

Books in Review

EDITED BY ELSIE S. PARKER

Municipal Management. By Thomas H. Reed. New York, McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1941. xii, 665. pp. \$4.00.

From abattoirs to zoning, most college courses on city government cover in a year or a semester the whole municipal alphabet. Though variations in the approach to this dynamic subject are almost as numerous as our institutions of learning themselves, these courses run the whole gamut through historic growth, politics, councils, mayors, commissions, managers, metropolitan and other areal problems, intergovernmental relations, administrative organization and management, with emphasis on as many line activities as can be crammed into crowded class hours. Belgian paving blocks, street plans, fire fighting equipment, sewage purification, water filtration—these and other common-places of modern municipal functionalism pass in kaleidoscopic review. Techniques from the fields of engineering, public health, social work, police administration, and public recreation are added to the classroom docket.

In *Municipal Management* Dr. Reed proposes a halt in introductory municipal courses on the stress upon technical processes now employed in line departments. This, presumably, would be left to advanced seminars, to courses given by specialists, to pre-service and in-service training. Accordingly, he devotes more than half of his book to basic administrative relationships and to auxiliary technical services such as financial management, personnel administration, and legal advice. The balance is given over to principles and problems governing *management* of the operating services (police, fire, health, parks and recreation, welfare, housing,

schools, libraries, public works and public utilities).

In punching out the underlying pattern of municipal administration, the author contributes some pungent observations on municipal executives *vis-à-vis* the public, the council, and department heads. With a sure touch he describes these delicate inter-relationships, drawing on his experiences as a city manager and as a consultant. The same blend of personal knowledge, true-story, suggestion and conclusion marks the treatment of finance and personnel. Measured opinions which do not equivocate, as well as facts, are set down with a flair for the frank and forthright.

Much of the book is orthodox and follows familiar directions. In holding out for the cash-receipt budget, Dr. Reed, as in other tight spots, fairly states that all authorities are not on his side. This characteristic crops out later when he recommends that administration of local public hospitals be put in the hands of departments of health. Acknowledging that this runs counter to some of the experts on hospital administration, he painstakingly quotes from the opposing camp.

Here as elsewhere in discussing line activities, the author adheres to the large view of concentrated responsibility and coordinated action, the "gold-dust" twins of efficient municipal management. But he recognizes that an equilibrium must be preserved between those who approach municipal administration from the over-all aspect of executive control and those who, concerned primarily with a specific function, seek independence or semi-independence through boards and other administrative paraphernalia. Budgets, purchasing, accounting, personnel, re-

search, and planning—all these elements are articulated as steps in the managerial process. Charts give a bird's eye view of the organizational picture. Based on the premise that public administration is an inductive science and not to be mastered by armchair generalization, the author has drawn his guide lines out of experience in city hall and in the field.

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Democracy or Anarchy? A Study of Proportional Representation. By F. A. Hermens. Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame, *The Review of Politics*, 1941. xxx, 447 pp. \$4.

Aided by a stipend granted by the Social Science Research Council, Professor Hermens of the University of Notre Dame during the past year was enabled to extend very greatly his earlier studies of proportional representation and thus to gather material for the expansion of his earlier articles into an average volume. To the chapters by the author, Dr. C. J. Friedrich of Harvard University has written an Introduction.

Because there had long existed a vital need for an intensive, perhaps exhaustive, study of the actual operation of P. R., the publication of this volume was anxiously awaited. The pre-publication announcements supplied a basis for sanguine expectations. Although, by his articles, the author was already known as an ardent opponent of P. R., it was expected that in the publication of this full-length volume he would avail himself of the opportunity to subject his old conclusions to a critical re-examination and to supply his complete proof and documentation.

With admirable clarity and force, Professor Hermens restates and elaborates his case against P. R. and makes it a castigation almost demagogic in its sweep and severity. He expounds

again the principles and merits of the majority plan. He incorporates a vast amount of statistics, testimony, and other data—the products of many months of industry. It is useful to have this fresh brief against P. R. and as its corollary the case for the majority plan. Even the one-track enthusiast for P. R. can profit greatly by their study. The valuable factual materials of the volume will be generally welcomed.

What make the volume disappointing and seriously mar its wider usefulness are the sweeping and almost reckless generalizations which the author permits to escape his inner scholastic censor as he proceeds to interpret his data and to correlate them with his theories. It would take a great deal more of substantial evidence and new historical facts than the author has mustered to make it appear plausible that P. R. is the *cause* of multiple parties or of parties based on economic differences or of radical parties, or "that P. R. is the Trojan Horse of Democracy," or "that the blow dealt to Radicals by the majority system is so severe that the evil is cured once and for all."

The facts of history as now recorded seem to show that the multiple-party system long ante-dated the adoption of P. R., that in Germany and Austria, for instance, there were more parties (including some rapidly growing radical ones) before the adoption of P. R. than afterwards; that Spain (among many examples) without P. R. had numerous parties including among others some that were radical and some that were based on economic elements; that in Great Britain (the native land of the majority system) the Labor party (a radical party) is a major party; that P. R. in the small democracies of Europe has been accepted as a vital instrument of popular government