

REPORTS OF ROUND TABLE CONFERENCES

HELD IN CONNECTION WITH ANNUAL MEETING OF
THE AMERICAN POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION
AT ST. LOUIS, DECEMBER 28-30, 1926.

I. COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT

This round table, with a total enrollment of thirty-seven, held three sessions under the chairmanship of Professor Frederic A. Ogg, of the University of Wisconsin, and devoted its entire attention to a consideration of problems in the study and teaching of comparative government. The first session was opened with a report prepared by Professor William S. Carpenter, of Princeton University, describing the teaching of comparative government under the preceptorial and honors system at Princeton. Here the subject enjoys the central place in the department of politics. It is offered as the introductory course, open only to juniors, and includes a study of European and American governments and problems of federalism. There are two lectures and one preceptorial conference each week throughout the year, the conferences being devoted to the discussion of assigned reading in groups of six to eight students under a preceptor with the rank at least of assistant professor. Students who wish to specialize in the department also take courses in constitutional law and jurisprudence, and in addition do "independent reading" under a supervisor, with individual bi-weekly conferences and the preparation of four papers. In the senior year, departmental students read in one of four fields: constitutional law, international law, political theory, and comparative government. Students selecting comparative government prepare a carefully documented paper of about eighteen thousand words under the guidance of a supervisor, and read for their comprehensive examination at the end of the senior year. The scheme is not limited to honor students. The department accepts any man who reaches the junior year and has had certain prerequisite courses in history or economics. The Princeton plan differs from other plans notably in that the study of government is not split into many parts by multiplying courses. The number of courses is small, and much emphasis is laid upon independent reading with preceptorial and individual conferences.

In commenting on the Princeton plan, Professor John Alley, of the University of Oklahoma, pointed out that whatever its merits the expense is prohibitive to most colleges and universities. It requires a large

staff of high grade preceptors and a heavily endowed library. Professor C. D. Allin, of the University of Minnesota, thought that the independent reading should include economics, and even literature. There should be no separation of political science from the other fields. Professor H. R. Spencer, of Ohio State University, said that coöperation with the economics department had been tried at Princeton. He also wished to point to the fact that Princeton insisted upon the study of jurisprudence; indeed, Woodrow Wilson had used Holland's celebrated treatise in his classes. Professor Joseph P. Chamberlain, of Columbia University, objected to the emphasis on jurisprudence; Holland's "Jurisprudence" is difficult for instructors, to say nothing of undergraduates.

A report on the teaching of comparative government in the University of California, Southern Branch, by Professor Malbone W. Graham Jr., was next presented. In his view, the disappearance of the traditional autocracies no longer permits the study of contrasted typical states, while the post-war interest in international relations demands that our students be acquainted with the institutions of many governments. The world has grown too large to compress the subject into a single course; the solution must be found in a regional arrangement, with careful gradation of courses. As to method, the problem method brings excellent results. A current election in Great Britain, for instance, should be used to familiarize students with electoral procedure and party organization by having selected students give electoral addresses. The committee system of collective reports has been used with good results. Professor Allin indicated that the problem method has been successfully used at Minnesota with reference to local politics. Further discussion developed the conclusion that Professor Graham's method requires an unusual type of enthusiastic instructor and vigilant supervision on his part.

A report from Professor John M. Gaus, of the University of Minnesota, was next considered. The aim of his course in comparative government is "to develop a more sophisticated and critical interest in students in problems of politics, using the comparative governmental systems of the more outstanding states of the world as material." The course requires the mastery of such books as Mill on Representative Government, Bagehot on the English Constitution and Sait on the Government and Politics of France, and great emphasis is placed on historical and economic backgrounds. Every student must also read the biography of at least one modern statesman.

The chairman read a letter from Professor Karl F. Geiser, of Oberlin College, where a course on comparative government occupies a conspicuous place in the curriculum, under the title of "European state systems." The first semester is devoted to a detailed study of the organization of the governments of England, France, Germany, Switzerland, and Russia. The second semester, offered by Professor Jaszi, formerly of the University of Budapest, is devoted to a study of the historical background and spirit of the whole European system. Reports were also presented upon similar courses at Swarthmore, Mt. Holyoke, Wisconsin, Pittsburgh, Oklahoma, Nebraska, Ohio State, and Northwestern. In particular, Professor Ogg pointed out that Wisconsin is working on the problem of segregating graduate students and reconstructing courses strictly for undergraduates. Professor Allin thought that comparative government ought to be offered to all students and not limited to a few students who have had many courses in government. Professor E. D. Graper, of the University of Pittsburgh, held that the course should be offered to freshmen under an arrangement whereby American government would occupy the first half-year and comparative government the second half-year, and one of the first results of the course should be to disillusion those students who consider our government superior to all others. The latter sentiment met the hearty approval of several members of the round table. Discussion also developed the fact that few institutions admit freshmen to courses in political science. At Oklahoma all students are required by a state law to take American government.

Dr. Carl J. Friedrich, of Harvard University, who reported upon German universities and schools, pointed out that political science is not taught to undergraduates in German universities. It is true that political theory (*Staatslehre*) is offered by the law faculties, and state-functions (*Staats-Soziologie*) and economic regulation (*Staats-Socialismus*) are dealt with by the philosophy faculties, but comparative government as a distinct science or subject does not exist in Germany. Professor B. W. Maxwell, of Washburn College (Kansas), did not fully agree with this statement, and cited the Hochschule für Politik in Berlin. Professor Albert R. Ellingwood, of Northwestern University, called attention to the remarkable contribution of German scholars to comparative public law (*Allgemeine Staatsrecht*).

The round table then took up the question of the content and method of the course. A report from Dr. F. F. Blachly, of the Institute for Government Research, was read, supporting the thesis that comparative

government should be devoted primarily to the problems of administration. The fundamental inquiries concerning any government relate to the functions that this government performs and the way it is organized to perform these functions. Hence it follows that the only adequate comparison of governments is that of their administrative achievements. Professor Graper did not admit this contention, holding that the relation of cabinets to parliaments is quite as satisfactory for comparison as the civil services of various states. He was supported in this position by Professor L. E. Aylsworth, of the University of Nebraska, and Professor C. O. Johnson, of the University of Chattanooga.

In discussing the study of governmental regulation Professor Ellingwood was inclined to agree with Dr. Blachly that there is need for greater stress on the functional, as contrasted with the structural, side of comparative government. What is the proper end of the state? This cannot be answered without studying what the state actually does. There should be more integration of the social sciences, especially between economics and political science. Text-books, largely devoted to the study of forms of government, are lamentably lacking in comparisons of governmental interference in economic life. This is due to the paucity of research in these fields. There is need for coöperative studies of such subjects as comparative labor legislation, regulation of monopoly and restraint of trade, transportation, agriculture, foreign trade, and banking. The research program of the International Labor Office is one of the few undertakings of this kind.

Professor W. R. Sharp, of the University of Wisconsin, discussed the value and place of the British dominions in a comparative study of the problems of federalism. The subject has special attraction for American students, but unfortunately the materials are difficult to assemble. Among the fields waiting investigation are problems in the representation of member units, constitution making and interpretation, allocation of functions—fiscal, economic, and social—and intra-federal coöperation. Professor Allin, in commenting on the lack of bibliographical service, drew attention to the pioneer work of the Royal Colonial Institute in London.

A greater use of foreign and domestic newspapers was urged by Professor Kenneth Colegrove, of Northwestern University, who held that students in comparative government should be induced to read papers like the *London Times*, *London Herald*, *Manchester Guardian*, *Paris Temps*, and *Frankfurter Zeitung*, rather than remain dependent upon the weekly or monthly magazines for current problems. Professor Maxwell,

while approving the use of newspapers, thought that too much attention is given to the conservative press. Students should become just as familiar with the radical papers, such as *L'Humanité* and *Die Rote Fahne*. Libraries should keep and bind files of these newspapers for historical, as well as current, needs.

Professor Allin took up the subject of fields of research for graduate students. He would discourage students from entering the realm of *Rechtsphilosophie* and *Staatslehre*, which is beyond the ability of most students. Let the Germans work out the vocabulary; Anglo-Saxons should settle the practice of government. Moreover, new fields of study should be found in the direction of functions, rather than structure and theory, of government. And here students with the gift of insight should be led into the habit of interpretation. Particularly, comparative studies may profitably be made in the problems of federalism, judicial procedure, parliamentary practice, administration, and local government. The comparative constitutional law of Anglo-American countries is a most satisfactory field because our law libraries offer unusual facilities.

Professor Graper thought that comparative government is not a field for large groups of graduate students, but rather should be limited to select students. The difficulty of obtaining documents from foreign governments is very great. There is need for some central exchange. He also advocated the more extensive use of parliamentary debates, much as these sources are sometimes despised. But valuable material is often to be found in the Congressional Record, Hansard, and the French Journal Officiel. Newspapers should be used for views of parties rather than for mere facts. An outstanding paper for this purpose is the *Vossische Zeitung*. Professor Walter J. Shepard, of the Robert Brookings Graduate School, emphasized the devious and uncertain character of our avenues of communication. Contacts made by visiting scholars are often helpful. A political science congress might be serviceable. Other members discussed the Reference Service maintained by the American Library in Paris.

At the closing session of the round table a motion was passed that the chairman be requested to associate with himself two other members to consider and report on plans for aiding scholars in the collection of information and materials in comparative government. The persons so designated are Professors C. D. Allin and W. J. Shepard.

KENNETH COLEGROVE, *Secretary.*

Northwestern University.

2. SCIENTIFIC METHOD IN THE STUDY OF ELECTORAL PROBLEMS

The first session of this round table was devoted to a consideration of five questions prepared by the chairman, Professor West, of Stanford University, and sent to as many as possible of the members of the round table before the meetings took place. This discussion was designed to lead the members of the group to a common understanding of the meaning of scientific method and its applicability to electoral problems, and to form the basis for consideration of more specific questions of methodology. In general, the following propositions were accepted: (1) That the scientific method is to be defined as an attempt to find out the facts, to classify and arrange them, to show the relationship between them, and to formulate a statement of the results obtained; that perhaps the chief characteristic of the method is a state of mind—an unwillingness to accept anything upon authority and a willingness to eliminate a subjective attitude. (2) That there are few limitations to the application of the scientific method to data in the field of the social sciences, except that studies must be limited to the present where facts bearing upon what happened in the past are not discoverable; and that even if the experimental method cannot be applied (and this may be possible in the future) we can observe and record as the astronomer does. (3) That practically all electoral problems may be attacked scientifically if data are available. (4) That different types of electoral problems may require a different line of attack. (5) That the scientific method may be useful for solving specific practical problems as well as for getting a better understanding of political forces and institutions. Some members of the group questioned whether finding out “all one can” makes one’s treatment scientific; also whether *all* the facts are essential. It was pointed out that results may be scientific where sampling is resorted to. There was some difference of opinion regarding the necessity of premising a study with a hypothesis, the possibility of ruling out personal bias, and the value of the questionnaire as a means of assembling data.

The second and third meetings were devoted to reports of problems in methodology encountered by members of the round table in making specific studies. Professor Joseph P. Harris, of the University of Wisconsin, outlined the technique used by him in a survey of systems of registering voters; Mrs. Flora May Fearing presented the questions of method raised by a study of voting behavior in a small American community; and the chairman laid before the group an outline of the problems met by Mr. Norton, of Stanford, in an attempt to apply the

scientific method to a study of the operation of the direct primary in California. Professor Harris started with a definite objective in view—to study the practical operations of registration systems and to recommend a model system based upon this experience. He collected his data largely by means of field interviews with politicians, reformers, former election officials, and newspaper-men, as well as the election officials themselves, making no attempt to obtain what might be called “general opinion” as to the value of various features of a registration system. Statistics were used in two ways: (1) to make a comparison of the volume of registration under permanent systems and non-permanent systems, and (2) to make a comparison of the percentage of registration in different types of wards, affording some index of fraud.

Mrs. Fearing’s study of voting behavior differs from previous studies of voting and non-voting in that it aims to study the habits of the voter over a period of years and relies entirely upon objective data obtained from the city directory and registration cards, without using subjective data obtained by questioning the voters. The contemplated analysis calls for a study by precincts; a comparison of the sex, occupation, nativity, and party preference of registrants and non-registrants; a comparison of voting registrants and non-voting registrants; and a more detailed analysis of voting registrants. Mrs. Fearing’s report provoked a lively discussion which revealed considerable difference of opinion as to whether a study confined to the purely objective data available would prove valuable, or whether it would be a “sterile study of figures.”

Mr. Norton’s analysis of his problem was accepted by the members of the round table as an excellent basis for the scientific study of any electoral problem. He presented the problem as a three-fold one: to state the problem in scientific terms, i. e., as the measurement of the effect of one thing upon something else; to get adequate and accurate information; and to estimate the causal relationship. In the discussion that followed some members of the round table took issue with the third point, feeling that what is wanted is a study of “relationship” rather than of “cause and effect.”

Part of the second day’s session was devoted to an interesting analysis of proportional representation in Greece by Mr. Polyzoides. This paper was published in full in the REVIEW for February, 1927.

LOUISE OVERACKER, *Secretary.*

Wellesley College.

3. AN ANALYTICAL APPROACH TO THE SUBJECT OF WORLD POLITICS IN TEACHING AND RESEARCH

This round table held three meetings under the chairmanship of Professor Quincy Wright, of the University of Chicago, and with an average attendance of twenty. In opening the discussion, the chairman drew attention to the conferences on instruction in international law which were held under the auspices of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in 1914 and 1925, and also the round table on the subject under Professor E. D. Dickinson at the 1924 meeting of the American Political Science Association. The growing interest in international relations is attested by the increasing number of institutions which publish separate bulletins of courses in the field offered by departments of political science, history, economics, law, philosophy, sociology, geography, and others. Such bulletins published by Georgetown University, the American University, Columbia University, the University of Chicago, and the University of Washington were examined.

The first day of the round table was devoted to a discussion of introductory courses in international relations. The objective of such a course was discussed by Professor Middlebush, of the University of Missouri, and others, with the conclusion that it should be to supply information and standards for forming an intelligent opinion on current international policies. The merits and methods of an analytical approach were considered, but the majority of the round table thought it difficult to use this method with freshmen and sophomores whose knowledge of the events and institutions analyzed is generally inadequate. Hence an historical or regional approach appealed to many of the members. It was thought that an approach from the standpoint of American policy has pedagogic advantages, but that, on the other hand, an approach from the world point of view will better serve to cultivate a desirable objectivity. The desirability of close coöperation between history and political science departments in giving introductory courses in the field was recognized. During the discussion, Mr. Walter Laves, of the University of Chicago, presented a report based on the examination of 125 typical college and university catalogues, from which it appeared that about two-thirds of the institutions offer no introductory courses in international relations at all. In those that do so, American diplomatic history is most frequently offered. International law, international relations, international trade, and world politics are occasionally open to freshmen and sophomores, as also are regional courses in the relations

of Europe and Asia, Europe and Africa, Latin America, the Far East, and the Near East.

The second session of the round table was devoted to advanced courses in international relations, and Mr. Laves presented data showing that international law is most commonly announced in the catalogues examined. American diplomacy, international relations, international trade, international organization, colonial administration, conduct of American foreign relations, world politics, and various regional courses were announced in this order of frequency. About one-third of the catalogues showed no advanced college courses in the field, and about three-fourths no graduate courses. Professors Allin of Minnesota, Garner of Illinois, Williams of Pittsburgh, Bose of Iowa, Hill of George Washington, McKay of Cornell, Edwards of North Dakota, and others explained in detail the method and content of analytical or other courses in international relations with which they were familiar. Mr. Butler, of Cambridge University, said that in England there are only two chairs of international relations, one at the University of Wales and the other at the University of London. Diplomatic history is there given by history faculties and international law by law faculties. The latter subject includes much international organization, interest in which has increased since the establishment of the League of Nations. Books and courses attempting to analyze the whole field of international relations have hardly been attempted in England.

The round table recognized that in spite of the recent reorganization of the American foreign service, professional opportunities are so limited that distinctively professional courses are hardly warranted except in a few institutions. General courses in international law, American diplomacy, commercial law, commercial geography, economics, modern history, and modern languages will, in fact, prepare for the foreign service examinations. It was thought that the objective of advanced courses should rather be the stimulus of investigation. Significant analyses and methods of investigation should be stressed, and discussion of problems should occupy more time than formal lectures.

This discussion naturally led, on the third day, to a consideration of the most fertile methods of research in the field. The chairman called attention to the list of doctoral dissertations in the field published in the August number of the REVIEW and to the fact that most of them seemed to contemplate a legal or historical approach, though a few, on the economic borderland, might use statistics or an economic analysis. He also recalled President Beard's advice to search for the significant

developments of a subject on its periphery rather than at its center and to the comment in Whitehead's "Science and the Modern World" that natural science has advanced by substituting for Aristotle's precept, "define and classify," the precept "measure and verify." Do international relations present factors capable of measurement? What are the disciplines adjacent to international relations on the points of contact with which significant advances may be made?

Mr. Harold Lasswell, of the University of Chicago, opened the discussion by suggesting a quest for research subjects, not within traditional categories, but within categories found after fresh observation of the processes of contemporary international life. He suggested that historical and legal studies might yield new results if conceived as the material for framing verbal patterns capable of affecting international tribunals, diplomats, armies, and other instruments of official international contact. He then discussed the importance of psychiatric analyses for understanding the activities of political leaders and diplomats, and perhaps for throwing light on the activities of people in the mass and the conditions and methods of effective propaganda. The value of anthropological investigations for showing analogues of modern social patterns in more primitive societies and the interpenetration of apparently unrelated patterns of behavior was also stressed.

Mr. Kaiser, a German fellow at the University of Cincinnati, described the new German study of geo-politik, embracing political geography, anthro-geography, and economic geography, and taking the world as a unit to ascertain the significant natural conditions of international policies. He also suggested that with the increasing importance of public opinion newspapers and periodicals would prove more useful sources for studying world politics than official documents.

Professor Wallis, of the University of Minnesota, further discussed the possibilities of anthropology in illuminating the field of international relations. Mr. McKay, of Cornell University, expressed the opinion that international relations is a synthetic subject which should aim at balancing material, from all sources, bearing on a particular situation, and not at cultivating one method exclusively. On this the chairman observed that, while most investigators will doubtless engage in such synthetic researches, advance may be more rapid if a few were to cultivate intensively peripheral areas by these new methods. It was emphasized that the use of psychiatric analyses and anthropological data requires trained students in both the field of political science on the one hand and of psychology or anthropology on the other. If fruitful in-

vestigations were carried out, the results would become available for synthetic political scientists. Mention was made of the significant fields on the borderland of economics and political science, although there was little discussion of them.

QUINCY WRIGHT, *Director.*

University of Chicago.

4. RESEARCH PROBLEMS RELATING TO PUBLIC OPINION

This round table was devoted to a discussion of the practical investigations which may be made to further our understanding of public opinion. It was suggested that a great amount of routine labor is necessary if we are ever to get anywhere in our knowledge of how we behave as political animals. It was suggested, further, that any investigations should be carried on in many communities, if we are to secure conclusions of general application. Since the labor involved is large, and since the investigations should be widespread, it was felt that we could accomplish most at the sessions if we considered fields for general research with great diligence and care.

Dr. Charles A. Beard advanced the suggestion that an investigation of word patterns of various communities would be of value. He pointed out that every age in recent European history has had its peculiar word formulae. The sixteenth century verbalized its behavior in such a way that a student of history can easily identify the thought of that period. The seventeenth century is readily distinguishable from the preceding. The eighteenth century, with its emphasis on reason, freedom, and enlightenment, is also unique. The nineteenth and twentieth centuries are likewise individual. History, from Dr. Beard's viewpoint, in one of its aspects at least, is a series of layers of word patterns, of stratified behavior norms, which have been verbalized. Why not determine the word reactions of present day America? Why not carry on the investigation for communities in many sections, and for groups within the communities? There is probably a peculiar response for the Rotary crowd, for the labor group, for the intelligentsia. It would be interesting to know more about the word reactions of each cross section of contemporary society.

Dr. Beard suggested that an examination of newspaper head-lines would reveal much regarding these word patterns. The study would have to be quantitative, and would involve classifying the word combinations of thousands of heads for stories. Yet the result might justify

the effort. It would certainly indicate whether anything approaching sectional word patterns exists.

A related study would deal with "hot words." A "hot word" was defined as one with definite emotional connotations. Words such as red, Russia, evolution, bolshevism, radical, enemy, and patriotism were advanced as illustrations. To determine the emotionally tinged words of various political groups would be of value in understanding their word patterns. The discovery of such words would also assist a practical politician in writing his party propaganda. Two methods were suggested of securing a list of these words. One was through studying head-lines. Where a word recurs incessantly, and when it is the stimulus for emotional attitudes, such a word should be listed. The study would be statistical and would involve a great deal of effort. The other approach would be to submit a list of words which were believed to be "hot" to various groups in the community, to Rotarians, to school teachers, to labor men. The subjects would be asked to write the first word reaction to each. This would be the ordinary word reaction test. The results might prove fruitful. A comparison of the replies from various groups tested might indicate definite class differences. Words which were emotional for one group might be colorless for another. The discussion turned on the advisability of measuring the time reactions for each word. The practical difficulty of such testing was advanced as an objection. If the tests are to be worth anything, they would have to be quantitative, involving many persons; and this would make time testing a very lengthy proceeding.

The advisability of making additional investigations in the field of non-voting was advanced by Professor A. N. Holcombe, of Harvard University. These should follow the study by Dr. Ben A. Arneson, of Ohio Wesleyan University, in Delaware, Ohio, the results of which were published in the REVIEW for November, 1925. Such a study should include not only persons who did not vote, but those who voted as well. Unless the results are available for many communities, we cannot reach general conclusions.

Professor Norman Meier, of the State University of Iowa, told of a study he had made in motives for voting. The fundamental motives were first reduced to four: self-interest, sympathy or mutual understanding, fear, and safety. The reasons advanced by a thousand persons for voting as they did in 1924 were then tabulated and classified under these heads. The results throw light upon political motivation.

An interesting discussion was held on the subject, "What is news?" Are statements backed by no authority, or only the authority of a "spokesman," news? Are the "it is said" statements which have become increasingly common in the last few years really news? The general opinion expressed was that such evasions of responsibility forbid the material concerned to be classified as news. The press was criticized for permitting items of this character to find space in the news sections.

HARRY BARTH, *Director*¹.

University of Oklahoma.

5. THE PROBLEMS OF A SCIENTIFIC SURVEY OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

The round table on this subject attracted very few participants, and the interest seemed to be such that an entirely different group came each day. This made it somewhat difficult to pursue any consistent course of discussion. It was necessary each day to develop a line of interest which would harmonize with the activities of those who were present. It is perhaps inevitable when round table discussions are held in connection with a national meeting to have a certain amount of "turn-over" in attendance, but it is doubtful whether the round table is a satisfactory substitute for a well planned program if the same group is not available to pursue a discussion over the entire series of sessions.

For the most part, the discussions were limited to research projects in the field of the administration of criminal justice and the best methods to pursue in developing such projects. It became apparent that the public agencies which are involved in the enforcement of criminal law would be a very profitable field of interest for political scientists in the various parts of the United States. Most of the offices concerned are county offices, and important research can be conducted in rural sections as well as in larger cities. The raw material has been practically untouched by research and is rich in possibilities. For example, the records of county clerks, sheriffs, prosecutors, and coroners can be made the subject of rather significant studies. If encouragement is given to this type of study, the science of politics will have in a few years a mass of local factual monographs which will furnish a basis of very important general studies. The possibilities in this field were stressed in the discussions, and there was presented by Professor C. E. Gehlke, of Western Reserve University, a rather elaborate statement of the statistical

¹ Substituting for Professor Robert D. Leigh, of Williams College.

process followed in the Missouri and Cleveland crime surveys which might be adapted to other jurisdictions.

At one of the meetings a very interesting project which is being undertaken in Iowa by governmental research workers was described, and there was also described a significant study of penal treatment in South Carolina. Professor F. A. Kuhlman, of the University of Missouri, described the processes necessary to a scientific evaluation of the working of parole in the various states. Professor James W. Garner, of the University of Illinois, contributed to the discussion a very interesting statement of criminal procedure in France.

It is hoped that if this round table is continued another year it will be possible to enlist the participation of a minimum number of members who are genuinely interested in the subject, and to develop agenda for a systematic discussion covering the entire series of meetings.

RAYMOND MOLEY, *Director.*

Columbia University.

6. INSTRUCTION IN POLITICAL SCIENCE ON FUNCTIONAL RATHER THAN DESCRIPTIVE LINES

This round table, under the leadership of Professor Charles E. Merriam, of the University of Chicago, spent its time discussing the question: "Is it desirable or possible to reorganize instruction in political science upon functional rather than upon descriptive lines?" At the outset it became apparent that while the question was couched in general terms, the discussion would be confined to the introductory course in the field. Two outlines of such courses were presented to the group and were made points of departure for the discussion. Mr. A. Gordon Dewey presented a syllabus of the elementary course given at Columbia University, and Mr. Dewey and Professor Arthur W. Macmahon gave brief explanations of the practical working of that course. The plan might be characterized as having a frankly functional approach, the descriptive element being kept subordinate. Each governmental function is treated as a unit through whatever organs, national, state, and local, it may be performed.

Mr. Herman C. Beyle, of the University of Chicago, offered a tentative outline of a plan which had been specially prepared for discussion in this round table. This scheme was neither descriptive nor strictly functional, but behavioristic in its approach. The methodology of this somewhat novel plan was, first, to consider the types of human behavior which lie at the basis of the fundamental political situations and set the problem

of government. These behavior types are found to be the exercise of political authority and the rendering of political obedience. Second, was considered the task of social control presented by the conflict of behaviors, one of the forms of social control being government. Third, were taken up the several governmental functions made necessary to meet and solve the situations presented by these behavior types. In its earlier sections this outline betrayed the influence of Professor Duguit, although it was expressed throughout in the language of the behaviorists. *Divested of its behavioristic terminology, it became a form of functional study, set off especially by its emphasis on the situations and forces which give rise to and make necessary the performance of the several functions of government.*

There was also presented to the round table by Professor Walter Thompson, of the University of Oklahoma, a summary of certain obstacles to the functional treatment of the subject. Among these were enumerated: *inadequately trained teachers; the meagre experience and outlook of students; the lack of texts arranged according to this plan; lack of research facilities and a body of conclusions adapted for use; and the added difficulties encountered in presenting the subject to large classes by this method.* While no plan based upon descriptive lines was presented, it became apparent early in the discussion that champions of that form of approach were not lacking in the round table group.

The concrete plans having been presented, a general discussion led to the emergence of three topics upon which the group agreed to focus further deliberations: the proper objectives of the introductory course; the relative values of the several methods of approach; and the implications of the more novel plan presented by Mr. Beyle.

Speaking of the objectives of the introductory course, President A. B. Hall, of the University of Oregon, suggested that the purpose is the development of a better citizenship. Good citizenship, he said, means more intelligent political behavior. He believed that the object of the course is to affect favorably the political behavior of the student, and that the course which does not produce that effect is impotent. Professor William Anderson, of the University of Minnesota, thought that the immediate purpose of the course is, rather, to give the students a definite picture of the federal, state, and local governments as operating organs. Professor F. W. Coker, of Ohio State University, held essentially the same view, urging that the object is a study of an important form of human activity for the immediate purpose of imparting a knowledge of the actual working of the government of a given area. Thus it was

apparent that the members of the round table held two rather distinct views as to the objectives to be reached in the course: the development of better citizenship, and the dissemination of information concerning the organization and operations of government. Professor Anderson, however, suggested that all were really presenting the same materials, and were perhaps seeking the same ultimate ends although emphasizing, some the anatomical and others the physiological, aspects in their handling of these materials.

Discussion then turned to the method of approach best fitted to attain the ends sought, whatever they are. Professor R. L. Mott, of the University of Chicago, challenged the value of the traditional descriptive method, which he characterized as mechanistic, incapable of arousing student interest, and involving duplication of effort. Mr. Dewey, speaking from his experience with the Columbia course, corroborated the statement of Mr. Mott that the functional presentation had been fruitful in arousing interest. Professor L. D. White, of the University of Chicago, emphasized the waste of time involved in discussing repeatedly the same principles as they arise again and again in federal, state, and local government. Under the functional treatment they are dealt with once for all. He, too, believed that the functional approach had aroused greater interest, and had resulted in the discussion of more vital questions in the class. He urged that, after all, it is neither organization nor processes, but human behavior and its causes, that are the vital problems of study. He would emphasize the study of functions, but as a means of getting back to the ultimate goal, a study of behavior. This goal he believed could not well be achieved through emphasis on description. Professor Merriam suggested the desirability of broadening the whole scope of the treatment by including a study of the recurrence of the same social patterns working out in other social relations as well as the political.

The functional approach was vigorously attacked by Professor K. H. Porter, of the State University of Iowa, who questioned the power of a study of functions to arouse student interest to the degree that is true of a study of areas. Professor Anderson felt that the best results could be obtained by giving a clear understanding of the various governments as going concerns. Professor Coker agreed with Professors Anderson and Porter and expressed doubt whether a study of abstract concepts such as functions can arouse much interest in the undergraduate, and whether the ordinary undergraduate is prepared to undertake a study of this kind. Professor Arthur N. Holcombe, of Harvard University, observed,

that there are practical obstacles, such as those suggested by Professor Thompson, which ought to be considered in undertaking a study on a functional basis. He thought, however, that with a group of well prepared and advanced students this line might be practicable.

As the discussion progressed, it became apparent that the seemingly contending views were not, in final analysis, so far apart as the terminology might suggest. Mr. Dewey and Mr. Beyle admitted that a functional or behavioristic study must also include a consideration of the organization which is to perform the function. Professor Horack, of the State University of Iowa, who inclined to the traditional approach, agreed that the study of organization and procedure should have as one of its ultimate objectives some consideration of the functions performed.

Very properly, the round table arrived at no concrete pronouncement upon the questions which it had itself stated. An impression which might be gained from the discussions was that, while no radical change is imminent as to subject matter presented, nor as to method, in many of the institutions there is destined in the long run to appear a growing emphasis upon functions of government and a corresponding lessening of emphasis on organization and particular processes. It appears that whether the aim be to create good citizenship or to inform concerning the organization or the functioning of government, the subject will tend more than at present to be approached as a problem in human behavior. The purpose of the study will come to be, as Professor Merriam has suggested, that of attempting to recognize and understand the behavior patterns working out in government, not only by themselves but in their relation to the same or similar patterns appearing in other social relations.

FRANK G. BATES, *Secretary*.

Indiana University.

7. THE PROBLEM OF ORIENTATION COURSES

The central theme of the round table on freshman introductory courses in the social sciences was the problem of testing the claims of orientation courses. An effort was made to bring together the various testing methods in use and to consider in how far they indicate the attainment of the stated objectives of the course. Secondly, opportunity was given for consideration of interesting innovations, in the field either of method or of content.

Professor Dale A. Hartman, of Syracuse University, opened the discussion with a paper on the problem of testing. His point of departure

was the questionnaire presented in the round table of the preceding year by Professor Charles McKinley. Mr. Hartman summarized the claims made in the replies under the following headings: "critical-mindedness", "scientific and philosophical", "impartial", "understand civilization", "participate in civilization", "understand the universe", etc. He pointed out that although an inquiry had been made as to the tests used it was indicated in only three cases that an effort was being made to determine whether the claims were justified. In most instances the main purpose of testing seemed to be to discover how well the students had done the work; that is, for grading purposes. Speaking generally, there appeared to be a wide gulf between the claims and the methods of judging in how far they were being attained.

Assuming that objectives and attainments should bear some relation to one another, and that this relation should lend itself, at least in part, to measurement, Mr. Hartman set up the following criteria: (1) that objectives be well-defined; (2) that they be attainable in some degree; and (3) that they be within the scope of measurement. He then took occasion to outline the experiment that is under way at Syracuse. In the first place, it was indicated that the goal is not so much content as bringing about certain changes in the student himself. One of these objectives was said to be the quality of "insight." In order to discover what progress is being made, a test has been devised that is based on the student attitudes toward a number of stereotypes. It is assumed that if the students look at stereotypes more critically at the end of the year's work than at the beginning they have developed insight. About one hundred statements were included in this part of the questionnaire answered by freshmen at the beginning of the year's work. The same form is used with a control group of freshmen not taking the course. The students are given the opportunity of checking one of five possible attitudes, ranging from *true—certain* to *false—certain*. Such statements as the following appear in the form: (1) "The Monroe Doctrine must be upheld at any cost." (2) "Too many amendments have been made to the Constitution." (3) "The drift toward municipal ownership is a most dangerous tendency." (4) "Strikes should be forbidden by law." As this test was launched only at the beginning of the current year, it was not possible to report on the outcome. Interesting figures were given, however, on the results of the initial test. At the conclusion of the paper there was discussion of the desirability of restating the objectives of orientation courses with reference to the possibility of measuring them. Needless to say, no general conclusion was reached.

A paper prepared by Mr. Donald G. Paterson, of the University of Minnesota, was presented, in which he set forth the quantitative measurements in use in the orientation course at that institution. It was pointed out that the course was planned from its inception to be conducted with reference to the possibility of applying quantitative evaluations. The problems analyzed were listed under the following headings: *predictive devices, examining devices, grading system*, measuring progress, measuring extent and causes of student elimination, motivation, sectioning on basis of ability, effect of size of sections, student opinions and attitudes. Some of the more interesting conclusions will be summarized.

The new type of examinations has proved to be more reliable than the old type. By means of the orientation information placement test, both at the beginning and at the end of the six months' period of instruction, it has been found that the average score has increased from 55 points to 95 points, with a standard deviation in both cases of 17 points. It has been further discovered, that about two per cent of the students know as much on the first day of the course as the average student at the end, and also that practically all of the students know as much at the end as the average student did at the beginning. Another interesting result of these tests is the absence of correlation between the gains made in the information tests and the intelligence test scores. This is interpreted as due to the successful adjustment of the course to the needs of the whole group of students, as all levels of ability seem to be profiting to about the same extent.

In discussing the matter of motivation, Mr. Paterson stated that since one of the aims of the course is to stimulate imagination and arouse intellectual enthusiasm, an effort has been made to discover what progress has taken place along these lines. The index used is the correlation between the intelligence test scores and final grades, on the ground that if a student is stimulated to do his best the correlation should approach unity. The results are encouraging, showing as they do that the correlation is higher for this course than for the other freshman courses. In the matter of sectioning on the basis of ability, the results proved to be negative, so that the sectioning policy along lines of ability has been given up.

With regard to student opinions, the following summary may be offered: ninety to ninety-seven per cent generally prefer natural science material; there is least interest in economics, politics, geology, and geography; interest is not determined by the ease or difficulty of a

subject; the course has influenced many students in their probable elections; they have been encouraged to think for themselves.

The third feature on the program was a paper forwarded by Mr. Joseph McGoldrick, of Columbia University. This dealt with the examination technique that has been developed in the course in contemporary civilization. It discussed in illuminating detail the various types of tests and examinations in use and the changes that have been made during the course of the experiment, which evidently is still going on. The description of difficulties overcome in developing tests of an objective character that can be graded by assistants formed an interesting part of the paper.

The following matters call for special comment: that absolute standards have been discarded, the distribution curve having been set up on the basis of the distribution of grades of former classes, on the theory that a class of 500 will run about the same from year to year; that the questions in objective tests must be so set up that some will be answered correctly by only A men, some by only A and B men, some by A, B, and C men, etc.; and finally that good final examinations will consist of both objective tests and essay tests, the former being graded by assistants and the latter by staff members.

The final session of the round table was devoted to a consideration of new developments. Under this heading Professor Arthur N. Holcombe, of Harvard University, presented a paper prepared by his colleague, Professor A. C. Hanford. The title of the paper was "The Case Method of Instruction in Government." On the ground that training for citizenship should include the application of sound principles of government to concrete situations, Mr. Hanford had brought together a series of cases that might provide the basis for analysis and application of principle. These cases were selected from reports of public officials, bureaus of municipal research, and civic organizations. The plan of presentation is to give the student all of the factors that enter into the problem, and then to stimulate him to propose the solution, or if one has already been proposed, to criticize it and if possible to improve on it. The various methods of using the case material that have been tested in classes at Harvard were also discussed. One would conclude from the report that the case system may do for political science what it is doing for law, and latterly for the study of business as well, namely, make it more real and vital. For the benefit of those who have not seen the book, attention may be called to the fact that Messrs. A. W. Shaw and Co.

have recently published a collection of about one hundred cases that have been put to the test of use by Mr. Hanford and his associates.

Finally, Professor Ben A. Arneson, of Ohio Wesleyan University, reported on the combination course that has been developed in his institution through the cooperation of his associates in the social sciences. The results of several years of experiment and thought have been brought together in a book entitled: "A Gateway to the Social Sciences." Those who have reviewed the book consider that it represents a notable effort to integrate the related social science fields.

The round table adjourned without drawing up resolutions or coming to any conclusions, except that it was the general sentiment of those present that it would be helpful if some agency would provide a bird's-eye view of the various experiments being carried on with introductory courses. In view of the increasing number of such courses and the widespread interest on the part of instructors in various institutions where no such course is yet given, the conclusion seems justified that we have here to do with something that is more than sporadic and that might perhaps be regarded as a symptom of a changing attitude toward the curriculum. It was agreed that if any survey were to be made, it should be more than descriptive; that is to say, that it should be analytical, critical, and interpretative.

WILLIAM E. MOSHER, *Director.*

Syracuse University.