
Metallurgy. *Alvin S. Cohan.* No. 33, Vocational and Professional Monographs Series. Bellman Publishing Company, Cambridge 38, Massachusetts. Rev. Ed., 1955. 32 pp. \$1.00.

This monograph on metallurgy is typical of the more than seventy publications in this series,* which are designed to provide the essential information needed by a young person in considering a lifetime career. Each monograph is written by an authority in the field, and covers: history and development of the vocation; personal qualifications needed for entry; scholastic training needed; employment opportunities; remuneration; chances for advancement; advantages and disadvantages; bibliography and professional organizations.

These monographs contain more technical information than is found in most of the current literature on occupations, and are suited to the reading level of college rather than high school students. They are useful references for college or high school guidance workers. Bound in heavy paper covers, size 6 by 9 inches, the pamphlets average about 30 pages and retail at \$1.00 each, with discounts to schools, colleges, and libraries.

*Other titles in this series which appeared in new or revised editions during 1955 were: *Astronomy, Dentistry, Dairy Industry, Soap and Detergent Industry, and Tool and Die Industry.*

MARJORIE HAMMOND.

The North American Midwest: A Regional Geography. *John H. Garland, Ed.* John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York. 1955. viii+252 pp. College Edition, \$6.75—Trade Edition, \$8.00.

This is a competently written geography of the Midwest, mainly organized on an orthodox regional basis: an introductory chapter, followed by five chapters of systematic material, then ten chapters of regional material. In the regional sections, the Midwest is broken down into four inner and six outer regions, which in turn are broken down into smaller sub-regions. In most chapters, fragments of the natural-resources, facility, activity, institutional, and idea patterns are haphazardly arranged in encyclopedic-descriptive fashion (i.e., there is seldom an idea of hierarchy closely adhered to).

As usual in an edited volume, the quality of individual chapters varies widely. In the systematic sections, four chapters stand out. Chapter 1, *The Heart of a Continent*, does a creditable job of placing the Midwest in a national perspective. Chapter 4, *Significance of Agriculture*, and chapter 5, *Structure of Industry*, are both of high-quality descriptively and analytically. Chapter 6, *Trade and Transportation*, has more new material than any other chapter, and also gives the best national perspective of any chapter.

All ten of the regional chapters are strong on description, and short on disciplined structure. Chapter 7, *The West-Central Lowland*, and chapter 13, *The Lower Ohio Valley*, are especially interestingly portrayed. Chapter 10, *The Upper Mississippi Valley*, has a clear theme running through its presentation. Chapter 11, *Upper Great Lakes*, has the best hierarchial order of any regional chapter. All of the regional chapters have a wealth of interesting facts, but in most cases the organization of ideas does not lend itself to easy identification of the most important distinguishing characteristics or problems facing the region.

The volume ends abruptly, with no concluding chapter putting regional problems in a wider perspective of changing standards of living, changing material and social technology, changing demography, and changing natural-resources.

Little of this book is so interestingly written that a layman would take pleasure in reading it. Its wealth of factual background (well mapped but not photographed at all) certainly makes it a good college textbook. A classical portrayal of the Midwest still remains to be done (probably by a single gifted author rather than by a committee of competent specialists).

LAWRENCE A. HOFFMAN

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