

synthesis"—and, of course, of much else in organic chemistry.

This age-long cavalcade of chemistry, charged with human interest, variety and colour, fully deserves the motto of Nicolas Flamel, the Parisian alchemist of the early fifteenth century: *Moult plaist a Dieu procession, S'elle est faicte en devotion.*

JOHN READ

SOCIETY: A PIECEMEAL VIEW

Society

Problems and Methods of Study. Edited by A. T. Welford, Michael Argyle, D. V. Glass and J. N. Morris. Pp. vi+586. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, Ltd., 1962.) 50s. net.

THIS work is introductory, "intended both for those setting out upon a systematic study of social processes, and also for those whose main interests lie elsewhere but who wish to orientate themselves in particular parts of the field". It consists of thirty-one different contributions, each by a different author or authors, and is divided into two parts, the first emphasizing various approaches and methods and the second examining a number of areas of study.

Inevitably, the particular contributions vary in quality, and in the extent to which they meet the objectives of the book. Some, such as those on the census, on the measurement of abilities, attitudes and personality traits, and on experimental studies of small social groups, place too much emphasis on technical details at the expense of the general significance and limitations of the work discussed. Others are too introductory and descriptive—for example, the contributions on personnel selection and vocational guidance, on urban sociology and on rural sociology. Not many of the articles are really outstanding, although honourable mention should be made of those on social medicine, on social factors in the major functional psychoses, on social mobility and on the sociology of education.

As the editors allow, selection is always a problem in a work of this kind. Nevertheless, some of the decisions made are curious. Contributions are included on road accidents, on operational research and on operational research in industry which have virtually no 'social' content at all, although the questions discussed might well have been approached with this emphasis. On the other hand, a number of important questions in the field of social administration, which are very relevant to social policy, such as poverty, are ignored. These omissions cannot be excused on the grounds either that it was desired to limit contributions as far as possible to those from sociology, or that applied research was to be excluded. The particular examples already quoted suffice to emphasize that the book covers studies of many miscellaneous aspects of social processes, contributed by a variety of disciplines, and ranging from the basic to the most applied approach.

The serious weakness of the book lies, however, in the absence of any overall view. The four editors assure us in the briefest of introductions that "the editorial hand has been kept light"; it certainly has, and in respect of the absence of a satisfactory introduction the editors appear to have underestimated their responsibilities. Particularly in an introductory text, it is essential that the reader be given a clear and concise outline of the wood before he is plunged

among the trees. Moreover, as several of the individual authors stress, the boundaries between the different areas they discuss are often no more than convenient conventions, and theoretical considerations seem to suggest increasingly that less attention should be paid to them. An introduction on the main social sciences, emphasizing the distinctive approach and hence limitations of each, would have added greatly to the value of an introductory work of this kind, which is wide-ranging yet very specific in each of its many parts. This would have served not only to highlight the complementarity of the approaches of various social sciences for the study of certain problems; it would also, by providing an overview, have made it easier to appreciate both the relevance of the particular techniques discussed and the adequacy of the research into specific problems which is described.

W. H. SCOTT

ANCIENT GLASSES

Analyses of Ancient Glasses, 1790-1957

A Comprehensive and Critical Survey. By Prof. Earle R. Caley. (Corning Museum of Glass Monographs, Vol. 1.) Pp. 118. (Corning, New York: Corning Glass Center, 1962.) n.p.

ALTHOUGH the town of Corning, the headquarters of the famous glass-making concern of that name, is in up-state New York, many miles from large centres of population, the Glass Center there was visited by hundreds of thousands of people in the first few months after opening. In the Glass Center the Museum of Glass and the Stubben glass house, where the extremely high-quality decorative pieces are made, are open to the public; in addition there is a fine library of books on glass and facilities are provided for scholars studying the history of the art and technology. As another means of fostering such studies the museum is to publish monographs, from time to time, of which the present volume is the first.

This is a very handsome quarto volume in which the results of analyses of ancient glass are collected, beginning with the work of Klaproth (1743-1817) and covering publication up to 1957. Prof. E. R. Caley, who has for many years been applying his chemistry to archaeological subjects, was obviously well chosen for the present task. The first chapter describes in detail Klaproth's analyses, published in 1801, of some coloured Roman glasses, and they were surprisingly good; the remainder of the chapter discusses analyses, mainly of Roman and Egyptian glasses, carried out by various people up to about 1880. The critical commentary directs attention to analyses that would preferably be repeated using modern methods and facilities and, unfortunately, often notes with regret the lack of careful description of the place in which the specimen was found and its probable date.

The long second chapter reports investigations of the past fifty years, many of which are concerned with ancient coloured glasses. Copper and manganese and the ever-present iron are the main sources of colour; some Egyptian yellow and brown glasses are shown as containing up to 1 per cent of sulphur, but Prof. Caley does not appear to suggest that these might be what are now described as 'iron-sulphur' ambers. Several deep blue glasses are mentioned in this section, but cobalt is shown to occur only in a