

READING LIST

Suggested by C. H. Murphy, Jr., to El Dorado High School students
during National Library Week, April, 1964

1. *Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World*. Sir Edward Creasy.
Those few battles of which a contrary event would have substantially varied the drama of the world in all of its subsequent scenes. There is a succinct synopsis of history between these turning points.
2. *The English Philosophers from Bacon to Mill*.
The preface is a good introduction to the evolution of British philosophical thought. Some of the selections, particularly those from Bishop Berkeley's works, are hard going and scarcely seem worth the effort today - at least that was my own reaction. The selections which culminate in Mill's doctrine of utilitarianism (unfortunately Bentham is not included) are worth every bit of effort required to master them. John Locke's "Essay Concerning the True Origin, Extent, and End of Civil Government" is a must because it is the first English language statement under one cover of the principles that finally led to the United States Constitution.
3. *Das Kapital*. Karl Marx.
This and its companion work, *The Communist Manifesto*, are as important to that part of the world led by the Soviet Union as is Locke's work to us. Never be afraid of an idea - read every word of it.
4. *The Wealth of Nations*. Adam Smith.
The foundation stone of economics as we understand it today. Mistakenly regarded as conservative in outlook, Smith's work - once one accustoms one's self to the archaic language - is as modern as tomorrow. Since most economic thought until the beginning of this century either flowed from or duplicated *The Wealth of Nations* it is suggested that time be devoted to familiarization with it in depth rather than scattering attention to and among the works of such authors as Ricardo, interesting as they are.
5. *The Theory of Economic Development*. Joseph Schumpeter.
Short but profound. Like *The Wealth of Nations* this statement of economic theory is based upon such perceptive insight into human nature that it is almost as worthwhile as a work of philosophy as of economics.
6. *The General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money*. John Maynard Keynes.
Just as *The Wealth of Nations* is mistakenly regarded as an authority for conservative thought Keynes' *General Theory* is mistakenly regarded as an authority for radical ideas. A close reading from the four corners, as distinguished from isolated sections taken out of context, will reveal a surprising degree of conservatism and orthodoxy. It's also of interest that Keynes became a very wealthy man by simply applying his ideas to personal investment while devoting his time to a life of teaching and study.
7. *Life of John Marshall*. Albert Beveridge.
A long (several volumes) but intriguing biography of the person who probably more than any other one man established the federal authority in our country and made firm the tripartite division of such authority into its Executive, Legislative, and Judicial Branches. As a result our Constitution became, as the saying goes, a living document.
8. A Shakespearean tragedy of your own choice.
9. *The Education of Henry Adams*. Henry Adams.
Rewarding for its facility and felicity of expression. Demonstration of the fact that education ceases on the day of death, not on the day of graduation.
10. A good small anthology, such as *101 Famous Poems*.
11. *A Treasury of the Familiar*. Edited by Ralph L. Woods.
12. *A History of the Peloponnesian War*. Thucydides.
Actually, a very poor history because of lack of organization of material. Because, however, of its penetrating analysis of the manner in which adversity can strip away the veneer of civilization, it has been said that one cannot be truly well educated without reading it.
13. *The Sermon on the Mount*. Our Lord Jesus Christ.
It is included in this list not for its religious inspiration, however magnificent that may be, but because it is the finest statement of ethical considerations available.