of the communities in our crowded cities and towns. And—though this is only a hope, unrealizable, probably—it ought to be studied from cover to cover by every employer of factory labor; as the efficiency of his employes, the health of their families, the sources of his future labor, all are wrapped up very largely in this matter of wholesome milk at a fair price. When the business men of the community study the economics of their local milk production and distributing systems, milk is going to reach their markets in wholesome condition and at a price within the reach of everyone who works.

The book is by all odds the most valuable contribution to the subject of the economics of milk production and distribution that has ever been offered. Coming, as it does, from the highest authority on the subject, its importance cannot be overstated.

A. B. ROSS.

THE HOUSING FAMINE: HOW TO END IT. A triangular debate between John J. Murphy, Edith Elmer Wood and Frederick L. Ackerman. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1920. Pp. 246.

In the triangular debate on "The Housing Famine and How to End It," Mr. John J. Murphy, secretary of the New York tenement house committee, Mrs. Edith Elmer Wood, author, and Mr. Frederick L. Ackerman, architect, each start with a well-defined thesis which they metaphorically nail to the oaken panels and valiantly defend as adequate answers to the seven questions propounded as the field for debate: I, Conditions—Causes—Remedies; II, Shall public credit be employed? III, Shall we have municipal housing? IV, Shall we exempt mortgages and improvements from taxation? V, How shall we deal with congestion? VI, How can land, labor and materials be made available? VII, What are the first steps?

Apparently the debaters agree that there is a serious housing shortage which has resulted in the social menace of congestion. To bring about an adequate supply of houses to the end that all may have decent living quarters:

Mr. Murphy proposes alleviations. He advocates taking off the government brakes by removing the tariff from foreign building materials, exempting incomes derived from mortgages from the federal income tax, likewise the state

income tax, abolishing the real estate tax on buildings, repealing the so-called usury law, taxing land titles and exempting productive enterprises and then bidding the private citizen god-speed on his enterprise of home building.

Mrs. Wood advocates "(1) the immediate appointment of national, state, and local housing commissions to study the subject; (2) long-time housing loans to workingmen at low interest rates under the auspices of federal and state governments; (3) municipal housing at cost for lower-paid wage-earners, and slum clearance where necessary."

Mr. Ackerman finds little to agree to in either remedy. He joins the plea for tariff revision and admits the value of gathering information and knowledge having to do with housing and town planning. He believes that "congestion of populace follows upon a concentration of industry; and that concentration of industry is consequent upon concentration of wealth (economic power) in the hands of individuals," and "that the only way to arrest the drift of population into industrial centers is to effect a redistribution of wealth." He advocates a "shift of control over industry from the field of financial business to that of technology"; in other words from the financier to the specialist! He opposes government subventions and awaits the day when no longer may there be a "legal right to acquire wealth without rendering service in return."

Meantime, whether by Mr. Murphy's individual enterprise, by Mrs. Wood's government intervention and subvention, or by Mr. Ackerman's new industrial system, these three agree with most of us that we want to house decently our entire population, a desire which does us credit, but a consummation which has not been achieved in our past history. We have a social as well as an economic problem. At the very time when the minimum cost of shelter has risen out of all proportion to the minimum cost of food and clothing we are trying to push up the minimum standard of living. And the only hopeful thing about it all is that our social conscience has been pricked into activity to the end that we shall not rest content until we have achieved the hitherto impossible.

Read the book and form your own conclusion. In these untried fields one man's—or woman's—solution is as good as another's until he is proved wrong.

HARLEAN JAMES.