

NATURE

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EDUCATION AND COLONIAL DEVELOPMENT

A LONG series of reports on almost every aspect of welfare in the British Colonial Empire, quite apart from the quiet but increasing work of the Colonial Research Committee, the Colonial Products Research Committee and other committees concerned with Colonial research in different fields, and more recently of the Colonial Primary Products Committee, have brought many scientific men into close touch with the particular economic, social, scientific and technical problems of these great areas. In the last ten years there have been important general surveys of nutrition, higher education, labour conditions, development and welfare; and also studies in more limited fields such as cocoa control in West Africa, West African oils and oilseeds, the groundnuts scheme in East and Central Africa, the advancement of Africans in industry, and the relation of the game reserves to the slaughter of game, with all of which the man of science is more or less directly concerned. Quite recently, it has been announced that medical specialists from a panel of eighteen will each visit Africa twice in the next six years, and if the experiment, which is being financed by the Nuffield Foundation, is successful, it may be extended to other territories.

Precedent for this unofficial contact is to be found in an earlier visit of university representatives to Nigeria, under the same aegis, or again in Service medicine during the War; scientific workers who have had personal contact or experience with any of these developments may well have been impressed with the way in which Great Britain is facing its responsibilities under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act. Mr. Marquand's recent tour of the East African Colonies is further evidence of the keen interest of the Government in Colonial welfare and development, and of the sincerity of the desire to promote self-government as well as a high standard of living in the British Colonial Empire.

It should not be necessary to do more here than mention the immense potentialities which science itself holds for the promotion of welfare in the Colonies, by the control of or even elimination of disease, the raising of nutrition standards, the improvement of agriculture and production, either by the introduction of more efficient methods or by the control of pests of plants or animals, or by extending man's command over natural resources by irrigation and like methods.

Some of the recent advances in such fields promise really spectacular developments in the control or elimination of tsetse fly and other pests, with most valuable results from the point of view of health and economics alike. Nevertheless, even the man of science responsible for such advances can scarcely fail to note the signs of widespread discontent with existing conditions. The disorders which occurred in the Gold Coast early in March and arose out of the serious increase in the cost of living in West Africa, and the evidence of fundamental discontent among

the intellectuals in the West Indies which finds violent and extreme expression in the report for 1942-43 of Dr. T. P. Achong, the Mayor of Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, are symptoms of a cynicism and disbelief in British policy and intentions which cannot wisely be disregarded. Inevitably they raise questions about the functioning of democracy among the Colonial peoples, and how best these peoples are to be fitted for self-government.

The contemporary review of British, United States, French and Dutch policy and practice in their Caribbean possessions which Paul Blanshard has written under the title "Democracy and Empire in the Caribbean"* is of interest from that point of view. The picture of the British West Indies as seen through American eyes is instructive, if sometimes a little crude, unimaginative and intolerant; but the comparative appreciation of the practice of the four Colonial Governments is fairer than some of his criticism, and beyond that he displays plainly the fundamental aspects of the situation in the Caribbean. This book makes very clear the background against which the Colonial research committees have to work, and in particular the limits which economic, social and political factors set to the work of the Caribbean Research Council.

Many will think that Mr. Blanshard takes too pessimistic a view of the prospects of regionalism and of the future of the Caribbean Commission; some of his criticism leads naturally to such pessimism. None the less, his forecast of the future may well be near the mark, for in it he seems to shed some of his prejudices. He believes that for most of the Caribbean colonies, independence is undesirable and undesired by the people themselves; but he urges that the first step in political progress is to make all legislatures genuinely democratic, and that next the governors should be elected by the people or their elected representatives. He admits, indeed, that in some areas the people are obviously unready for this step, and that when it is taken safeguards will be required for the standards of the Civil Service; clearly his criticism of the present system is not to be taken entirely at its face value.

Next, the colonies of the Caribbean should be fitted into a democratic regional agency with power to co-ordinate and develop the economic life of the area, and serve as a link between the region and world organisation. He would place all these colonies under the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations, giving the Council full power to investigate and report upon all aspects of Colonial administration. Here again he admits that his proposition has no immediate hope of realization, and he further recognizes that all his political proposals demand universal, free and compulsory education for a generation as preliminary preparation for self-government.

In the economic sphere, he says little about the question of nutrition and raising the standard of living, though he recognizes a trend in the area towards increasing social control of economic life and the need to maintain the large-scale plantation

system, regardless of the type of land ownership, because of the greater productive efficiency of large operating units. He has little to say about the contribution of science to the social welfare or economic progress of the area, though, surprisingly in view of much of his criticism, he concludes on the note that the Caribbean peoples will remain loyal to the Western democracies, provided that those democracies be worthy of their allegiance.

Mr. Blanshard's book should certainly dispel any complacency with which British rule in the West Indies is regarded, or even the operation of the Colonial Development and Welfare Act. There is, however, a wealth of material against which the objectiveness of his criticism can be tested, and it is to be hoped that his book will stimulate at least some scientific workers to make that effort. What stands out most clearly is the need for much closer and objective study of the working of democratic institutions among the Colonial peoples, and the means by which the idea of true local self-government may best be furthered in terms of the economic, social and cultural as well as political welfare of those peoples.

Mr. Blanshard, although at times excessively caustic in his comments upon governors in the Colonial systems, is not so obsessed with his dislike of that system as to fail to recognize that the strongest indictment of the Colonial Powers in the Caribbean is that for a hundred years after emancipation they did so little to prepare the people for self-government, and that the Caribbean peoples were not given a fair chance to learn democracy by practice. Nevertheless, his survey makes little constructive contribution as to the way in which that problem of education is to be tackled, and for all its merits as a comparative study of different systems and as a guide to the trend of local opinion—in which last a bibliography and some notes and comments on Press articles are useful further aids—his book of three hundred and seventy pages, so far as education is concerned, falls far short of the forty-page report on "Education for Citizenship in Africa" which has come from the Colonial Office Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies (London: H.M.S.O. Colonial No. 216, 1948. Pp. 40. 9d. net). It might be objected that the sub-committee responsible for the report should have included a representative of the Colonial administrators on whom will fall the main burden of providing the appropriate political and economic organisation, and some Africans whose presence might have added to its authority. No such additional representation could well have improved on its statement of general principles, or increased its consciousness of the necessity of preparing not merely Africans but also other Colonial peoples for self-government, and affording them the opportunity for its practice.

Under its terms of reference, the sub-committee was to study the technique needed to prepare people for responsibility, and examine generally the problem of building up a sense of public responsibility, tolerance and objectivity in discussion and practice, and an appreciation of political institutions, their

* *Democracy and Empire in the Caribbean: a Contemporary Review.* By Paul Blanshard. Pp. xi+379. (New York: The Macmillan Company; London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1947.) 25s. net.

evolution and progress. It was decided, however, to prepare a report which, though taking Colonies outside Africa into consideration so far as possible, should frankly apply principally to Africa, where its members had principally gained their Colonial experience. Speaking of the title of the report, the Committee emphasizes that there is no true education which is not education for citizenship, and that education which does not produce good citizens has not justified its claim to be called education at all. It is in this spirit that the Committee faces the central purpose of British Colonial administration, which has been described by successive Secretaries of State for the Colonies in similar terms, namely, to develop the Colonies and all their resources so as to enable their peoples speedily and substantially to improve their natural resources and, as soon as may be, to attain responsible self-government.

Self-government, however, is a much heavier responsibility in the twentieth century than in the eighteenth, and in pointing out that education must aim at fulfilling the special needs created by social and political changes and that with the great variations in culture, in social and economic conditions in the Colonies the path to self-government can scarcely be the same for all, the Committee affirms its belief in the soundness of the principle, which has guided British Colonial education policy in the past, that education to be effective must be based partly at least on local conditions. Not only must it take account of cultural differences; it must equally seek to present to the Colonial peoples Western civilization at its best side. The Western world should place its political experience of democracy and its conception of democratic government at the disposal of the Colonial peoples without any reserve. It will be for them to make what use they think fit of this experience. We must remember that democracy is not merely a matter of political institutions but of the spirit in which they are worked; democracy must arise from within, though it may be helped or hindered from without, and it can only be judged by being seen in action.

It is in dealing with the difficulties that exist in the path of the Colonial peoples who are endeavouring to advance towards full citizenship of the modern world that the report is so much more realistic than Mr. Blanshard's book. There is no less sympathy with, or understanding of, the aspirations of nationalism; but the disintegrating influence of Western civilization is more fully appreciated. The prerequisites of democracy are clearly stated: a profound belief in the value of the individual, and with it a general feeling of confidence in one's fellow citizens; the intellectual equipment—not merely informed minds, but minds capable of straight thinking and not to be deceived by the demagogue; and a political and economic organisation which permits such spiritual and intellectual qualities to flourish.

Much of the report is occupied by detailed recommendations, throughout which runs one main principle already adumbrated: you cannot educate people for citizenship unless you give them the

chance of exercising their citizenship. For this reason the Committee urges that every opportunity should be taken of entering into full and frank discussion with the Colonial peoples while policy is still only half-formed and even if no formal organisation exists for such discussions. The importance is emphasized of bringing together around the council table the young educated men and the traditional elders; and that any tendency to restrict discussion on the plea that the people are not yet able to understand the questions involved is shirking the task of education for citizenship.

The report urges in conclusion that the task is too great to be left to one section only of the Government organisation, or of the European or educated Colonial public. The task is so large and urgent that the help of everyone will be needed, and in one section of the detailed recommendations, dealing with the teaching of science, the Committee shows how the man of science can help. It suggests the study of science from the historical point of view, with a background of its social implications and an indication of the indirect contribution to education for citizenship which training in science in this way can make. No constructive educational policy can ignore the dangers of producing a class of men of mainly academic training larger than can find a useful place in the body politic, and of neglecting the improvement of craftsmanship. One sound reason for welcoming such developments as the groundnuts scheme in East Africa is the increased outlet it might afford for African craftsmen and technicians; and for that reason alone the unexpected difficulties and greater cost of the scheme should not be allowed to exert undue influence. Similarly, while we may welcome wholeheartedly the recent recommendation for an institution of full university standing in Malaya, neither there nor in the West Indies nor in Africa should it be forgotten that with economic and industrial and educational development must go a careful study of the social-psychological factors which underly the rising tide of nationalism and have provoked the disorders on the Gold Coast and elsewhere. The full inquiry already promised into the Gold Coast riots, for example, should establish the facts; but something more is needed. Fundamental research into the real causes of Colonial discontents is a matter of the greatest urgency, not merely to point the way to appropriate remedial measures, but also to assist in the adjustment of our own attitude to the Colonial peoples. Collaboration with other peoples is imperative not only for the development and welfare of those peoples, but also to enable them to make that contribution to the welfare of mankind at which Mr. Bevin hinted in a memorable speech early this year; and collaboration involves mutual understanding and trust. The proposal for the establishment of a University of Malaya is much more than a further token of our goodwill and of our determination to build a noble structure of higher education in the Colonies. It is equally important as one more step towards the provision of institutions where fundamental research can be prosecuted, and where the Colonial peoples may learn the technique of research

in many fields where it is so urgently required. In that way and in co-operation with their Western teachers they may make their own distinctive contribution in advancing knowledge, and also gain the vision and wisdom which will increasingly fit them for the searching responsibilities of full self-government.

APPROACHES TO SOCIOLOGY

From Max Weber

Essays in Sociology, translated, edited and with an Introduction by H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills. (International Library of Sociology and Social Reconstruction.) Pp. xi + 490. (London: Kegan Paul and Co., Ltd., 1947.) 21s. net.

The Analysis of Political Behaviour

An Empirical Approach. By Harold D. Lasswell. (International Library of Sociology and Social Reconstruction.) Pp. ix + 309. (London: Kegan Paul and Co., Ltd., 1948.) 21s. net.

MAX WEBER was no believer in mystical doctrines of national genius, but he did believe that given societies had their own way of noticing, defining, and solving problems. There was, for example, a British way of approaching physics that differed from the Continental way. This truth is admirably illustrated by these two important new volumes in the "International Library of Sociology". It is not a simple contrast between the German academic temperament and training and the American. Max Weber was, in many ways, *anima naturaliter Americana*. But as a German professor and a German citizen deeply and justly concerned for the present and future of his country, he was bound to deal with different problems than those which rightly concern and interest Prof. Lasswell; and if the publication of these books had no other justification, it would have this, that the two books illustrate this difference of approach and of method.

Max Weber's fame in Britain is mainly due to his "Protestant Ethic", and however much that famous essay may be criticized, it did illustrate an important truth, that there is not, in the nineteenth-century sense of the word, a political or economic 'religion of all sensible men' that has only to be set out to be accepted. The uniqueness of the European economic and scientific achievement was bound up in some form with the 'configuration of institutions'—and of ideas caused by and causing the configuration. It has reasonably been objected that Max Weber simplified his problems, produced too neat contrasts; but he did sow an idea that has had its fruitful crop.

In this collection, naturally, attention has mainly been directed to those parts of Weber's very varied contributions to our knowledge of society that have not been already translated, and it might be said that the reader coming to Max Weber for the first time might do well to read Prof. Talcott Parsons' introduction to "The Theory of Social and Economic Organization" (that is, the recent translation of Part I of "Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft"). But the choice of themes has been judicious and it gives the flavour as well as the weight of Weber's work. For this reason it is probably worth having the essays on the Chinese *literati* and the Indian caste system, though they are not novel or particularly enlightening to-day.

The main themes of these selections are centred around power in its various forms, economic, political and intellectual, and around organisations of power—

feudalism, bureaucracy, churches, universities. Contemplating the problems of power, Weber was repelled by two fashionable German doctrines, simple Marxism and the great national superstition of belief in the expert. Marxism repelled him much less than the ignorant and dangerous complacency of the German officers, officials, professors. Professing to be an aristocracy, they were complacent and, in the field of general politics, highly incompetent *dilettanti*. Weber was fascinated by America, to which he went with a far more open mind than did most Europeans, above all than did most Germans. He held the view, not as a paradox but as a saving truth—if only he could get it accepted—that Tammany Hall was a more valuable political institution than the German bureaucracy with its flippant monarchical top-structure and its pedantic, complacent and deeply maladjusted professorial allies and apologists. Few political essays written in a time of crisis read better, a generation later, than "Politics as a Vocation", a sermon in the Munich that knew Kurt Eisner and was about to house Hitler; and the prophecy of the coming of the "charismatic leader" is almost awe-inspiring. Of almost equal interest, though calling for less remarkable powers, is the essay on German universities; and the two taken together explain a great deal about the fate of the Weimar Republic—and the present problems of German rehabilitation.

When we turn to Prof. Lasswell we are conscious of a drier light and a cooler ambition. Prof. Lasswell takes for granted the democratic premise that the object of a democratic society is "the realization of human dignity in a commonwealth of mutual deference". That society will be more easily attained and maintained if we think hard about what we are aiming at and import as much controllable knowledge into our policy-making as is humanly possible. There are many dangers which face American (or any other) democratic society; but Prof. Lasswell is mainly concerned with two. One is the degree to which a society abolishes or encourages "skill blockades", impedes the ability of the individual to contribute to society and to acquire the resources to contribute. All existing societies impede, unnecessarily, such contributions, by financial, racial, dogmatic, political barriers; all are obstacles to the "open society" (to borrow Prof. Popper's useful term). The most interesting example of Prof. Lasswell's analysis of such problems is to be found in his proposals for the reform of American legal education. In no free country do lawyers play so great a part as they do in America. It is not only that constitutional law gives the courts and so the lawyers an importance to which there is no European parallel, but (possibly for reasons that would have interested Max Weber) the lawyer has had his prestige and field of functions greatly extended. So the curriculum of the great law schools is of the utmost importance and the criticism of it made here is very enlightening. Critics of the preliminary training of British Civil Servants or advocates of increasing the number of administrators who are trained scientists might well ponder, in an English context, Prof. Lasswell's questions and answers.

Both these books are so timely that it is perhaps unkind to end on a note of criticism. The translators of Max Weber have excellent principles and nothing could make him easy to read. But too often he has been translated into a language that is almost as near German as it is English or American, and this holds up the reader and may put him off. D. W. BROGAN