

is probably too sketchy for the average uninformed American. Chapters v and vi are devoted to a consideration of the Austro-Serbian causes of the war and of Serbia's part in it. Mr. Savic gives a clear and accurate statement of the causes and a most illuminating and stirring account of Serbia's heroic defense against Germans, Austro-Hungarians and Bulgarians. The remaining chapters consider the problems that will confront the new state in its internal organization, particularly the harmonizing of the aspirations of the component peoples, Slovenes, Croats and Serbs, and in its external relations with Italy and Austria-Hungary.

The book is characterized throughout by a tone of fairness and impartiality, and the statements of fact are seldom unjustified. Mr. Savic's boundaries for the new state based on ethnic claims are hardly sustained by the excellent map inserted at the close of the book. And once in a while he indulges in a rhetorical flourish that might better be omitted, as when he says on page 248: "For more than a thousand years Germans encroached upon Slav countries. By fire and sword they have germanized millions of Slavs, and have incorporated in Germany hundreds of thousands of square miles of Slav territory." The whole area of Germany is only 205,000 square miles. But these are but small defects in a book that ought to make an appeal to the intelligent American reader.

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The Polish Peasant in Europe and America. By WILLIAM I. THOMAS and FLORIAN ZNANIECKI. Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1918.—Two volumes: ix, 526 pp.; 589 pp.

The first two volumes of this five-volume work deal with the primary groups of Polish peasant life in Europe and the partial evolution of the primary group organization "under the influence of the new industrial system and of immigration to America and Germany."

The first volume is introduced by an 86-page "methodological note" setting forth the authors' theory of social methodology. Social scientists should not be dismayed by the complexity of the social world; "it is still a problem whether the social world will not prove much less complex than the natural world if only we analyze its data and determine its facts by proper methods." But we need a new technique of rational social control to replace the "ordering and forbidding" technique of popular politics and the faulty technique of practical sociology.

The immediate task of the sociologist is to acquire knowledge concerning present cultural society. When that knowledge is sufficiently complete and well ordered, then we may gain a real understanding of ethnography and history. The knowledge can be gathered monographically by studying "whole concrete societies" or by the method of the specialist who chooses a specific problem and follows it through a limited number of concrete social groups. The essential feature of the method to be used is the distinction between "objective cultural elements of social life and the subjective characteristics of the members of the social group." This distinction is expressed in the terms "value" and "attitude." A value is any datum, such as a coin or a university, which has "an empirical content accessible to the members of some social group and a meaning with regard to which it is or may be an object of activity," while an attitude is a "process of individual consciousness which determines real or possible activity of the individual or the social world." In disentangling causes and effects, "the cause of a value or of an attitude is never an attitude or a value alone, but always a combination of an attitude and a value."

The method developed by the authors is rather a method of collecting the materials for general sociology than of reasoning to general laws. It treats of the preliminary work which must be done before generalizations concerning present cultural society will be soundly based. Its aim is a "system of laws of social becoming" quite distinct from any supposed essence of social reality or *sine qua non* of social evolution. The method is wholesomely modest in its purposes, less dogmatic than many of its predecessors and quite free from dangerous *a priori* conceptions. It has been so successful in the study of Polish society that there is reason to agree with the belief of the authors that a great body of socially useful knowledge can be built upon this foundation. But it will be indeed surprising if the classification of social phenomena into values and attitudes does not lead to confusion when handled by less careful investigators. The final test of the method will come when other monographical and special studies have been based upon it.

A 200-page introduction to the first two volumes gives a clear picture of the familial system of Poland, its social and economic life, its religious and magical attitudes and its theoretic and æsthetic interests. The remainder of the first volume and all of the second are devoted to peasant letters presented in family series with notes and an introduction to each series. A rich store of information is accumulated

here which will be of immense value to all students of social evolution. The changes wrought so swiftly by individualism upon the values and attitudes of the Polish peasants are especially significant for comparative study. The letters and introductory analysis treat of the transition from the social values of the old family system to the competitive values of the "capitalist system" as it has invaded peasant life in Poland and America. The intimate view of peasant thought and feeling which is revealed in the letters more than repays the reader for the labor of going through material which is necessarily diffuse.

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A History of Medieval Europe. By LYNN THORNDIKE.
Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1917.—xx, 682 pp.

No doubt the majority of the medievalists in this country greeted with dire forebodings the announcement of this book, edited by the leading exponent of social history in America, and written by a distinguished advocate of the importance of intellectual history in the interpretation of the life of the middle ages. On examining the book, the conventional medievalist will discover with a sigh of relief that the volume possesses many of the earmarks of "eminent respectability." In it can still be discovered the names and achievements of Arcadius and Honorius, Liutprand, Brunhilda, Peter the Hermit and Raymond of Toulouse; and Magna Carta is reverently referred to as the "most important single document in English medieval history." "Animated moderation" was evidently the watchword of editor and author; there has been no radical break with the traditional treatment of medieval history.

In a rather lengthy preface the author states his dominating purposes and conceptions to be the following: to present the subject as a European unity rather than as an aggregation of separate national histories; to give a large amount of space to the Roman Empire and early Christianity as an indispensable preliminary to the understanding of the middle ages; to emphasize feudal and municipal diversity rather than national unity as more truly descriptive of medieval conditions; to present ecclesiastical organization as a better key to the unity of medieval civilization than political life; to emphasize the environmental basis of medieval European history; to give proper attention to social, economic and intellectual history at the expense of the minor details of political, dynastic and military events; at the