

## REVIEWS

### RECENT SOCIAL STUDIES

The publication of the first volume in the International Library of Sociology and Social Reconstruction brings home to us how backward this country has been in sociological studies and ensures our gratitude to the enterprising publishers for placing the series under the general editorship of Dr. Karl Mannheim, who by his two recent works has established himself as a foremost sociologist. His new work, *Diagnosis of Our Time*,<sup>1</sup> maintains that position. In this collection of essays Dr. Mannheim emphasises that, even when the actual fighting is over, the war will have to continue on a spiritual plane. For in the Great Society which has evolved in the last century many of our customs, traditions and techniques still relate to a parochial world, even to a pre-machine age. The inevitable result of this has been a crisis in valuations, and we have no agreed basic values with a spiritual content on which to build a new social order. At present we are in a transition period between a disintegrated laissez-faire which bore little relation to its label of 'democracy' and some form of social discipline, alternatively called 'controls' or 'planning.'

In the latter there are the obvious twin dangers of Communism and Fascism, and the author is at pains to expound a Third Way which 'although using the techniques of planning, maintains its democratic control, and keeps those spheres of freedom and free initiative which are the genuine safeguards of culture and humanity.' There is a penetrating chapter on the future of Youth wherein Dr. Mannheim rightly underlines the fact that hitherto far too much emphasis has been given to the rights of Youth and not enough to the needs and claims of society.

But for the Christian the most interesting section is the last sixty-five pages, which, under the sub-title of 'A Challenge to Christian Thinkers,' sets out (from the sociologist's angle) the basis of co-operation between sociologists and Christians. The author frankly states that sociology is perhaps the most secularised approach to the problems of human life, but acknowledges that freedom and social control can only be reconciled in self-discipline, which in turn demands a religious basis. In the sphere of practical politics one cannot but applaud the suggestion that where social controls are to be applied their value must first be weighed and appreciated by theologians—implying the correct hierarchical subordination of politics to theology. The difficulty which Dr. Mannheim finds in the plural-

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<sup>1</sup> Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner; 10s. 6d.

ism of religious experience can perhaps be solved in an appreciation of the comprehensive nature of the Mystical Body, where there are many functions but One Spirit and One Head. Herein surely is to be found the integration of variety accompanied by a basic agreement on values and on the end of man. The author is convinced that the awakening of religion, the free development of his Third Way and the evolution of a democratic self-discipline will appear primarily in Britain, and one can do no more than recommend this timely and scholarly work to all Christians who believe that in God's providence England has a special vocation in the post-war world.

On the other hand, Mr. Drucker in *The Future of Industrial Man*,<sup>2</sup> treating of the same problems from a political and economic point of view, assigns this messianic role to the United States. His concern is to answer the question: How can an industrial society be built as a free society? Reluctantly one must admit that he was much more successful in his panegyric on Economic Man than in his plan for the future of Industrial Man. Not that there are not good things to be found here—in particular the early sections of the book on 'functioning society'; but when Mr. Drucker begins to analyse political theory and economic institutions his touch is much less sure. In fact many of his historical interpretations, though perhaps valid, are supported by inaccuracies and errors, and this whether dealing with the age of Socrates or of George III. So long as he keeps to his main theme, which is the 'separation of political government and social rule,' i.e. State and Society, he makes many illuminating and penetrating suggestions, but when he wanders away from philosophy into history his treatment is superficial. By the last chapter he has returned to his theme, the necessity of restoring to Industrial Man his sense of status, function, and social purpose in society. This, he asserts, will come through a self-governing industrial society, but through plunging into his historical morass he has avoided so many questions, begged so many others, that he leaves the reader with no indication of what he means by this new society nor of how it will develop. Left suspended as it is, the solution could be claimed as his own by either a Leninist or by Courtauld.

To see the problem in its true perspective we must turn to the Master of Balliol's recent book on *The Modern Democratic State*,<sup>3</sup> where with admirable balance and depth of knowledge Dr. Lindsay expounds the evolution of the democratic idea in relation to the changing historical scene of constitution and institution. This is not just another book on political theory, but an attempt, a successful attempt, to expound the 'operative ideals' which have inspired men

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<sup>2</sup> Heinemann; 10s. 6d.

<sup>3</sup> Oxford University Press; 12s. 6d.

in their relations to law. Special attention is paid to the mutual influence of the Puritans and the State Constitutions in North America, to the Utilitarians and the Industrial Revolution; all of this seen against the background of the Graeco-Roman Christian heritage of Western civilisation. Dr. Lindsay stresses, as does Mr. Drucker, the distinction between society and state, and in so doing is led to discuss the rise of nationalism and of the nation state. Here perhaps his treatment is less satisfactory, and the chapter bearing the latter title suffers from compression. As he wishes to distinguish nationality from nationalism his definition of nation is framed to suit this and many will find it insufficient, viz: 'a state becomes a nation when instead of its members being primarily divided between sovereign and subjects, government and citizenship becomes a common task, demanding not passive citizenship but active co-operation from all.'

The concluding chapters of the book, dealing with the spirit and the standard of the common life, discuss modern theories of political obligation, dismiss those which can only lead to claims of absolute sovereignty and end by stating the immensely complex problem of the control of the organisation of power by the ordinary person. Dr. Lindsay promises to take up this problem in his next volume along with a discussion of how a greater sense of community can be produced in the modern democracy. To this we look forward with all eagerness.

JOHN FITZSIMONS.

**SOCIAL STRUCTURE.** By Henry A. Mess. (Allen & Unwin; 6s.)

Practically all modern scholarship is scientific in its treatment and proceeds exclusively by induction. Definitions, therefore, are still being sought. It is difficult to know on inductive principles alone how or when we can define anything except as a working hypothesis. When such a method is in use in all branches of science, a certain confusion is inevitable. There is abundant need at the moment for people to compare notes about definitions. This introduction to sociology by Dr. Mess will be welcomed because he has tried to meet this need. He has given to his readers a useful series of definitions arranged so that no section is in verbal contradiction with the other. This explains certain innovations in definitions. "The book is therefore a stepping-stone to a synthesis of sociological knowledge.

But it is well to see that it is only the first step. A Catholic will find much of the atmosphere of the book dull and dreary. Scientific induction of this kind only skims the surface of reality. The impartiality of the treatment of religion and the churches in particular seems to evade the issue. However impartial a man may desire to be, the fact remains that he is bound by the laws of human nature to depend on one doctrinal system or another in order to affirm