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of 1844 and its various sequelæ. But, as Professor Foxwell aptly says, "the Act has been discussed *ad nauseum*," and the "earlier" portion of the history of the Bank "has never before been thrown into a form so convenient for English students," while "in the later part some new matter of interest, especially the sketch of the relations between the Bank and the Treasury," will be found. Professor Andréadès' book, indeed, as a whole must, as Professor Foxwell appropriately observes, "be held to be in many respects a *tour de force*." "Written by a Greek in French," "notwithstanding the double difficulty with which the author had to contend in describing an institution, so characteristically English, in a language not his own, it is the most comprehensive and most readable account of the Bank yet published."

And, we may remark in conclusion, what an instructive and fascinating chapter of economic history is unfolded in this narrative! The prominent part played by this single institution in the commercial and industrial development of our country is emphasised by the apology of the author for introducing into his account so much of general history; for the progress of our manufacture and our trade was in fact largely dependent on the creation and extension of an effective organisation of credit, such as the Bank supplied, systematised, and represented. The vast proportions indeed of the structure, which has finally been reared on the basis of modern banking, as first laid tentatively by those Goldsmiths who were the predecessors and the opponents of the Bank, are not more astonishing than is the strange but true paradox furnished at the present day, as another able author has pointed out in a recent book. For the fear of an internal panic may be now to all practical purposes dismissed by the pregnant reflection that the Bank of England could in effect at such a season enlarge its own deposits by giving the precise accommodation which they would naturally desire to those surrounding banking institutions which compose the hierarchy of which the Bank itself occupies the central highest place. The wonderful process which thus took its genesis from the operations of the Goldsmiths, and has reached its consummation in this identity of "cash" with the deposits in the Banking Department of the Bank of England, is traced with care and explained in detail in Professor Andréadès' history now translated into English under such favouring auspices. The book should surely find a place henceforth upon the shelves of every English economic student's library.

L.L.P.

19.—*Soziale Gesetzgebung und Statistik. Ein Beitrag zur Frage der Errichtung eines Eidgenössischen Sozialstatistischen Amtes.* Von Dr. N. Reichesberg. viii + 138 pp. Bern: Scheitlin Spring und Cie., 1908.

This monograph by Dr. Reichesberg is a sustained argument for the formation in Switzerland of a Federal Bureau for Social Statistics. To the foreigner, the sections of chief interest will be the two introductory chapters on "the problems of social legislation," and "the claims of social legislation on statistics."

The author commences by protesting against the usual definition of "social legislation" as "legislation intended to alleviate the lot of the working classes." Such a definition, he argues, is unscientific and too narrow. Any legislation is social legislation which interferes in the struggle between different social classes, and is directed towards the attainment of some definite social ideal. He regards it as the problem of social legislation to weaken and ultimately abolish class distinctions and class strife, and as the immediate duty of such legislation to support that form of production which is in a position to produce the greatest quantity of goods with the least expenditure of human labour, whilst removing everything in the process of production which may be detrimental to the workers. A systematic collection of social statistics is needed which shall be definitely and consciously adapted to the ends of social legislation.

But such a general statement hardly carries us far, and we must confess to having read Dr. Reichesberg's chapter on the claims of social legislation on statistics with some disappointment, for it appears to us lacking in practical and definite suggestion. We concur that the term "social statistics" should not be limited to statistics affecting the working classes—in fact we do not think that it would be so understood in this country—and we agree that even the labour statistics of the present day (as illustrated by those of our own Labour Department) do not give "a complete picture" of the economic condition of the working classes. We further concur with the author in thinking that the working classes should not be treated alone but as an integral part of society. But surely the question is what statistics should be collected and in what way? To these definite questions the author gives no definite answers, but puts off the enquiring reader with a few generalities as to the futility of social legislation in the absence of necessary information, the desirability of statistics exhibiting the tendencies of social development, the exact conditions of life of different social classes, and the productivities of different forms of industrial organisation. The present work, he says, is not the place for a detailed programme. If the author was prepared with a programme it was, however, we think, a mistake of judgment not to include it: it would have given reality to a rather abstract argument.

The introductory chapters are followed by an interesting sketch of the historical development and the present state of federal statistics in Switzerland, the growth of which appears to have been seriously hindered by the insufficiency of the power of the Central over the Cantonal Authorities (several of which possess their own Statistical Bureaus, all acting completely independently of one another), as well as by the very inadequate equipment of the Central Bureau. A discussion follows on the utilisation of the voluntary "class-interests organisations" of Switzerland—*i.e.*, the four recognised organisations of traders, employers, and workmen—in social and statistical inquiries.

The author concludes that a special "Social Statistical Bureau" should be formed, which should, in fact if not in name, be

independent of the present Federal Statistical Bureau. It should be assisted by an Advisory Committee, on which the above-mentioned Associations should be represented, which should not only be responsible for fixing, in conjunction with the Director of the Bureau, the general lines on which the statistical inquiries should be conducted, but should also have the power to initiate investigations of a non-statistical type ancillary to the inquiries made by the Bureau. G.U.Y.

20.—*Essais de statistique morale. I. Le suicide.* Par Camille Jacquart. 106 pp., 8vo. Bruxelles: A. Dewitt, 1908.

This is the first of a series of essays on moral statistics promised by M. Camille Jacquart, with no intention of trespassing on the problem of free-will, but simply of studying a certain number of acts which throw some light on the moral condition of the population, with especial reference to Belgium. It is unfortunately true, as the author says, that no official statistical bureau records our acts of virtue, and consequently when we speak of moral statistics we really mean statistics of immorality. Of these, the statistics of suicide form one important section, and, owing to the number of special studies that have been written on the subject, an essay thereon forms a not unnatural introduction to the series.

The present monograph falls into two distinct portions, the first dealing with Belgium alone and the second giving international comparisons. The annual rate of morality from suicide in Belgium has increased rapidly during the last thirty years, as in most other European countries. During the years 1876 to 1884 the rate averaged 98 per million of the population, during 1901-05 no less than 125 per million, an increase of 28 per cent. The progression has not, however, been at all uniform, but has fluctuated to a considerable extent with the course of trade. Little light can be thrown on the relation between suicide and civil condition in Belgium, as the returns are not classified by age and civil condition in combination. The same holds true, apparently, for occupation, but the few data available and the figures for suicide rates in different districts suggest that by far the higher rates are found amongst the lower and the industrial classes.

The information given in the international section is a little scrappy, and might, we think, have been made more complete and up to date. Of the figures given incidentally, those contrasting the rates in the Catholic and Protestant cantons of Switzerland, cited from the *Statistique de la Suisse*, are most interesting; both in industrial and in agricultural districts the suicide rate for Catholics is very much lower than that of Protestants.

Considered from the international standpoint, the rate of suicide in Belgium is moderate, but higher than in this country. M. Jacquart refuses to attach much weight to the rate in this country (p. 61 and p. 85), as he holds it to be in defect, seeing that "the authorities charged with making the inquest in cases of suicide are disposed to admit, in every case which leaves room for doubt, accident or mental alienation as the cause of death." A death is, however, classified as