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In the Next Issue —

Community Service News for January-February, 1950, will include:

The Prospects for Rural India, by Arthur E. Morgan.

A review of The Structure of the Metropolitan Community, an important study by Don J. Bogue of the Scripps Foundation for Population Research.

The Nature of an Organic Society, by Gordon Rattray Taylor, an arresting statement of the impossibility of depending on the institutions of urban mass society to replace the small community.

Education and Community, by Rabindranath Tagore, a previously unpublished statement of a great educational philosophy.

NEWS NOTES

During this Christmas season our readers will be interested to know that Community Service has a list of names of some German leaders in the movement for social and economic autonomy who are in dire want.

Mr. Waldermar Kurtz, of Stuttgart, Germany, recently spent a few months in America studying regional and community autonomy and the theory and practice of community development. During a week's stay in Yellow Springs he outlined plans for the creation of an organization and publication paralleling for Germany the work of Community Service and Community Service News in America.

From many nations throughout the world, as well as from all sections of America, come visitors and inquiries with similar concerns. Outstanding among all was the recent visit of Father Hayes of Ireland.

MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

November 6-9. 27th Annual Convention, National Catholic Rural Life Conference. Columbus, O.

November 10. Special meeting on "Muintir Na Tire," community movement in Ireland, Yellow Springs O., sponsored by Community Service, Inc.; Very Rev. J. M. Hayes, of Bansha, County Tipperary, Ireland, speaker.


Chinese Intellectuals Heading for Rural Communities

by Bengt Hoffman*

The most spectacular feature of recent developments in China has been the concentration of attention on rural communities. It is impossible to understand the Chinese situation unless one keeps in mind that the revolution has its strength in rural China and derives its force from the peasants' dissatisfaction with age-old extortion methods and arbitrariness of a relatively small group of literate and therefore powerful families with privileges inherited through generations.

The two recent Chinese revolutions, both that of 1911 when the Kuomintang brought about the downfall of the Imperial dynasty, and the Communist revolution after 1927, were led by students and intellectuals. Many Kuomintang revolutionaries in the early stages of that party realized that the problem was a rural one. But as the Kuomintang gradually became entrenched within the old Confucian frame and dependent financially on the old moneyed or land-possessing classes and a widespread secret-police system, the idea of radical social reconstruction was obscured. The Chinese Communist party throve, thanks to this failure. It concentrated and still concentrates definitely and decisively on the peasants. It has managed to stir up quite an enthusiasm for nearly a cult of the peasant.

The present stage of Chinese communism from a doctrinaire angle is quite non-Communistic in some respects. The class of industrial workers, the "proletariat," is insignificant numerically, and in addition is nearly as illiterate as the vast mass of peasants, and therefore at present would be a poor sole basis for the social revolution.

Recognizing the fact, the Communist leaders are speaking about what they term "the new democracy." Only in the far future will China reach the stage of "socialist-proletarian revolution," they say. Their conviction is based upon some rather flagrant failures in the twenties and the beginning of the thirties when the Chinese Communist party pushed radical Communism, like collective farming, in central and southern China. These attempts did not work out at all, and several of the most influential party leaders decided that China did not provide ground for absolute Marxism. However, some leaders, notably Li Li-san, disagreed with the go-slow policy of Mao Tse-Tung, and within the Party there is consequently a radical, albeit not very vociferous, wing advocating a revolution in strict accordance with the Russian pattern. But the go-slow policy has won out. In the countryside the landlord system is broken up and supplanted. not with collective

*Secretary to the World Student Christian Federation in China. 1947-49.
farming, but with distribution of land to the individual peasant, making him more independent than he has ever been, at least as to freedom from many arbitrary taxes of old standing, the heavy interest on loans, and the heavy burden imposed on him by his contract as a tenant.

The Communist Party was greatly aided by the Japanese! That is the irony of fate. When the Japanese invaded China in 1937, many universities took to the road. Students and professors by the thousands set out for the interior of China carrying books and belongings in haversacks or pulling them on hand-carts. During these months of pilgrimage and hardship, the Chinese students and professors really discovered rural China. They ate with the peasants, slept in their grey-mud hamlets, helped in the rice fields, and acquired an intimate knowledge of their life. They were often horrified at conditions which, many of them became convinced, should and could be ameliorated. Much enthusiasm for "lao fai hsing," the common people, born during those war years, is now being harnessed and "channeled" by the Communist Party. The intellectuals do not appear to be afraid any more of the thought of serving in the countryside.

In the old days the Emperor's "literati," the scholars, went out to the rural communities after their graduation and established themselves as officials. But they were strictly the rulers of the common people, not co-workers and constructive counselors. They believed in status quo. When the modern Western university was introduced to China it also brought the Western idea that an intellectual is too good for life in the country. The modern Chinese intellectuals all too willingly adopted this attitude. It was in line with the Confucian disdain for the dirty, backward, illiterate communities, although, of course, the intellectuals were glad to get their income and wealth from the selfsame dirty peasantry.

Now the slogan is: back to the rural communities. Thousands of students have volunteered to go to the villages and hamlets to teach elementary school, to help in the redistribution of land and in the cooperatives, and to teach new agricultural methods. Before they go out they have to attend a three months' course in "practical indoctrination," i.e., Marxian indoctrination. The point is that they do not seem to regard manual labor or a permanent contribution to a rural community as below their intellectual dignity.

China seems headed for another dictatorship, and no one can say where she will end up. Much of what is being done in social improvement might prove to be built on sand. But the discovery of the peasantry and of the rural communities will constitute a lasting legacy, and will make its mark in some form or another in days to come.
The Community Council and the Community

Recurrently during the past fifty years community development programs have caught public interest and achieved notoriety and apparent success, only to die out. On one occasion we took a collection of five-year-old magazine articles which enthusiastically described epoch-making community programs, and visited the communities concerned. In nearly every case the program was dead and buried. Sometimes their history stands in the way of future efforts as indications that these, too, might prove to be but passing fads.

Such programs call to mind a discovery made in the General Electric company's experiment at its Hawthorn plant with problems of improving the productivity of labor. For some time at the Hawthorn plant every experiment that was tried improved the productivity of labor, whether it was more lighting or less, or longer or shorter hours of work. In time it was realized that it was the workers' aroused interest and participation in the study that was most important, not just the particular physical conditions of work. Similarly in community development programs there is an elusive quality of interest and vitality that is the first essential for success. With it a large range of programs may succeed, but without it the best of programs may fail. One of the hazards in developing a formula for success is that the elusive quality of home-grown initiative may be forgotten because of preoccupation with imposed techniques and processes.

Another condition that makes many recurrent programs of community improvement only temporarily successful is the resulting overdraft on accumulated energies and resources. A tremendous amount of nervous energy is consumed in a burst of community action and improvement. Family life may have to be sacrificed to the detriment of wife and children. The storekeeper who failed to keep his store up to city standards may get a spurt of trade from improvement, but if he has not calculated carefully he may be unable to stand the pace year after year on his small margin of profit. The funds of money that are put into circulation to "paint up" may stimulate a brief revival of trade that will end when the money has been drained out of the community. Thus the immediate results of a community betterment campaign are sometimes misleading, and should not cause us to neglect active consideration of more underlying causes of small town decay.

A third hazard of preoccupation with standardized techniques of community organization work is well exemplified in the use to which "group dynamics" is sometimes put in community work. The Research Center in Group Dynamics at the University of Michigan is the lengthened shadow of a significant social scientist—Kurt Lewin. Group dynamics is making a
distinct contribution to our knowledge about group relationships. It has advanced our knowledge about "group maturity," has made detailed studies on how to make conferences effective, and has studied techniques of achieving understanding and teamwork within groups. But some of its many devotees have regarded it as the new technology of human relationships, of influencing people and promoting social progress. So commonly have the abler and more experienced community workers found this fetish a handicap and obstacle to effective community relationships that among many people it is discrediting itself, despite its valuable insights.

Just as group dynamics is no alternative to the slowly developed art and tradition of fine human relationships, no more can the community council and formulas for employing it take the place of the vision, understanding, culture, and economy that will make community relationships more enduring and secure.

In an able survey of experience with community councils in Michigan,* Howard McClusky points out that there is a high mortality among community councils. Out of an estimated 120 Michigan councils in existence between 1936 and 1946, almost 60 percent at some time suspended operation, with an average life of two years. Like countless other civic organizations, even the best and most successful community councils commonly have a life cycle of growing public interest and support, followed by decline into a concern of the same few citizens who would be active in other similar civic groups if the council were not in existence. The council has a distinctive advantage over other civic organizations in that it aims to be most completely representative of the citizenship interest of the entire community. But that advantage does not make the community council immune from the normal experience of civic groups. Attempts to avoid that experience through the support of councils by governmental agencies may only serve to enslave the community by enforced compliance to a program dictated from above.

There are more underlying values and problems than those of organization that we must keep in mind in our concern for the local community. And when we have those other considerations well in mind, as have the leaders in the Michigan program, changing circumstances bring about changes of emphasis and technique. We may find ourselves more occupied, for example, with educational methods which will more effectively impart community awareness, vision, and practical community competence to the rank and file of our adolescents.

Some people feel that the promotion of standard organization plans which can be readily taught the would-be “community organizer” is the practical means of saving our communities—and hence our civilization. Let us look for a moment at some groups that have been most enduringly practical and successful.

The Catholic church has long been doing effective community work in Nova Scotia, Ireland, and the United States. Its success arises in part from its historical perspective and experience, and from a wealth of cultural and organizational devices. While it keeps dominant its aims of human survival and church authority, it does not commit itself to any one formula.

In contrast to the more authoritarian culture of the Catholic church, what whole and integrated culture of community relations and values does democratic society have to offer? The people’s college—community workshop, or folk school—has been similarly successful where it has kept a whole culture in the center of its attention and has kept the intimate community group as the basis of operation. Its historical perspective and freedom from preoccupation with technology and short-lived methodology has made it effective in serving the local community.

What is the place of wider culture in promoting the work of the community council? The publication *Adventure in Cooperation,* of the New York State Bureau of Adult Education, suggests the place of values and community skills in describing the work of the Columbia, New York, community council. Readable, illustrated, mature, this “adventure in community building in a central school district” is a balanced story of community development. It took men who had a whole culture to produce it, not men merely trained in community organization. The Columbia council had concentrated on envisioning what the *good community* is, in addition to tabulating changes people wanted made. Such vision is an essential prerequisite to great achievement.

Howard McClusky presents a similar picture from Michigan:

“Community council” is a many-sided term. Combining the resources of many agencies, a community council is usually local in character. In principle, if not in practice, it is designed to serve all elements of the community and may center on one or several subjects (e.g., health, recreation, economic development, employment) related to community well-being. For purposes of this discussion, the term ‘community council’ refers to that type of structure which is representative of major educational, civic, welfare, and eco-

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* *Adventure in Cooperation: Community Building in a Central School District* (Albany, N.Y., Bureau of Adult Education, New York State Education Dept., 24 pp., 1949)
nomic interests, and which pursues multiple goals largely under volunteer leadership. It does not include planning and recreation commissions, youth and health committees, and such enterprises as councils of churches and social agencies.

"Communities, like people, differ, and the councils which serve communities are often as different as the communities they serve. Apparently variety is a common trait of community self-help.

"What conditions appear to favor the successful operation of community councils? Our data appear to support the following answers:

1. The community council needs clear-cut goals which are understood by council members and the organizations they represent. Overemphasis on machinery of organization (constitution and by-laws) and neglect of objectives is usually the first and often final step toward the suspension of council programs.

2. A council thrives on a broad and inclusive membership base. Young people, both sides of the tracks, farmers, townspeople, overall workers, white collar workers, etc., should be represented.

3. Special measures should be taken to assure continuity of leadership. The method of alternate or deputy leaders has been successfully used by many councils to prepare persons to take over important tasks when the original leaders have given up their responsibilities.

4. The quality of leadership is a crucial factor in council success. The leader who works well with others appears to be more effective than one who dominates his colleagues. This is especially true of councils with wide differences in membership.

5. The communication of information to council members and the organizations they represent is an important feature of successful operation. The most effective method of communication appears to be a face-to-face exchange of ideas by the persons directly involved.

6. Successful councils have made excellent use of working sub-committees to secure facts, diagnose community needs. and formulate plans, as well as to operate projects. These small committees may call on the services of anyone in the community, regardless of membership on the council. These committees are often the proving ground for new leaders.

7. Councils are sustained by evidence of achievement. Interest appears to grow when the program of the council occasionally leads to some tangible outcome which the community can see.

8. Successful councils are aware of and make use of the resources in and outside their communities in planning programs, in training leaders and in solving problems requiring technical and specialized knowledge.

"In conclusion, twelve years of experience with community councils in Michigan have led the writer to the following hypothesis: Community self-help is a many-sided and continuing process which advances with varying
volume and effectiveness. It transcends particular machineries like community councils but may involve them in the completion of limited projects and in the service of long-term functions. Viewed in this perspective, a community council is an instrument for guided change whose value should be judged not in terms of the performance of its operations but by the character of its achievements and the extent to which it leads the community to assume responsibility for the solution of its own problems.”

How do men develop the capacity to see the whole picture, to bring together values and techniques as is being done in Illinois, Michigan, Virginia, New York, and elsewhere? Such a whole culture does not come ready made. The vision of it may be largely lacking in the community, in the trained community organizer, in the university and in the church. One of our most pressing needs is to have our adult education deal with such a whole culture within the community setting of residential short-term people's colleges dominated by this vision. Such an environment is needed to accentuate such culture to the point that it will be sufficiently powerful and contagious to prevail.

To me rural community organization is a means whereby people in a local area (recognized as "the community") through voluntary collective effort set about to secure what they want. The disturbing thing to me is that what frequently passes for rural community organization is not that at all—often it is not local and often it is not voluntary. Furthermore, we frequently emphasize the machinery and not the working together to get needed things done.—A. F. Wileden, rural sociologist, University of Wisconsin.

The Community Development Service of the Extension Division, University of Wisconsin, is publishing bimonthly bulletins for smaller communities, their business and industry. Among them are: Suggestions for Appraising the Industrial Potential of the Smaller Community (13 pages); Health Resources for Community Builders, outlining the health services of state, university, community, and physician; and Community Cross Section, presenting comparative data for Wisconsin counties in specific areas of community well-being—economic stability, recreation, education, and divorce—as the basis of evaluating communities, with discussion of the significance of the data for use in study and evaluation of each aspect of one's community.

*From "Twelve Years of Community Councils in Michigan."
Reviews


This pamphlet is the first detailed study we have seen of how nationwide "hoarding" or refraining from spending and investing affects the rural economy, and, through that economy, the nation. In past issues of *Community Service News* we have pointed out the consequences to the small town of the uneven and progressive development of hoarding. In this pamphlet Mr. Schoff points out how a reduction in national spending is reflected in a reduction in prices of agricultural products more rapid than the reduction in prices of luxury goods, and twice as great. This is due to the great perishability of surpluses of agricultural products. The decline in the farmer's income and the income of communities that depend on the farmer's purchases is one of a sequence of developments in a deepening depression which results from reduced spending and investing.

Mr. Schoff might have followed his evidence a little further to demonstrate the advantage of the financier capitalist during a depression in holding surpluses of money that do not depreciate at all, but rather increase in value with the hoarding. And he might have shown that this advantage of the capitalist and the corresponding disadvantage of rural areas is chronic, placing the rural area at the mercy of the metropolis even in good times.

This pamphlet is remarkable in being one of the first to recognize the rural problem as being at heart very significantly a "fiscal" one, due to hoardability of our purchasing power in comparison with the farmer's inability to hoard. While it points out that the temporary remedy must be to maintain rural income by means of flexible price supports for agricultural products and supplying food surpluses to the unemployed, it fully recognizes that "a complete corrective [of the underlying cause of industrial paralysis and business depression] may have to be deferred until education has imparted a realization that income which has been received should be promptly expended or invested" to the point of giving the adequate market necessary to a free economic system.

*Organizing for Community Action,* by Clarence King (New York, Harpers, 1948, 197 pages, $3.00).

This little book has a modest yet difficult aim. It is to provide a practical handbook for the social worker concerned with community organization. In effect it turns out to be quite general, commonsense advice on how to win allies and influence a community.
For example, it stresses the values of indirect leadership pre-eminently exemplified in the political boss (the analogy is mine). It emphasizes the slow, gradual snowball technique of enlisting the support of key people. It discusses the education and wise use of the board member as a bridge between the expert and the layman. The reader will find advice on how to sell a budget, when to kill off substandard agencies, and the merits and disadvantages of joint financing of social agencies.

Dedicated to Trygve Lie and ambitiously concluding with a statement on community organization on the international level, it leaves much to be desired. For example, does the establishment of special-purpose agencies mean that we are neglecting essential changes in the function of local government? Is the manipulation of people the best and only answer to the problem of getting around those who fail to see the need and function of welfare organizations? And how valid is this emphasis upon developing skill in manipulating people to achieve ends regarded as rightly determined by the community organizer or the social worker?

Other relevant resources for a consideration of community organization have been untapped; and some were unavailable at the time this book was published. The Industrial Areas Projects in Chicago, Hollingshead's Elmtown's Youth, and Ronald Lippitt's Training in Community Relations are sources which would be of interest to people in this field.

This, unfortunately, is the sort of book which gives substance to the appraisal of the social worker as being long on good will and artistry in handling people, but short on the theoretical and research insights which would give perspective to his work.

---Everett Wilson


This introduction to social group work is elementary in the extreme. Many important questions have been sidestepped; and both current theory and recent research in its field have been disregarded.

For example, it can be assumed that group work emerges as a result of the inadequacies of existing agencies and institutions. If the family, the church, recreational agencies, local government, and the schools are failing in their jobs, might the group worker better address himself to the problem within this framework rather than introduce a new agency or a new function?

What is the relevance of group work to the fruitful development of democratic processes? In an urban culture where human relationships are characterized by anonymity, impersonality, callousness, and formal controls, what has the group worker to tell us about functioning democracy?
One is impressed by the inadequate theoretical treatment given the concept of the group by Mr. Trecker. While some deference is accorded Lewin, Lippitt, Sherif and Allport in the references following each chapter, there is no discussion of their contributions to the theory of group behavior.

One could wish, too, that some recognition were accorded the empirical investigations, few as they are, which have been made and which illuminate the growing body of theory of the group. This recognition would avoid such remarkably inaccurate statements as this: "Social group work is increasingly aware that structure and organization within a group have little to do with the actual influence of the group on the individual" (page 12).

—EVERETT WILSON

THE SMALL INDUSTRIAL COMMUNITY AND ITS RAILROAD

In the January, 1949, issue of Trains magazine, L. A. Johnson, president of the Associated Short Line Railroads, writes of the careful study he has conducted to determine the possibilities for the community, industry, and short-line railroad of a rehabilitated short-line transportation. Communities that can benefit from cooperation with this program should investigate it. Mr. Johnson significantly considers a first essential of this cooperation to be the physical and cultural housecleaning of the small community. The following suggests Mr. Johnson's picture. We present it without passing judgment on its technical validity.

If the small community loses its branch railroad it loses one of its important business assets, one of the tools by which it can offer variety of employment in local industries which can compete with industry in larger towns.

Many small towns are losing their short-line railroads. Often their citizens regard such loss with resigned regret, having been persuaded that their loss was inevitable. But a new approach to short-line railway management in conjunction with wide-awake community and business cooperation may alter the prospects of many of these railroad lines and communities.

Short-line railroads have been dying because they have not been imaginatively managed and have been trying to maintain the technical and labor standards of the main-line railroads, using their cast-off remnants and equipment. A light railway for low-speed light and efficient equipment can take advantage of the trend toward decentralization of industry and of mass-production to achieve profitable operation. Railroads are needed for mass-production industries. But the operations of a mass-production industry do not need to be located all in one city. They can be, in America, as in Sweden, distributed among many small towns, with one town assembling the specialized products of several others. Thus the small town can compete to advantage with the city, while industry can yet keep the morale, healthier setting, and less expensive environment of the communities that supply the surplus of labor. Instead of workers commuting to work in the city, industry may commute between communities of workers.
EDUCATION FOR COMMUNITY

College and Community

The lay and professional study of community by college students is a growing concern in many universities and colleges. "Field work," "laboratory" study, or "internship" in the community is difficult to make significant, and it runs the hazard of being superficial and misleading. Immature students commonly have had little experience of being members and effective participants in a community, and, having inadequate roots in any community, look upon it only from the standpoint of the outsider. These students are sometimes prematurely assigned tasks of making community surveys, of directing community organizations, recreation leadership, and social service agency work. Such superficial experiences may result in a naive desire to exert influence and leadership in a field where they themselves are ignorant novices. The students by such experience may have actually reduced their capacity for normal community fellowship.

As a means of building sounder understanding and community relationship of students who are studying the community, Dr. Regina H. Westcott, in the Health Department of the city of Milwaukee, is directing resident internships in family and community development. The program of this study aims to identify the student with the community and to develop freedom from cut-and-dried formulas of social group work.

The announcement of the internship for the present academic year describes the program as follows:

"Nature of the Work: Education in participation and leadership in family and community development through guided participation in the life and development of an actual community—some one selected area of the city having certain common interests and problems. The work deals with the psychological, social, emotional, and physical aspects of community life. The three stages in this education—orientation, participation without responsibility, and participation through specific responsibility—are marked by appropriate programs even though they necessarily merge.

"The methods of education include:

Lectures and discussions concerned both with current happenings and undertakings in the community and with basic principles and data.

Group conferences with local leaders regarding local situations.
Making informal surveys and the study of formal surveys.
Group conferences with city and national leaders who are making
significant contributions to some aspect of this family and community work.

Guided reading. Individual conferences.

Facilitation of the work of those students developing a special study or report as a part of their academic program.

This basic education is carried on primarily as a group process in preparation for professional work in human nurture in the community.

"Eligibility: University, seminary, and college students, of graduate or upper division standing, whose vocational interest involves some aspect of human nurture. Effort is made to include in each unit of interns representatives from such fields as medicine, social welfare, education, law, homemaking, architecture, public health, the ministry, and 'group work.'

"What Does It Mean to Intern? Resident interns in the past have stated that their experience of interning has turned out to be one of the most significant of their whole lives. This is because they become appreciative and appreciated participants in the life and development of an actual community under conditions which draw them into the pulsating web of relationships which is the matrix of human growth. One of these conditions is the removal of control over the interns by the set patterns of both the academic curriculum and the campus social program, each of which is more or less artificial. The new interns find themselves in situations where they must discover their real selves, discover the community and discover a program which brings them into effective and true relationship with this particular community.

"The required period of internship is one academic semester (or quarter), because this is the period for which the various colleges and universities from which the interns have come have been willing to give academic credit. We strongly recommend, however, that the internship be of an academic year's duration where this is possible.

"Guidance of participation by the interns comes from many sources:

The comments and reactions of the community members and organizations among which the interns work.

The regular staff members of the Project, augmented by the members of the contributing faculty who come in from time to time to share their experiences with the group. Workshop Sessions and Requested Discussions of Subject Matter or of relevant experiences are common forms for this aspect of guidance.

Excursions to places or institutions where related work is going on, and study of reports of family and community developments under way at some distance.

Cooperative evaluation of the emerging program, of the resultant action, and of the soundness and effectiveness of the whole develop-
mental process. This is carried on both in community groups and within the Project membership.

"All this means that the resident intern has little chance to assume the role of a spectator. He is an active participant. He comes to see with the eyes and hear with the ears of the people. Thus he comes to feel with them and to appreciate their ways and perspectives, even in those matters where he does not agree with their views. In summary, a resident intern must develop the readiness to subject himself to the changing requirements of an actively developing Project in an evolving community. Such an experience should be the first and foundational requirement of all professional people whose work involves human nurture.

"Applications: Those interested in registering for a resident-internship may secure an application form with directions by addressing: Dr. Regina H. Westcott, Consultant in Family and Community Development, Matthew Keenan Health Center, 3200 N. 36th St., Milwaukee 10, Wis."

Another significant course in community living is conducted at LaVerne College at Fresno, California. The Fresno Bee of July 10 carries a story of the LaVerne College project.

"Students of LaVerne College recently completed the rough carpentry on a new home for a burned-out family of Grove Avenue as part of a summer course in community living. The young people not only did the work under the project, sponsored by the Fresno Church of the Brethren, but also paid for the privilege.

"The students, who started with no knowledge of carpentry, donated their labor as part of a Church of the Brethren project designated as Students in Community Living. The Brethren Service Committee underwrites the educational expense of the Community Living Project, and the Church of the Brethren provides lodging, but each student pays $1 a day for food.

"In addition to the building of the house, the students heard discussions of community agencies, cultural and social activities in Fresno, and the relations between labor and management in the Fresno area."

—GRISCOM MORGAN

The Danish Folk High Schools, by Fridlev Skrubbeltrang (published in Denmark, 1947, 85 pp.; available from Community Service, Inc., $2.50).

Adult Education and the Struggle for Peace, by the International People’s College (published in Denmark, 1949, 400 pp.; available from Community Service, Inc., $5.00).

These two books from the Danish and international folk school movement together bring us up to date in the thoughts, development and circumstances of the people’s college and folk school.
Adult Education and the Struggle for Peace is a well illustrated and rich anthology of articles and essays on the environment, thought and work of the International People’s College, Elsinore, and other folk schools in Denmark and elsewhere. It is contributed by teachers, students and friends of the college on its twenty-fifth anniversary.

Although Denmark and Scandinavia loom large in this volume, a unique internationalism has come into being at the People’s College and here makes its appearance. Internationalism at the College is taking on flesh and blood and personality, ceasing to be a mere conglomeration of national cultures forced together by a shrinking world and barely touched by the idealists’ hope.

There can scarcely be a world or international culture unless there are small communities to which people from throughout the world come together in intimate association, each nationality to some extent modifying the others on a common basis of understanding created within the intimacy of the vital and progressive small community.

The International People’s College is founded on the need of a world civilization for a university of the world small enough—as such universities have been when most productive—to let the world mingle intimately so as to become a community. Peter Manniche expresses this mission of the International People’s College as follows:

“Renewal usually comes in small groups. Those who have really experienced fellowship in a small international community, and later, in silence, have endeavored to interpret to God and their conscience the experience they have gained, ought to have special qualifications for giving to the world values which can strengthen international cooperation.” In their anniversary volume the teachers, students and friends of the International People’s College demonstrate those qualifications in the quality of their new developing thoughts and culture.

The book is divided into four parts. First is a series of essays about the People’s College itself. A group of essays on the cultural background of the People’s College forms the second part. It ranges from a discussion of internationalism—or supernaturalism—in education to excellent essays on the folk school, on Grundtvig, and a penetrating study of Scandinavia. Part three surveys adult education—particularly in terms of the people’s college—in other lands, and part four reviews other active fields of work to promote peace. Fifty-four essays are included from many able people throughout the world.

The Danish Folk High Schools is an excellent survey of the Danish folk schools, their history, wartime experience and post-war development. It is well written, up-to-date, and attractively printed and illustrated.
Experimental Communities


The report of this conference on social experimentation on the community level is an authentic and readable survey of some of the best experimentation within primary-group communities in the South. It gives us the well developed and mature understanding of people who have spent many years working in true self-help communities.

The more detailed account of Participating Experimental Communities will be valuable to those desiring to make a more intimate study of individual community projects.

The following extracts from the conference report are particularly valuable and are representative of the conference.

This two-day conference brought out in bold relief the problem of the small, independent farmer in a changing economy. He finds himself without the means or the technical know-how to get in step with the trend. It also pointed out that the professional workers are aware of the change, but do not have adequate staff or resources to help the farmers make these changes. It is hoped that the organization formed by the representatives at the conference will be the instrument to help them better understand the nature of the problems and through collective efforts to do something to improve the situation...

Most of these projects are operating in communities of small landowners. These communities are characterized by small farms, large families, and a low level of agricultural technology. This suggests that the land available for ownership by low-income families is either land that the plantation operators have mined of all its fertility or hill land that never possessed much fertility. The land of high or potentially high fertility is still in the possession of the large landowners and operated by tenants or paid farm laborers. The problem that came out time after time in this conference was that the community had too many people and too few resources.

During a panel discussion the following was brought out by the members:

The community is the adaptive mechanism that a population utilizes for survival. Therefore, there is a very close correlation between the degree of community organization and the development of resources available to the community.
The social organization that has existed so long in the rural South is in the process of changing. This accounts for our renewed interest in rural community organization. The picker is displacing hands. All the growth of farm mechanization, pasture, and livestock has made tremendous progress in the last decade. The old traditional tenant farm organization is on its way out. The new type of social organization is emerging. Its contours are dimly visible. We do not know what it will be; we do know, however, that rural communities will be regrouped to fit into a mechanized and livestock farming program. The people being pushed off the farms will not find job opportunities as fast as they are displaced. In all likelihood the number of subsistence farmers will increase during the transition period. The subsistence farm community will be in a much more precarious position than at any time in history, because industrialization and urbanization have so completely dominated our society that most of the arts of self-sufficiency have been lost. People must have money income either from the sale of their labor or through relief of some sort.

The Rural Center must help the people to work out the best possible adjustment during this transition period, and these centers must help the government and welfare agencies to devise the most effective methods to supplement the efforts of the people in making these adjustments.

The leadership needed for this transition period is not being trained in the established institutions of the South. The problem is too complex for a specialist. The leader needed to cope with rural economy must be a "generalist," that is, his academic training should include a knowledge of population, human ecology, agronomy, agriculture, economics, rural sociology, and social psychology. It is not expected that the generalist will master any of these fields of study, but community problems cut across all of them. The generalist must have a working knowledge of all of these areas so that he can fit the specialists into their proper relationship in planning for better rural communities.

The training of generalists is not enough. If effective community planning is done, then the local leaders in the community must be brought into the training program, because it is they and not the professional leaders who will bring about the change.

In a talk on "The Guiding Principles of the American Missionary Association in the Rural Community Development," Ruth Morton, Director of Schools, American Missionary Association, New York City, defined principles that apply to "primary community" service work everywhere.*

*This address has been published independently by the American Missionary Association. 287 Fourth Avenue. New York 10.
"In our centers," she said, "we recognize that all of the learning must be concrete. We also need to recognize some ways of working with adults. Our responsibility in educating adults is not so much to give actual information, as to see and hear and understand what they see and hear. We as teachers are so interested in teaching that we do not allow people to learn. Our task is to motivate people. In choosing our leaders, we like to have skilled people, but people are not employed for this reason. They are important because we think they can get people to think. These Centers are thought centers. No organization or person can solve any other person's or organization's problems.

"We put a good deal of stock in Cooperatives and Credit Unions, not because they are the most important, but because they teach the basic social elements of working and living together. Then they serve to awaken and enliven people. The transition from selfish to unselfish ends develops best in the intimate give-and-take of group life. In all our Community Centers we lay the great stress on working together. If you are going to be in an adult education program, you have to take the whole family.

"We believe in the little people. We believe in their ultimate ability to solve their own problems. In our projects we differ in two ways. We give a leader, and physical facilities, to each community. We are intent on getting people to stand on their own feet. It may surprise you when I say that we do not select anyone for the American Missionary Association on training in school. No one community project is the leader's pet plan. It is group leadership. Our leaders have to be modest, self-effacing, and not too good talkers. They must listen to people and understand them. All of our leaders have to identify themselves completely with the community. When they go into the community they are to proceed slowly and soundly. They must be able to grasp and find ideas. We are all here to learn and not to teach. Leaders have to have the technique for developing a group process. The people have to be listened to and trusted. In getting started we say to our workers—be simple, respectable, and thought-provoking. There should be a minimum of advertising, but if a thing gets around, that is good."

Experimental Communities participating in the Tuskegee conference.

The Highlander Folk School is an experiment with mountain people dependent on worn-out coal mines, cut-over timber, a summer resort and a college for livelihood. The school has provided the people with a library, nursery school, health facilities, adult education and scientific farm management. These efforts have helped the people, but try as hard as it may the school has not been able to develop the local resources to the point to provide adequate living for the ever-increasing population. The school has recognized the fact that training for migration must be a part of its educational pro-
gram also. Consequently people are educated for job opportunities in nearby Chattanooga and far-off Detroit.

The program in Harris-Barrett Community is a project in low-cost houses. Tuskegee Institute supplies the technical leadership, the part-time farmers in this community supply the sand, labor, and cash needed for cement, roofing, doors, windows, plumbing and electrical fixtures.

At Cross Roads Community, another project sponsored by Tuskegee Institute, the problem is to reverse the trend from subsistence to commercial farming.

The Log Cabin Community in Sparta, Georgia, is demonstrating the effectiveness of large-scale commercial farming under sympathetic and intelligent leadership. All farming practices in the Log Cabin Community are scientific and market-oriented. Emphasis is placed on quality.

In the Macedonia Cooperative Community, scientific utilization of the natural resources is under way. The 820-acre plot has timber and land suitable for pasture and livestock. The people on this cooperative project are tree and dairy farmers. This is an experiment in cooperative living. The aim is not only to make money, but to provide educational, recreational, and health facilities for the people.

Bricks, Dorchester, Lincoln and Cotton Valley Centers are projects of the American Missionary Association. They provide buildings and professional workers to help the rural families in these areas to find a better way of life. At Bricks the emphasis is on educating tenant farmers to become landowners. This education is received on the farms owned and operated by the Bricks Center. The project at Dorchester is an experiment in Credit Unions, political action and a health clinic. Cotton Valley is an experiment in community clinics.

The work at Marion Cooperative is an experiment in transitional agriculture. The farmers are in the process of going from cotton to cattle. In this process many farm families are being displaced. They need education and training for industrial urban centers. Those who remain need education, training and credit. Credit Unions and Farmers' Purchasing Cooperatives are techniques being tried.

Sabine Farms represents a farm settlement project that was set up by federal funds, but federal funds were finally withdrawn. A private college took over where the government left off. This is now an experiment with a group of ex-tenant farmers becoming landowners, with education provided by the college. The method used here is a Farmers' Marketing and Purchasing Cooperative. This experiment is proving rather successful. The turnover of families has been negligible, the rate of payments is ahead of schedule. The Farmers' Cooperative has been financially successful.
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