

growing list of state and regional agricultural histories. The illustrations reflect those of the agricultural press of that day and the format is pleasing. It is to be hoped that a second volume will bring the story to date.

Western Reserve Historical Society Russell H. Anderson

American Social Reform Movements, Their Pattern Since 1865. By Thomas H. Greer. (New York, Prentice-Hall Inc., 1949, pp. ix, 313. Bibliography and index. \$5.35.)

Professor Greer's book is a convenient summary of some of the major movements for social reform in the period since the Civil War. Space limitations compelled him to select the basic strands of the story and to omit others. This inevitably exposes an author to the kind of criticism that anthologists encounter from readers who are quicker to detect omissions than to appreciate the inclusions. This reviewer, for example, thinks the title of the work misleading because the volume deals after all almost exclusively with movements for economic reform. And since the work is largely concerned with programs for economic change he is somewhat surprised at the extremely brief treatment of the fateful mutations in the nation's economic life history that called forth the efforts at reform; at the scanty attention given Edward Bellamy, Henry George, Herbert Croly (no mention of the important *Promise of American Life*); at the absence of any word about the Fourteenth Amendment, about Thorstein Veblen, or about Justice Holmes and the momentous shift in American jurisprudence from an emphasis on legal justice toward (though perhaps not yet *to*) social justice. One feels too that the author's treatment is descriptive rather than analytical and interpretative, though the last chapter, "Conclusion: the Pattern of Reform," sets down some generalizations that emerge from the data in the preceding chapters and that are worth pondering.

The book divides the story into two periods: 1865-1917 and 1917-present. There are four chapters in the first section, one on the labor movement, another on radical efforts (anarchists, socialists, syndicalists), a third on agrarian programs, and a fourth on the Progressive Movement. The second section follows the same organization with one chapter

to continue the story of organized labor, one on the radical groups since World War I, another on farm movements (Non-partisan League, the new National Grange, the American Farm Bureau Federation, the National Farmers' Union), and a fourth on the New Deal. To each of these chapters are appended source excerpts from representative illustrative documents, a feature that adds measurably to the value of the work. The volume closes with the chapter on "The Pattern of Reform," already mentioned.

The book does not pretend to offer new data or interpretations; its merit lies rather in assembling and discipling into a coherent narrative material whose treatment has usually been rather diffuse. This reviewer expects to find the work a useful addition to the basic library of some two or three hundred books that he keeps on a reserve for an upper-class course in social, cultural, and economic forces in the United States since 1865.

The author demonstrates once more the essentially conservative pattern of American social change. Reform movements that deviate far from traditional American concepts win very few adherents, though the bolder corollaries of traditional ends and means that they have adumbrated, have frequently become public policy a generation or so after the fringe groups began to educate a skeptical public. There is a lesson here for the hysterical, now so much given to frenetic heresy hunting. The communist influence in the past has been wholly negligible, and the whole history of American society argues that it will continue to be so. "Only in a time of major economic collapse," writes Greer, "would the communists have a chance of winning support for their program. It is for such a moment that they are waiting. The best safeguard against communism and all other forms of radicalism is a positive development of economic well-being and stability."

Professor Greer writes without passion—I was about to say without inspiration—and expresses himself like a restrained liberal. The New Deal he properly regards as an essentially conservative program, an extension of the Progressive Movement of the preceding generation, constructed wholly within the framework of the American liberal tradition.

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