

**PUBLICATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF  
SOCIAL ETHICS IN HARVARD UNIVERSITY, NO.  
3. A GUIDE TO READING IN SOCIAL ETHICS  
AND ALLIED SUBJECTS: LISTS OF BOOKS AND  
ARTICLES SELECTED AND DESCRIBED FOR THE  
USE OF GENERAL READERS**

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BY  
TEACHERS IN HARVARD UNIVERSITY



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## PREFATORY NOTE

THE following bibliography is compiled to meet a practical need which teachers of social ethics and kindred subjects are often forced to recognize. The absorbing interest of the modern social questions has led great numbers of persons to more or less serious study, and they find themselves bewildered both by the volume and the diversity of literature which solicits their attention. Appeals for counsel or guidance are received almost daily by a teacher, and his replies must be either very elaborate or very perfunctory. College students in their class work, charity-workers who look beyond the routine of their task, pastors of churches preparing for their classes in social questions, employers looking for the best types of industrial adjustment, working-men eager for instruction in economic reforms, women in their clubs, readers in their homes, — all these and many other types of inquirers turn to the University for suggestion and advice. Historical researches, erudite discussions, or elaborate lists compiled by professional bibliographers are not to the immediate purpose of these inquirers. They want to be informed concerning the best contemporary studies of social conditions and problems. Indeed, for the average student a common defect of bibliographies is their comprehensiveness. The more complete such a list is made, the more confusing it may become to one who cannot discriminate. A perfect bibliography may justify pride in the compiler, but may provoke despair in the reader. What he wants is not a hundred titles on his subject, but a dozen selected titles, with brief estimates of their importance or conclusions.

It has seemed, therefore, that a public service might be rendered by offering such counsel in systematic form, and by committing to teachers who are especially concerned with single aspects of social problems or welfare the section where each is most competent to advise. The present list represents an attempt to make this connection between the teaching of the University and a need of the modern world. Each compiler has had in mind, not a superficial reader, nor yet a learned scholar, but an intelligent and serious-minded student, who is willing to read substantial literature if it be commended to him as worth his while and is neither too voluminous nor too inaccessible. To such an inquirer each editor makes suggestions concerning the contents, spirit or doctrine of a book, not attempting a complete description or a final judgment, but as though answering the preliminary question of a student, "What kind of book is this?" The plan thus depends for its usefulness on the competency of the editors concerned, and each editor assumes responsibility for the section to which his name is prefixed. The books and articles named are in most instances selected from those which may be found in well-conducted public libraries and from publications issued within ten years. References to foreign languages are made only when equivalent titles are not available in English. Titles regarded by any editor as of the first importance may be starred by him.

In such a compilation by many writers there is likely to be both overlapping and overlooking. Some titles may be commented on more than once, and some may be altogether neglected. Yet the advantages of independent treatment may atone for such fragmentariness of method. It may be interesting to have the judgment of two persons on the same book, and it may be scarcely less interesting to observe what titles have seemed to an editor unimportant. The collaboration of representatives of many different departments of study in this promotion of one subject is also

an interesting illustration of University fellowship and loyalty, which may be a useful precedent in academic life. Finally, it must be recognized that a list thus designed to represent contemporary literature must soon become obsolete. It is, therefore, our intention, if this bibliography prove of service, to re-edit it at frequent intervals, hoping for the same generous coöperation of teachers in Harvard University which is now gratefully acknowledged. The present collection has had the valuable assistance of Dr. Benjamin Rand, Librarian of the Philosophical Department, in editorial supervision and scrutiny.

FRANCIS G. PEABODY.