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REVIEWS

THE EVERGLADES: RIVER OF GRASS, by Marjory Stoneman Douglas. New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1947. Pp. 390, \$3.50.

It took the talent of a first-rate novelist to do justice to the theme of this delightful addition to the "Rivers of America" book series. The distinguished authors who wrote, for example, the stories of the Mississippi, the St. Lawrence, and the Hudson had waiting for them within their subject-matter, the silver thread of running water that binds empires. Mrs. Douglas had a swamp. Limited by the material of this magnificent monotony and disciplined by the need for historical authenticity, she, nonetheless, has created a moving and beautiful book.

It is divided into what might be described as three movements: the origin and nature of the Everglades, the historical development of Florida, and the enormous importance of the Everglades as an influence shaping the past and future development of South Florida. Of the many men and women of practical affairs, probably only a small proportion of them realize the decisive effect which may be exerted upon their holdings in this area by this river of saw grass. The rock rim that cradles it, as Mrs. Douglas shows so clearly, controls the rise and fall of the water with the seasons. The resultant balance of the water tables is the balance upon which rests the future of the entire region. Predicated upon what this generation does about it may decide whether South Florida shall flourish or become, like the lands of ancient Carthage, a desert. It is a controllable situation - at present.

Past attempts to drain parts of the Everglades were primarily directed at reclaiming the land. These attempts were made without adequate study of the problem. The water table was lowered. During World War II, there were several dry seasons. The saw grass dried; the muck was burned and shrunk by the sun; fires broke out all over the glades; salt water infiltrated at the rate of 1000 feet per year ruining the ground for farming and destroying the wells. These are the effects of improper drainage.

There was an obvious need for a unified plan of drainage which could be carried out with respect to the glades as a whole. Governor Caldwell's plan in 1945 for over-all control was defeated. Of the individual counties, only Dade took steps, but this cannot be effective, as the problem is not one of a local type to be solved by the individual counties.

There is a unified plan available. It was made after a study of the problem as a whole, conducted on a scientific basis, free from local influences. During the war, a federal program of study of the "Ever-

glades Project of Soil and Water Conservation" was undertaken by the Soil Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture and Geological Survey. This report shows that excessive drainage would result in continued and increasing damage, that some parts preclude the possibility of drainage, and that others would never be usable even if drained. It was recommended that a large part of the Everglades be kept in its natural state. The recent formation of the Everglades National Park is a step towards the possible achievement of this goal. The report also recommended a single plan of drainage under the direction of a single engineer to avoid the conflicting demands of local areas. However, there has been no unified action taken. Activities of private interests still result in over-drainage. Mrs. Douglas concludes her discussion of this topic with the plea that some action be taken along the lines suggested by the project, to conserve both public and private values, which are now moving, step by step, to ruinous disaster.

In addition to the topic of conservation, Mrs. Douglas has developed the story of Florida from the time of discovery of America up to the present time. This historical account is a mixture of the well-known milestones of history and trivial events. The result is a quite broad, and yet personalized, history.

But Mrs. Douglas is interested in more than topographical, historical and economic phenomena. She sees more than rivers boiling with alligators. Civilization may have come late to the area, but she rejoices in its coming. Much of what she tells with the national reading public as an audience, has been told in greater detail, if less skillfully, by our local lauders. Of the University of Miami, she has this to say: "Miami had even learned to be proud of the most important thing the boom had begun and the bust had not killed, the University of Miami. It lived and grew because of the dogged courage of one man, Bowman F. Ashe. George Merrick in his expanding vision had touched on the idea of a university, endowed it with a million dollars of boom money and some land. There were paper promises of millions more. Ashe, a man with unlimited experience in practical education, had been employed as an executive secretary to get the university going. When the boom and the hurricant were over there was the land and the cement beginning of a vast Spanish building, no money at all, and Bowman F. Ashe. He had said emphatically when he came that he wanted never to work for an institution for which he would have to raise money. Everybody else gave up, not he. He had had an idea about how much a university was needed here, on this frontier between two continents. He thought he saw what could be done. So he was made president.

Dr. Ashe and the university went on somehow through years of almost complete destitution. He leased a big unfinished hotel building in Coral Gables, and scraped together a faculty willing to live on small pay and great hopes. A first class of a hundred twenty-five was gardedated from that hotel, with its celotex walls and cement stairs and temporary partitions. Dr. Ashe believed that a university could live on its tuition fees. Several years the faculty members who saw it as he did

followed his example and voluntarily cut salaries and lived as they could on next to nothing. The others quit.

They got small help from the people. The city of Coral Gables began to give money from the publicity fund. There were a few donations. The school lived through days when the faculty itself was torn with dissension, when the president was lied about and his aims belittled.

He held on through that, sweating out the summers when it looked as if they might not be able to open in the fall. His face, with its jutting nose, the flexible big mouth that can shut so tight, the eyes, deep set in the big skull and alive with the constant progress of his thought, showed the strain that carved deep the granite of his patience and his tenacity. The university went on. Trustees who could not stand the strain resigned and other men took their places. Men and women of his own caliber stood by the president, growing gray with him: Franklin Harris, Bertha Foster, Mary B. Merritt, and many others.

Arnold Volpe began a student symphony orchestra. They (sic) did not play very well at first and their (sic) public concerts were not crowded. Little by little the students improved. The orchestra added better musicians, and attracted great guest artists. People began to attend the concerts in crowds. He died having devoted his life to it, as did Orton Lowe who had begun the English Department and the Winter Institute of Literature. A School of Law was added to the School of Liberal Arts and the School of Music. A School of Education went directly out into the Dade County school system with experimental schools and classes for teachers. The Department of Adult Education opened classes to everyone.

The student body and the alumni grew proud of being part of a university in the making. They had a better football team, a distinguished tennis team. Miami began to be proud of it and refer civic problems to its faculty. The university went on, held together and improved by the man who had planned it as a university in which politics had no place and where teaching and thought might be sound and free.

Dr. Ashe saw hundreds of boys trained in his classrooms during the war, navy men, hundreds of young navigators for the Royal Air Force of Great Britain. Winston Churchill, in one of his two public speeches in the United States, expressed his recognition of that aid before a great university convocation at which he was awarded an honorary degree. Dr. Ashe would see a great new campus for a student body of more than five thousand young men and women."

So recently as last year, Mrs. Douglas thus underestimated by many thousands the size of the student body that Dr. Ashe would see. However, this conservative error is well-balanced by her too-enthusiastic appraisal of other matters.

However, it would be well to hope that both her faculties of judgment will prove themselves of some use if one wishes to develop an optimistic point of view. The conclusion is inescapable, upon uniting

both these traits, that even in her enthusiastic and overvaluated appraisals she may nonetheless have been too conservative.

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PRACTICE OF LAW by Claude R. Miller. Chicago: Callaghan & Company, 1946. Pp. XVI, 231. \$5.50.

The author's message in his preface—to the effect that "this book is a condensation of a great deal of information into the fewest possible words", is a masterpiece of understatement. Mr. Miller, a successful lawyer, and member of a prominent legal firm, has fulfilled that urge that many of us carry to the grave unsatisfied; he has written a book. The language is clear and concise, the style is simple and readable, the title is all-inclusive and all-embracing—and so is his book.

In 231 comparatively small pages, with print easy on the eyes, one interested in the practice of law may learn of early and present methods of legal education in this country; how to try a case, including the selection of the jury, direct and cross examination, and all other pertinent practicalities in trial procedure; a discussion of administrative practice; "how to practice law and live a long time"; preparation of wills; appellate procedure in all of its phases; the corporate merger; client-counselor relationships; labor relations, real-estate and insurance practice; how to secure business and maintain clients; and a score of other materials regarding phases of the substantive practice of the "ancient and honorable" profession.

The table of contents, with its clearly labelled chapters and descriptive sections, makes as interesting reading as does the substance proper. A casual inspection creates an almost irresistible urge to turn to Chapter II—"Choosing a place to practice", or Chapter IV—"Securing Business", or Chapter XV—"Some general advice", for the purpose of discovering what is contained in such fascinating sections titled "The Big City Law Firm", "Practicing Alone in a City", "The Country Town", "How One's Practice Grows", "Doing Business at the Same Old Stand", "The Key to Success", "Every Fixer a Self-Confessed Shyster", "Improving the Profession", "Some Promises for the Future", "Disbarment of Lawyers", and a host of others equally as intriguing.

For one interested in almost any phase of the actual practice of law, this volume offers 2 hours of light, pleasant, interesting reading, while the novice lawyer will undoubtedly read it with absorbing attention.

The book is replete with practical suggestions which the author bases on knowledge which he has acquired "the hard way", and which the beginner would do well to digest. If he is looking for "easy work, quick profits, and a life of leisure", Mr. Miller recommends that the fledgling attorney "had better turn to other fields for the attainment of these ends". The principles of thoroughness, honesty, diligence, prompt-