Then follows a chapter dealing more specifically with homicide in the United States. The author calls attention to the relatively high rate which is still increasing, although possible explanations of this increase are reviewed with results which are largely negative. His summary is as follows:

If, therefore, an attempt is made to understand why the homicide rates of the United States are so much higher than those of other civilized countries, emphasis should be laid upon the presence in this country of influential folkways or culture patterns, most of them survivals of more barbarous days, when human life was little esteemed.

A study of specific slayings leads the author to the conclusion that we need better regulations regarding the sale of firearms and their concealed possession. The reviewer is not entirely convinced by the arguments presented of the importance of such regulations, and the conclusions in this chapter would seem to be in some degree opposed to the conclusion quoted above as to the causes of murder in the United States.

A survey of opinions as to personality of slayers concludes with a belief that they are “weak in conflict.” The opinions of divers students of homicide are given attempting to classify homicides psychologically. These psychological classifications seem quite involved compared with the more obvious cultural groupings found among homicides. It would seem that too much attention is paid by the author to philosophical formulas rather than to data concerning studies of murderers.

There is a chapter entitled “The Negro and Homicide” which is excellent and extremely fair. After reviewing considerable material dealing with this matter the author thinks that it is possible that if the same standards of comparison were used there would be found relatively little racial difference.

Abundant material is presented showing failure to properly punish homicide in the United States and the author concludes after examination that the weight of evidence is against capital punishment. In fact, he concludes with the statement that little reliance can be placed upon punishment, improvement depending more upon changing attitudes and values.

A comparison of homicide with other social phenomena shows little correlation except that there seems to be a distinct relation between the increase of homicide and rapid growth of a community, especially of a city.

Chapter nine is one of the longest in the book, occupying thirty-nine pages and deals with seasonal variations in homicide. This chapter is rather tedious and seems somewhat out of proportion. As might be assumed before reading it concludes that there is little if any correlation.

The book concludes with a chapter on the preparation of data giving numerous statistical tables especially a mass of data giving number of homicides in various states and counties. This material has been used throughout the book for purposes of exposition. There is an adequate bibliography and a good index.

On the whole this book is excellent and should be very welcome. It would perhaps have been better if original studies had been used for reference rather than so many newspaper and magazine articles, but the material has been used temperately and has been carefully selected.

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Dr. Stauffer, who is economist in the State Department of Taxation, here tells
us, with many tables, what is right and what is wrong with taxation in the State of Virginia. More is right than is wrong but all is by no means right.

The author shows that government costs in Virginia have grown less rapidly in recent years than they have in the average state. The same is true of governmental debt. This conservative policy may have meant poorer roads and schools than other states were developing but it has also meant less worry and fewer defaults during the current depression. Virginia is well below the average of the 48 states in ratio of taxes to wealth and of taxes to net income.

A few years ago Virginia wrote into her constitution the principle of separation of sources: the state to take certain sources of revenue such as the income tax, the local governments to take different sources, especially the tax on real estate. This reform (?) is not an unmitigated success, certain problems, especially the assessment of real estate and of corporate property in general, proving troublesome. The author believes that the classified property tax, while superior to the general property tax, is not producing the results it ought to. There are too many classes of intangibles with haphazard and unsound rates. Bank deposits are taxed against the individual whereas they ought to be taxed against the bank. The author recommends that all intangibles be taxed as property at a low rate.

The income tax does not seem to be producing as it should, yielding only about 12 per cent of the total state revenue in 1927. This is partly due to low rates and high exemptions, and partly perhaps to structural weaknesses in the law itself.

Dr. Stauffer does not face the question whether the necessary functions of government are adequately performed in Virginia, especially education. Low taxes in the state may be at the expense of the childhood of the state. And it may be that Virginia has, like other southern states, low taxes because she has low tax-paying ability and has low tax-paying ability because she has low taxes.

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These essays, two of which have not been previously published, and three of which are now for the first time made available by the editor, from lecture notes and manuscripts left by the late Mr. Field, are a welcome addition to the literature on population. Although written between 1906 and 1917, the essays reveal a remarkable freshness of view, which, coupled with their sound scholarship, make them of more than ephemeral interest. Of the fifteen papers comprising the volume, six are devoted to different aspects of the Malthusian controversy and its development in England and in this country, leading finally to the propaganda and adoption of birth control methods. Such is the irony of history. Contraception legitimately derives from Malthus—offspring he would violently have repudiated. Three essays consider some problems in eugenics, which in its original historical setting, as a discussion of the adverse effects of differential fertility, shows more numerous affiliations with Malthus and Darwin than is generally suspected. From this angle Galton, the creator of eugenics, may be considered as its midwife. Three essays take up a number of miscellaneous population problems, such as demographic aspects of the last war, individuation and genesis, and differential fertility. The remaining three papers deal respectively with the place of economic theory in