

whole time to the work and following better methods.

An excellent bibliography of fourteen pages completes a volume which students and administrators will for a long time find indispensable to any thorough acquaintance with the history and problems of state tax administration.

C. C. WILLIAMSON.



STREET RAILWAY FARES: THEIR RELATION TO LENGTH OF HAUL AND COST OF SERVICE. By Dugald C. Jackson and David J. McGrath. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc. Pp. 169.

This joint work is an intelligent and unprejudiced study of the basic problems involved in fixing a just cost of urban street railway service. It is unfortunate, in a way, that the investigation on which the authors based conclusions ended early in 1916, before the effect of the war on the street railway industry was more than superficially felt. From this fact the conclusions reached as to rates of fare are unavoidably somewhat inadequate. It is unfortunate, too, that they could not have had the benefit of the results of recent investigations by public service commissions and individual experts into the field of operating economies and discussed this phase of the subject. The authors ignore wholly as a fare rate factor the vast possibilities for reducing operating cost through new methods of operation, prominent among them the skip-stop, the one man car, devices to reduce peak-load traffic and other methods, which suggest practical economies of operation not before dreamed of by street railway operators, and in some cases a way to preserve the prevailing rate of fare.

The authors have done a notably valuable work in presenting the salient facts of the period covered in their investigation—1914-1915—and in drawing their conclusions they appear to have been eminently fair and judicial. Their study covers the United States generally and includes both elaborate statistical studies

and intensive investigation of transportation conditions in specific fields. A special chapter is given to a review of Cleveland's experience with cheap fares, and their findings appear to be fair to all interests. Other studies cover the zone system of fixing fares, the relation of length of haul and density of traffic to cost of service, a comparison of American and British fare systems, and rate of return on capital investment. The authors reach the following condensed general conclusions:

That the flat-rate system as used on practically all the street railways of this country is an inheritance from the horse-car days, and is not now the proper or the best system for fixing fares, being too inflexible to meet changing conditions entering into the cost of furnishing service and discriminating between long and short rides.

That the only just and satisfactory way to meet present and future conditions in the street railway industry is for the companies to arrange their fare systems on a basis more nearly approximating distance, or zone, rates. A reasonable limitation of the length of haul for a 5c. fare in urban service, with a small excess charge for long hauls, and a lower unit rate than 5c. for a short haul in some cases, is the concrete suggestion offered.

While the authors made their study before the experiment of a 6c. fare in any city of importance had been made, they declare that their data show clearly that increased unit fares almost invariably result in a reduction in total passenger traffic, being especially discouraging to short riders. This view reinforces the present day opinion held by some that the popular recourse to a higher rate of fare to meet the added burdens of furnishing street railway transportation may not bring the results expected.

Before recommending a rate of fare each individual case must be treated as a special problem and studied separately, they hold. The rate as fixed should possess sufficient flexibility to lessen the risks of loss of dividends or interest as a means to secure capital at minimum rates.

And due consideration should be given to the sociological and psychological sides of the question as well as its financial and economic aspects.

STILES P. JONES.

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THE HOUSING PROBLEM IN WAR AND PEACE. By Charles Harris Whitaker, Frederick L. Ackerman, Richard S. Childs, Edith Elmer Woods and others. Washington, D. C.: *The Journal of the American Institute of Architects*. Pp. 116, illustrated. \$2.25.

One of those who secured a copy of this thin, paper-covered volume and noted that it consists chiefly of articles reprinted from the *Journal of the American Institute of Architects*, first exclaimed over its price and then explained that lack of interest in the subject probably compelled a small edition. But however near to or far from the truth this explanation may be there is great significance in the fact that the *Journal* should be sponsor for such a book. Naturally architects have written much about houses, but here they have concerned themselves with other than architectural questions, have invaded the fields of economics and sociology and then have supplemented their own outgivings by including articles written by men and a woman quite outside the profession.

The *Journal* rendered a distinct service when it sent Mr. Ackerman to England last year to study the house-building undertaken by the British government in war time. It is increasing this service by putting his report and the other articles into a form which makes them available for others than architects, who alone may be presumed to keep files of the *Journal* on their shelves.

To be sure the architect's point of view is dominant in the book and it results in a somewhat unbalanced presentation of the subject, noticeable in references to such matters as "restrictive" housing legislation as opposed to "constructive" housing legislation. Perhaps this is not altogether unfortunate as the balance in

American discussions has inclined to be the other way. Mrs. Wood in her article obviously seeks to keep the balance true though her subject, "Constructive Housing Legislation and Its Lesson for the United States," forces her to become a special pleader. But one wishes that Mr. Kohn had added to his brief but caustic comments on the New York tenement house law what "some of us think we know is needed to relieve a situation which is the result of our inelastic law joined to the profiteers' cupidity." Others of us would like to know what Mr. Kohn thinks he knows.

There are other explanations than the one in the first paragraph why this book will not be a best seller. It is a pioneer. Much of its content lies beyond the interest of many architects. It is not sparing of adjectives for another group in the community, the real estate operator. It contains an article by Richard S. Childs that shows a way by which the land owner may be put out of business and so counters an ancient tradition; another by Thomas Adams on the control of land, not for the benefit of individuals, but for that of the community; and another by Walter H. Kilham on Massachusetts as a landlord.

Dreams of a Utopia too far away to even seem possible may run into large editions, suggestions whose sponsors believe they can and should be acted on now don't take well until they have been accepted. They involve thinking and the overcoming of difficulties. The Housing Problem in War and Peace is one of a new crop of books on housing the number and popularity of which will increase.

JOHN IHLDER.

Philadelphia.

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THE PLAY MOVEMENT AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE. By Henry S. Curtis, Ph.D. New York: The Macmillan Company. Pp. 346. \$1.50.

In these days of war, when at first to think of play seemed unpatriotic, until next it appeared that without recreation,