study will learn much about Indiana politics in the 1870s, and, by extension, will undoubtedly also learn much about midwestern politics in that decade.

One answer to the problem of creating and writing social science history, while at the same time making it attractive to the largest possible audience, may be found in the format used by Robert William Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman in their monumental work *Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery* (1974). Fogel and Engerman solved much of the problem by publishing their results in two volumes—a volume of readable prose which described their conclusions, and a second volume, *Time on the Cross: Evidence and Methods—A Supplement,* whose subtitle indicates its contents. While such a two-volume format may not be economically feasible for all social science history monographs, perhaps a more clear-cut division of single-volume works into two sections would be helpful. The first section could state the principal findings in everyday prose, while a second section contained the quantitative data, a description of the methods employed, and a discussion of the problems encountered. Such a format for Hammarberg's study would undoubtedly increase the number of persons who would read his principal findings, without denying to other readers the opportunity to study his data, to learn his methods, and to share his consideration of the problems faced in conducting the investigation.

Because Hammarberg's volume adds significantly to our understanding of late nineteenth-century midwestern political life, going beyond such earlier examples of the new political history as those of Jensen and Kleppner, it deserves the widest possible audience. To secure that audience, new historians, be they economic, political, or social historians, should devote themselves to the task of presenting their findings in the most attractive form possible, as well as to the task of applying social science methods and insights to their analysis of human experience. If Hammarberg and other social science historians develop as much skill in presenting their findings as they do in their search for understanding, the new history may help bridge, or at least narrow, the gulf which now exists between social science historians and others, and thereby secure the largest possible audience for the promising work of the new history.

——Thomas G. Ryan
University of Northern Iowa

Better City Government: Innovation in American Urban Politics, 1850-1937, by Kenneth Fox. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1977. pp. xxi, 222. $15.00.

Kenneth Fox, visiting Assistant Professor of History at the State University of New York, Binghampton, has written a thoroughly researched account of urban political theory and urban politics during the crucial years from 1850 to 1937. Trained by Thomas C. Cochran and Seymour Mandel-

baum, Fox is one of a growing group of historians who are taking a broader social science approach to studying the past. In this case *Better City Government* analyzes the development of "urban political innovation" in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. According to the author, this was a political theory which examined the special political problems of growing American cities and derived ways to deal with them. Fox traces the demise of traditional urban political theories, the rise of municipal law and political science as separate branches of study, the growth of a national urban reform movement, and the changes in city life which prompted the decline of that movement.

Traditional political systems, such as ward and city-wide machines, and early Progressive reforms, such as city commissions, failed completely to meet the problems of cities in the Gilded Age. As a result, urban political theorists began developing a new concept for governing urban areas. This started with Thomas Cooley's standardization of state law and John F. Dillon's development of municipal law. These two theorists established the idea that cities exist as separate political entities and should have their own independent systems of government. James Bryce further refined the process with his publication of *The American Commonwealth* in 1888. Bryce was responsible for separating the disciplines of law and political science, and establishing the latter as a viable subject of study. Then Frank Goodnow brought theory to the city by developing municipal political science with its key concept of home rule.

With this theoretical base, young reformers moved from civil service reform to changing urban life. They started with local Good Government Clubs and eventually established the National Municipal League, which offered its Municipal Program as an ideal system for urban reform. At the same time, the newly-created Census Bureau began pushing for changes in city government. These groups helped develop the functionalist model for reforming urban political systems. Urban political scientists argued that cities needed a unique, independent form of government because of the special problems created by the high concentration of population. They favored a strong mayor with support from centralized, functionally-oriented executive departments. Thus, functional innovation became the basis for organizing city governments until the late 1930s. And, increases in government spending over this period seem to indicate that this system was responsible for getting more money per capita to more services for city residents.

Functionalism, which was to the left of most urban theories because of its emphasis on democratic local control, gradually faded after 1937. The rise of the decentralized metropolis and the growth of the suburbs undermined the whole argument for functional innovation. This approach was replaced by a new system of innovation in the 1930s which involved more extensive national planning. The author calls this Keynsian-pluralist innovation. Ultimately each of these theories demonstrates the need for the historian and the political scientist to be more than just a detached observer; social scientists must

seek and test ways that society can deal with its problems, both urban and rural.

Better City Government is a very well-researched volume and the author provides us with a solid historical study of how political theory develops and how it is put to use. Unfortunately the book also shows that historians and political scientists are all too often not trained as writers. The author's style is turgid and typical of most doctoral dissertations; sometimes this detracts from the impact of the book's very important contribution to American urban history.

——**James Ware**
Louisiana State University
at Eunice

Agriculture in the Great Plains, 1876-1936. Edited by Thomas R. Wessel. Washington, D.C.: Agricultural History Society, 1976. pp. 263. $8.00.

The Agricultural History Society began a series of symposiums on specialized topics in 1967. The third, on Midwestern agriculture, was held at Iowa State University and the resulting volume was reviewed in the *Annals* (43: 156). *Agriculture in the Great Plains, 1876-1936* prints the papers read at the sixth symposium, at Montana State University, Bozeman. The time span is limited to the period of white agricultural settlement and adaptation, not fully successful, to the semi-arid climate. Earlier Indian farming and the brief but romanticized open range livestock industry are therefore excluded. The area discussed stretches from Texas to the Canadian Prairie Provinces.

One contributor, political scientist Donald Hadwiger, teaches at Iowa State University and the editor, Thomas R. Wessel of the host institution, and several others are former Iowans. Several papers cite the work of Atlantic native M. L. Wilson and early Iowa State professor Charles Bessey. Much attention is paid to failures by early twentieth-century Great Plains agriculturists from the farms and cities of more humid states, presumably including Iowa. Editor Wessel properly wrote that not every subject can be covered but that a symposium should be "raising questions, exchanging information, and stimulating further research." Questions raised by this volume, from an Iowa perspective, include the reasons for leaving the humid region of usually adequate rainfall for crops and forage. Agricultural historians of particular regions overlook most farmers who move elsewhere or who leave agriculture altogether. How many young Iowans were unable or unwilling to establish themselves at home because of population growth, rising land prices, or increasing tenancy? What were the actual or perceived differences between buying or renting in Iowa and moving to newer states? Did migration routes change from nineteenth-century patterns? How effective was the promotion of new farms on the Plains? How many Iowa farmers moved instead to grow-