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men's consciousness. All through history intelligent and courageous individuals have been picking up the fragments and piecing them together again. If this weren't true mankind would hardly have survived the tussle for food round the mouths of the caves in the ice age.

It is a time for taking stock. Perhaps some critical voices can make themselves heard. Instead of throwing down their cards in a fit of pique it is the duty of men of intelligence and learning to get to work, as they always must, piecing together civili-

zation's broken fragments, dissecting the generalized commonplaces that obscure realities, sorting out truth from falsehood, extolling the good and decrying the evil. Even if it were possible at any time, this particular moment would be the wrong time for a man of letters to resign from responsibility. Suppose you did shake the dust of Idlewild off your feet would the dust of the new Roman airport be so different? There is really no sense to the cry of the clown in the English musical: "Stop the world; I want to get off."

machine, the forms of city government, the political roles of city employees, voters, civic leaders, businessmen, labor, Negroes, and the press. In each case one senses a serious and largely successful effort to be objective. It would be difficult to read a more dispassionate statement about the NAACP in politics than is found here. For example, the small number of Negroes who belong to the organization (an average of 3 or 4 per cent in various cities) is surely a lesson in the power of the small group to control politics.

Some Cities Are Abnormal

FRANCIS G. WILSON

AMERICAN CONSERVATIVES usually say they favor decentralization and liberty in local government, but they seldom write about cities. They do not ask whether cities are normal or abnormal, that is, whether anything can be done about them, or

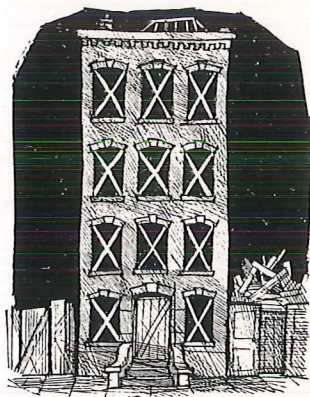
City Politics, by Edward C. Banfield and James Q. Wilson. Harvard, \$6.95

Cambridge: HUP, 1963

whether they should just be described while the more irresponsible reformers are held at bay. Curiously, this year is going to be a great season for New York slums in our television contributions to dramatic culture. It would appear that the Western gunman is being replaced by the slum social worker, coach, or psychiatrist. All of these characters succeed in their social work, but it will be some time, of course, before the recipients of their therapy have reached maturity.

Banfield and Wilson have written a book which does not fit in with the new enthusiasm for social work in the New York slums, or in any other slum area. This is a book about cities; it deals with social forces in the whiplash of politics, not with the theory of the community. In contrast, writing about cities has for long been largely the preserve of the melioristic and progressive writer of political science textbooks. The city has been the playground of those who are urging some particular reform. Though the conservative can get his facts from this book, the professional

reformer of the municipal associations will not find his ideology supported. Instead, the authors tell us that government cannot do much about some of the most exasperating of human situations, that greater evils (unspecified) are perhaps ahead, and that professional staffs of groups and associations, being Liberal intellectuals, often read their conclusions into reports when those who provide the money think quite otherwise. While the authors suggest that city cleavages do not fit into the Liberal-conservative pattern, the im-



perfect of this pattern on the city through the national bureaucracy is not adequately profiled.

Much of the material of the textbook in municipal government is included. The authors describe the legal position of the city in the state and federal system, efforts at planning, the work of the party and the

ANYONE who is reflective about the issue of the city will miss a comparison with European traditions of city life. This book deals with the United States. There is no comparison with past time, or with cities in other parts of the world.

On the last page the authors insist there is nothing to be gained from speculation on the possibility that there will be greater evils than "municipal reformers have ever contemplated." But isn't there? Again, the most fundamental problem is one that cannot be solved in a free society or even relieved by government action at any level, local, state, or national. That is, people still have a right to move out of the central city when living becomes unbearable. This is refreshing, and will no doubt irritate the Liberal who may believe there is a solution for every issue, even if he has to create the problem in the first place.

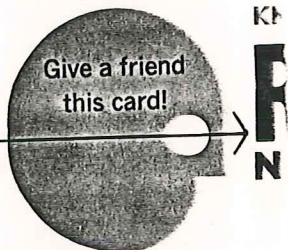
Though reformers have not produced the results they have intended, city government has improved because of "the steady diffusion in our culture of the political ideal of the Anglo-Saxon Protestant middle-class political ethos." But from numerous references in the book the WASPS (White Anglo-Saxon Protestants) are hard to find and the ethic of reform is carried forward mostly by non-Anglo-Saxon civic leaders. If the authors really understood the varieties of religious tradition, or even more broadly the Jewish-Christian tradition, they would not have to explain municipal idealism in New York or elsewhere as a variety of the Anglo-Saxon Protestant ethic. Some Catholics have been powerful people in the establishment of human relations and interracial groups, and Jewish idealism is hardly a child of Protestantism.

Broken Eggs

NAT

THE MEMOIRS OF VICTOR SERGE, the concluding volume of Deutscher's trilogy on Leonid Brezhnev, are descriptions of the development of the Soviet messianic totalitarian system by two of its heretics: Deutscher and Serge. Of these books, that of Deutscher is broader in its vision, more original in its outlook and richer in its original insights.

Serge was an enormously popular man of letters whose books have been largely neglected because he was a revolutionary who could not see the future.



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those French anarchist circles combined ecstatic devotion to brotherhood and fraternity with a contempt for the dregs of life, an affinity for the morally debased, and an attraction to politically senseless assassinations.

From the profoundly mass-appealing ambient of anarchism, Serge proceeded via various prisons to revolutionary Russia, where he became a high functionary of the Comintern. In Petrograd, "the metropolis of Hunger, of Hatred, and of Violence," Serge's keen nose sniffed out moral corruption which he characterized the Soviet regime in its first days of power. Serge saw the rise of the Cheka to an absolute legal state within the state, officers were characterized by zhinsky himself as early as "half-rotten." He observed that the Cheka deliberately chose as its