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