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a number of diagrams afford pictorial expression to some of the principal groups of figures resulting from the calculations of the compilers of the volume. In the latter the course of the fertility index for urban and extra-urban populations in each of the provinces of Bavaria is traced for nearly forty years, and the contrasts between the ebb and flow manifested by these pairs of lines, and the comparison between the lines for legitimate and those for illegitimate fertility, are of considerable interest. How far these contrasts may be related to the occurrence of births in other localities than those where one or both parents ordinarily reside is a question which occurs to the reader, but which we have no space to discuss here. A.W.F.

9.—*National and local finance: a review of the relations between the central and local authorities in England, France, Belgium, and Prussia during the nineteenth century.* By J. Watson Grice, B.Sc. (Econ.). With a Preface by Sidney Webb, LL.B. xxiv + 404 pp., 8vo. London: P. S. King and Son, 1910. Price 10s. 6d. net.

The literature in English upon foreign systems of local taxation and finance is decidedly scanty in quantity and unsatisfactory in quality, and this volume in the series of studies published in connection with the London School of Economics and Political Science is a welcome and useful addition to its ranks. The first part of the book gives an interesting sketch of the history of the English grants-in-aid system, together with some sound criticism of its present workings; and Mr. Sidney Webb, in the preface which he has contributed to Mr. Grice's study, deduces from the history the conclusion that we have stumbled quite accidentally, but with our wonted good fortune, upon a plan which can be made infinitely more effective for securing general administrative efficiency than anything yet devised by our continental neighbours, even when allowance is made for the difference in the principles underlying the respective systems of local government. But this matter is more or less familiar to English students of political science; the remainder of Mr. Grice's book has much greater novelty. The author has brought together a large amount of information as to the systems of local taxation in the three foreign countries included in his survey, and he has given an instructive account of the relations which exist there between the local and central authorities, in respect both of the assistance given by the latter and of the control exercised over local expenditure and indebtedness. It is not possible in this place to enter upon any discussion of the numerous questions, political and economic, which are suggested by such an investigation; it must suffice to say that the study is of particular interest at the present time, when the swift increase of central expenditure, combined with the continued growth in local expenditure in response to the needs of a rising civilisation, is rapidly rendering absolutely necessary, alike in the United Kingdom, Germany, and France, a complete reconsideration of systems of central and local finance, and of their inter-relation. In Germany, it is clear that reform, to be effective, must embrace Imperial, State, and local taxation; in

the United Kingdom and France, though the difficulty is not so great or pressing, a general readjustment is becoming more and more desirable.

One point which Mr. Grice brings out incidentally should be a cause of some satisfaction to British statisticians. The statistics relating to the financial operations of local authorities in the United Kingdom, whilst open to some criticism, are unquestionably, in respect of completeness, regularity, and practical utility, far superior to anything which has yet been produced elsewhere; and Mr. Grice's book, extensive as is the statistical material which has been brought together, is full of evidence of the difficulty which he has encountered in the attempt to secure really satisfactory data, especially to cover any considerable series of years. Students of foreign financial systems are familiar with this difficulty, which becomes particularly acute when the inquiry is extended to local finance.

Mr. Grice's book deserves study by all students of administrative science; it is instructive and suggestive, and the following criticisms of points of detail are offered in the hope that the author may have an early opportunity of preparing a second edition. Chapter XI (p. 157) is headed "Central Assistance to Local Bodies in France for Roads," but it also includes primary education, police (in France, with comparisons of Paris, Berlin and London) and public assistance. A printer's omission has deprived the first note on p. 244 of much of its point—in general Mr. Grice has not been well served in the revision of proofs. Some of the statistical tables appear to call for reconsideration: it is not clear in Table IX (p. 376) to what year the figure of 193'4 million francs refers; the third column in the table on p. 18 might have been filled in; the table at the foot of p. 377 is printed in a needlessly obscure form; no authority is indicated for the tables on pp. 388—390; and the table on p. 138 would be more useful if some indication were given of what are included under the eight classes into which each occupation group appears there to be divided for the purposes of trade licenses. The statement on p. 242 that "while in France in 1877 the ratio of additional centimes revenue to total income was $\frac{1}{5}\frac{3}{5}\frac{8}{0}$, and in Belgium, in 1880, $\frac{1}{5}\frac{1}{2}$, in Prussia it was $\frac{7}{10}\frac{1}{8}$ in towns and $\frac{4}{6}\frac{8}{3}$ in country communes," might have been simplified with advantage to the reader. The statement on p. 125 that political resolutions by the councils-general are expressly forbidden, needs some qualification—whatever the case may be at the present time, resolutions of confidence in the ministry of the time were not unwelcome a few years ago. On p. 122 the present reviewer is quoted in a manner which, doubtless unintentionally, credits him with an opinion, as to the possible action of the Council of State, which is entirely opposed to that which he actually expressed. It is a little odd to find the Report of the Gainsborough Commission given as the source of a table illustrating the working of the German old-age and infirmity insurance system on pp. 392 and 393. Finally, there is no apparent reason for the failure to give the dates of publication of a number of works included in the bibliography, which needs some rearrangement, whilst the dates are given in other cases; and Mr. Grice

might well have added to his list the memoranda issued by the Imperial German Government during the recent controversy as to the reorganisation of the Imperial finances, which are not only a mine of information as to the financial systems of Germany, but also contain instructive accounts of the central and local finances of a number of European countries, as well as Japan and the United States.
P.A.

10.—*Wool growing and the tariff: a study in the economic history of the United States.* By Chester Whitney Wright, Ph.D. xiv + 362 pp., with charts. 8vo. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin and Co., 1910. Price \$2 net.

Raw wool was admitted free into the United States up to 1816; from that year to the present time it has always been dutiable (with some occasional exceptions in respect of the cheapest kinds), save during the short period from August, 1894, to July, 1897, under the Wilson Tariff. Since the imposition of the first duty of 15 per cent. *ad valorem* in 1816 the rates of duty have been changed sixteen times; at every revision of the customs tariff the problem of the wool and woollens schedule has loomed large, and through all the changes in the economic conditions of the United States it has provided the one permanent cause of tariff controversy. Mr. Wright's monograph, which gained the David A. Wells prize for 1907-08, and is published in the series of Harvard Economic Studies, is an attempt to disentangle the various influences which have determined the course of the wool-growing industry in the United States, to measure their relative importance, and so to arrive at some estimate of the effect upon that particular industry of a tariff policy which, with the numerous changes in degree already mentioned, has prevailed throughout practically the whole period of its existence.

Such an enquiry is of great importance and greater difficulty, and Mr. Wright is to be congratulated on the success of his effort. He has furnished us with a valuable contribution to the economic history of the United States, and his book attains a wider interest by its demonstration, elaborated through a great mass of detail, that in this, as in other cases, "the tendency to overestimate the power of the tariff, either for good or evil, is almost universal." The claims of the wool-growers; the demands of the manufacturers of woollens; attempts to reconcile the interests of the two groups (notably by the system of "compensatory" duties); the protests of the producers—all these have kept the wool-growing industry constantly in the minds of American politicians; and all the while the course of the industry in the United States has been determined in the main by forces which legislative action could affect but little.

Mr. Wright very properly regards the period from 1860 to 1870 as an episode which has little or no relation to the general history; but the long chapter which he devotes to that decade deserves careful study as illustrating, first, "the economic disturbance that follows in the train of war," and secondly, "the evils which follow in the train of a depreciated monetary standard; the deceptive