

EUROPEAN POLICE SYSTEMS. By Raymond B. Fosdick. New York: The Century Co., 1915.

This valuable book is based on direct personal study for more than a year and a half of the police in twenty-two cities in different European countries. While there is no detailed comparison with American conditions, the facts and conclusions will be of great service in working out the problems of police organization and control in this country.

In his first chapter Mr. Fosdick brings out the broader scope of police functions on the continent of Europe (and especially in Germany and France) than in England and the United States—including fire protection, health and building regulations. He considers, however, that this combination of heterogeneous functions under one control does not conduce to efficiency.

The police in all the capitals and most of the large commercial centers in Europe are under the direct control of the state. Only in the provincial cities of Great Britain, in Switzerland and Belgium, in Leipzig and Stuttgart, and in smaller places in Austria, is there local autonomy. The reasons advanced in European countries for state control are given; but not critically discussed. Nor is there a full discussion of the systems of state supervision over local police, though the author considers the county police in England (which are under a larger degree of central supervision) superior to the borough police.

On the continent, the police force is organized on a military basis, but with some important variations. Berlin and Prussian cities have an overcentralized military organization; Vienna a more decentralized military organization, under civil control; Paris has had a highly centralized civil organization, but the internal organization is in process of transition; in London and Great Britain, the police is a civil organization, largely decentralized.

There seems no special significance in noting that the police force is recruited from the army, in countries where military

service is compulsory. But it is significant that in continental Europe the ordinary policemen come from the non-commissioned officers of the army, with from six to twelve years military service. On the continent, the ordinary policemen seldom rise above the rank of sergeant; and the officers of the police force form a distinct class.

In England, the policemen are largely country born and bred; and these are preferred to city men. The rank and file are superior in spirit and intelligence to those on the continent; and chief constables in provincial cities and district superintendents in London usually come up from the ranks.

Mr. Fosdick suggests as a compromise that the rank and file should have larger opportunities of promotion than on the continent; but that it should also be possible to appoint officers from outside sources.

All of the European countries have some system of police training, Vienna having the best equipped police school. Policemen in Germany, and to some extent in Austria, are the object of marked dislike on the part of the lower classes; while the London "Bobby" is more or less a favorite with the people.

The higher positions of police administration in Europe form a distinct profession, composed largely of jurists of university training, with long experience in the public service. London has had but six police commissioners in eighty-five years; and Berlin has had only ten police presidents since 1848. In Paris there was a long period of frequent changes; but M. Lepine was prefect of police for eighteen years.

The detective force is more highly centralized on the continent, and more decentralized in England. The London system of training for this service is said to be good, Berlin's fair, Vienna's excellent, and that of Paris meagre. The English detective shows more initiative and originality. That the results are as good in Germany as in England is due to the larger legal powers to extort evidence from suspected persons, and the better material

equipment of the German police. An interesting chapter discusses methods of criminal detection.

On the whole, the police of European cities bear an excellent reputation as to integrity; and this public confidence is not undeserved. There are some instances of individual delinquencies, but no organized system. Policemen receive rewards and gratuities, and there is a widespread practice of accepting tips.

An important safeguard against police corruption is that the police are not called on to enforce standards of conduct above those of the general public. For example, public houses (saloons) are legally open in London at certain hours on Sunday; and on the continent there is no attempt at Sunday closing.

Mr. Fosdick concludes that the European police departments form an excellent piece of machinery, due to the acceptance of certain common principles: the police are not called on to enforce moral standards not approved by the public; control and authority is centered in a single official, on whom responsibility can be fixed; and the rank and file, as well as the officers, are carefully selected and trained.

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GOVERNMENT AID TO HOME OWNING AND HOUSING OF WORKING PEOPLE IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES. Bulletin No. 158 of the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics.

One is tempted to believe that this is a partisan document. It is full of facts, nearly every other page of its 451 is decorated with orderly and symmetrical tables of facts; but with all this array some are missing which should be there, inasmuch as the others are.

The volume really does more than its title promises. It gives a brief introduction to the housing problem in many of the countries whose methods of giving aid it describes, and at least indicates that they have found it necessary to regulate as well as to assist house builders. If one may judge by internal evidence, a corps

of clerks have industriously assembled pro-aid extracts, statistics and tables from hundreds of volumes, many of which are listed in alphabetical order at the ends of the chapters. But, again judging from internal evidence, not all of the compilers were familiar enough with the subject to know that housing statistics are like others and while perfectly true if rightly and thoroughly understood and carefully placed in their right relation to other equally true statistics, they may, through lack of understanding or because of wrong relationships—or none at all, produce quite an erroneous impression.

For instance, in the chapter on Great Britain and Ireland there are figures which seem to indicate that London is actually deriving a net revenue from its municipal housing schemes. This leads the compiler, or the commentator if they be different persons, to say: "The rents . . . are fixed in accordance with two principles. They must not exceed the rates prevailing in the neighborhood and they must be sufficient to insure that after providing for all expenditures for maintenance and capital charges the dwellings shall be self-supporting."

This may have seemed a very simple proposition to the one who wrote it out so clearly for our edification; but did he ever stop to think? London condemns an unsanitary area. It buys the land and buildings at a very good price—London has found no royal road to the cheap purchase of real estate. It demolishes the buildings. It then erects much better buildings and in them it puts fewer people per room than the old buildings had held. It charges approximately the same low rent per room that was charged in the old buildings. And its new buildings are self-supporting, even pay a net return!

It cannot be done, and London has not done it. One thing that London has done has been to charge off a considerable part of the purchase price, revaluing the land on a housing basis. A considerable part of the cost of the undertaking thus disappears from the housing account, though it still continues to bear its part in the tax rate.

The same easy acceptance of statistics