

Book Reviews

By HOWARD S. ROSS

HOW TO FACE LIFE, by Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, is published by B. W. Huebsch, New York. The price is fifty cents net.

This is another book of The Art of Life Series, edited by Edward Howard Griggs. These attractive little books, from about sixty to one hundred and twenty pages, are printed on toned paper in Caslon type and are most suitable as gift books, and well worth a place in the library of thoughtful and progressive readers.

The author is Rabbi of the Free Synagogue, New York City. He strikes a high note throughout as he gives good advice to: Youth—Preparing for Life; Maturity—How to Serve and Achieve and Age—How Not to Grow Old.

WISCONSIN PLAYS (Second Series), contain four one-act dramas: The Feast of the Holy Innocents, by S. Marshall Hsley; On the Pier, by Laura Sherry; The Shadow, by Howard Mumford Jones; and We Live Again, by Thornton Gillman.

The publisher is B. W. Huebsch, of New York City, who seems to have the art of finding manuscript which is very often just a bit different and generally very good indeed. As stated in the introduction by Zona Gale, the plays are written by Middle-West men and women and produced by the Wisconsin Players, a group of non-professional actors now in their seventh season, who not only produce their own plays but translations from European plays and English, Irish and Scottish plays. They also design and execute the stage settings, costumes and posters used. They are said to have accomplished: "Acting sufficiently unprofessional to achieve the illusion of life which the sharp edges of the trained actor are successful in keeping at arm's length."

THE NEW VOTER, by Charles Willis Thompson, is published by G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York and London. The price is \$1.50 net.

People who say they will have nothing to do with politics are mistaken. They might as well say they will have nothing to do with air. One cannot refuse to have anything to do with politics; but one can, by his or her attitude, help a good deal to make politics bad, and therefore to make government bad.

While this book is primarily intended for American women, new to the ballot, it makes interesting reading to those living outside the U. S. A. It is not a hand-book for voters, telling them where their assembly districts are and how to mark a ballot. It sheds light on what they will accomplish by marking it or what the marking is for.

The following in the chapter "The Tariff in Politics" will give a good idea of the author's method: "I tell you that on the tariff, no less than on other things, the old party lines are getting all mixed up. I have already told you that even in the old days they were always mixed up when it came to a matter of a man's own interests, or a district's own interests. No district, and no man, except in the case of an incorrigibly rigid man-like Underwood, was for either protection or a 'tariff for revenue only' where it hit near home.

Among other chapters all interesting and showing insight are: The Difference Between the Parties; Joining A Party; Lobbying, Good and Bad; The Dark Side of Politics; Tammany, in New York and Elsewhere; How A President is Elected; The Cabinet; The Art of Booming a Candidate, and last, The Job of a Lifetime. In the last chapter the College Woman is asked "What is the general impression that has been made on your mind by the things that have been said during the discussion." She replies "It is very distinctly my own fault if I'm not governed the way I like; and I shall never again have any patience with people who tell me that politics is corrupt, or that there is no use in taking a part in it. Because, even if that is so, it is my fault and the fault of those who are doing the growling."

And who is "the adversary"? asked Anna. "The Boss, the corporation magnate, the briber, or the demagogue?"

"Gladstone called him 'overweening authority' and 'property'" said the lawyer, "but his name in this country is legion. He is whoever at a given moment is trying for whatever motives—and they are not always bad—to bring about legislation and administration that are not in the public interest even when they appear to be."

THE STRUCTURE OF LASTING PEACE, by H. M. Kallen, Ph.D., of Madison, Wisconsin, is published by Marshall Jones Company, 212 Summer Street, Boston, Mass. The price is \$1.25 net.

The thesis is that America's paramount aim in the war is to establish a League of Nations and secure lasting peace. The author discusses the development, nature, and purposes of states, nations, and nationalities, the significance of sovereignty and the reciprocal interplay of these with the economic interests which underly civilization. He claims that what is called "human nature" is only social habit established by class interests, and that war is an artificial enterprise following from those interests. By means of a striking analysis of the history of the United States, between 1776 and 1789, he shows how, in the creation of the United States, a League of Nations was in fact established and lasting peace secured. His argument is that what was attained for America can be attained for the world.

Dr. Kallen has made a valuable contribution on a difficult subject at a difficult time. He concludes: "Human nature is not in conflict with lasting peace and a free international order. It sets no limits to internationalism. Only the perversion of human nature by the illusions of exclusive sovereignty, the sordid realities of class vanity and class greed, of 'national honor' and the 'rights of property' limit and combat it." Regard a free league of free peoples; if you will it, it is no dream."

Is it a dream?

Nay, but the lack of it the dream,
And failing it, life's lore and wealth a dream,
And all the world a dream!

Walt Whitman.

THE WORLD REBUILT, by Walter Walsh, D.D., is published by George Allen & Unwin, Limited, 40 Museum Street, London, W.C. 1. The author is a leader of the Free Religious Movement towards World-Religion and World-Brotherhood, London, and the author of a number of well-known books. He has made a special study of Town Planning. The book is dedicated to Hendrick Christian Andersen, who has devoted his talents and fortune to the working out of his conception of a city which would be a World Centre of Communication and to Paul Otlet, Belgian jurist, professor and sociologist, a leader in the Cause of Internationalism and author of many books on International relations including an outline of a World-Charter.

The book of about one hundred pages is made up of addresses delivered for the most part in London, England, dealing with the peaceful reconstruction of society and the rebuilding of the war-shattered world.

The author describes the movement as "the Modernist Movement in its most comprehensive and thorough-going form. It has its source in that desire for unity which pervades the modern world. It is a reasoned effort to express and encourage that sweep towards Universalism in religion and politics and social ethics which is the most powerful and hopeful impulse of our time. It takes the world for its parish, and mankind as its concern. It seeks to relate human beings to one another and to their universe by principles which are rational, scientific, ethical and international. The movement is essentially religious; but it is not a sect or a church; for it operates in all sects and churches; yet outside and independently of them all. It substitutes the humanist for the dogmatic, ethics for creeds, and the collective service of mankind for sacraments. It regards religion as spiritual enthusiasm directing itself towards reform of abuses, a just social order, free economic conditions and proper international arrangements and the movement embraces all those who are making towards a world which shall be enlightened by knowledge, guided by reason, and animated by love."

The chapter, A World-Conscience, is particularly striking. The author says, "I declare the advent of a World-Conscience. Without a World-Conscience the wisest and most comprehensive World-Charter were nothing but a 'scrap of paper'! Without a World-Conscience the most noble and beautiful city—John's New Jerusalem itself—were no better than a slum. A splendid spirit breathes throughout this striking and interesting little book.

A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF MUNICIPAL UTILITY REGULATION AND MUNICIPAL OWNERSHIP, by Don Lorenzo Stevens, M.B.A., is published by Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. The price is \$4.00 net.

This useful book of four hundred pages was compiled primarily for busy men of affairs—public service company managers, commissioners, lawyers, and others interested in public utilities. The list names nearly every work in English on these subjects and the best of the earlier books. The subjects treated are electricity, gas, water and traction utilities. The critical annotations are intended to indicate the relative value of the different works and indicate in a helpful way the nature of each book and article and where the writer's conclusions are of interest in determining the choice of material, these also are briefly indicated. The author has read every work listed and in his forthcoming book on The Regulation of Municipal Utilities he gives a broad survey of the published material referred to. The author deserves the thanks of all those who should be interested—namely everyone.

THE AIMS OF LABOUR, by Rt. Hon. Arthur Henderson, M.P., Secretary of the Labour Party, is published by Headley Bros., 72 Oxford Street, London, W. 1. The price is one shilling net. The author is giving the profits to the fund which the Labor Party is raising for the erecting of a suitable and lasting memorial to the honor of those who have fallen on the field of battle in furtherance of the ideals and aims which inspire British Democracy and on behalf of which British Labour has sacrificed so much and so freely.

The substance of several of the chapters has already appeared in the form of articles. There are a few new chapters.

The titles of some of the chapters will give a good idea of the wide scope of this inspiring little book which contains a good photograph of the author. The following chapters are particularly interesting: The Political Labor Movement, World Security, A People's Peace, No Economic Boycott, The Spirit of Democracy, and Labor and The New Social Order.

THE NEMESIS OF MEDIOCRITY, by Ralph Adams Cram, Litt.D., LL.D., is published by Marshall Jones Company, Boston. The price is seventy-five cents.

The author is probably America's greatest architect, a keenly analytical thinker who is brave enough to say things opposed to popular beliefs or should one say popular prejudices. He says our age, in its art, literature, statecraft, education, philosophy and religion is lacking in leadership. In education Newman and Arnold are followed by Flexner; Browning is succeeded by the writers of vers libre; Burne-Jones and St. Gardens are followed by the cubists; even in German statecraft Bismarck is worth fifty Wilhelms or Hindenburgs; Disraeli and Gladstone give place to Asquith and Lloyd George; and in religious leadership Martineau, Brooks and Manning are gone, while H. G. Wells and Billy Sunday seek to prophecy. The disappointing part of it is that the author is able to make a better case than most of us would wish. He admits we have leadership in materialistic science, but insists that such leadership cannot supplant, with safety to the race, strong idealistic leadership. Man lives not by bread alone, or, when he does, he sinks to beastly levels and perishes of soul rot. The imminent danger of mediocrity is the authors second proposition. His third contention is that this incompetence is due and and to be blamed upon democracy. He then distinguishes between essential democracy and democracy of mere method and mechanism. The first he says is a fundamental demand for "three things: abolition of privilege, equal opportunity for all and utilization of ability." It is the lack of this ideal which has produced mediocrity. One is surprised to see a man of the evident discernment of Dr. Cram has so little faith in electoral reform. How can we abolish privilege thus giving opportunity for all unless the voters actually direct and control their governmental affairs and cease doing business by proxy. Surely voters must deal with issues instead of speculating as to what a candidate will do a year hence under unknown circumstances. After each mistake we say let us get better men. We do not go on this principle in connection with our mechanical problems or for that matter any of our industrial problems. The representative system has—most people think—failed and there seems to be a growing demand for direct legislation and proportional representation.

Dr. Cram thinks it absolutely necessary that along with a victory by the Allies there should be an awakening to fundamental democracy.