

boundary of verifiable truth. * * * To offer the ideal which that method [social science] may some day hope to realize". This characterization may be accepted, if he means to describe sociology as a completed interpretation of social phenomena. In this sense sociology will always remain a far-off ideal; but equally so will any other science; for there is no such thing as a single completed science until the knowledge of man is co-extensive with the universe.

Our author's best chapter is on Religion and the Social Question. He believes that this question is at heart a religious one. He believes that around it there is developing a vast extra-ecclesiastical movement which is fundamentally, though not professionally, religious. "Here is no abandonment of religion, or substitute for religion, but a way—not yet wholly clear, but not impassable—along which the life of the present age may reach a religion appropriate to its own needs." And in his conception that religion will be but an application to the peculiar needs of this age of the spirit of Jesus. "It is the discovery, which many minds at many points of this great adventure are now making, that beneath the forms of economic change there is proceeding a spiritual enterprise which the present age is called to undertake."

C. S. GARDNER.

The Process of Government. A Theory of Social Pressures. By Arthur F. Bentley. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago. 1908. Price \$3.20.

Our author has performed a valuable service for sociology by his emphasis upon group-activities. "It is first, last and always activity, action, 'something doing', the shunting by some men of other men's conduct along changed lines, the gathering of forces to overcome resistance to such alterations, or the dispersal of one grouping of forces by another grouping." The essential phenomena are not men interacting as individuals, but men as masses or groups pressing against other masses or groups, each group seeking to establish some particular interest. The government, law, is the actual, but temporary and unstable, equilibrium of these pressing groups. This idea he has worked out in a very luminous and impressing way.

Mr. Bentley criticises aggressively and sometimes rather caustically the sociologists who have abstracted for separate treatment the ideas and feelings which underlie all social action and who find in such ideas and feelings the social causes. This, he claims, renders the whole science abstract, sterile, useless, divorcing it from reality. He singles out Dr. Small especially as blameworthy in this respect; and apparently finds nothing of real value in Small's work—a very unjust judgment, for Small has given great emphasis to the idea of social phenomena as *processes* and is as far from the abstract static conception of society as Bentley himself, though failing to give sufficient prominence to the idea of group-activity. In criticising other sociologists for abstracting ideas and feelings for treatment as social causes, Mr. Bentley does not seem to realize that he is just as guilty of the same fault, if it be a fault, as those whom he so sharply arraigns. He himself abstracts for consideration another phase of the total social process and gives it a disproportionate emphasis. Take, for instance, the following: he bids the reader “try to see the corporative activity streaming right through the directors toward realization on one line or another”, and then tells us that we “will see the social facts, the given raw material, without the misleading structure of hypothetical psychology in which it is ordinarily stated”. “A corporative activity straining through the directors” is just about as abstract, misleading and hypothetical as any “hypothetical ideas” ever invented by other writers. It is absolutely impossible to construct a science without such abstractions; and those of Mr. Bentley are no more serviceable than those of other writers. The chief defect, and it is a serious one, of this otherwise very valuable work is the severe and often ill-judged criticism of the work of other men, to which this is only supplementary. The author's extreme emphasis upon group-activity, a most important concept, has obscured his appreciation of other equally important phases of the total social process. C. S. GARDNER.