

Professor McLaughlin's lectures delivered on the George Slocum Bennett Foundation at Wesleyan University a year ago, seek to describe certain basic American "doctrines and beliefs, some of which may have had their day, while others have not yet reached fulfillment." Like a great many generalizations on historical facts, Professor McLaughlin's lectures may seem more suggestive than convincing, but it is an excellent thing to have the landmarks in the development of American Democracy charted by such a competent scholar, and published for a larger audience than the students of Wesleyan University.

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*Economic Democracy.* By C. H. DOUGLAS. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe. 1920. Pp. 141.)

This volume is one of the many efforts put forth by inquiring minds during these days of reconstruction to diagnose the disease from which economic society seems to be suffering and to propose a remedy. While the book is small the reader will find nothing dwarfed about the ambition or courage of the author in dealing with his problem.

There is at the outset an analysis of the difficulties which at present prevent the realization of a true economic democracy, a democracy which is vastly more important to human welfare than any mere guarantee of political equality. The author believes that the root of the evil lies in the enormous centralization of economic power which has resulted from the modern movement for scientific management and efficiency. This centralization has produced a bureaucratic system in modern industry, under which the personal initiative of the individual has been sacrificed in order to secure perfection in the mechanical processes of production. This has resulted in a diminution of the psychological efficiency of the worker to whom the increased production of machine-made goods has brought some physical comforts but much discontent of mind. The problem of modern economic society is to retain the enormous benefits of mechanism for productive purposes but to secure an effective distribution of the results and restore personal initiative.

For the solution of this problem there is presented a plan for accomplishing the needed economic decentralization. The state and not the capitalist is to be entrusted with the duty of loaning money for purposes of productive industry. Such loans are to be limited to \$5000 to any

one person. Thus the number of persons who can establish and maintain plants will increase and personal initiative in industry will be revived. A scheme of cost accounting is to be installed and by means of it a "just price" for the product is to be determined based upon use-value. Just how this is to be accomplished is a question which will remain somewhat vague in the reader's mind.

The author has not succeeded in making his program stand out clearly. He is handicapped by an almost total lack of concreteness in method of presentation and a somewhat confusing use of various technical economic terms. The value of this book lies chiefly in the useful criticisms urged against our present economic system rather than in the proposed plan for reform.

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*The History of Cumulative Voting and Minority Representation in Illinois, 1870-1919.* By BLAINE F. MOORE, Ph.D. Revised edition. (University of Illinois Studies in the Social Sciences, Vol. 8, No. 2. Pp. 70.)

This is a thoroughly well-made study of one of the very few experiments the American states have undertaken in the structure of representative government. It is just fifty years since Illinois rather courageously recognized that something was wrong with the single member district and plurality election scheme, and adopted for its larger house a device which, roughly speaking, assures the second party in any district one of the three members which the district returns, provided it can muster as much as one-fourth of the vote which the two cast together. In 1920 there met at Springfield a new constitutional convention, the first since 1870, one of whose proposals will pretty surely be the elimination of this device; and if the voters are allowed to act separately on it, as they did in 1870, they will quite surely adopt the recommendation.

Dr. Moore's monograph will make it unnecessary for the future inquirer to look further for the measure of success and failure that has attended Illinois' half-century of experience. After a brief introductory chapter calling attention to the progress of new forms of representation, and another on the circumstances of the adoption of the Illinois system, there follow two chapters of careful statement of the facts of experience, accompanied by five statistical tables. In these the student will find