

MIRROR FOR MAN. The Relation of Anthropology to Modern Life.

By Clyde Kluckhohn. (Harrap; 12s. 6d.)

Scientists sometimes write as if their eminence in a specialised field gives a seal of authority to their general views on politics and metaphysics. Harvard's Professor of Anthropology has evidently been tempted in this way. His book is intended to make good his claim that 'anthropology provides a scientific basis for dealing with the crucial dilemma of the world today'. It is written for the general public, but it is doubtful if the layman is as simple as he is taken to be.

The early part of the book reads uncomfortably like an advertisement. First the net is thrown so wide that anyone who ever described a foreign culture is counted as an anthropologist, including Herodotus, Tacitus and the ancient Babylonians. The obvious value of the study of strange peoples is suggested in the title, 'Mirror for Man', but admittedly this has little direct bearing on political problems. So the practical achievements of at least five related subjects are listed to the credit of anthropology. The layman may well ask how the army once managed without 'military anthropologists', or how railways and schools solved their seating problems before the advent of physical anthropologists. For the chapter on 'Anthropologists at Work' the net is tightened, for it seems that only social or cultural anthropologists are intended, and any sociological research is chalked up to the credit of anthropology.

This impressive record of applied science sustains the hope of happier solutions to political problems once they are flood-lit by anthropology. But lest he be disappointed by the conclusions ('Make haste slowly . . . the anthropologist's solution is unity in diversity') the layman is reminded that the social sciences are immature, and here the advertisement becomes a frank appeal for funds.

Anthropology, adequately endowed and staffed, will show the world that its problems are matters of faith and morals. It seems that his anthropological learning leads the author to advocate a 'secular religion', which will teach mankind to accept responsibility for its own destiny. All the insistence on the anthropologists' right to instruct the world today ends tamely in recommending Whitehead's God, as described in *Process and Reality*. It seems inconsistent, and a little hard on the philosopher who is cited, that he is not also included in the ranks of the anthropologists.

MARY TEW.

AUTHORITY AND DELINQUENCY IN THE MODERN STATE. By Alex Comfort. (Routledge, Kegan Paul; 8s. 6d.)

There has recently been instituted a scheme of research known as 'the Unesco Tensions Project', and its object is to study 'the causes of international and intranational hatreds and tensions'.

Dr Comfort's book is an essay in the sociology of modern urban society and centralised government, and its aim is similar. Delinquency in high places is its theme, and it seeks to relate delinquency in government to delinquency in society as a whole, in the hope of establishing that modern government, democratic no less than totalitarian, has a particular attraction for psychopathic individuals.

The result is inconclusive. Certainly we find the 'aggressive ego-centric' in political office, but he might quite as readily be discovered in business or at the Bar. Again, the work of a propaganda ministry is no doubt agreeable to a 'fantasy-delinquent', but he must be equally at home in the world of cheap fiction or journalism. Nor is there much difference between electioneering and salesmanship. The fringes of government, that uncertain land of 'contacts' and 'fiddling', has perhaps more to offer.

Dr Comfort is driven to sober conclusions. In respect of governments, people usually get no worse than they deserve. Emphasis upon defects of government diverts attention from the central issue of all political thinking, the good life in the good society. By focussing his resentment upon the meaningless 'them' of those in office, a man attempts, as Dr Comfort puts it, to externalise his conscience. His book illustrates the ease with which a false institutional problem may be substituted for the real human predicament.

Delinquency, I have said, is the author's subject, and by delinquency he means conduct which from the standpoint of the investigator appears antisocial. Like all scientific enquiries of its kind, his book achieves its emancipation from all transcendental standards at a high price. No argument, save that of utility, can be advanced in favour of any course of action. Conduct is analysed in terms of 'adjustment' 'maladjustment', 'cultural conditioning', 'environmental factors' and so on.

This book is clearly and vigorously written. Sometimes, it is true, in an attempt to be precise, Dr Comfort merely achieves a solemn redundancy; for example he talks of 'historical certainty' where 'certainty' would do quite well, and of 'biological growth' where no other kind of growth is conceivable. But he succeeds in holding the attention, and, in the accomplishment of his attack upon a most difficult subject, gives cause for optimism regarding the efforts of social psychology.

J. JONES.

DARWIN IS NOT FOR CHILDREN. By Vera Barclay. (Herbert Jenkins; 9s. 6d.)

Miss Barclay is a convert. '...I believed in Darwinism and thought it quite compatible with religion' and then 'I ceased to believe in