


REVIEWS AND NOTICES

 Publishers desiring reviews and notices of Books or Periodicals must send copies of same to the Editor, Cecil A. Wright, Osgoode Hall Law School, Toronto 2, Ontario.

Problems of Modern Government. Edited by R. MACGREGOR DAWSON. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. 1941. Pp. xii, 124.

This volume consists of a group of lectures and papers, some of which have previously been published in the *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*. They have been issued in book form with the laudable desire to awaken a greater interest in the study of political science in Canada, and of its supremely important place among the social sciences. As Professor Dawson puts it, "The positive state is, beyond any reasonable doubt, here to stay, and no one can live in such isolation that he can be indifferent to it or ignore the multitudinous problems to which it will give birth".

Each reader, like this reviewer, will find matter to stimulate as well as to criticise in these pages. Professor McIlwain on "The Present Crisis of Constitutionalism" is disappointingly remote; the suggestions that we should revise our notions of feudalism and Roman law in the evolution of political freedom, and should emphasize more the "unique" English contribution, seem a leisurely, if not narrow approach in these days. Professor Clokie comes to grips with the crucial problem "Democratic Possibilities in a Totalitarian World", yet omits consideration of the most important contributions of social-democratic philosophy to the question. His statement that "Planning is always based on the concept that there are experts who know what is good for us", for example, entirely ignores the claim that a national economic plan is quite amenable to democratic formulation and electoral approval by parliamentary processes, of which the experience in Sweden and New Zealand is surely some proof. And he pays no attention to the element of democracy within the political party that will run the planned state. Yet in theory planning under the protection of a democratic party should be as different from planning by dollar-a-year men as cheese from chalk. The advantages of trades-unions and co-operative societies as checks and balances in the planned state are also not discussed.

The editor's own chapter on "The Impact of the War on Canadian Political Institutions" shows the same combination of acumen, humour and practical suggestion for reform which we have learned to expect from his other writings. Government corporations, controllers and boards come under his gentle but expert surgery, and he draws on the experience of the last war to show the inadequacy of business training as a preparation for top governmental positions. We should like to see him deal some time with other aspects of the subject, such as the role of Parliament in war, the limitations on orders-in-council, and the problem of group representation on control boards. Like his, Professor Macmahon's chapter, on federalism in the United States, is most instructive reading. Canadian constitutionalists are likely to feel envious of the progress he records, in comparison with our Canadian federal rigidity. The American Supreme Court has already

removed the most serious obstructions to national development that previous decisions had created, while we are carrying on with a temporary unity resting on dubious emergency powers. The United States is constitutionally ready for the post-war world, whereas Canada is not.

The volume concludes with chapters on "The Federal Dilemma", by Professor Corry; "Canada and the Balance of World Power", by Professor Mackay; and a valuable comparative study by Professor Brady of the economic activity of the state in the British Dominions. It is to be hoped that other Canadian universities will emulate Toronto in publications of this kind, and if in later volumes some elements of a more radical democratic philosophy creep in the problem of distribution will, we feel sure, be easier to solve.

F. R. SCOTT.

McGill University.