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THE SOCIAL WORLD

THE idea of "society" as a primary factor in the shaping of human life is a relatively new idea for Western civilization, possibly for world civilization. While the concept of "social institutions" is plain enough in ancient works, and is set off, by Krishna in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, against the wholly independent individual, or *yogi*, there is little in pre-Renaissance thought to suggest the idea of "society" as conceived in modern sociology. The human environment was rather something "given," as a part of the natural order. Ancient moralists paid no attention to the question of whether or not it is desirable for men to attempt to alter the social system under which they live. A reference to the social system had almost the same value as a reference to the world of nature. While evil men might have positions of power in the system, there was no criticism of the system *per se*, which was rather regarded as being itself of divine origin. Plato, of course, undertook political criticism, and composed what is probably the first "utopian" work in his *Republic*, but it is possible to argue that the *Republic* is more a psychological and educational study than a political treatise. In any event, Plato made no extensive analysis of social institutions as independent factors of conditioning in human life.

Not until early in the eighteenth century, with publication of Vico's *Scienza Nuova*, did any Western writer even hint at the concept of "society" in the modern sense. And Vico, genius and scholar that he was, could not emancipate himself from the medieval view of life sufficiently to develop a theory of history and society which was free of theological content. But Vico did stake out the fundamental observations and definitions which have given birth to modern social thinking. In the first chapter of Edmund Wilson's *To the Finland Station*—a chapter filled with intellectual excitement—Wilson tells of the thrill experienced by Jules Michelet, the great French historian, when, as a young man, he first discovered Vico:

> From the collision of Michelet's mind with Vico's, it is hardly too much to say that a whole new philosophical-artistic world was born: the world of re-created social history. Of this moment in Michelet's life he was afterwards to note:... "From 1824 on," he wrote, "I was seized by a frenzy caught from Vico, an incredible intoxication with his great historical principle."
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> Human history had hitherto always been written as a series of biographies of great men or as a chronicle of remarkable happenings or as a pageant directed by God. But now we can see that the developments of societies have been affected by their sources, their environments; and that like individual human beings they have passed through regular phases of growth. "The facts of known history," Vico writes, are to be "referred to their primitive origins, divorced from which they have seemed hitherto to possess neither a common basis nor continuity nor coherence." And: "The nature of things is nothing other than that they come into being at certain times and in certain ways. Wherever the same circumstances are present, the same phenomena arise and no others." And: "In that dark night which shrouds from our eyes the most remote antiquity, a light appears which cannot lead us astray, I speak of this incontestable truth: *the social world is certainly the work of men;* and it follows that one can and should find its principles in the modifications of the human intelligence itself." . . .
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> How was it . . . that the *Scienza Nuova* (1725) could come to a man of 1820 as an intoxicating revelation? Because Vico, by force of an imaginative genius of remarkable power and scope, had enabled him to grasp fully for the first time the *organic* character of human society and the importance of reintegrating through history the various forces and factors which actually compose human life. "I had no other master but Vico," he wrote. "His principle of living force, of humanity creating itself, made both my book and my teaching."

Here, then, is the foundation of the secular view of society. Others, of course, had a hand in its development, but the proposition that "the social world is the work of men" immediately suggests its corollary: that, being the work of men, the social world can and ought to be studied, criticized, changed, and improved by men; and with this corollary was born social science and the dreams and passions of social revolution.

Within the scope of European history, there can be no doubt but that this assumption of responsibility for the form of human society was a great step of progress. It was a part of the growing self-consciousness brought by the Renaissance—a self-consciousness which expressed itself as social and historical awareness. If, as a result, this development joined with the new materialism to produce, in less than two hundred years, an "atheistic" revolutionary movement which eventually came to direct the destinies of half the world, we may here be confronted with massive evidence that the human drive for self-consciousness and independent moral responsibility cannot be frustrated without terrible disaster. We might argue that while the early energies of the social movement were devoted to attempts to formulate the "laws" of social evolution, and to re-shape social institutions according to the conclusions reached, the task, now, is to study *the laws of the failure of the social movement.* Dwight Macdonald's *The Root Is Man*, often referred to in these pages, is largely devoted to an investigation of this sort.

In any event, it seems plain that the first great attempt of Western man to alter the social world by political means was a relative success, but that the second attempt, which was to carry the labors of political transformation to climax and completion, has proved abortive. The first attempt was made in the eighteenth century, and is marked by the American and French revolutions. These conflicts in behalf of liberation undoubtedly brought new social orders into being, and the constitutions which gave them legitimacy were without question great and pioneering documents in political philosophy. But whether the revolutions and the new political forms *were* the change, or only their political validation, remains a question. In his old age, John Adams suggested "that the true history of the American revolution could not be recovered," for "the revolution was in the minds and hearts of the people before the war commenced. The revolution was in the minds and hearts of the people." Writing of the early and middle years of the eighteenth century in America, Vernon Parrington (in *Main Currents in American Thought*) speaks of the pioneer farmers and frontiersmen who lived out "a vast drama, magnificent in the breadth and sweep of its movement, . . . enacted by players unconscious of their parts." Parrington continues:

> Today it is plain that those unremembered years were engaged in clearing away encumbrances more significant than the great oaks and maples of the virgin wilderness: they were uprooting ancient habits of thought, destroying social customs that had grown old and dignified in class-ridden Europe. A new psychology was being created by the wide spaces that was to be enormously significant when it came to self-consciousness. If this middle eighteenth century wrote little literature, it created and spread among a vigorous people something of far greater importance to America, the psychology of democratic individualism.
>
> From this determining influence—too little recognized by later generations—the creative outlines of our history have taken shape.

Parrington echoes John Adams' uncertainty that the actual history of the American Revolution can ever be known. "The appeal to arms," he writes, "would seem to have been brought about by a minority of the American people, directed by a small group of skillful leaders, who like Indian scouts, covered their tracks so cleverly that only the keenest trailers can now follow their course and understand their strategy." The Revolution came, he proposes, because of the new American psychology and the situation of the British Empire and the close of the French and Indian war. He continues:

> In the beginning it was a clash of jurisdiction between colonial self-government and absentee paternalism, but later it developed into an open challenge of the monarchical principle. A popular will to self-rule had long been developing in America, and when the outbreak of hostilities clarified its latent objective, it speedily asserted a conscious republican purpose. To many of the early supporters of the colonial protest, this republican outcome was unforeseen and deeply regretted; but it was implicit in the whole history of colonial development, and must ultimately stand sharply revealed, once its aspirations were balked. . . . Once the crisis was precipitated, . . . and it became clear that imperial centralization was encroaching on local rights, the liberal impulses in the background of the American mind assumed a militant form and purpose.

Here, in brief compass, we have an account of the organic growth of American attitudes which underlay the political declarations of the American Revolution. The new American society was a state of mind before it was a political system. And here, therefore, is the explanation of its relative success.

The second attempt to change the social world by political means—the communist revolution—has ended in failure. It is a failure, that is, when measured by any standard of the liberal ideal of individual freedom. It may not be a failure from the viewpoint of State power, or economic achievement, but in terms of the original values of eighteenth-century liberal philosophy, it represents a falling back into the grip of centralized and autocratic power. Analysis of this failure might be pursued in any one of several directions. It could be argued that the communist revolution lacked the constructive growth processes which preceded the American Revolution—that the Russian Revolution was essentially a revolution *against* injustice, and not *for* concrete and already partially achieved social values. The ideal of the Russian Revolution was a concept of the ideal society—a concept, moreover, defined in extreme generality and abstraction. The theory of the Russian Revolution may have been profoundly humanitarian, but its passion was destructive and filled with hate.

It might also be claimed that the theory was not only abstract and untested, but false or incorrect as well. The individual is at a discount in Communist theory. He is not an end in himself, but is made to serve the generalized good of the social whole. The individual is compelled to sacrifice himself for a utopian ideal. There may be no objection to such sacrifice, so long as it is voluntary, and some certainty exists that the ideal may be gained. Indeed, the nobility in this idea has supplied incalculable moral energy to the communist movement. It is hard for men who have given themselves to a revolutionary cause to admit that their efforts have been fruitless or misguided. For many men, such an admission would amount to a kind of moral suicide. This has been a major explanation of the curious psychological phenomenon of the confessions of "guilt" by the old Bolsheviks during the Moscow Trials. It would be a mistake to suppose that even contemporary communists are insensitive to the moral contradictions in their revolutionary activities. In the modern literature of revolution, there is little to compare with the moving appeal of Bertold Brecht, the German dramatist, in his poem, "To Posterity." From the bloody present, he cries out to future generations:

> Indeed, I live in the dark ages!
> A guileless word is an absurdity.
> A smooth forehead betokens
> A hard heart. He who laughs
> Has not yet heard
> The terrible tidings.
>
> Ah, what an age it is
> When to speak of trees is almost a crime
> For it is a kind of silence about injustice!
> And he who walks calmly across the street,
> Is he not out of reach of his friends
> In trouble?
>
> You, who shall emerge from the flood
> In which we are sinking
> Think—when you speak of our weaknesses,
> Also of the dark time
> That brought them forth
> . . .
> For we knew only too well:
> Even the hatred of squalor

Makes the brow grow stern.
Even anger against injustice
Makes the voice grow harsh. Alas, we
Who wished to lay the foundations of kindness
Could not ourselves be kind.

But you, when at last it comes to pass
That man can help his fellow man,
Do not judge us
Too harshly.

Here speaks the poet and the dreamer of the second great attempt to remold society closer to the heart's desire by means of political revolution. Those whose emotions and loyalties have not become involved in this struggle, while they may be moved by the pathos in Brecht's appeal, will feel a larger concern for the tragedy of revolutionary failure. The communists, it now appears, have misconceived the Enemy, and by persisting in their misconception, have created a new tyranny still more formidable than the old one.

The time must come, however, when the social world constructed by the communists will be just one more *status quo* added to those that have gone before, and then the tremendous power of the moral and poetic imagination will no longer be available for its service. Daring men are not attracted to the defense of orthodoxy. They are more oppressed by the perils of conformity than by any other social force. It is this, perhaps, which will finally end the confinement of the socially creative energies of the men of the communist social world.

Meanwhile, in the West, a new attack on the problem set by Vico has already begun. Although the old forms of analysis in political terms will doubtless linger on for at least a generation, the new approach, implicitly when not explicitly, cuts across the crystalized political categories of good and evil, proposing that the real issues of human life, both individual and social, must be defined in psychological terms.

One fundamental difference between the political and the psychological analysis of the human situation is that political analysis almost inevitably becomes partisan analysis, developing, as it reaches its climax, an Enemy who must be vanquished, a Party which must be joined, a Power which must be possessed, and a Program which must be put into action. Psychological analysis does none of these things. While psychological analysis does not pretend to abandon political values, nor to condemn political objectives as meaningless, it rather examines human behavior in the attempt to show why revolutions fail to reach ideal goals, and *how* political values may be drained of their authentic moral content by compulsions which seem overpowering.

There is a sense in which Psychology declares: "Political forces did not create the social world of man; they only *seem* to create it." But political forces often embody psychological values and interests. A generation of freedom-loving men will adopt the political means that seem necessary to obtain their freedom. Those means stamp a pattern of relationships upon society, which comes to be spoken of as the form of a "free society." In time, a new definition of freedom arises, made in terms of conformity to a pattern. The transition is so gradual that many men are unable to distinguish between actual freedom and the verbal freedom of conformity to the pattern. They suffer confinement, but do not know it, becoming indignant when told that they are not free. Yet their insecurity grows, their pleasures become tasteless or vulgar, and finally a faceless, anonymous disease of universal feelings of inadequacy overtakes the population. Everyone feels guilty, yet no one has committed a crime. Everyone fears, although no one is overtly threatened. Then comes the inescapable necessity to complete these equations with missing terms. An Enemy must be found, a Sin must be devised, a Savior must be invented.

Something has gone wrong with the social world once claimed to be perfect, or practically perfect, yet no real cause can be found. This is the Saturnalia of the Revivalist, the Season of the

Witch-Hunter, and the Heyday of the Wizard. No one can be "strong," for strength is somehow a heresy which denies the common acceptance of weakness. No one can be uncompromising, since compromise is a natural as well as practical defense of human nature in difficult situations.

The contribution of psychology, however unpalatable it may be, is instruction in the fact that the social world of man, whatever the political labels we give to its structure, is made up of attitudes of mind, ideas of value, and goals to be sought. If these are impoverished, the social world is impoverished, and no revolution, no political change which is not preceded by a psychological change, can help matters at all. In such circumstances, a political change of any importance is likely to make things worse.

So far, the voice of psychological analysis has been limited to diagnosis. We have learned about the neurotic personality of our time, and been told at some length of man's—progressive, Western man's—flight from freedom. Psychology, it may be admitted, cannot be expected to do much more than diagnose. It is a study of how men behave in relation to what they believe, and how a large family of self-deceptions modifies their actions and blunts their perceptions. Psychology is not religion, although some religious orthodoxies have already sensed in psychology the presence of a dangerous competitor at the diagnostic level, and have either been making alliances, seeking captive psychologists, or uttering denunciations.

But psychology, with its close attention to the relation between ideas and behavior, is bound to approach the decisive area of philosophy and religion, and individual psychologists sometimes find themselves unable to avoid philosophical or religious speculation. Erich Fromm has been the most daring in this direction, as he has also been the first among modern analytical psychologists to go back over the ground of political theories of the making of the social world, to see what may be salvaged from these doctrines.

We have now reached a point in this discussion where some attempt at prophecy seems indicated. What will be the issues in future struggles to remake the social world? The slow decline of the sense of reality in political issues will probably throw social controversy into the psychological area, and this means, also, the raising of religious issues in some form or other. Already tendencies of this sort have become manifest, in the neo-religious undertones of Nazi ideology. On the positive side, the growth of maturity should tend to reduce the scape-goating of political suspicions and animosities. Psychology and philosophy are non-partisan disciplines, and as men come to recognize that the important forces which shape the social world originate in philosophy, the basis of nationalist conflicts will lose command of human emotions. On the other hand, those who still suffer from insecurities, personal inadequacies, and undefined fears are likely to cleave to new forms of partisanship, perhaps with a strong religious coloring, to find psychological sanctuary and a protecting power.

REVIEW
"THESE LOVERS FLED AWAY"

OUR last experience with a Howard Spring novel—*The Houses in Between*, published a few years ago, and quite expectedly a Book of the Month selection—has just been duplicated by a leisurely reading of *These Lovers Fled Away*. One begins by thinking: "Well, there is much of charm and much of insight in the book, but is there really anything a reviewer can do with it in a magazine of ideas, such as MANAS purports to be?" So the large volume almost found itself returned to the library, unannounced to our readers. But it is one sign of a good novel to find its values still emerging in the mind, considerably after first reading. Mr. Spring, like Nevil Shute, though with less philosophical provocation, always seems to come out well in this way.

Having seen the praise of several reviewers, we find it easy to agree, yet wonder if the reader gains much from abbreviated descriptions such as that "this long and entertaining novel follows the pilgrimage of an Englishman, Chad Boothroyd, through the first fifty years of this century," or that "the narrative is full of natural light and shade—from halcyon days on the Thames and the Yorkshire moors to the cold drizzle of London. An attractive fusion of shrewdness and warmth." Describing a "saga" is not much good, just the synopsis of a life is not, by any means, the telling of it. We do agree, however, that there is point in remarking, as does one critic, that Mr. Spring is "warm and evocative," that the novel is "large-hearted, sensitive, full of feeling for change and tuned to the music of humanity." In retrospect, the reader discovers that he really has been living, not only with the "lovers," of whom there are many, but with an endearing Dickensian conservative whose virtues far outweigh his pompous conformity, with an atomic scientist, an economic expert, and a successful playwright. Mr. Spring, moreover, manages to take all of these variegated personalities through fifty years of life together, and on turning the last page, the reader is likely to discover that he learned more about himself and friends of different temperament than he had realized.

"Uncle Arthur" is the Dickensian paragon, at first an upright clerk in a smug English municipality. But the same Uncle Arthur whom we first take to be utterly dull, void of imagination, emerges as one of the true heroes of the tale. Now, lest it be suspected that Mr. Spring is deliberately contriving a case for conventionality, it must also be noted that the man who attains the greatest spiritual depth in the closing chapters has spent most of his life as an irresponsible pleasure-seeker.

But to turn back to the "unforgettable" Uncle Arthur who, in his 70's, retires to the narrator's country home: Constitutionally unable to vegetate, he cultivates vegetables instead—well and usefully—and also cultivates a small boy:

> He made off to his kitchen garden again, and I went with him. Like an inspecting officer he surveyed his orderly platoons, and suddenly said: "Now that all this is reduced from chaos to creation, my dear Chad, I find a lot of time on my hands. I think I should take over Simon's education. He is five years old."
>
> "*You*, Uncle Arthur?"
>
> He bridled. "And why not I? If a Master of Arts and a Barrister-at-Law who for years controlled the affairs of a municipality is unable to teach the rudiments to one small boy, then there is something extremely cockeyed in the state of Venice. Alternatively, since the moment has arrived when the State insists on education, you could send him to the village school."
>
> "Rose would hate that."
>
> "Very well then. If such a man as Ashmole could lick even you into the rough semblance of an educated being, you need have no hesitation in entrusting your cub to such a man as I."
>
> "What do you propose to teach him?"
>
> "Reading, writing, and the rudiments of mathematics and Latin."

"Why Latin? It was driven into me. I dropped it as soon as I could, and I haven't opened a book in Latin from that day to this."

"That was my experience too; but you have lived in vain, my dear boy, if you have not discovered that I am a Conformist. I have my suprisingly novel ideas on many subjects, but I keep them under my Hat. My Hat has always been the symbol of my Conformity. I take it Simon will go in time to a public school?"

"Probably."

"Well, then. The public school requires Latin; the boy requires the public school; therefore the boy must learn Latin. Which means, God help me, he said with a sigh, "that in his seventies Arthur J. Geldersome will have to learn it all over again."

Uncle Arthur began by giving Simon a slice of the kitchen garden and his own tools, which had to be kept spotless, and this was certainly a wiser start than setting him down at a desk with a book. The boy loved it, and they spent hours together every day, having, I should imagine, some rum conversations. At the end of a month I asked Uncle Arthur when the lessons were going to begin, and he said: "Well, it's early days, Chad. He knows his alphabet. That's not bad in a month."

"But when do you teach him? He spends all his time in the garden?"

"Simon and I have discovered the educational value of seedmen's packets. An A is not a mere tiresome symbol: it is the first letter of Aubrietia, which Simon has growing in his plot. At the other end of the scale he has sown some seeds of Zinnia, and we have considered everything in between and planted or sown a lot of it. When Simon's garden is mature it may be a shade surprising horticulturally, but it will be a triumph of mind over vegetable matter. X rather foxed me, but happily I discovered the Xeranthemum, which you perhaps call the immortelle or everlasting flower."

"Can he write the alphabet?"

"Oh, yes, we have our blackboard in the garden—the door, in short. You should have a look at it some day—a palimpsest of enormous interest to any right-minded horticulturalist."

"Well," I said, "I suppose the method's all right if it works."

"Oh, it works. When we came to V, which of course was Violet, I said: 'Violets dim, but sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes.' Do you know what he said?"

"I couldn't guess," I answered, looking with an oddly chastened feeling at the old man, standing there with one boot on the spade.

"He said: 'Those are like Mummy's eyes. Who was Juno?' "

Billy Pascoe—Sir William in his later years—is the country boy who makes good in atomic science. A world away from Uncle Arthur's garden, caring little for his usefulness or for other people, he finally wakes up to the disastrous one-pointedness of his scientific thinking, developed, perhaps, while protectively incarcerated at Los Alamos. His letter to the narrator is an instructive communication:

My Dear Chad:

Do you realize that I am one of the most important men in the world? I didn't know this myself till I was given a bodyguard, which is to say I was put under arrest, for I suspect that the purpose of my bodyguard is not so much to see that nobody gets at me as to see that I get at nobody else. I'm not the only one. Where I work, all the important people have bodyguards. Mine is a revolver. A gun, he calls it.

I am so important that you mustn't even know where my work is done. There are a lot of us swept together there—Italians, Danes, Germans, Americans, English—and we are shut up inside a barbed-wire fence, a genuine League of Nations, working in perfect understanding to give the nations something to thank us for. After *your* war, peoples were offered another sort of League of Nations. They didn't seem to want it. At any rate, they didn't want it enough to make it more than a gasworks; so now they must put up with our smaller and wonderfully elite League and with what it hands out to them.

My brief time out has thrown me into a welter of reminiscence. I have breathed another air, as some wretch might on parole from a forced labor camp. And I suddenly find that this air belongs to a world which, for all its idiocies, trivialities and sentimental emotions, is worthy and desirable in a way that mine is not. It is a world that I have never lived in; but I have wandered along its fringes. If I have never experienced its meaning, I have apprehended it; and now I know that what distinguishes it from my world

is that, for all its tragic failures, it has within it the germ of life. And what I want to say to you, Chad, is this: that if the warm, bungling humanity of the life you know does not realize its responsibility to take hold of the life I represent and say: "Drop your bodyguards; come out from behind your barbed wire; let us know what you are doing, and let us judge whether you are to go on doing it" . . .—then the worse for you. . . .

Another thing I want you to know, Chad, is that the people who are doing this are in no way remarkable, in no way qualified to have so decisive a say in the affairs of the world. I have spent my life among them, and I know. They will tell you—most of them—that their business is discovery, and that what is done with the thing discovered is not their concern. That, in itself, is an admission of spiritual idiocy, of utter baseness, that makes them lower than the run of men and women, not greater, for who, with a grain of moral perception, would go on handing poison to a known murderer or manufacturing plates for a forger? But who am I to talk? My perception comes late. The only ray of light I see is that, even among my colleagues, there are some who are afraid.

However, for me, I have done with it. When I return behind the barbed wire I shall pretentiously potter and make no further contribution; and when I am back at Pentyrch, to carry forward the good work in England's green and pleasant land, I shall do the same.

Well, this isn't much of a review, but we have done the best we can to pass on the impression that no one who reads these 400 pages of Howard Spring will be any the worse for the experience.

COMMENTARY
DAYS OF CAPTIVITY

As one reads the present-day literature of essay and commentary and criticism, as well as the serious novels of our time, it is impossible not to become aware of the strong sense of captivity felt by the writers. Yet few of the people who give articulate expression to this feeling belong to "movements" or are plumping for "causes." Primarily, they are artists and thinkers, giving an account of their reactions to the world around them.

The causes, these days, on which intelligent citizens can find agreement are "holding actions" rather than great drives for affirmative objectives. The thoughtful members of our society are seeking repeal of the McCarran Act (see Frontiers), working for justice for the American Indian, or striving to obtain a foreign policy for the United States which has some hope of increasing the understanding of this country among peoples abroad.

We have earlier suggested that the content of the liberal magazines is changing. The *Nation* has deepened the quality of its coverage of national affairs. The *Progressive* is featuring articles, critical and otherwise, on pacifism. While it is difficult, these days, to start a "little" magazine, and almost impossible to keep it going, such papers keep on emerging and giving voice to fresh points of view.

The present, it seems, is a period of reflection and search for orientation. It is a problem to know where to place one's constructive energies. . There are a lot of small movements—or perhaps we should say non-political movements—which are slowly changing human attitudes at the grassroots level—movements concerned with the reconstruction of the soil by organic gardening methods, and decentralist and communitarian movements.

But there are no "big" movements. Yesterday's political "causes" have gone into a kind of hibernation. The Socialists suffer from ambivalence, torn between the obvious nihilism of violent revolution and the apparent "impracticality" of pacifism, to which many young socialists of draft age have been drawn. The major political parties have nothing noticeably new to offer, nor is there anything on the political scene anywhere to suggest the possibility of a rebirth of political enthusiasm. It may be fairly said that this is a time of waiting.

What are people waiting for? Our own answer to this question should be fairly clear. It is that the hunger of men's minds for a deeper explanation of their strange and oppressive captivity will become increasingly insistent. An attempt is made in these pages to indicate possible directions of search.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves
A BOOK FOR YOUR HOME

A READER recently brought us a little book we feel should reach the libraries of all who are interested in education—and especially those who believe that the most important sort of learning is integral to a growing perception of universal brotherhood. *The Little Professor of Piney Woods*, by Beth Day (Julian Messner), is the story of one of the most courageous and determined Negro teachers in the history of the United States. Laurence Jones, after obtaining his college degree in Iowa, 1907, turned south to help his people by teaching them to help themselves—through education. His dream was to start a school, and he persevered through layer after layer of indifference and hostility, found in both Negroes and whites. When all his efforts to secure financial help proved unavailing, even though he had shown his willingness to undergo any sacrifice to provide free instruction if others would supply a building, he began "Piney Woods School" on a log with one pupil—a boy of sixteen who couldn't read or write. This was in 1909. Within the next few months the "log" and several others were filled to over-crowding, pupils of all ages taking time from their labors to reach into the world of mind.

As Jones's influence in the little community progressed, he encountered a good deal of white hostility, despite his best efforts to explain his intention to influential white citizens and secure their "permission" to teach. Once, when he was addressing a Negro church congregation on the need for keeping up the fight for learning, two suspicious (white) eavesdroppers misunderstood his intent and stirred up a lynch mob. A dramatic passage in Miss Day's book tells how the "Little Professor," with a rope around his neck, proved that intelligence could break through hate and draw out better instincts—even in a "mob":

He glanced at this sea of faces before him now, devoid of justice, and he felt sick for the whole human race.

And then a strange thing happened. One man, caught either by that fate-filled face before him or merely driven by a desire to prolong the excitement, jumped up on the pyre beside him and waved his hat for silence.

"I want to hear him make a speech befo' we string him up," he said.

"Yeah, let him talk." "Let's have a speech." "Tell us what you told them niggers yesterday!"

"Yes, I'll make you a speech," Laurence cried quickly before the mass mind should shift. "I'll tell you what I told them !"

Balanced firmly on his pile of brush, with the rope slack around his throat, Laurence started talking—talking as he had never talked before—strong, clean words that cut sharply but simply across the curious silence. Humble words but not begging ones. He spoke of the South of both the Negro and the white, the land where they all lived and must keep on living together. He told about his school, about what he was trying to do to make that living together easier for both white and black. He told them of the many southern white men who had learned to trust him and who had helped him. He called names that some of them there knew. He repeated what he had said the day before and just what he had meant by it. He even wooed them to laughter, giving them a moment's respite in which to relax before he hit again—at the message they must learn if their beloved land was to survive and be more than an ugly battleground of hates. And then at last when he felt he could let go, when there was nothing more to say, he concluded with this solemn statement: "There is not a man standing here who wants to go to his God with the blood of an innocent man on his hands."

Then he waited before them, quiet once more.

There had been noise and interruption as he spoke—laughter, some shouts, some heckling, and every once in a while a clap of hands. But as he finished a great shout went up, shouts and roars of approbation, as the men, as though released from a spell, looked guiltily at each other.

Suddenly an old man, wearing a tattered Confederate army coat, pushed his way through the crowd. Scrambling up beside Laurence on the brush pyre, he reached over and with gentle hands lifted the noose from his neck.

"Come on down, boy," he said. "We jes' made a slight mistake."

Men came forward and slapped Laurence on the shoulder as he climbed down; others strode up with outstretched hands.

Far back in the crowd a disappointed murmur went up, mostly from younger men, as they realized they were going to miss the fun. But the real danger was over. The older and solider members of the mob had been reached somehow through the power of words; the appeal to their innate sense of justice.

"Let's help the Professah with his school," someone shouted.

Hats were passed through the crowd while other men threw bills and small change at Laurence's feet. When it was all gathered together there was more than $50.

So, on this occasion as on many others, Jones brought salvation to prejudiced whites as well as to members of his own race. Whenever he "broke through" the wall of prejudice, he taught the white man a lesson never to be forgotten. A moving tribute was accorded Jones's courage in 1955:

On a Sunday afternoon, January 23, 1955, Jackson, Mississippi, witnessed a heartening triumph in democracy, For the first time in the history of this southern state white and colored publicly shared a speakers' platform, to pay tribute to an outstanding citizen: Dr. Laurence Clifton Jones, president and founder of the Piney Woods Country Life School.

Accolades, that Sunday afternoon, ranged from Governor Hugh White's designation of Dr. Jones as "Mississippi's First Citizen" to "Modern Moses of the Black Belt" and "Mississippi's Booker T. Washington" as white and colored leaders expressed their appreciation for the man who, for more than forty-five years, has quietly but persistently turned thousands of forgotten backwoods children into first-class citizens by providing them with an education, a home, and a new way of life.

Today the Piney Woods Country Life School, located twenty-two miles southeast of Jackson in the hill country of Rankin County, has a three-quarter-of-a-million-dollar physical plant which includes substantial brick buildings, dairies, gardens, orchards, and farm lands, as well as nearly a million dollars in permanent endowment, a regular enrollment of five hundred boarding students, and a staff of forty teachers.

The Little Professor of Piney Woods is more than a tale of courage and an education in inter-racial relationships. It is also a book which illustrates many of the things we have been saying in these columns about the most important ingredients for the life of the young. Dr. Jones built upon a sound foundation—not because he had no alternative, but because he believed that the greatest good could be accomplished by community effort. By New Year's Day, 1910, Piney Woods School was in full operation, aided by grants of lumber, services and a small amount of cash from progressive white citizens of the country. "But as the winter days passed and spring came to the land, the visitors, both white and colored, who came to see what was happening would have thought it more of a frontier settlement rather than a school. By now there were eighty-five students, and when not attending class the boys were out clearing brush, chopping wood, preparing land for planting, or building temporary pens and sheds for poultry and stock. The meals were prepared by the girls, some of them working while others attended class." The story continues:

To pay their tuition, students arrived with a jug of cane syrup, a sack of ground meal, a pig, or a calf. Georgia Lee Myers, the first girl boarding student enrolled, brought with her a variety of items which, since she had no parents or money and only a burning desire for education, she collected from friends and neighbors. Her list of contributions and the names of the donors included:

Aunt Hester Robinson—one pound of butter and a dime.
Grandma Willis—a chicken.
Aunt Lucy McCornell—four bits.
Sarah Pernell—a chicken.
Effie McCoy—a cake and five cents.
Sam McCoy—five cents.
James Buckner—two bits.
Mrs. Church—seven cents.
Meal Kye—two bits.
Mollice Pernell—"a few things."
Chlora Pernell—a dime.
Bessie Harvey—one of her dresses.

Washington Lincoln Johnson—two pecks of meal.

Mandy Willis—a dozen eggs.

Not a student that came had enough money to pay tuition and none of them could afford to pay board. In exchange for a few hours of class instruction each day they worked the land, fed and clothed themselves, and learned new methods as they labored.

The TV show, "This Is Your Life'" couldn't have picked a better subject or a better cause than Jones and his school, featured in April, 1955. As a result of that program, which told the full story of Piney Woods, $625,000 was procured for the "Dr. Laurence C. Jones Foundation" for the perpetuation of the School. And Jones has been an ambassador of good will even in foreign lands. From Mexico and South America, visitors and students have come to see for themselves what a passion for education, combined with community work, can accomplish.

So the story of Jones's life is a good one—one of the best—for your children to know. Its message is not only that conveyed by any tale about the struggles of a hero, and Jones is all of that; it also strikes at the heart of those prejudices in matters of "race" which so many still need to overcome.

FRONTIERS

Remediable Injustices

"THE bosom of America," George Washington wrote in 1783, "is open to receive not only the Opulent and Respectable Stranger, but the oppressed and persecuted of all Nations and Religions; whom we shall welcome to a participation of all our rights and privileges, if by decency and propriety of conduct they appear to merit the enjoyment."

The legislative record of the United States in regard to immigration since Washington's time is briefly summarized in a pamphlet issued by the Southern California Branch of the American Civil Liberties Union:

> In 1921, the first major restrictive immigration policy was passed. [The Quota Law of May I9, I921.] By this law, immigration was restricted primarily to those of the "Nordic" races on the basis of their presumed racial superiority.
>
> To further emphasize this myth, the Congress, by the Oriental Exclusion Act of 1924 slammed the door shut against immigration of aliens from Asia. At the same time, immigration from the rest of the world was reduced to a trickle of some 154,000 a year.
>
> In 1952, in the revision of its immigration and naturalization laws, the United States had a golden opportunity to implement its break with isolationism and to assume enlightened world leadership. A shining beacon of light could have welcomed each individual alien upon a common standard of worth and individual merit and ability, regardless of race, creed or national origin. The beams from our Statue of Liberty could have pierced the darkness of a world gripped by tensions, fears, and oppressions. It could have inspired confidence in the United States as the leader of an enlightened world.
>
> Instead, under the McCarran-Walter Act, fallacies of 1921 and 1924 were reaffirmed and further compounded by new and even more dangerous restrictions, both for the stranger at our gate and the newcomer within.

The ACLU pamphlet, *The Lamp and the Law,* is an examination and a condemnation of the provisions of the McCarran-Walter Act (Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952). While this law institutes certain desirable changes, such as allowing the privilege of naturalization to all races, and elimination of discrimination between the sexes with respect to immigration (reforms made nominal by quota restrictions), other features of the Act dig away at the foundations of American freedom by undermining the Bill of Rights. The McCarran Act was passed over the veto of President Truman, after the President had branded it "a step backwards," perpetuating "injustices of long standing against many other nations of the world." The law, he said, "departs from traditional American insistence on established standards of guilt," and would "intensify the repressive and inhumane aspects of our immigration procedure." President Eisenhower has said, "A better law must be written that will strike an intelligent, unbigoted balance between the immigration welfare of America and the prayerful hopes of the unhappy and oppressed." The New York *Times* observed editorially: "The racist and reactionary philosophy of the McCarran-Walter Act . . . undermines the principles of liberty, equality and justice for which this Republic stands."

What are the objectionable features of this law?

Until the McCarran Act was passed, a naturalized citizen of the United States enjoyed the full protection of the Constitution, the same as anyone else. He was, as Supreme Court Justice John Marshall wrote, a hundred and fifty years ago, "on the footing of a native, possessing all the rights of a native." Justice Marshall also said: "The Constitution does not authorize Congress to enlarge or abridge those rights."

In 1942, the late Supreme Court Justice Frank Murphy declared: ". . . once an alien lawfully enters and resides in this country, he becomes invested with the rights guaranteed by the Constitution to all people within our borders. Such rights include those protected by the First and Fifth Amendments and by the due process

clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. None of these provisions acknowledges any distinction between citizens and resident aliens."

Under the McCarran Act, these safeguards of freedom can be set aside by the Attorney General. There are thirteen new grounds for deportation in the Act. An alien can be deported for a violation of the law which occurred even thirty years ago, however technical his offense. A naturalized citizen automatically forfeits his citizenship should he be absent from the United States for five consecutive years, on the ground of presumed fraud in his application of citizenship. A naturalized citizen can have his citizenship revoked if he is convicted of contempt for refusal to answer questions before a Congressional Committee investigating "subversive" activities. Should a naturalized citizen lose his citizenship, his wife and children also lose theirs, if derived from his naturalization. This applies no matter how long the latter have innocently exercised the rights of citizenship. Past as well as present political beliefs are grounds for deportation under the McCarran Act.

From a multitude of instances of injustice worked by this law, the ACLU pamphlet describes a few, of which the following is an illustration:

> Under "crimes involving moral turpitude" and for conviction for two or more non-political crimes, a Belgian war bride of an American serviceman was denied entry to the United States with her husband. She had twice been convicted of altering food ration documents while serving as a slave laborer in Nazi Germany.

This law, as the ACLU pamphlet points out, makes naturalized citizens second class citizens. Already its infringements of basic constitutional liberties have had terrorizing effects. Readers are invited to send for copies of this pamphlet, *The Lamp and the Law*, by writing to the American Civil Liberties Union, 5927 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood 28, Calif.