

The Birmingham Eccentric

BIRMINGHAM, MICHIGAN

Thursday, May 14, 1959

SECTION
B

A most remarkable mental change takes place during the life of an average person. What one regards as his or that in youth often changes in middle age—and then during the so-called "evening hours" another and, perhaps, more mellow and philosophical change takes place. Thus, as in all of the world's life, so individually, change appears as the law of man's living.



BOOKS and REVIEWS

Suburbia: Its People And Its Politics

By Robert C. Wood, 334 pp. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, \$4.00

Reviewed by SALLY PARSONS

Have we in suburbia created a ghetto system of society—a sort of large scale social fraternity? To this question, political scientist Robert C. Wood would answer a positive "yes."

In this exhaustive work Wood has used facts, statistics and theories as a point of departure for a lively, stimulating study of suburbia, why it developed, how it survives in the face of movements to assimilate it into the central city, and the likelihood of its future existence.

Suburbia, defined as an ideology, involves "a faith in communities of limited size and a belief in the conditions of intimacy." Historically the suburban community is seen as a renaissance of the Roman "republic in miniature," the small town grassroots ideal to which we all cling while modern methods surround us.

IN HIS discussion of the political nature of suburbia, Wood finds the following characteristics most noteworthy: the rise of nonpartisan sentiments, the increasing use of administrative and professional experts, and the astonishing amount of apathy on all political issues except those dealing with the public school.

A study of suburban public problems reveals that the expanded responsibilities of local government coupled with its apparent shortage of financial resources creates an unfortunate situation. The basic difficulty is that the major source of local governmental income is the property tax, which supplies the expensive, restricted suburb with plenty of money, while the poorer ones go bankrupt. The federal and state grants-in-aid programs help remedy the situation, but distribution is often arbitrary and unfair.

THE QUESTION most basic to the author is whether the values suburbia brings are better than the ones it destroys. Suburban organization is fundamentally fraternal. Which is admirable, as long as it serves to banish loneliness, supply a security, soothe nerves, bolster faltering egos, and foster togetherness and harmony. But ironically, the very freedom which the suburbite was seeking upon his exit from the city is even more restricted in the small fraternal community, where the unanimity that prevails leaves little room for strong dissenting individuals.

Wood recommends that the great organization—gargantuan metropolitan government—be adopted, because the small community destroys some of our basic American values. This is true in the field of law where a personalized form of government has replaced procedural requirements and contractual relations, and in the area of individual freedom where the fundamental rights of the minority—disagreement and opposition—have been repressed.

HOWEVER, the author feels that metropolitan reform is unlikely for some time to come. Suburbia is managing to plod along politically and economically although its methods are far from

satisfactory. In the final analysis, Wood himself admits to living in suburbia and is quite happy to "indict" himself by continuing to live there!

Elizabeth the Great

By Elizabeth Jenkins, 324 pp. New York, Coward-McCann, Inc. \$5.00

Reviewed by FRED MALLENDER

Few public figures, past or present, have so captured the imagination of historians, biographers and the general public as Elizabeth of England. At a time when the world was still a man's world, she was the most capable monarch in Europe.

Displeased by other royals, feared by many, she so ruled England as to leave her indelible mark for all time. She believed in peace as a necessary to prosperity and ably governed to maintain peace. Although luxury, particularly of costume and jewelry, always attracted Elizabeth, frugality, usually her beloved virtues. It was well that such was the case for her flamboyant father, Henry VIII, and her inept brother and sister had left England in a precarious financial position.

IN 1603 when Elizabeth died, England was the most prosperous nation in Europe, a prosperity that extended beyond the upper classes. The only child of Henry VIII's marriage to Ann Boleyn, Elizabeth was declared illegitimate after her mother's beheading. Throughout her childhood she lived in constant danger of being assassinated and as a virtual state prisoner.

Fortunately, Elizabeth was very close to her brother, Edward I, a fact that did not go unnoticed by those who tried to control the young king. Miss Jenkins also believes that the general view that Elizabeth and her sister Mary, better known as "Bloody Mary," were enemies, is incorrect. There is too much evidence of Mary's kindnesses and attentions to fully support such a theory.

THREE major factors account for Elizabeth's success as a monarch. Although of somewhat sickly constitution, she was a person of great mental and intellectual capabilities who could physically drive herself and exist on nervous energy.

Few monarchs have ever enjoyed her great popular success, a success which she carefully nurtured.

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tured. Likely the most important factor was her ability to select extremely capable men for her governing council. Her selections were based on ability, rather than birth, and her loyalty to these men was returned by them fourfold.

Name Webb Director At United

Appointment of Cleve Webb, 1095 Puritan, Birmingham, to the newly created position of director of a national marketers for the United Motors service division of General Motors is announced by Thomas F. Plant, general sales manager.

In his new post, Webb heads up a new department which has been established to handle sales activities in connection with the national marketing of United Motors' lines distributed by United Motors, including Delco batteries, Delco-Remy, Rochester carburetors, Del-

Local Engineer Heard, Honored

George E. Hubbel, President of Hubbel, Roth and Clark, Inc., Birmingham engineers, was on the schedule of the Michigan Sewage and Industrial Wastes Association conference here.

Hubbel addressed the group at its annual meet in Bay City Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of this week.



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Rev. Philip Gentile To Conduct Services For Congregationals

The Rev. Mr. Philip Gentile will preach at both services May 17 in the absence of the Rev. Mr. John D. Rose.

Mr. Gentile, who has been with the church since last July, has been directing the church's program of Christian Education, including work with the young people.

A coffee hour, served by the Women's association, Mrs. Melvin

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H. Humphrey, president, will follow each service.

THE J'ERS, A group of seventh and eighth graders, will be hosts May 17 to their parents for a special program in Fellowship Hall.

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