison House*. Pp. ix, 402. London: Williams and Norgate, 1932. 12/6.

INNES, A. MITCHELL. *Martyrdom in our Times*. Pp. 119. London: Williams and Norgate, Ltd., 1932. 3/6.

Mr. Lynch's book is a reprint of articles originally appearing in the *New York*

Herald-Tribune. It is a recital of the sordid facts concerning the growth of organized crime and racketeering in the largest cities of the Union, a story of the unholy alliance of politics and the underworld which should bring the blush of shame to the visage of every honest citizen.

Behind the pseudonym "Stuart Wood" is hidden a man who has spent most of his adult life in English prisons and who is now attempting to return to a law-abiding life. His life's story is one of the few autobiographies of a criminal written with intelligence, skill, and honesty. It is not merely a description of external happenings, but the interpretation of a criminal's mind and its reaction to penal treatment. The conviction is voiced that even enlightened prison administration can do little to stop recidivism, since "the fundamental problem of reclamation is not primarily a matter of prison treatment at all . . . but what happens to the criminal on release. . . . So long as your criminal is ostracized by the so-called respectable elements of society; so long as he is vomited forth from prison homeless, friendless, and often penniless; so long as the ranks of industry are closed to him by social prejudice, so long will the problem of recidivism remain insoluble!"

Mr. Innes, who has lived for seventeen years in the East, mostly in Egypt, and who has for several years as prison visitor taken great interest in the work of juvenile correctional institutions in England, makes a plea for a less rigid and more humane system of dealing with offenders. He is a severe critic of the machine-like work of courts and prisons, points to its injustices as falling most heavily on the poor and unprivileged classes, and pleads for penal treatment which will not place a permanent stigma on the offender.

THORSTEN SELLIN

University of Pennsylvania

GLUECK, SHELDON (Ed.). *Probation and Criminal Justice*. Pp. viii, 344. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1933. \$3.00.

Recent studies have given us convincing evidence that prisons are failures as reformatory or correctional institutions.