

will find very much valuable material in this volume, and the author is to be congratulated upon the production of such a substantial contribution to a rapidly differentiating aspect of educational science.

An extensive list of readings to accompany each section will be found at the end of the volume. The marginal topics throughout the book are of great assistance in following the discussion, as are also the excellent summaries at the close of each section.

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*An Outline for the Study of American Civil Government, with Special Reference to Training for Citizenship.* Prepared for the New England History Teacher's Association by its committee: RAY GREENE HULING, WILSON RYDER BUTLER, LAWRENCE BOYD EVANS, JOHN HAYNES, AND WILLIAM BENNETT MUNRO. New York: Macmillan, 1910. Pp. xxx+187. \$0.50 net.

This report of the committee appointed some time ago by the New England History Teachers' Association to prepare a syllabus for civics work in secondary schools will be gratefully received by teachers throughout the country. Some of the difficulties which the committee had to face, as well as the scope of its work, are indicated by the following questions in the preface of the report:

"1. What should be the position of the study of government in the secondary-school curriculum, and what time allotment should it reasonably be expected to have?

"2. What should be the aim—or aims—of instruction in civil government in secondary schools?

"3. What should be the scope of the subject and what should be the place—or places—of emphasis when presented to students of secondary-school age?

"4. What should be its relation to other subjects of the secondary-school curriculum?

"5. What should be the point of attack and the order of topics?

"6. What should be the method of presenting the subject?

"7. What should be the form of the syllabus?"

The opinions of the members of the committee, the report says, were widely different upon many of these questions. The chief value of the syllabus, therefore, as is generally the case, will probably come from the discussion which it provokes, rather than from any settled, cut-and-dried plan for the teaching of civics.

Many teachers will feel that too much emphasis is laid upon the study of local government. They may agree with the committee that first-hand material relating to local government is more accessible than that for the study of state and nation, and that the local government seems to touch the life of the individual at more points. But much of the subject-matter of local government as given in the syllabus is better suited to classes in the elementary schools, and much of it has already been introduced into the programs of these schools. It is to be regretted, therefore, that no representative of these schools seems to have been

included in the membership of this committee, so that the work of the secondary schools in this subject might have been articulated with that of the earlier grades. And while at first glance it may appear "that the pupil comes into direct contact with his local government scores of times oftener than with the federal government," a little reflection must convince anyone that the point is not very well taken as an argument for giving more space to the local government than to the government of the state and the nation. We are more directly conscious, most of us, of the food we eat, the clothes we wear, and the houses we live in than of the air we breathe. But a few minutes in a vacuum would suffice to bring to our attention the fact that life requires something more than food and raiment and shelter. The federal and state governments are the political atmosphere in which our local institutions have their being. The importance of their functions is not less real because the points at which their activities touch the individual's life are less obvious. The sense of security from foreign invasion and domestic insurrection, the body of laws designed to protect the individual in his personal and property rights and in general to regulate the relations of individuals and groups of individuals to each other, the conditions governing the production and the distribution of wealth, and the authority safeguarding our social traditions and institutions are the work very largely of the state and federal governments. The fact that so much emphasis has been placed upon the study of these governments in most of our textbooks in civics is due to their relative importance rather than to a desire, as the committee intimates, to produce a textbook for a wider market. So, without underestimating the importance of local governments, and especially of city governments, which have come to embrace more than a third of the population of the United States, we must still keep in mind the relatively greater importance and value of the study of the government of the state and of the nation.

There is also a wide-spread opinion among teachers of civics as well as among teachers of history and economics that instruction in these subjects can be carried on to the best advantage in a high-school class when they are taken together. While these teachers may agree with the committee that "the study of civics is important enough in the education of American youth to warrant the pre-emption of a definite field," they will not look with favor upon an attempt to fence off this field too exclusively, nor be inclined to agree with the committee that the attempt made in many high-school courses of study to correlate civics and history has been unwise. The political institutions of today, which are the subject-matter of civics, are the product of the past. They are the instruments, the tools, which society has invented and is using to accomplish certain ends, and they can be understood properly only when they are studied in the light of the purposes which brought them into existence. They are not finished instruments, either, but are still in the process of evolution. The progressive citizen must understand this. He must have a knowledge of the history of these institutions as well as of the fact of their present existence, and he must have a vision of what society is trying to do, to appreciate the value or the shortcomings of the instruments which it uses. But this means a study of history on the one hand, and of economics on the other.

Notwithstanding the opinions expressed in the preface, the committee has actually recognized both of the above principles to a considerable extent in work-

ing out the syllabus, and while comparatively few teachers, perhaps, will be able to follow it in all of its details, it will prove, nevertheless, a helpful and very suggestive guide in the study of civics.

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*Sociology and Modern Social Problems.* By CHARLES A. ELLWOOD. New York: American Book Co., 1911. Pp. 331.

This book is primarily intended for short courses in higher institutions, but it might be used to even greater advantage in secondary schools that are sufficiently progressive to offer electives in the social sciences. It will also supply a popular demand similar to that met some twenty years ago by Ely's *Problems of Today*.

The second part of the title is more descriptive of the contents than the first. About one-half of the work is nominally devoted to principles; the other half consists of applications to special problems. But as a matter of fact the book is a unit, and it would be difficult to tell where theory shades over into practice. The theoretical chapters are constantly illustrated by concrete problems, and the guiding principles are everywhere in evidence throughout the practical chapters. Dr. Ellwood has been able to arrange the treatment of many isolated problems in a logical order, without overlapping, and to work up to the climax: "The ultimate reliance in all reconstruction must be, not revolution, nor even legislation, but education." Hence "Education and Social Progress," his final and most inspiring chapter, would itself make the book worthy the attention of teachers.

While interesting and clear, the treatment is thoroughly scientific, and embodies the latest results in the field. It stands for ideals, but does not base them upon the visions of a mystic, and it tends to dissipate a number of popular traditions. A few terse summaries will illustrate the author's directness and some of his positions: "There is scarcely any sanity in sociology without the biological point of view." "Divorce is prevalent not because of the laxity of our laws, but rather because of the decay of family life." "Social phenomena are too complex to reduce to simple formulae or laws as physical phenomena are reduced." "The burden of educating the negro for citizenship should rest primarily upon the whole nation, since the whole nation is responsible for the negro's present position." "As in the solution of special social problems we have seen reason to reject 'short-cuts' and 'cure-alls,' so in a scientific reconstruction of human society we have good reason to reject the social revolution which the followers of Marx advocate."

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*A Defense of Prejudice, and Other Essays.* By JOHN GRIER HIBBEN. New York: Scribner, 1911. Pp. viii+183. \$1.00.

Among Professor Hibben's eleven essays, all of them sensible, solid, and interesting, there are four which will especially commend themselves to the friends of education: "The Paradox of Research," "The Art of Thinking," "The Voca-