Introduction to American Civilisation

by

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R. M. F.

AN INTRODUCTION
TO
AMERICAN CIVILIZATION

INTRODUCTION

"Freedom," "democracy," "equality," "progress," and "success" are just a few of the concepts which have been used to express American ideals. Undoubtedly, these words have universal significance, but not all people use them in exactly the same way. To understand what these terms mean to Americans, one must see how Americans use them, and how they apply to American life. Thus, the reader is invited to step "inside" America — to see America as Americans see it. That is not the only way to view America, but it is the best way to understand Americans.

The beliefs of Americans are important, for they show us the image Americans have of themselves. Their beliefs are also the standards they use to judge others. Of course, people do not always practice what they preach. The reader should make an attempt to distinguish the image of America from its reality. In the following pages, there are many instances where ideals and practices do not agree. However, ideals and practices are related. Thought influences behavior, and changing patterns of behavior influence thinking. This book shows how traditional American ideas have been modified by changing conditions, and demonstrates how ideas themselves have been a source of change.

The book is intended for foreign nationals who are interested in understanding the United States. The materials used in preparing the text were developed over several years of teaching a course in American civilization to foreign students. In writing the book, I have kept in mind many of

the questions which foreign visitors have asked about America, and have tried to provide some of the background necessary for answering them. No book can say all there is to say about the United States, but I have tried to write a fairly comprehensive treatment of America. Since the book is intended for the general reader, technical terminology has been avoided as much as possible. But content has not been sacrificed for the sake of simplicity.

The book is divided into separate chapters, each of which treats one or more major aspects of American life. The chapters may be read independently of one another, but it is hoped that many students will be able to read the book as a whole. The initial chapters cover certain basic principles and facts which would help in understanding the subjects which follow. Indeed, if one wishes to understand America, it is best to see it as a whole.

This is not merely a book of facts about America. Nor is it simply a history of the United States. It is, rather, an interpretive account. A limited amount of historical information is provided for background, and facts are presented to illustrate ideas. However, major emphasis has been placed upon explaining certain ideas and themes which seem to underlie American behavior. These ideas provide the key to understanding America.

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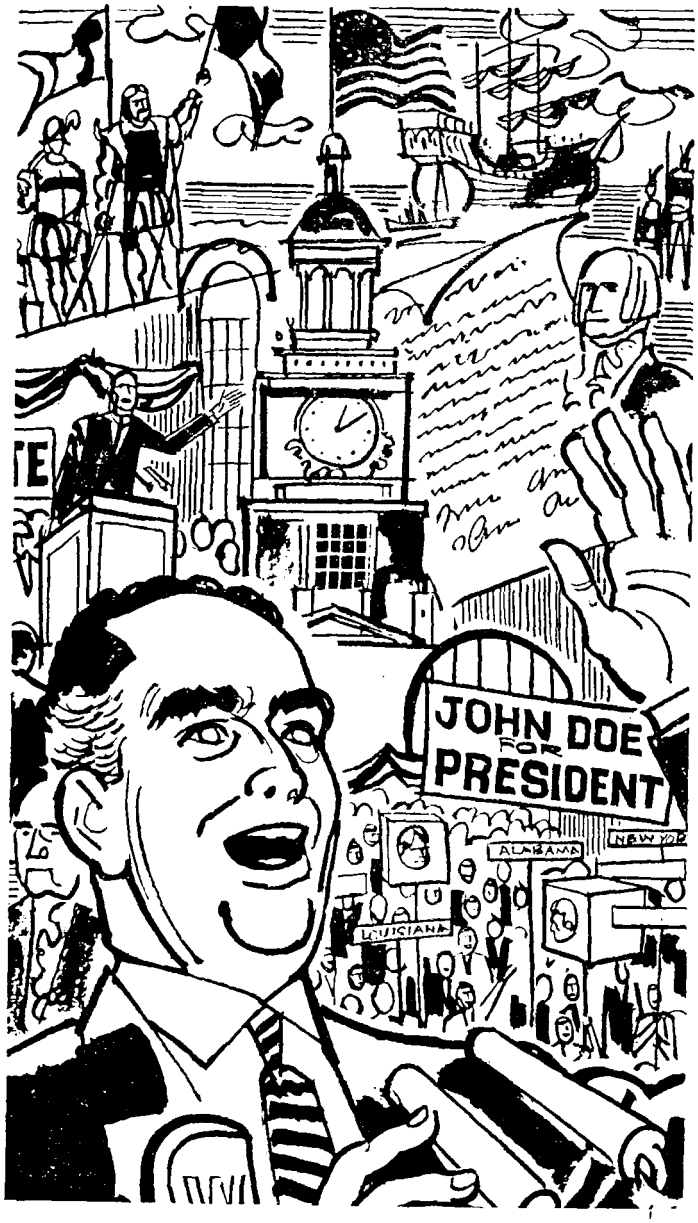
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AMERICA'S POLITICAL SYSTEM

1. America's Political System

The American system of government owes much to other nations and civilizations. One of the major influences upon American political thought has been the Judeo-Christian religious tradition which was founded in the Middle East over a thousand years before America was discovered. From this tradition, America has inherited a moral code which most Americans believe to be the fundamental basis of their political faith. The American's concept of law also derives from this tradition. Just as Jews and Christians believe that God commanded one moral law for all mankind, Americans believe that laws should apply equally to all men. The Jewish and Christian teaching that man is made in the image and likeness of God has supported the American belief in man's inherent dignity and worth as a person. The religious conception of all men as "brothers" under one God has inspired the American political conviction that all men are essentially equal. These principles were made explicit in the American Declaration of Independence which states that all men are created equal and that all men have certain God-given rights which cannot be taken away by governments or men.

From the philosophic doctrines of Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics of ancient Greece, America has inherited theories of ethics, government and law. These theories have been wedded to the concepts of religion and have given to them a rational justification. Truth and reason, which were conceived as divine by Greek philosophers, became identified with God and the soul in the theology of the western world. When modern science came into existence in Europe, men

became very optimistic about the powers of human reason. Philosophers argued that by the use of these powers men could discover universal and necessary truths. The founding fathers of America were influenced by European philosophers when they appealed to " the light of reason " to justify their political causes. Thomas Jefferson, for example, in writing the Declaration of Independence, thought it " self-evident " that all men have rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Optimistically, most Americans believed that by the use of reason they could build a better society.

American political institutions have also been influenced to a large extent by the government of ancient Rome. The early Americans were known to be admiring students of the Greek and Roman classics, and the founding fathers of America must have studied carefully Rome's laws and political organizations. The Government of the United States is very similar to that of Rome. The Senate of the United States resembles Rome's body of elders from which it takes its name. The House of Representatives is similar to Rome's popular assembly. Indeed, the Congress of the United States resembles the Roman legislature more than it does the British Parliament.

However, the most direct influences upon early American government were the political ideas and institutions in England during the period of American colonization. Americans cited English ideas and practices to justify their demands for self-government and political independence. The English settlements in America during the 17th century were established under charters granted by the King. The settlers assumed that they would retain their political rights. In town meetings and colonial assemblies, they were allowed to regulate their affairs with little interference from England.

In the 17th century, a form of parliamentary government was established in England to curtail the powers of the monarchy and to provide a basis for popular government through

elected representatives. The political revolution in England which produced this change in government was supported by the political theory of the English philosopher, John Locke. Locke argued that the power of government rests upon the consent of the governed. He believed that men have certain natural rights of life, liberty, and property and that governments are instituted to protect those rights. Locke challenged the belief in the divine right of Kings, maintaining that people have the right to change their government if it fails to protect their rights. These ideas were brought to America by English settlers, and conditions in the new world seemed suitable for making them a reality.

The colonists in America enjoyed even more political freedom than the people in England. The colonies were separated from English rule by the vast expanse of the Atlantic Ocean. An equal expanse of frontier land lay open to them in the west. Thus the settlers in America faced the responsibilities of developing a frontier society, governing its affairs and protecting it from hostile Indians. These responsibilities, in turn, tended to enhance the value of the individual, encouraging a spirit of independence which minimized England's importance in American affairs.

For many years England allowed the colonies to set their own political course. During the 18th century America became quite prosperous as a result of expanded agricultural production, trade, and an influx of new settlers. England, however, attempted to retain economic controls over the colonies, collecting taxes and benefiting from colonial trade. In exchange, the Americans were to receive a protected market in England, but during the latter part of the century England increased taxes in the colonies and began to monopolize trade. Americans believed that England was attempting to reduce the powers of the colonial legislatures and strengthen its economic controls. At mid-century England was periodi-

cally engaged in wars with France in a struggle for control of the American Frontier. England needed support from the colonies to conduct the war, but even after France was defeated, England retained troops in the colonies as an occupation force. Revolts broke out in protest against new taxes and the presence of British troops. The Americans argued for their rights as Englishmen and complained of " taxation without representation. " The Crown, however, chose to ignore the complaints and refused to make concessions.

These were some of the events leading to the American Revolution. In Philadelphia on September 5, 1774, representatives from the colonies established the First Continental Congress and decided to unite in resistance to England. After all attempts at peaceful settlement of the dispute had failed, the Americans issued a Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. The Declaration of Independence justified the revolution by an appeal to John Locke's theory that government should exist only by the consent of the governed. War followed, and the bitter struggle ended when the British General, Lord Cornwallis, surrendered to General Washington in 1781. The revolution was officially terminated by the Treaty of Paris in 1783.

Before the end of the war, each of the colonies drew up a state constitution to replace its colonial charter. In 1781 the Articles of Confederation were ratified by the states as a constitutional basis for national union. The Articles of Confederation, however, did not give to the national government enough power to carry on its work. They failed to provide for an executive branch of government, or give to the government the power to impose taxes. Under the Articles the government could not intervene in disputes between states nor regulate trade. The colonies, involved in a long and bitter struggle for independence, were not anxious to create

another strong government similar to the rule of the English monarchy.

In the years following the revolution, it became clear that the government established by the Articles of Confederation was not strong enough to preserve national unity. A constitutional convention was called at Philadelphia in 1787 to amend the Articles, but the delegates decided that a new constitution had to be written. The Constitution which they adopted has served as the basic framework for American government ever since. Although amended several times, the present Constitution is still very similar to the original document. The principles of government which it embodies have remained the most enduring feature of the American political system.

The U.S. Constitution

The U.S. Constitution includes the principles contained in the Declaration of Independence. It is also a practical document which drew upon America's political experience and was designed to solve the problems facing the nation after the Revolutionary War. The major problem at that time was the question of national unity. How should the people and the several states be unified under one government without sacrificing the sovereignty of the states or the rights and liberties of the people ? The authors of the Constitution recognized that the national government needed more power to meet its responsibilities, the states were jealous of their powers, and the people questioned the centralization of authority. In order to solve these problems, they followed examples set by Parliament and by their own colonial legislatures. They attempted to create a government which would be representative of the people. They also decided to divide and balance the powers of government between the states and the Federal Government. They provided for

a division and balance of power within the Federal Government itself to prevent any one branch from exercising control over it. Finally, the government and the people were subject to the Constitution as the supreme law of the land. Thus the Constitution, which grants powers to the Federal Government, also defines how these powers shall be used.

The following principles, expressed in the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution, may be regarded as fundamental to America's political system :

(1) that individuals have certain natural rights to " life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, " which neither governments nor men have the right to abolish ;

(2) that government is essentially an instrument of the people, established to protect their rights and promote their welfare; that government derives its powers from the people and is ultimately responsible to them ;

(3) that laws should be created by the people through their representatives and that people should be regarded as equals before the law ; government officials are subject to the law and military and police powers are subordinate to civilian authorities;

(4) that political authority should be kept in the hands of the people and subject to their will, by having them accept the responsibilities of enlightened citizenship, voting and expressing their opinions in political organizations. Traditionally, Americans have believed that popular government is best achieved when people assume the responsibility of solving their own problems, and that the Federal Government should not regulate affairs which state or local governments can handle themselves.

The Constitution divides the powers of the Federal Government into three separate and independent bodies: the Presidency or executive branch, the Congress or legislative branch, and the Supreme Court or judicial branch. Each of these

has powers the others do not have. Only Congress can make Federal law, and only the President has the power to enforce it. Independently of Congress and the President, the Supreme Court and lower courts interpret the meaning of the law as it applies to particular cases.

Members of each branch of the government are chosen by different methods and for varying periods of time. The President is elected every four years. In Congress, Senators are elected by the people of the states they represent for terms of six years. Representatives in the House are elected from Congressional Districts — smaller divisions within each state — for periods of two years. Members of the federal courts are not elected but are appointed for life by the President with the consent of the Senate. Federal judges can be impeached by Congress for misconduct, but they cannot be removed from office for political reasons.

These procedures insure that there will always be at least some experienced men in government by making it impossible to change the entire government in one election ; yet they serve to limit the powers of these men by making them responsible to the people in elections. The exceptions made in the case of the Supreme Court is intended to keep the courts free from political pressures. Unlike a parliamentary system, the party which controls the administration of government is not directly dependent upon the support of the legislature. The party which wins the Presidency holds office for four years, even though the opposition party may control Congress. Neither Congress nor the President have any direct influence upon the courts : judges can render decisions without fear of political reprisals.

Each branch of the government has certain controls over the other branches which it can exercise to prevent them from overreaching their authority. While the President himself cannot make law, he can veto acts of Congress. Congress

can override the President's veto only by a two-thirds majority of both houses. Congress can also limit the effectiveness of the President by refusing to give him legislative support for his administrative programs. The courts, in turn, have the power to review legislation passed by Congress. The courts can declare null and void any act of Congress which disagrees with their interpretation of the Constitution. These powers provided by the Constitution, are referred to as the system of "checks and balances," for their purpose is to assure that each branch of government acts as a control upon the others. But, in the final analysis, the efficient operation of government depends upon the cooperation of all three bodies. Compromises must be reached between them in order to carry out an effective governmental program.

The Constitution grants to the Federal Government authority in matters which affect the nation as a whole,but it reserves to the state and local governments the power to regulate their own internal affairs. The organization of state governments in the U.S. is similar to that of the Federal Government. Each state has a Governor as its chief executive, a state legislature, and a state court system. However local governments, such as counties and cities, have a variety of organizational structures. State and local governments cannot enact any laws which conflict with the U.S. Constitution or acts of Congress, but they can regulate most activities within their political boundaries. State governments collect taxes, regulate commerce, exercise police powers and determine qualifications for voting. The states support and regulate their own school systems without supervision from federal authorities. The Federal Government has no direct voice in the operation of state or local governments, and state and local authorities are not responsible to federal authorities for their actions. The Federal Government may intervene in state and local affairs only when a question of federal law

is at issue, or when there is a conflict between states or the citizens of different states. It cannot take punitive action against governments as such but only against individuals guilty of crimes under federal law.

The rights of individuals are protected by the first 10 Amendments of the Constitution, called the " Bill of Rights." The Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution because the people of the states wanted their rights protected by law to prevent the Federal Government from taking them away. The first of these Amendments guarantees freedom of religion, freedom of the press, and freedom to assemble peaceably, or to petition the government to correct abuses. The Second Amendment allows the people to own weapons. The Third and Fourth offer protection against the use or seizure of private property by the government without legal authorization. The Fifth Amendment guarantees the right of trial by jury to anyone accused of a major crime ; it protects persons from being prosecuted more than once for the same crime ; and it prevents authorities from forcing a person to testify against himself. The Sixth Amendment specifies that a person accused of a crime must be told of his offence and be given a speedy public trial ; he must be allowed a counsel for his defence, and witnesses against him must testify in his presence. The Eighth Amendment forbids excessive fines and cruel punishments. The Tenth Amendment makes it clear that the states and the people have all powers which the Constitution does not grant to the Federal Government and which are not prohibited by law.

Besides the Bill of Rights, 13 other amendments have been added to the Constitution since its original writing. Of these, three so-called " Reconstruction Amendments " were added after the Civil War to specify that persons who were previously slaves would have the full rights of citizenship. The Twelfth Amendment modifies the method of electing the President,

and the Twenty-Second limits the President's term of office. Other important amendments have provided for the popular election of Senators, given women the right to vote, and established a graduated income tax. One amendment, called the " Prohibition Amendment," prevented the sale of intoxicating drinks in the United States, but it proved to be so unpopular that it was later repealed.

The early American Republic established by the Constitution was not by any means a perfect society, nor did it have a popular democratic government. The Constitution did not provide a method for electing the President by direct popular votes ; Senators were elected not by the people, but by state legislatures ; and voting rights were restricted by sex and property qualifications. Negro slaves did not have the rights of citizenship and hence were prevented from exercising political influence.

The early American society was more democratic, however, than any other society of its time, allowing its citizens more freedom than existed before. Over the years, both the Constitution and the American society evolved toward a fuller realization of American ideals. Flaws in the Constitution were corrected by amendments. The institution of slavery was abolished and other class distinctions have been so modified as to eliminate political privilege based upon social position. The right to vote and to hold office has been extended to all adult citizens who meet the legal qualifications, placing political power in the hands of people at all levels of society.

Congress, the Presidency, and the Supreme Court

Of the three branches of the Federal Government, Congress best expresses the various political interests of the states and the people. In the Senate or upper house of Congress, each state has two Senators. In the House of Representatives, each

state is represented according to population. Members of both houses are elected by direct popular vote and may serve for as many terms as they are elected. At present there are 100 Senators and more than 400 Representatives.

Congress was divided into two houses to resolve a conflict between the large and small states. The large states naturally wanted more representation in Congress, according to their size, but the small states wanted equal representation, in order to prevent the larger states from controlling the government. To satisfy both the large and small states the Constitution created two houses and gave them approximately equal legislative powers. A bill introduced in Congress must be passed by a majority of both houses in order to become law. In effect, each house has veto power over the other. Taxation or revenue bills, however, can originate only in the House of Representatives. The Senate, independently of the House, approves appointments and treaties made by the President.

The Constitution gives to Congress the power to impose taxes, coin money, regulate interstate commerce, establish courts, raise and regulate military forces, and declare war. In addition to these, the Constitution states that Congress can make all laws which shall be "necessary and proper" for carrying into execution the previously mentioned powers and that it has "all other powers vested in the Government of the United States." This clause is the basis for the doctrine of *implied powers* which makes it possible for Congress to legislate in cases not specifically mentioned in the Constitution. In effect, Congress can make any law which may be required for the operation of the government or the good of the nation, with the exception of acts prohibited by the Constitution.

In actual practice Congress studies a variety of questions concerned with the administration of government and the welfare of the nation. Congress is sometimes characterized

as the keeper of the purse, for it must appropriate the great sums of money spent by the Presidential administration.

Congress appropriates money for such matters as the operation of government, national defense, foreign assistance, grants for educational purposes, and public works programs. However, Congress passes many other laws which have little or nothing to do with government spending. Much important legislation in this century has dealt with the regulation of business organizations and labor unions. In recent years "civil rights" legislation, aimed at protecting the rights of Negroes and other minorities, has been a central issue of political debate. Several laws concerning civil rights have been passed by Congress. For example, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 specifies, in addition to other guarantees, that all persons are entitled to equal treatment in places of public business.

Congress is the most important branch of the Federal Government, for it is the organization through which the people express their will most effectively. Congress was designed to initiate legislative programs which would set the course of government according to the wishes of the people and the states. This occurred in early American history and to an extent it is still true today. But as the nation grew it became more difficult for Congress to initiate a unified and well-defined program of government. Representing large numbers of people with divergent interests, Congress naturally turned to the President for leadership. Problems facing the nation, especially in times of crisis also required decisive action which the Congress by its very composition, was not equipped to provide. Thus, leadership in matters of legislation is often assumed by the President.

The Constitution gives to the President the power to veto acts of Congress, and some Presidents have used their veto freely. The President also has the constitutional right to

address the Congress or to send special messages to Congress on matters which he feels are important to the nation. By tradition, he delivers a State of the Union message to Congress each year on the activities of his administration and to outline the needs of the government. This message usually establishes guidelines for legislation, and the achievements of Congress are measured against the goals which the President sets forth.

The President has other means of influencing legislation which are not mentioned in the Constitution. As the leader of his political party, he can expect a certain amount of support from his loyal followers, and he uses party leaders in Congress to persuade other members to stand behind his programs. The President meets regularly with congressional leaders to discuss legislation and he often has them introduce bills in Congress. His power to make appointments to administrative and judicial offices gives him a means of rewarding faithful party members. If the President has great popularity with the people, Congressmen may be anxious to please him in order to win his support in Congressional elections.

Most important legislation is prepared in the offices of the President and then introduced into Congress. But Congress is not merely a rubber stamp. Much legislation originates in the Congress, and most bills are greatly modified by Congress before they become law. The President usually faces considerable opposition in the legislature, and compromises must be made before laws can be passed. Strong Presidents have attempted to force their wills upon the Congress, but Congress is jealous of its prerogatives and usually resists attempts by the President to dominate it. Only Congress can make law, and no President can be legislatively successful without its support, To be effective, a President must use every legal means at his disposal to gain Congressional support for the aims of his administration. He is given the credit or blame for

success or failure in government. Since he is the leader of the nation, the people expect him to lead.

One of the most important duties of the President is to provide leadership in foreign policy. The Constitution makes him head of state as well as head of government — an office which has brought with it ever-increasing responsibilities since America's rise to power in world affairs. He formulates foreign policy with the advice of the Secretary of State, members of the Cabinet and Congressional leaders, but on his shoulders rests the responsibility of making final decisions. He can make treaties and executive agreements with foreign countries; and as Commander-in-Chief, he can enforce them with America's military forces.

It is important to realize, however, that all treaties made by the President must be ratified by the Senate. Therefore, the President must work in close cooperation with members of Congress in formulating foreign policy. In recent years members of both major political parties have been enlisted in an effort to shape international policy. Bipartisan support for Presidential decisions serves to insure continuity of action in foreign affairs during changes in administration.

The President's authority as Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces reflects a principle deeply ingrained in American tradition: that military authority should be controlled by civilian authority. Most military matters are directed by the Secretary of Defense, together with the Secretaries of the Army, Navy, and Air Force; all of whom are civilians appointed by the President. These men receive advice and assistance from the Chiefs of Staff who are military officers representing each of the armed services. Military officers are appointed by the President with the approval of Congress, and the President can remove them from active duty at any time. The President may use military forces according to his own discretion without the consent of Congress. This power is given

to him to use in national emergencies. However the President cannot declare war, and he could not conduct a sustained military campaign without the support of Congress.

In daily practice, the President administers the government through various departments and agencies established by Congress. At present there are 11 Executive Departments: the Departments of State, Treasury, Defense, Commerce, Interior, Agriculture, Labor, Justice, Post Office, Housing and Urban Development, and Health, Education, and Welfare. The heads of these departments are called Secretaries rather than Ministers and they are members of the President's Cabinet. They are advisors to the President, and they assist him in administering the law through their respective departments. The Cabinet members are not part of the legislature nor are they chosen by the legislature. They are appointed by the President with the approval of the Senate, and may be removed at the President's discretion.

There are many other agencies in the Government created by law to do jobs which the Executive Departments are not designed to do. There are also several special advisory assistants who work directly for the President to keep him informed on scientific, technical, and political affairs. There are more than two million civilian workers in the Government under the leadership of the President, not including the military forces. The highest officials are appointed by the President, but most governmental personnel are Civil Service workers who qualify for their jobs by examinations. Civil Service workers are generally unaffected by changes in administration.

According to the original provision in the Constitution, the President of the United States was not to be chosen by direct popular vote. He was to be elected by Presidential Electors who were chosen by each state to vote for the President. Each state was allowed a number of electors equal

to its combined representation in the House and the Senate. Each elector was free to name two men whom he felt would qualify for President. The candidate who received the highest number of electoral votes became President, and the next highest became Vice President. There were several reasons for this system. The men who wrote the Constitution were well-educated and some were aristocrats who did not believe that the uneducated masses of early America were qualified to choose a national leader. When the Constitution was written there were no political parties, so electors served the purpose of nominating candidates. A third and important reason lies in the nature of the federal system: since the President represents a union of states, he was to be chosen by representatives of the states and not by the people.

However, this system has been changed so that now the political parties nominate the candidates. The President and Vice President are elected on the same ticket from the same political party. The people of each state vote to choose between the parties, and the winning party in each state also gains its electors. Thus the votes of Presidential electors merely represent the majority of popular votes in each state. Presidential electors usually serve no independent function. Critics have sometimes suggested that electors be eliminated completely so that the President may be elected by direct popular vote. However, they often fail to take into account the fact that the President is elected by states as well as by the people. If the system were changed, the influence of smaller states in elections would diminish. As the system now stands, each state is guaranteed two electoral votes because it has two seats in the Senate. The electoral system gives more influence to the smaller states than they would have if represented by population alone.

The President's term of office is four years, and he cannot be elected for more than two terms. He cannot be removed

from office during his term except by impeachment for misconduct, and this has never happened. If he dies, the Vice President takes his place. The only official position which the Constitution gives to the Vice President is that of presiding over the Senate, but he is not allowed to vote there except in case of a tie. Traditionally, the Vice President has had limited official relationship with the President. His public role has been determined largely by the attitude of the President. In recent years, however, Vice Presidents have played a more important part in the affairs of government. They have served as advisors to the President on the National Security Council, and have represented the President on diplomatic missions throughout the world. Vice Presidents have begun to share some of the responsibility of the Presidency itself, for the job is greater than one man can handle alone. The more active roles which Vice Presidents have played also prepare them to assume the duties of the Presidency in case of the President's death.

The Supreme Court is the third branch of the Federal Government established by the Constitution. The number of justices on the Court is determined by Congress, and at present there are nine members. They are appointed by the President with the consent of the Senate, and they cannot be removed from office except by impeachment for misconduct. The President can appoint new members only when there is a vacancy caused by death or retirement. Life tenure gives judges the security and freedom to decide cases according to their understanding of the law without being influenced by political considerations.

Congress also has the power to create other courts. At the present time there are 11 Courts of Appeal and about 90 District Courts which have been established by Congress. Congress can abolish these courts or judgeships when they become vacant, but there is usually a need for more courts

and judges than fewer. Congress does not have the power to abolish the Supreme Court.

The Federal Courts are concerned with all cases involving federal laws. These laws include the Constitution, the acts of Congress, and treaties with foreign nations. The Courts also decide cases of disagreements between state governments or the citizens of different states, and cases involving the U. S. Government. Most cases arising under federal law are first heard in a District Court, but they may be appealed to the Courts of Appeal and to the Supreme Court if the higher courts agree to review them. Decisions of the Supreme Court are final. The District Courts of the Federal Government should not be confused with state and local courts. State and local governments have their own court systems which are independent of the Federal Courts and are concerned with state, county, or city laws.

Since the application of the law to particular cases is not always clear, the courts must interpret the law before it can be enforced. Such interpretation usually develops out of a lawsuit brought as a test case before the court. Decisions of the courts establish precedents which are for interpreting and applying the law in later cases. This is one of the most important roles filled by the judiciary. It not only interprets how the law should be applied to new situations but also provides continuity and consistency in application by the precedents it establishes.

The Constitution gives the Supreme Court the authority to decide on the constitutionality of state laws. However, in the famous case of *Marbury vs. Madison* in 1803, this authority was extended to include acts of Congress. According to this decision, the Constitution was declared to be the highest law of the land. Any state or federal law which violates the Constitution may be declared null and void by the Courts. The Courts have assumed the right to inter-

pret the Constitution and other laws not only according to their literal meaning but according to their intent or purpose as well. Congressmen have sometimes felt that the courts, by their interpretation, have stretched the meaning of the law beyond any conscious intent of the Congress, but the decisions of the courts are usually accepted as the "law of the land," and are rarely challenged. Congress can clarify its meaning by rewriting the law, and it can, if necessary, initiate amendments to the Constitution. Amendments to the Constitution, however, require ratification by three-fourths of the states.

Judicial review of legislation has two most important consequences. First, it enables the Supreme Court to act as a check upon the other branches of the Federal Government by defining their powers according to the Constitution. It may, for example, decide that Congress has overreached its authority in passing a certain law and hence prevent the law from being applied. Secondly, it helps to keep the Constitution up to date. In order to decide whether or not a law conflicts with the Constitution, the Court must decide first what the meaning of the Constitution is as it applies to a particular situation. Thus the Court is continually reinterpreting and updating the Constitution by applying it to new situations in a more complex and rapidly changing society.

The high ethical standards of the Courts and their reputation for wisdom and integrity have won them the respect of the nation. They are looked upon as the guardians of the Constitution, the protectors of the law, and the defenders of individual liberties against the powers of government and the tyranny of public prejudices. Judges are, of course, only human and are naturally influenced by individual interests, political sympathies, and varying interpretations of the needs of society. Sometimes the decisions of the Court serve to crystallize important public issues and become the subject of

heated debate. The *Dred Scott* case in 1857, in which the Supreme Court decided that runaway slaves were not free citizens, was one of the events which contributed to the start of the Civil War. In 1954, a more liberally oriented Supreme Court sparked a whole movement for racial equality in the United States by declaring that the segregation of Negroes from whites in public schools is unconstitutional. In a series of recent decisions the Courts have firmly defended the rights of individual citizens according to the provisions of the Constitution. They have also favored a broad interpretation of the Constitution to extend governmental powers whenever this appeared necessary to meet the government's ever increasing responsibilities.

Political Parties

Political parties are just as essential to the workings of government as government agencies. They perform the important tasks of expressing public opinion, nominating candidates for office and providing channels of communication between the various levels and branches of government. They are organizations in which ordinary citizens can actively participate and contribute to the formation of policies and the selection of candidates. Political issues and campaigns generate so much interest and excitement among both active participants and spectators that politics is sometimes called America's national game. It is a game which confuses people who are unfamiliar with it, and some have admitted frankly that they do not understand how it works.

To outside observers, American political parties are ostensibly so similar that there seems to be no choice between them. Each party is such a mixture of liberals and conservatives, with regional and class differences, that one wonders how it can formulate policies at all. Commentators have often noted that national party conventions resemble a circus more

than a serious discussion of issues and candidates. Yet American politics has its own logic and the race for the control of government is always hard-fought. Opponents contend with one another as if defeat would bring downfall to the government and the American way of life ; yet the losers often unite in support of the winners after the race.

Perhaps the key concept in American politics is " compromise," for it is only by compromise that the parties can be made to work, and it is by compromise that they win elections. Political interests in the United States are so varied that no party which limited itself to only one interest, one class, or one region could possibly attract enough votes to win a national election. This is one reason why there are not many small parties in the United States, each representing one specific point of view, but only two large parties, each of which represents many points of view. Since the United States does not have a parliamentary system of government, the control of government does not depend upon a coalition of parties in the legislature. Therefore, the coalition among several smaller parties, usually brought about after elections in a multi-party system, is effected within each of the two American parties before the elections. By so unifying diverse elements within its organization before the elections, each party hopes to attract enough votes to win. The people, in turn, are given a chance to preview the composition of the parties before they vote. Thus, when Americans vote to choose between the parties, they vote for many policies and programs which have been brought together, argued, and compromised within the party organizations.

Another reason for the similarity between the two major parties is that both reflect the same basic principles of government. Both parties are founded upon the traditional principles expressed in the Constitution and the Declaration of

Independence ; consequently, neither party seeks to change the basic structure of government. This reflects the convictions and sentiments of the nation as a whole, and to oppose them would be political suicide. In this respect, U. S. political parties are conservative according to standards in some countries. However, parties which have been radically opposed to traditional principles have never been successful in the United States. Third parties have come into existence from time to time, and some of them have had an important influence on national politics — but they have never won a national election. The role of third parties is essentially educational, serving to introduce new ideas and test them before the public. If their ideas win any measure of popular approval, they are usually adopted by one of the major parties and later may be translated into legislation. In the election of 1912, for instance, the Progressive party supported woman suffrage and the popular election of senators ; it did not win the election, but both of these ideas were later enacted into law.

The differences between the parties are not so much theoretical as they are practical. They tend to differ on programs rather than principles. They argue not about what should be done but when and how it should be done. The hard-core conservatives in both parties tend to resist change and often look nostalgically upon times past; moderates tend to welcome change slowly; and liberals usually think that changes in government must be introduced quickly to keep up with the times. There are mixtures of conservatives and liberals in both parties, but there are more liberals in the Democratic party and more conservatives in the Republican. In this country, Democratic administrations usually have been more liberal than Republican ones in both domestic and foreign affairs. However, in recent years, members of both parties have supported social security and

protective labor legislation at home and international co-operation abroad.

What is liberal or conservative depends upon the times and the issues facing the country. As a consequence, the composition of the parties has changed over the years. There were no actual political parties before the American Revolution. The people who opposed the English Crown were called Whigs and those who supported it were known as Tories. After the Revolution, Whigs controlled the government, but soon were divided by arguments concerning the status and powers of the new government. Frontier farmers wanted a weak central government consisting of a loose confederation of independent states. Merchants and planters along the Atlantic Coast wanted a central government with enough powers to provide national unity, protect trade, and insure economic stability. The newly-established Federalists were responsible for drafting the U.S. Constitution. George Washington, the first President, and his successor, John Adams, were both chosen by the Federalist Party. In the meantime, Thomas Jefferson reorganized the Anti-Federalists and won the election of 1800. Jefferson's party, renamed the Republicans, later became known as the Democratic-Republicans, and then simply the Democrats.

The election of Jefferson established the Democratic party as the dominant party in America during the first half of the 19th century. The Federalist Party, losing popular support during Jefferson's administration, went out of existence. Later it was reestablished and took the name Republican Party just before the Civil War. But Jefferson's ideas became so well accepted that both parties today trace their basic philosophy of government to him. He emphasized the importance of popular government, states rights, and a strict interpretation of the Constitution to limit the powers of the Federal Government. Jefferson's party was largely

responsible for extending suffrage to all citizens, improving public education, and providing a popular basis for nominating presidential candidates. During the early years of the American Republic, the administration of the Government was dominated by aristocratic leaders from the East. Popular democracy was established, however, when Andrew Jackson was elected to the Presidency in 1828. Jackson, a frontiersman from the West, was the first President chosen by a popular nominating convention, and during his administration the government became more responsive to the interests of the common people.

The Whig and Democratic parties contested for the Presidency during the first half-century of the Republic's history. Both parties, however, floundered on the slavery issue in the 1850-60 decade as the Northern sections opposed the expansion of slavery and the Southern sections insisted on continuing the system. The Whig Party was largely replaced in 1856 by the new Republican Party which was an anti-slavery Northern party. The Democratic party in 1860 split into northern and southern parties and so lost the election to the new Republican Party which elected Abraham Lincoln. This split was also a partial reflection of the growing economic differences between the two regions. The North was rapidly becoming more industrial, and the South tended to remain basically agricultural. After Lincoln's election, the Southern states seceded from the Union to form the Confederacy and the Civil War followed. The Federal Government fought to preserve the Union. During the course of the war, Lincoln issued his famous Emancipation Proclamation declaring the slaves free. The Federal Government won the war, and the Republican party profited from the victory. Identifying itself with the industrial interests of the North, the Republican party also benefited from industrial expansion elsewhere after the Civil War.

With the exception of two administrations, the Republican party dominated the government until the Great Economic Depression of the 1930's.

The Republican party lost control of the government to the Democrats when Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected in 1932. With the exception of the Eisenhower Administration, the Democrats have controlled the government ever since. To regain its strength as a national party, the Democratic party had to win support in the North as well as in the South. It accomplished this by representing the industrial workers in northern cities, thus winning a broad base of popular support. Today the Democratic party is strongest in the heavily populated industrial states of the Northeast. Normally it can also count on the support of the traditionally Democratic South. However, in recent years, the Republican party has gained strength in the South, and in national politics Southern Democrats and conservative Republicans have sometimes been united on various questions including civil rights.

Regional differences have tended to characterize the two parties ever since the Civil War, although neither party today limits itself to one region or one issue. Just as the Democrats gained strength among the working classes in the Northeast, the Republicans have recently won new adherents among the middle and upper classes of the Southwest. To the old distinction between North and South must be added a new distinction between East and West. Western states have so increased in population and wealth that they are now competing with the eastern states for control of the parties. But none of the regions is wholly conservative or liberal on all questions. Southerners, who have been conservative on the issue of civil rights for Negroes, have usually been liberal in matters of foreign policy. Northerners, who are usually liberal on civil rights, are often conservative in foreign

policy. Fortunately, each party tries to represent all regions. If either party represented the interests of only one region, it would divide the nation politically and weaken national unity.

Ironically, conservatives used to argue for more power in government, and liberals championed individual liberties and states rights. Today, their positions seem to be reversed. In early America, businessmen were regarded as " conservative' because they wanted a strong government to protect their interests. However, in the 20th century, business organiztions have been so thoroughly regulated and taxed that farmers, who at one time opposed big government because it seemed to favor the business interests, now tend to support it because they benefit from its agricultural subsidy programs. The reasons for these changes are not difficult to see. In this century, Democrats have won the reputation of being liberal because they introduced changes in government to protect the nation's workers and farmers and to curb the powers of big business. To do this, they had to extend the government's authority and increase its responsibility in economic affairs. The Republicans, who gained much support from business leaders, naturally resisted the restrictions placed upon business and the heavy taxes imposed to finance government programs. The difference between the parties is not simply a differenee between business and labor — or between those who have and those who have not. Both business and labor are regulated by the government, both pay taxes, and both receive benefits. The arguments about big government and spending also reflect a difference in philosophy. Conservatives believe that the bigger the government becomes and the more it regulates the lives of people, the less freedom individuals have. Economically, they think that people will have more money to spend if the government does not take so much in taxes. They maintain that individual initiative will put

more money into circulation, increase production and benefit the whole economy. Liberals tend to emphasize that people with low incomes will suffer if the government does not offer them economic protection and security. They feel that freedom without opportunity is meaningless, and that the government must actively stimulate the economy to provide more jobs and markets. They argue that money spent by the government directly helps the people who need it most ; and that in the long run this money will be returned in taxes. Republicans emphasize the importance of individual initiative and production by private agencies, and Democrats tend to stress the need for more equitable distribution of wealth through government planning.

However, the American parties are not highly disciplined organizations. It is almost impossible to predict how any political official will stand on an issue by knowing his political affiliation. In Congress, for instance, voting does not always follow party lines. Some members of both parties vote for a bill and some against it. In popular elections, Democrats sometimes vote for Republican candidates and Republicans for Democrats. There is also a large number of uncommitted voters who may vote for either party. In voting, people consider not only a candidate's party membership but also his stand on public issues, his record in government and his personal appeal. This is one reason why candidates from both parties stand a chance of winning, regardless of which party happens to have the greater number of registered members. This is how it should be, for if the minority party did not have a chance of winning, the voters would not have a real choice to make, and the two-party system would eventually collapse.

The party out of power can always be counted on to heap criticism upon the party in power, to keep the public informed and to keep government officials alert to their

responsibilities. But it is also expected to play by the rules. In keeping with the American tradition, the parties are supposed to use only peaceful, legal means of attaining their goals. Their object is to defeat their opponents, not to destroy them. In times of national crisis, the minority party regularly unites behind the party in government for the sake of national unity. In turn, the party in power peacefully hands over the reins of government to its opponents when defeated in elections. These practices are summed up in the concept of "peaceful opposition," and they are among the most cherished and enduring traditions of America's political system. The only major exception to them was the breach in government caused by the American Civil War.

The President's four years in office gives him time to carry out his programs without fear of being unseated by changes in the legislature, and the major policies of government are carried over from one administration to another without drastic change. Such continuity is practically guaranteed by the fact that both parties are committed to the same basic principles, and transitions in government are peaceful. Newly elected officials can be expected to introduce changes, but they can also be counted on to remain faithful to the commitments made by their predecessors. One-party systems of government often achieve such stability, but at the sacrifice of democratic procedures. Multi-party systems can offer the voters a variety of political alternatives, but often at the sacrifice of stability in government. In addition, multi-party governments frequently lack the ability to secure sufficient agreement among the parties to permit carrying out important policies. The chief merit of the American two-party system and the Constitutional structure of government is the stability and continuity in government they provide without denying the people a real choice in the selection of candidates and policies.

Foreign Policy

American foreign policy naturally evolved over the years as the United States grew from thirteen small colonies to become a major world power. The United States had to accept responsibilities for which it was initially unprepared, and had to modify its policies in the light of changing events and new experiences. Throughout this development, however, the Government has been guided by America's political principles and traditions and has attempted to apply them to international affairs. The United States resisted colonization by foreign powers in the Western Hemisphere and has recognized the rights of other nations to independence and self-determination. It does not seek colonies of its own and has been opposed to war. Although the United States has increased in size by territorial expansion, the Northwest Ordinance of 1785 provided a means for new territories to enter the Union as states instead of imposing colonial status upon them. As a matter of record, the United States has shown unusual restraint in refraining from the use of force to gain its objectives. America has fought several wars but, characteristically, it has usually preferred the conference table to the battlefield for settling international disputes.

The United States seeks to protect its interests at home and abroad and it is committed to the defense of its allies against armed aggression. But, over the years, Americans have learned that their interests and those of their allies are tied to the security and well-being of all nations. As a consequence, the Government has directed its policies towards international peace and cooperation among nations. By participation in world organizations, and by various treaties and agreements with foreign countries, the United States has pledged itself to programs of mutual assistance to promote world peace and prosperity.

Throughout early American history, the United States advocated a policy of neutrality which, according to the words of George Washington, was intended to keep America free from "foreign engtanglements." This seemed a natural course for a young and small country which exercised limited influence in world affairs, but it was not easy for America to preserve her independence. The European powers were reluctant to give up their interests in the new world. Both France and England attacked American ships during the years following the American Revolution, and the American Navy was periodically involved in battles to protect America's rights on the seas. Eventually, after thousands of American sailors were captured by the British, the United States again went to war with England in 1812.

A decade later the United States, in sympathy with the newly independent nations of Latin America, issued the Monroe Doctrine. The Monroe Doctrine announced that the United States would regard as an unfriendly act interference or colonization in the Western Hemisphere by foreign powers. This doctrine has been invoked several times to justify U.S. resistance to foreign intervention in American affairs. It was recently applied during the administration of John F. Kennedy to force the removal of Russian missiles from Cuba. The United States viewed the Soviet action as a threat to itself and to the free nations of Latin America.

After the War of 1812 the United States did not become involved in any major conflicts with European powers until the end of the century. During the intervening years, it was able to concentrate upon domestic problems. The 19th century was the period of the great westward migration in which settlers pushed out across the continent from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific. The original U.S. claims after the American Revolution extended to the Mississippi

River. In 1803 Thomas Jefferson doubled the size of the country by purchasing the Louisiana Territory from France. By mid-century, Americans had settled lands as far west as Oregon and California. As the population of the frontier regions increased, new states were added to the Federal Union.

The westward expansion was one of the most important episodes in American history, accomplished by individual citizens seeking new lands and better opportunities. It was not a military conquest led by government forces. By the Homestead Act of 1862, the Government provided land for settlement, and supported the building of railroads across the continent. It sometines defended the settlers against Indian attacks but in most cases pioneers had settled on the frontier lands before government agencies could be organized to protect them. In the original settlements of the far West, they went beyond U.S. jurisdiction.

Acting independently of the Government, American settlers in Texas — which was then part of Mexico — seceded from Mexico in 1835 to form their own republic. In the following decade, they sought admission as a state of the United States and were admitted by Congress. A short time later, a boundary dispute between Texas and Mexico led to war. When the war ended in 1848 the United States annexed the entire southwestern region of the country from Texas to California. This acquisition of new territories by force was unprecedented in American history and was condemned by many Americans as a violation of principle and an affront to a neighboring country. The war was unpopular with many people in the Northeast who viewed it as an attempt to increase the number of slave states in the South. The opposition between Southern slave states and Northern free states divided the nation and became one of the major issues leading up to the Civil War.

In contrast to this event, the United States gained the Northwest Territories by peaceful agreement with England, and it purchased Alaska from Russia. But at the end of the century the nation again became involved in Latin American affairs. A popular revolt in Cuba was cruelly suppressed by Spanish forces, and a highly emotional American public urged the Government to intervene in defence of the revolutionaries. President McKinley hesitated to take action, hoping that Spain would make concessions. However, when the American battleship Maine was sunk in Havana harbor, the United States declared war. Perhaps Cuba would have been granted independence without U.S. intervention, but in the spirit of the Monroe Doctrine, Americans felt justified in resisting Spain's attempt to hold an American colony. What did not seem justified, however, were the possessions the U. S. had won as a result of the war : Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines. The United States did not enter the war to gain new possessions, nor did these acquisitions, with the exception of the Philippine Islands, serve any immediate practical interest. In the course of the war, the American Government indulged in a display of might — an indulgence which has been embarrassing to Americans. Cuba was given independence and Puerto Rico, though allowed a degree of self-government, was annexed as a U.S. colony. The Philippines were held as U.S. territory, though in 1934 the United States pledged to give the Philippines complete independence after a ten year transitional period. Due to World War II the pledge was not fulfilled until 1946.

At the turn of the century America was still an adolescent in world affairs, self-conscious about its growing power, and somewhat awkward in using it. In the Spanish-American war, America flexed its muscles to show that it was willing to fight for causes it thought just — but in acquiring new territories, it did not consider the consequences of its actions.

Becoming somewhat optimistic about its influence, a year later in 1899 the United States joined with Britain in persuading the major European nations to accept an " Open Door " policy in China. This policy proposed that all nations trading with China respect Chinese national integrity and gurantee equality of trade in China. To the European powers, it must have seemed that the United States was presumptuous in trying to impose its ideals beyond its developed sphere of influence. Also, during Theodore Roosevelt's administration a treaty with Panama allowed the United States to build the Panama Canal. By once again invoking the Monroe Doctrine, it formed temporary protectorates over Haiti and Nicaragua.

Most Americans had no taste for international involvement or for war. During the beginning of the 20th century the nation returned to an isolationist mood, expressing the traditional feeling that the country should remain neutral in foreign conflicts. The Atlantic Ocean seemed to provide good insulation from foreign wars, and America's growing prosperity gave her a feeling of self-sufficiency. Americans thought they had enough to do at home without worrying about what happened elsewhere. The United States, however, was more dependent upon other countries than it realized. It took two world wars to convince the nation that it could no longer remain a spectator in international affairs.

Running for office on the slogan, " He kept us out of war," Woodrow Wilson was re-elected to the Presidency in 1916. He had attempted a peaceful settlement of the war in Europe but failed. Then, in 1917, after repeated attacks on American ships by German submarines, the United States entered the war in support of England and France. Americans believed idealistically that World War I would be the " war to end all wars," and would make the world " safe for democracy." In his famous " Fourteen

Points" Wilson proposed that the war be settled without revenge, that territorial boundaries be respected, and that an international organization be established to solve world problems. But Wilson met considerable opposition from European nations at the peace conference in 1919. He failed to convince his isolationist opponents in Congress that the United States should join the League of Nations.

Wilson was ahead of his time, for most Americans had not learned the lesson of the war : the security of the United States depended on its allies and the balance of power throughout the world. Even during the rise of the Nazi powers in Germany and the Fascist government in Italy during the 1930's, the American people did not fully grasp the significance of events. Franklin D. Roosevelt tried to arouse the nation to the dangers of war, but the public paid little attention. It was not until 1941, just prior to America's entry in the war, that the nation began its Lend-Lease Program to supply the allied forces with military equipment. Only after the Japanese air attack on Pearl Harbor did the United States declare war.

After World War II the United States emerged as the world's leading power, and it had become fully conscious of its responsibilities in world affairs. This time the nation enthusiastically joined the United Nations, and has since been one of the major supporters of that organization. The United States contributed almost three billion dollars to the United Nations for relief to the homeless and starving after the war. In 1948, the Marshall Plan was put into effect to assist European economic reconstruction. In 1949, President Truman announced his " Point Four " program of technical assistance to the countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Since World War II the United States has spent approximately five billion dollars yearly in foreign aid to more than 100 countries. A substantial part of this aid has been sent to

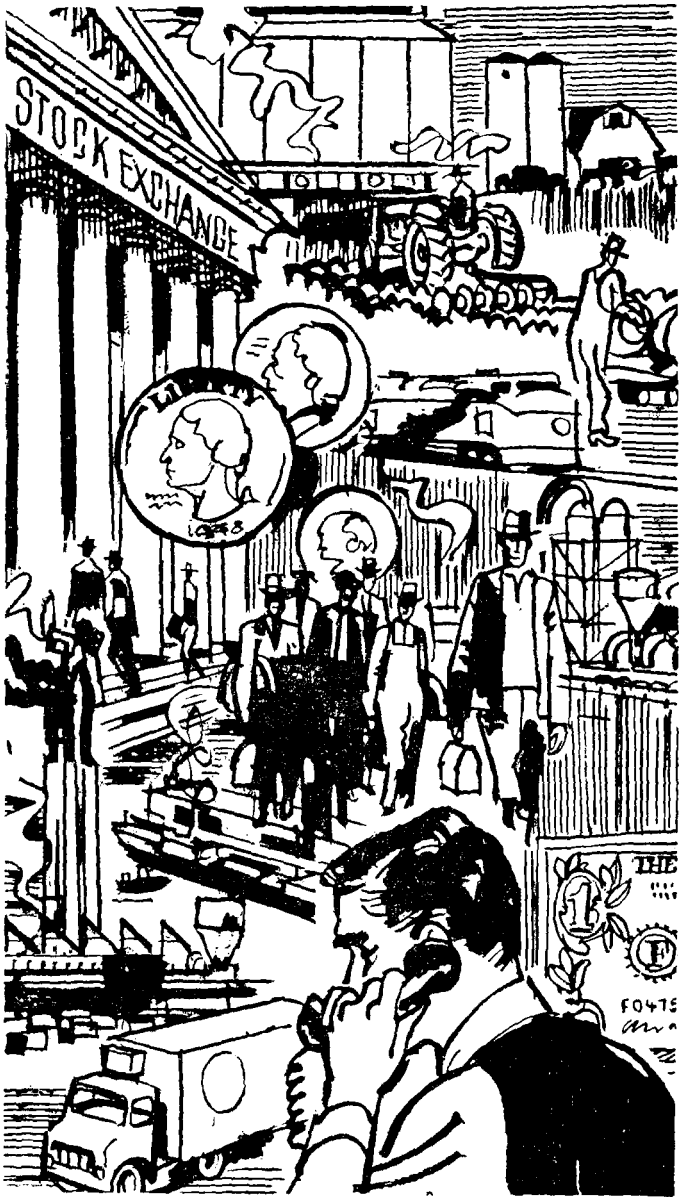
its allies, but much has been contributed to neutrals in an attempt to help them maintain economic and political independence.

The United States disarmed again after the Second World War, much as it had after the first. However, events following the war soon convinced American leaders that military weakness served only to invite aggression. Immediately after the war Russia seized control of several nations of Eastern Europe to form Communist satellites. Chinese Communists forced the Nationalist Chinese to flee to Taiwan. United States and allied attempts to establish a peace in Germany which would respect the integrity of European nations were met with resistance from the Soviet Union. As a consequence, much of the world was divided by a political conflict between the Communist nations and the nations of the free world. This so-called "Cold War" did not result in any major military conflict until the Korean War in 1950, but it has been characterized by threats of war, economic competition, and political propaganda. United States military forces have been stationed in Europe to support the North Atlantic Treaty Organization formed in 1949 to provide a united defense of Europe by America and its allies. In 1950 the United States joined with other nations, under the auspices of the United Nations, to drive back the Communist invasion of South Korea. In 1954 the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization was formed to defend member nations from Communist aggression. In recent years it has given economic and military assistance to nations of Southeast Asia to resist Communist aggression. The Eisenhower Doctrine, proclaimed in 1957, pledged similar assistance to any nation of the Middle East requesting American aid to oppose Communism.

Today the United States is the strongest economic and military power in the world. Of necessity, it exercises great

influence in international affairs. Responsibilities have been forced on it by its growth and world position. But America has been reluctant to play the role of a world power. Unlike any powerful nation in previous history, the United States has not based its foreign policy upon territorial expansion. America has and will defend her interests, but her record in this century illustrates that she does not intend to use her power for aggression. However, while America's military posture is defensive, her interest in other nations today extends far beyond her own immediate security; it includes plans for lasting peace and prosperity for all nations based upon a respect for international law, national sovereignty and human dignity. These ideals cannot be achieved easily or quickly, but Americans believe that they are worth striving for and that the world shares their hope of attaining them

THE AMERICAN ECONOMY


STOCK EXCHANGE

2. The American Economy

Politics and economics are closely related aspects of social behavior. Both indicate ways in which societies organize their activities to solve practical problems. Governments regulate economic practices, and economic changes may affect the operation of government. Indeed, a single name or descriptive phrase is often used to refer to both the economic and political systems of a nation or civilization. When one thinks of the feudal system in medieval Europe, he recalls not only its economic structure, but its social and political institutions as well. Socialism, for instance, may be used to indicate an economic or political theory, or both. One should not be surprised, then, to discover that America's economic system is closely linked with her political system and that the principles of both are fundamentally the same. When John Locke enunciated man's rights to "life, liberty, and property," he had in mind economic rights as well as political ones, and when the political parties today argue about what kind of government is best, they are usually talking about the best way to run the economy.

Traditionally, the American economic system has been described as a system of "free, competitive, private enterprise." Sometimes it has been referred to simply as "private capitalism." These concepts point up both an ideal and a fact of American economics. The ideal is that economic powers, like political powers, should be kept in the hands of the people as much as possible. Americans believe that the economy should be regulated by the government only to the extent that it is necessary to keep order, protect individual rights or promote the common good. The fact is

that most of the productive property in the United States always has been owned and operated by private citizens, and the initiative for economic production has come from them rather than from the government. Private ownership and control of business are considered to be among the most important rights of the people. They provide a means of preserving individual independence on the one hand, and a means of limiting the powers of government on the other. Believing that power tends to corrupt, Americans have been reluctant to entrust economic powers to the centralized agencies of government.

The American economic system is founded upon the psychological theory that people work best when working for themselves. Individual initiative is encouraged in America by allowing private persons to set their own economic goals and by giving them the freedom to choose their own means of achieving them. Motivated by their needs and desires for individual accomplishment, people who profit directly from their work may be expected to increase production as much as possible. Increased production, in turn, is supposed to bring benefits not only to the producer but also to the consumer, by placing more goods on the market and thereby improving the general standard of living. Competition is regarded as a regulative factor. Its purpose is to lower prices and offer the consumer a choice in the selection of products. It presupposes that there is more than one outlet for goods and that the consumer is free to choose where he will buy. Competing business firms may be expected to reduce prices in order to sell greater quantities of their products on the open market. Thus consumers can also exercise influence upon business activities by purchasing or refusing to purchase the goods produced.

This theory has generally worked well in practice. Americans have been free to take jobs or enter business, according

to their interests and ambitions, and limited only by their talents and the opportunities open to them. Fortunately, there have been ample opportunities for most people. America has always been rich in natural resources and full of economic promise. Yet natural resources alone do not make a prosperous economy. They must be developed and transformed into products and services. The development of natural resources in the United States has been brought about by the incentive and inventiveness of individuals who, because they were unrestrained by social or political impediments, were motivated to build a better life. As a consequence production in the United States has so increased over the years that it has reached gigantic proportions, and the standard of living in America has become the highest the world has ever known.

Yet America's economic development has had many successes and failures; and traditional concepts and practices have been modified to meet changing economic conditions. America's success in attaining high levels of productivity has sometimes been offset by her failure to discover adequate means of distributing the wealth. Periods of increasing prosperity have been followed by periods of depression in which the consumer's ability to buy did not measure up to industry's capacity to produce. Competition in certain major industries has sometimes been destroyed by the growth of large corporations which have nearly monopolized the the production of goods, and the creation of great wealth in some segments of society has been counterbalanced by severe deprivation in others. Thus, a significant change in the economy resulted from the development of big business corporations which have replaced many smaller producers in the nation's major industries, and the nation depends more and more upon big companies for its economic will-being. Large labor organizations have also come into existence to

provide collective security for industrial workers and to protect them against exploitation by big business. The Federal Government has extended its economic powers to regulate both business and labor. It has played an important role in the economy, especially in this century, by enacting legislation designed to provide for economic stability and promote the general welfare of the nation. The Government has used its offices to effect a more equitable distribution of wealth and to create opportunities for business expansion and employment.

Big business, big labor, and big government are major forces in the economy today, and their influence has transformed America's economic system. No longer does the concept of "private enterprise" in America denote an economy composed simply of individual farmers, shopkeepers and merchants owning their own businesses and working for their own profit. A description of the economy today must take account of the effects of corporate management, unionized employment, and governmental regulation. The free enterprise system, however, has been altered; not abolished. Of necessity many workers today are dependent upon large business organizations for their livelihood, and they require protection by the government and labor unions. In turn, business corporations have been forced to accept responsibility for the economic security of their workers and for the well-being of the nation. Yet economic powers are not highly centralized. Authority to initiate action is dispersed not only among the major organizations of business, labor, and government but within them as well — through many national, state, and local divisions. There are over 100,000 units of government which can make decisions affecting the economy. There are nearly five million business organizations, both large and small, and almost as many farms. Individuals also exercise influences as businessmen

and workers, as stockholders, as members of labor unions, as voters, and as consumers.

America's Economic Development

The free enterprise system in America reflects European ideas and practices brought to America during the Colonial period. These ideals and practices have been refashioned to accord with America's peculiar economic conditions and her social and political ideals. The discovery of America by Christopher Columbus at the end of the 15th century was indicative of the travel, exploration, and trade which brought about a transformation in Europe's economic structure during the Renaissance period. American was one of the products of this change. Europe's older feudal system based upon the ownership of land and agricultural production, was modified by the growth of trade. A middle class composed largely of merchants and tradesmen began to assume greater importance as nations became more dependent upon monetary exchange. Later, in the 17th and 18th centuries, scientific discoveries and technological developments in Europe brought about the Industrial Revolution. Mechanical methods of production were introduced to replace hand methods of manufacturing. The so-called "capitalist" class, which gained control of the means of production, exercised a dominant influence in economic affairs. European capitalism, however, tended to reflect the social structure of the feudal system out of which it grew, for the landed aristocracy had the advantage in securing and maintaining control of industrial capital. The feudal class distinction between landlord and peasant served as a foundation for the newer socio-economic distinction between capitalist and industrial worker.

In contrast, capitalism in America developed along significantly different lines. The Industrial Revolution did not take hold in America until the middle of the 19th century.

Its earlier, basically agricultural economy did not take the form of European fuedalism. The early American society was founded upon independent farmers, each of whom usually owned his own land and worked for himself. As a consequence, there was little distinction between owners and workers in early America, atleast among free citizens. The egalitarian habits and attitudes which were formed in early America later served as a basis for restraining the powers of industrial leaders. When modern industry came into existence, the nation was not divided into rigid economic classes.

When the American colonies were being settled during the 17th century almost anyone could own land. There was more than enough land for everybody. The population was so limited that hired labor was scarce. There was no need for a man to work for someone else as long as he could work for himself. Work, as well as land, was an equalizing factor. Manual labor was necessary for survival in America's rustic wilderness, and hard work was considered a mark of good character. People who were lazy or who, because of social pretensions, thought that manual labor was beneath them, were often censured or ridiculed. These attitudes were strengthened by the religious beliefs of the Colonists, for Protestant ministers taught that industriousness was a sign of righteousness and that idleness was the work of the Devil. Today all persons are expected to make a contribution to society, and those who snobbishly consider themselves to be superior to others are made the butt of popular jokes.

Aristocracies did develop in Colonial America, but their powers in economic affairs were limited. They could not monopolize production, for ownership of land was distributed among many groups. New lands were always open to settlement on the Western Frontier. At the end of the eighteenth century, when the United States became independent, the land area of the United States extended from the Atlantic

Ocean, the Mississippi River, and the population was only about five million. The ratio of population to land still prevented a concentration of economic powers. The Louisiana Purchase in 1803 more than doubled the size of the nation, making even more land available on the frontier. But successful merchants in the North Atlantic States and slave-holding plantation owners in the South were able to exercise a dominant influence on the economy. Having acquired wealth and education, they looked to the manners of Europe's aristocracy for a model of gracious living. Some, like Alexandar Hamilton, felt that the Constitution of the United States should recognize and prtotect the aristocracy's right to leadership in economy and political affairs. But the dominant attitudes of the country were articulated by Thomas Jefferson who, although an aristocrat, recognized that the preservation of democracy in America depended upon the economic strength of the people as a whole.

Jefferson's economic and political theory was founded upon early America's predominantly agricultural society. He felt that the American people would continue to be free only so long as individuals were able to own land and profit directly from their work. The Western Frontier, he hoped, would provide land for family farms far into the future. He never dreamed that the frontier would be settled and that mechanized industry would replace agriculture within a century after his death. Yet throughout the nineteenth century, most of America's workers were employed in agriculture, and Jefferson's ideas continued to serve as an expression of the nation's traditional economic and political beliefs.

The rapid settlement of the frontier had the immediate effect of providing new lands for agriculture and absorbing increases in population. However, it also created new opportunities for business and industry by expanding America's domestic market and extending trade. Towns

grew up first as trading centers,, and the development of agricultural and mineral resources turned them into industrial cities. The great westward migration of people created a demand for better transportation and communication, and new industries arose to meet the demand. The money needed for capital investment was derived from several sources. Western lands, which originally had been occupied by settlers without cost, became more valuable as the population increased. Speculators made profits by purchasing land at low costs and selling high. Businessmen in the East and in Europe invested their profits in new industries. The discovery of gold in the Far West at mid-century was another sizeable source of wealth. The Gold Rush attracted thousands of people to California and turned frontier outposts into commercial cities almost overnight. However, business corporations, which began to appear in the 1850's, were by far the most important means of financing industrial growth. Since they were able to combine the wealth of large numbers of investors, corporations could purchase land, factories and machines that individual proprietors or partnerships could not afford. Eventually, by mass production methods, large corporations could produce goods more cheaply than was possible for small manufacturers. As a result of these changes, by 1861 the value of industrial capital in the United States began to exceed that of agriculture.

During the later half of the nineteenth century, industrial pioneers, many of whom rose from poverty to riches, began to capture the imagination of the nation. Their personal success demonstrated that many new opportunities were being created by the rise of industry. Such industrial tycoons as John D. Rockefeller, Andrew Carnegie and John P. Morgan became multi-millionaires in oil, steel, railroads and banking. Since they were responsible for much of America's industrial growth, these men were in a sense national heroes. However,

they came close to monopolizing production and gaining control of trade in several of the nation's basic industries. Although they were symbols of success, the industrialists became symbols of irresponsible and uncontrolled powers dominating America's Industrial Revolution.

By 1890 practically all of the productive land on the Western Frontier was occupied and hence closed to settlement. America's growing population, swelled by repeated waves of immigration, was forced to turn from the farms to the cities for employment. The population increased from about thirty million in 1860 to approximately sevently-five million in1900. No longer able to produce by themselves the goods they needed for daily life, increasing numbers of workers became dependent upon large industrial corporations for jobs and wages. The expansion of the labor force made labor cheap. Men — and women and children — worked long hours in mines and factories, sometimes under intolerable conditions. The wages they earned were barely enough to sustain them. During economic depressions, many were unemployed. A new and widespread class distinction between owners and workers began to upset America's traditional economic structure. This contrast between the riches of the few and the poverty of the many was symptomatic of the economic imbalance and social injustice created by the growth of industry.

Several leaders of business and spokesmen in government advocated a doctrine of *laissez faire*. In keeping with traditional principles, they argued that the government should not intervene in economic affairs. Since they owned industrial capital, businessmen felt that they had a right to use it as they wished. But by seeking to form monopolies, businessmen were destroying competition; and in their quest for profits, they seemed to have little regard for the welfare of industrial workers. Aroused by public opinion

both political parties adopted programs designed to regulate business practices. As a result, in 1890 the Sherman Anti-Trust Act was passed by Congress in an attempt to break up monopolies. It was given new force in 1914, during the administration of Woodrow Wilson, by the Clayton Act and the establishment of the Federal Trade Commission. In 1913 the Income Tax Amendment was added to the Constitution, allowing the government to levy higher taxes upon individuals with higher incomes and upon corporations according to their profits. The income tax not only provided a basis for increasing revenues, but it also has served as a means of limiting and distributing wealth. Other laws were designed to improve working conditions and to regulate the employment of women and children. These laws did not immediately solve the problems facing the nation, but they marked the beginning of a new era in which the government began to exercise more influence in the economy.

For a century before the Great Depression of the 1930's the American economy had been crippled by economic crises which occurred almost regularly every twenty years. One cause of such crises was over-production. During periods of prosperity, businesses expanded by increasing production. Often such expansion was financed on borrowed money. This money could be repaid as long as business was successful. But when production increased beyond the rate of consumption, businesses were forced to slow down. Those who could not pay their debts went out of business. Failures in one basic industry led to failures in others, and workers no longer needed for production became unemployed.

Economists began to accept these cyclic occurrences as part of the normal economic pattern. However, the stock market crash of 1929 and the Great Depression of the Thirties made many persons consider the wisdom of traditional practices. In 1933 there were fifteen million unemployed workers

in the United States, and there were few signs that conditions would improve. Many economists and political leaders became convinced that more governmental regulation was needed to bring the nation out of depression and to prevent depressions from recurring. It seemed evident that the capitalistic system in America, as traditionally conceived, was no longer adequate to solve the problems of modern industry. Workers lacked a means of acquiring economic security, and private business interests could not be depended upon to regulate themselves. Indeed, liberal economists shifted the emphasis in economic thinking away from private interests toward a consideration of the welfare of the nation.

Under the administration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, new regulations were enacted to solve the problems of depression and provide for future economic stability. During the depression, direct relief from the government supplied food to needy persons, and jobs were created in government-financed public works programs. In 1935 Congress passed a law to provide unemployment compensation for the nation's workers. The cost of the program is financed by taxes imposed on employers. According to varying state regulations, at the present time unemployed persons may receive up to $70 per week, and collect benefits for as long as 39 weeks. A federal insurance program, called "Social Security," went into effect in 1936 to provide pensions for disabled or retired workers, their widows and dependents. The plan is paid for by taxes imposed equally on workers and employers, and at the present time the benefit payment may be as high as $254 per month. The Wagner Act, passed in 1935, offered more protection to labor organizations. In 1936 the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act allowed the government to offer price-supports to farmers. Other laws permitted the government to regulate the sale of stocks and bonds and to limit credit by fixing interest rates on loans. By regu-

lating the exchange of stock and interest rates, the government has been able to prevent a rapid inflation of prices and has restrained corporations from expanding far beyond real dollar investments.

Economic activity can be stimulated by government spending and taxation. As the nation's largest single consumer of goods,the Federal Government helps support production in many industries. In recent years the national budget has exceeded $100 billion. Most of this money is spent for goods and services. These expenses, in turn, are paid for largely by individual income taxes and corporation taxes. Approximately 50 percent of the net profits of business corporations is paid to the Federal Government in taxes. Individual income tax rates are graduated progressively upward, ranging from 14 percent of a married person's taxable income of $ 1,000 to 70 percent of a married person's taxable income of $ 200,000 or more. "Taxable income" means the amount subject to tax after certain deductions have been made. A married man may deduct from his income $ 600 for himself, $ 600 for his wife,and $ 600 for each child or dependent. He may also subtract certain expenses, such as medical bills and interest paid on loans. In 1965 the Federal Government received $56 billion in personal income taxes and over $ 34 billion in corporation taxes — approximately 70 percent of its total revenue. The remaining 30 percent came from indirect taxes on the purchase of luxury goods such as jewelry, alcohol and tobacco. Through these taxes, much of the nation's privately earned wealth is redistributed through government agencies to meet public needs.

The United States has not suffered from a major economic crisis since the 1930's. The production of war materials during World War II created more jobs than there were workers to fill them. After the war, production shifted from

war materials to consumer goods. Economic recessions, which are less serious than depressions, have periodically slowed the rate of production and caused unemployment. Fortunately, however, they have not affected as many industries, nor have they lasted as long as the depressions of previous years.

Population increased rapidly after World War II. In 1950 the population of the United States was 150 million. In 1960 it reached 180 million. Population gains created the problem of employing greater numbers of workers, but also created a larger market. In the Sixties, the total value of goods and services produced in the United States began to exceed 700 billion yearly. As production increased, so did wages. In 1964 the average per capita income was $ 3,272 and the average family was earning $ 7,900 per year. In real money — measured by the things it can buy — the average worker was earning more than three times as much he did at the begninning of the century.

Since World War II, most Americans have enjoyed unprecedented prosperity. Until recently, however, unemployment has been a pressing problem. Progress in science and technology, which has brought new industries and new products into existence, has also been a primary cause of unemployment. Even as production continued to increase, the rate of unemployment remained relatively high — from about six to seven percent of the total labor force. New machinery has made it possible to produce more goods with fewer workers. Men previously employed in older, now declining industries are without the necessary skills for new jobs. However, the Federal Government has taken several measures to solve this problem. In 1964 individual income taxes and corporation taxes were reduced so that customers would have more money to spend and businessmen would have more money to invest in the expansion of industry. A training program for

workers has also been established to give them the opportunity to learn new skills. In 1964 the number of unemployed workers fell below four million for the first time in recent years — to approximtely five percent of the labor force. At the present time less than four prercent of the labor force is unemployed. Economists believe that a rate of three or four percent should be considered normal. Because of students leaving school, workers changing jobs, and seasonal types of employment, a certain amount of unemployment at any one time is unavoidable.

The Corporations

The small business of early America were usually owned and operated by individual craftsmen or merchants and their families. Sometimes two or more persons entered into partnerships in order to raise more funds. But such organizations were necessarily limited in size. The laws governing partnerships have always made partnerships a great risk, and businessmen have been reluctant to enter into them. In contrast, the corporations which came into existence in the nineteenth century were potentially unlimited in size, for they were able to attract money from hundreds and even thousands of investors. The laws governing corporations reduce the element of risk by making investors liable only for the actual amount invested. Thus, if a person invests $100 by purchasing stock in a corporation, he cannot loose more than $100. According to law, a corporation is regarded as an individual separate from its owners. By the sale and purchase of stock, ownership changes, but the corporation as an institution continues in existence. If a corporation fails to earn profits and is unable to pay its debts, creditors may seize control of the company and continue to operate it in an attempt to recover their losses. However,

if it is a success, stock-holders receive a share of the profits in proportion to their investment.

The rise of corporations has revolutionized economic concepts and practices in the United States. The concept of " private property, " as applied to corporations, does not have the same meaning as it does when applied to small business. Corporate property does not belong exclusively to one person or group of persons, Stock, which represents shares of ownership in a company, is usually bought and sold by investors who exercise little or no direct control over the administration of the business. In the past corporations were often controlled by the persons who pioneered new industries and by the bankers who raised the money for them. Today, however, the institutional nature of corporations gives them an identity apart from their ownership. They are largely independent of the banks, for their wealth has made them self-sufficient. In most cases, corporations are administered by business managers who are not major stockholders. Stockholders may vote to elect officers and determine policies, but they do not manage the company. Executives are usually employed to operate a business because of their ability and training in business management. They are given the responsibility of expanding the operation of the business and returning a share of the profits to the stockholders. Their motive is not profit but the salary they receive. Thus owning shares of stock in a corporation is much like investing money in a bank. The investor allows the corporation to use his money, just as a a bank would, with the expectation of sharing in its profits. However, he does not control the use of his money, for the business is operated by persons other than himself.

The separation of ownership from management has been just one of the major changes effected by the development of corporations. Another significant effect of corporate growth

has been a widespread distribution of ownership. Few large businesses today are owned by individuals or families. In most cases, no one person controls a majority of the stock. Corporations offer shares of stock for sale to the general public, and anyone who has the money to invest may become a part-owner of business. Money is invested by individuals, banks, insurance companies, schools and even by labor unions. Industrial workers may invest money in the companies where they are employed, by having money withdrawn from their wages. Persons who do not have large amounts of money to invest may join investment mutuals. These are companies which combine and invest the savings of thousands of persons. In some of the largest corporations in the United States, there are more owners than there are workers.

Generally business corporations are privately owned and managed. However, their institutional nature and the wide distribution of ownership gives them a public character which small buisnesses do not have. Corporations affect the lives of thousands and sometimes millions of people. Stock holders depend upon them for profits, executives for salaries, workers for wages, and consumers for goods. Indeed, the whole nation depends on them, for their success or failure may effect major changes in the economy. This is one reason why corporations are highly regulated by federal and state governments. The practices of corporations are subject to inspection according to law, and they pay taxes to each level of government which has jurisdiction over them. The powers of corporations are also restricted by the powers of labor unions. By far the largest amount of money spent by business is used to meet the demands of labor for higher wages and insurance. Thus corporations do not operate simply in the interest of a few private persons, but have been forced to assume responsibilities for the welfare of the nation.

Although corporations are no longer private property, according to the traditional meaning of the term, the ownership and control of corporation is still in the hands of individuals. The government regulates business, but does not control it. Businessmen rather than government officials make the important decisions about what will be produced. Thus, in corporations, the United States has discovered a means of concentrating the great sums of money needed for modern, industrial production in institutions independent of the government. The government, in turn, has succeeded in regulating economic practices in the public interest, without seizing private property or dictating its use. Economic power is kept in the hands of private persons, and the agencies of government are used to prevent its abuse.

One of the major abuses of corporate power has been the effort to achieve a monopoly of production. The very size of large corporations has been their great disadvantage. Large capital holdings have enabled them to produce vast quantities of goods by mass-production methods. More efficient production methods have placed more goods on the market at lower costs. As long as competition exists, the customer benefits. However, some highly successful corporations have been able to force their competitors out of business. When this happens, the incentive to improve production techniques and to lower costs is absent. Inefficiency — the danger of any large bureaucratic organization — may set in and increased operating costs may be passed on to the consumer. Anti-trust laws have been enforced to prevent the formation of such monopolies. However, there is nothing in the laws which limits the size of businesses, and corporations today have grown bigger than ever before.

Today control of an entire industry by one, two or three companies is practically impossible because of anti-trust legislation. In some industries, such as public utilities,

where monopolies cannot be avoided, it is customary for the government to regulate prices. However, in several of the nation's most important industries, only a handful of companies control most of the production. In automobiles, for instance, three or four corporations dominate the entire industry. One company, General Motors, produces approximately fifty percent of all the cars. In other important industries such as steel, oil, and appliances, many companies exist, but only a few dominate the market. One consequence of control by a few companies has been a reduction in price competition. There is little difference in the prices of similar products manufactured by different corporations. Instead of competing in prices, companies usually compete in the quality, design and sales appeal of their products. Thus, instead of passing on the benefits of more efficient production to the consumer by reducing prices the corporations are now spending more developing and advertising new products. The advantages of such practices improved products and increased sales. The advertisement of new products makes older goods seem obsolete and creates a demand for more goods.

Since the prices set by manufacturers tend to remain fixed, price competition has been passed on to distributing companies. Distributors or retailers attempt to make larger profits by selling greater quantities of goods. In order to sell more than their competitors, they seek to attract customers by lowering prices as much as possible. Price competition among retailers tends to remain keen, for it is unlikely that one retailer will dominate an entire market. Normally retailing does not require as much capital as manufacturing. Thus it is relatively easy for retailers to come into existence. Customers living in metropolitan areas may purchase goods of the same type — even goods made by the same manufacturer — from any one of several sources.

However, even in retailing, large corporations have been more successful than small concerns. Big companies have forced small distributors out of existence by selling the same goods at lower prices. Since they handle vast quantities of merchandise, big companies can reduce their margin of profit on each item. Large corporations also gain by keeping profits within the company, for example, by owning transportation facilities and financing credit purchases. Many large stores profit from interest on credit purchases as well as from the sale of their product. In recent years, prices have been greatly reduced by eliminating many operation costs. Self-service food stores and department stores have saved labor costs by having the customer wait on himself. Most goods today are pre-packaged and openly and displayed, and the customer can select what he wants. Such techniques have revolutionized the retail industries in recent years. Large department stores and variety stores have made shopping more comfortable and convenient by selling all necessary household goods in one place.

Small business, however, has not disappeared. New inventions and industries have brought new businesses into existence. There are thousands of small manufacturers who sell specialized parts to larger companies, and many small distributors who offer goods and services which large organizations do not provide. Small businesses are needed to maintain, service and repair products after they have been sold. There are, for example, only a few large corporations which manufacture automobiles or refine oil, but there are countless automobile distributors and gasoline service stations. The growth of service and luxury industries has been significant in recent years.

Organized Labor

Trade unions existed during the early years of American

industry, but only for a limited number of workers in skilled trades and crafts. Indeed, there was no widespread need for labor organizations until the latter half of the nineteenth century when large numbers of workers were employed on the railroads and in mines and factories. In early America labor was scarce and wages high. But as the population increased, wages were lowered. Even then, however, labor unions were not highly successful. The America's traditional belief in individualism and free enterprise did not prepare him to accept the idea of unionism. In fact, it did not seem to the average person that workers needed union protection. The great westward movement of the nineteenth century and the development of business provided more opportunities for everyone.

If anyone was poor, the apparent reason was that he was too lazy to work. What many people did not realize however, was that by the end of the nineteenth century most of the productive land in the West was settled. The Frontier, for all practical purposes, was closed. As the population increased, thousands of workers had no choice but to work in industry. They received little compensation for their work, and had no direct means of improving their economic condition.

Because most people did not recognize the need for social and political change, attempts to unionize often failed from lack of public support. There were no laws to protect labor unions. Most existing laws had been designed to protect private property: *i.e.* business, not labor. As a result, police forces were frequently used to break the unions by stopping strikes. Also an increased labour supply, primarily a result of immigration, made labor cheap and periodic depressions reduced the number of jobs. Under such conditions strikes were practically useless.

Labor's attempts to form political organizations failed because the nation was not willing to accept the radical

changes which the unions advocated. Certainly a labor party would have been successful if it could have attracted the votes of all the nation's workers. However, the workers of America represented too many occupations and industries to have a common political interest. The Knights of Labor, for example, which attempted to unite workers in all classifications, could not design a program of action which would satisfy all members. Eventually it went out of existence because of internal dissention. Political programs also failed largely because American workers did not think of themselves as a separate socio-economic class. Since they were not deprived of political rights, their concerns were primarily economic not political. They were not opposed to the American system of government, and they naturally resisted any movement that would alienate them from other groups in society.

The later success of labor unions was a result of their emphasis upon practical day-to-day bargaining rather than large scale politcal changes. Instead of attempting to destroy private business, labor unions learned to exist side by side with it. Their primary objective has been to win a greater share of the profits of business, and they have come to realize that they can share in the profits only if business has the right to make profits. However, although labor unions in the United States have not formed political parties, they have been able to exert a powerful influence in politics. They use their collective voting strength to reward the political parties and candidates who support labor legislation.

Truly effective labor legislation awaited national recognition of labor's needs, which did not come until the Great Depression of the Thirties. Before that time, certain steps had been taken to improve the status of labor unions. In 1914, during the administration of Woodrow Wilson, the Clayton Act was passed and a Department of Labor was

created. But these measures were not wholly effective. Labor unions were not granted adequate power until the Wagner Act of 1935, passed during Roosevelt's administration. The Wagner Act not only permitted unions to organize and strike, but allowed them to form a "closed shop." According to the closed shop provisions, union membership could be required of workers as a condition of employment. Employers were required to recognize the unions and to bargain directly with union leaders.

As a result of improved labor legislation, increased production and more jobs, labor unions have gained strength over the years. Although union membership was reduced to less than three million workers at the beginning of the Great Depression, it increased to almost eight million in 1938, eleven million in 1942, and nearly eighteen million in 1957. In 1962, approximately one out of three employees in non-agricultural establishments was a trade union member and about half of all factory production workers were organized. Most union members are in manufacturing industries. Generally, those not unionized include business, managers, professional men, clerical workers, and farmers. Many workers in the retail trades belong to unions, but unionism among teachers and government employees has not been extensive.

There are nearly 200 national labor unions in the United States. Most of them belong to a national federation of unions, the American Federations of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO). The AFL was founded in 1885 by Samuel Gompers for workers in specialized trades and crafts. Its success was largely a result of its exclusive membership, for it was able to monopolize much of the labor supply in certain essential trades. Today the AFL numbers among its members craftsmen such as carpenters and printers, and skilled worker in the construction and

service industries. The CIO, which developed from a faction within the AFL, became an independent federation in 1937. Its purpose was to organize industrial workers not previously included within the AFL. The CIO now represents national unions in such industries as steel and automobiles. The two federations were reunited in 1955 and now have a combined trength of over 15 million members.

Each national union is composed of local unions which represent workers in particular locations throughout the country. The national unions and federations formulate general policies and establish standards which may be followed by local unions in their negotiations. The national organizations attempt to exercise an influence in national politics, and they keep the workers informed on political issues. They also provide information about economic changes, such as increases in industrial profits, the cost of living and wage-rates in other industries or regions. Through their public relations programs, the national organizations attempt to win public support for union objectives. National unions also protect local unions from being dominated by employers or from being forced out of existence by competing labor organizations. In general they seek to promote trade unionism in America and cooperation with labor unions in other nations.

Most of the actual bargaining is done by local units. The local unions work in close cooperation with their membership through union leaders in the plants. Workers attend local meetings to discuss and resolve problems, and they vote to elect both local and national leaders. While nationwide strikes are sometimes initiated by national organizations, the locals usually negotiate their own contracts and conduct their own strikes.

According to the closed shop provisions of the Wagner Act, labor unions could require workers to join the union

before being employed. As a conseqvence, employers could not hire non-union help, and non-union workers sometimes could not find jobs. The Wagner Act, however, has been amended by the Taft-Hartley Labor Law passed in 1947. The Taft-Hartley Law outlaws the closed shop. Now unions may form a "union shop," in which workers can become employed without previously joining the union. However, in a union shop, a worker must join the union within a specified period of time after being employed. The new law allows workers and employers more freedom in seeking and giving employment, but it still allows the unions to represent the workers after they are employed. It is important that unions represent all of the workers in a given plant, for if they did not, their bargaining position would be greatly weakened. It is important to note, however, that a union shop cannot be formed unless a majority of the workers vote for it.

When a working agreement is arrived at between union representatives and management, a labor contract is drawn up. A typical contract makes specifications about wage rates, accident and health insurance, pensions, vacations and other benefits. In return for these guarantees, the employer is assured of quality workmanship and specified levels of performance. Some contracts provide for automatic wage increases according to the cost of living and corporation profits. Unions will normally accept from a company only what they consider to be a fair share of the profits. They will demand more money if they feel the workers need it, or if company profits show a steady rise. If the unions cannot reach an agreement with management, they can always strike. The settlement of a strike usually depends upon how long the workers can remain out of work, without pay, and how long the company can afford to stop production and lose profits. However, most disagreements are settled in

peaceful, day-to-day bargaining based upon the conditions of the contract.

By their strength of numbers and their practical approach to problems, labor unions have been successful in winning higher wages, better working conditions, and fringe benefits. Fringe benefits include such things as vacations, pensions, and health insurance. Unions have helped to raise the social status of industrial workers in America by securing middle-class incomes for many of them and adequate incomes for most. Skilled workers today, in many trades and crafts, average $8,000 to $9,000 a year, and the average production worker in industry earns more than $6,000 per year. Standards set by labor unions have also had an influence in improving the wages and salaries of non-union employees. Unions have been influential in helping to win public support for social security, unemployment insurance and a guaranteed minimum wage for all production workers. Congress has passed a bill which increases the minimum wage of production workers to $1.60 per hour in 1968.

Labour unions have become a major power in the nation's economy. However, their success would have been impossible without business expansion and governmental regulation. Economic prosperity since World War II has been achieved through the interaction and cooperation among business, labor and government. The stability of the economy depends upon a balance of these forces. To maintain economic balance, large labor organizations, as well as big corporations, must accept their share of the responsibility for making decisions. Unions have the power to call nationwide strikes which can paralyze national industries. Their demands for higher wages, if not supported by increased production, can also inflate prices. For these reasons, the government has legal authority to stop strikes in national emergencies and it may restrain the unions in their demands for wage

increases. Today most union leaders are aware of their responsibility to the nation, and they work together with business and government to improve economic conditions.

The Farmers

During the early years of American history, most people were employed in some form of agriculture. Even after the Colonial period, America's expanding frontier continued to provide more farm land. The farmer was a central figure in the drama of America's growth. He cleared forests to build homes and plant crops. He was largely responsible for turning America's wilderness into a peaceful and prosperous civilization. He risked the dangers of extreme climates, endured primitive living conditions and even fought the Indians for the right to own his own land and profit from his work. It is easy to see how the position of the farmer has been idealized in American life. He seemed to be the backbone of the economy and personified the virtues of free competition and rugged individualism.

In reality, the farmer's life was not all romance. He had to suffer many hardships. The land was not always fertile, and crops sometimes failed. Flood, drought, storms, and disease periodically ruined farmlands in some parts of the country. Many farmers faced poverty and starvation before discovering ways of conquering these natural enemies. To save themselves from ruin, farmers were often forced to mortgage their land, and mortgages were foreclosed when many could not pay their debts.

The problems of improving agricultural production were gradually solved over the years by the invention of farm machinery and improved farming methods. However, as per capita production increased, the farm population decreased. Great numbers of farmers were no longer needed to feed the nation. In this century there has been a mass

exodus from the farms to the cities. The farm population, which in 1800 represented approximately seventy-five percent of the nation's workers, today constitutes about seven percent of the total labor force.

Although the number of farmers in America has been reduced, farming is still largely a family affair. Nearly ninety-five percent of the 2,412,000 commerical farms listed by the Department of Agriculture in 1961 are classified as family farms. This means that individual families provide most of the labor and management. Each of these farms produces at least $10,000 worth of food and raw materials every year. On the average, each farmer produces enough food to feed 38 other people. Net profits, however, are low. To be successful, a farmer must own a large area of land and enough modern machinery to produce large quantities of food. As in other industries, profits are made by reducing operating expenses. As a consequence, corporation farms have been most successful in specialized types of production such as poultry, livestock feeding and vegetables. High levels of production and efficient production techniques have kept food prices relatively low. Many small farmers cannot produce enough to make adequate profits. The standard of living of most farmers is well below the national average.

The Federal Government has provided assistance to farmers in several ways. The Department of Agriculture provides information and technical assistance for farmers to help improve their crops. The Government has constructed dams to provide rural electrification and irrigation systems for underdeveloped areas. The farmers themselves have formed more than ten thousand local cooperative associations to raise money for loans and insurance.

The main problem in agriculture today is the over-production of food which makes it impossible for farmers to sell all they produce. In fact farmers make a small margin of

profit on the food they sell. Attempting to solve this problem, the Federal Government has purchased surplus quantities of food from the farmers and placed it in storage. Some of this food has been used for relief in emergency situations and some has been sent abroad to assist other nations. However, it is difficult to distribute surplus foods without seriously affecting prices in domestic and foreign trade. Thus great quantities of food have piled up in government storage bins. Another program of the government, aimed at solving this problem, is called the "soil bank," Farmers have been paid by the government to "save" part of their land by not using it for production. Yet the problem remains. By improving their crop yield per acre, farmers have managed to grow more food on less land. These forms of farm subsidy, which have been intended to aid the small farmer, have sometimes been of more benefit to large producers. Large farms can place more land in the soil bank, sell more surplus goods and produce more on less land by mass production methods. The farm problem has become a major political issue because the government continues to spend approximately one billion dollars yearly on farm subsidies without actually solving the problem.

Because there are more farmers in America than are needed, the solution seems to be to reduce the number. This reduction is still going on. Many farmers are seeking jobs in other industries. However, there are not enough jobs in other industries to provide employment, and farmers have not developed the skills for other types of work. The government will probably continue farm subsidies. There is popular sentiment in favor of reserving a place for the small farmer in the American economy, for the nation fondly remembers its agricultural beginnings.

Farmers have had greater political influence than their numbers indicate. The organization of congressional districts

in rural states has given sparsely populated farm areas more representation in Congress than densely populated industrial cities. The Supreme Court has recently attempted to solve this problem by directing states to reorganize their districts. However, farm states with small populations still have as many senators as industrial states with large populations. As a result, farmers are well represented in the Federal Government.

Yet, despite the farm problem, many farmers today are prospering and the nation has enjoyed the benefits of increased food production. There is plenty of food for everybody, at prices most people can afford. Lack of food and other necessities is not a problem for most Americans. According to national averages, only eighteen percent of a family's income is spent for food.

The Consumers

No description of the economy would be complete without mentioning the nation's consumers. Ultimately all operations of the economic system must be related to the consumer needs and economic success or failure should be measured by its ability to satisfy them.

One of the most conspicuous aspects of the American economy is the abundance of goods produced and sold. Most of the labor saving machines used for manufacturing and transportation, for business and home use, were not even dreamed of a century ago. The invention of new products and the improvement of old ones has proceeded at such a rapid rate that nearly half of the products for sale today did not exist in their present form before World War II. Today America's industrial capacity is so huge that, even in times of prosperity, not all of it can be put to use. As a result, the need for improving the means of production is not as important as the need for discovering ways of selling what

is produced. In order to maintain high production levels, there must be a market for goods.

The domestic market has been expanded by the population increases of recent years. However, on a free market, it is not enough to increase the number of consumers. Consumers must be able to purchase the goods produced. Purchasing power depends on jobs and earnings. Unemployment, caused by population increases and technological progress, has been a chronic problem for a significantly large number of workers, but the development of new industries and products has created jobs which did not exist before. Today there are fifteen million more employed than there were ten years ago, and twice as many as twentyfive years ago. New types of employment have increased the number of technical, managerial, and professional workers, while the percentage of jobs in lower paying occupations has decreased. Consequently more people are earning higher incomes with which to purchase goods. Estimates show that nearly fifteen percent of the average family income today is not even needed to purchase basic necessities. Consumers can spend this money for luxuries and recreation, or save it.

Business encourages people to purchase products by spending billions of dollars each year on advertising. Sales are increased by creating desire for the goods produced. Liberal credit terms also increase sale by allowing people to purchase on the "installment plan." Expensive items like homes, furniture, automobiles, and appliances can be bought with a small down payment and paid for over a period of months or years. People do not need much cash to buy, and the variety of goods displayed makes the temptation almost too great to resist.

Consumer spending is an index to the economy. Without it, increased production and employment could not be maintained. If people suddenly stopped spending excess income,

production would slow down and many workers would lose their jobs. Spending benefits the economy by putting money into circulation. It multiplies the purchasing power of the dollar, for each time money changes hands, it can be used to purchase more goods. Unfortunately, the circulation of large sums of money also tends to cause inflation. However this has not been a serious problem in the United States since wages have increased more rapidly than prices. Inflation usually becomes a serious problem only when goods are scarce. Because per capita production has steadily increased in the United States, people have been able to purchase more goods with their earnings.

People today not only have more money to spend but also more time to spend it. Since the beginning of this century the average work week in industry has been reduced from more than fifty to less than forty hours. Unions have begun to bargain for even shorter work weeks, and in some trades have been successful. A reduction in working hours is a natural consequence of more efficient production methods. As machines do more work. people have more time to go shopping. They are spending more money for recreation and entertainment — for vacations, boats, camping equipment and sporting goods. Indeed, shopping is a national pastime, and there is every indication that high levels of spending will continue. Thus, to the extent that the economy depends upon continued buying, the prosperity now enjoyed by Americans will continue into the future.

THE AMERICAN SOCIETY

3. The American Society

The decentralization of powers and diversity of forms which are characteristic of the American government and economy have a parallel in its society. America was born and bred in diversity. The United States is not only a union of independent states, but a union of people representing many nations. America was founded and developed by settelers and immigrants from all corners of the world. To these many differences in national origin may be added regional differences which reflect America's geographic extremes. The regions of the Northeast, South, Middle West, and Far West have developed distinctive cultural characterristics. Religious differences between Protestants, Catholics, and Jews — to mention only the larger denominations — have added significantly to America's cultural heritage. The society is also composed of several economic classes which may be distinguished according to occupation and income. These differences have sometimes created divisions and conflicts but they also have been a source of cultural enrichment. Variety has given America a dynamic quality by making it adaptable to change. The goal has been to achieve unity amidst diversity without denying to individuals or groups the right to express their differences.

Diversity is not simply a fact of American life — it is also an ideal. Many of the words in America's vocabulary of ideals — "individualism" "competition, and "success," — imply differences. Even the ideal of equality has not been understood to mean that all people should be the same. As Americans understand it, equality does not mean that people

should belong to the same economic class or lead the same kind of life. It means that everyone should have the right and opportunity to pursue the kind of life he desires. A society which did not allow for individual differences would not be a free society.

Americans believe in equality, but ordinarliy they are not concerned about class distinctions. The people are well aware of social differences and realize that some sort of class structure is not only inevitable but desirable in any society. Americans recognize the need for leadership and feel that individual achievement is deserving of reward and recognition. Social distinctions give practical meaning to the Americans' belief in individual freedom, for their highly diversified society offers many alternatives from which to choose. To a large extent, social status is a symbol of individual achievement and success ; the possibility of social advancement motivates people to attain higher levels of performance and gives them incentives for developing their talents.

The American ideal of social equality was not intended to abolish classes. However, it was intended to prevent castes. Unlike normal economic classes, castes are rigid and exclusive. Where caste distinctions exist, rights and privileges are reserved to one group and are permanently denied to another. Caste distinctions are based upon group difierences which individuals have little or no ability to change. Such distinctions may be based upon ancestry, racial origin, or religious belief. It was just such distinctions that the U.S. Constitution was intended to abolish. Titles of nobility for instance, were not to be used in the United States ; there was to be no religious test for holding political office. Although the original Constitution recognized slavery, it was later amended to provide equal rights for former slaves. The omended Constitution specifies that rights are not to be denied an the basis of race, color, or creed.

Ideally, Americans have tried to create an open-class society in which distinctions would be based on individual achievement. Instead of eliminating classes, the American goal is to preserve a fluid system in which individuals can move from one class to another according to their talents and industry. A classless society, Americans feel, suppresses individuality and destroys initiative, whereas an open-class society stimulates the competitive spirit and provides a means of expressing differences. This American ideal of equality has been intended to create a society in which leadership is provided by talented, industrious and responsible citizens. Competition is a means of discovering such persons. Descendants of early settlers or those of great wealth enjoy advantages over others, but in America people are not granted the right to lead by virtue of ancestry or wealth alone.

Perhaps no ideal is ever fully realized, but America has made progress toward the ideal of an open-class society. Caste-like distinctions still exist, but they have been weakend, and while opportunities may not be the same for all, most people have a chance to succeed. Individuals frequently move from one class to another according to their personal success or failure. Universal suffrage, universal education, and widespread material prosperity have eliminated many of the barriers which, in the past have alienated one group from another. As important as any other consideration is the fact that the ideal of equality is still an active force for change. Most indicators suggest that Americans today are conscious of their ideals and that the institutions of American life are evolving towards their realization.

Class and Status in America

Power, wealth, education, manners and taste are marks of social position in the United States as elsewhere, but because the differences between one class and another are not well-

defined, social position is difficult to determine. Common styles of dress, speech, manners and taste overlap from one class to another. Political rights and educational opportunities are enjoyed by practically everyone. Mass production tends to standardize material living, and the same goods are available to all at reasonable costs. The mass media of communication tend to standardize speech and even taste. Therefore, the marks of social distinction are sometimes subtle and may be subject to rapid transformation. Sytles of living may change quickly and much depends on fads and fashions. It is not unusual for the people themselves to be confused about social standards. The person who is stylish today may not be stylish tomorrow — unless he is very alert to changes in popular taste.

"Class" and "status" are separate but not unrelated concepts. Sociologists distinguish one class from another according to financial income. Status is a measure of social prestige. It is possible to earn money without earning social recognition, just as it is possible to gain social respect without earning wealth. However, both class and status are largely dependent upon occupation, for occupation usually determine income, which in turn may be used to purchase symbols of status. Social status is measured to a large extent by material possessions such as the size of a person's home or the number of his automobiles. However, education and talent, authority and responsibility also command respect. Occupation alone, regardless of income, is a measure of status. Professionals, business executives, government officials and university professors have high status ratings, but their incomes vary widely. Thus status, unlike class, depends upon a number of factors which are not directly related to wealth.

A third factor, in addition to class and status, is social power or influence. An individual's social position may be gauged by his ability to make decisions which affect the lives

of others. Politicians, business managers and union leaders exercise power by directing large organizations ; actors and entertainers may influence others by introducing new styles or fashions ; journalists may sway public opinion. Power, however, does not necessarily indicate status. Gangsters or racketeers have power but not status. Entertainers, although often popular and wealthy, may not be highly respected. University professors hold positions of prestige, but usually their influence does not extend beyond the classroom. Labor leaders have great power, but their social rating is not high.

The division between one social class and another is largely an arbitrary matter. Except at the extremes of high and low income, where there are relatively few people, there is no definite line of demarcation between classes. It is customary, however, to distinguish three classes in America : the upper, middle, and lower — although some sociologists have argued that there are more. A family income of approximately $6,000 per year may be taken as a dividing line between the middle and lower classes. It is estimated that the average family needs at least that amount to live according to average standards. Middle-class families can enjoy most of the comforts and conveniences of modern life by budgeting carefully. Usually they can afford a house, a car, modest vacations and recreation. Lower-class families may be able to afford the necessities of life, but usually must sacrifice certain comforts and conveniences enjoyed by the middle-class. The dividing line between the middle and upper classes is difficult to determine. Normally, families earning $15,000 and even $20,000 a year are still considered to be middle class. Practically speaking people are not upperclass until they are able to afford expensive luxuries without worrying about cost.

Since there are significant differences within each of the major class divisions. distinctions are usually made within

each class. The upper-middle class which earns $15,000 to $25,000 per year may be distinguished from the middle-middle of $10,000 to $14,000 or the lower-middle of $6,000 to $9,000. Similarly, there is a great differences between the lower class family which earns $5,000 a year and the still lower class family earning less than $3,000. Families which earn less than $3,000 per year are regarded as living in poverty.

It is significant to note that families in lower economic classifications are earning a larger share of the wealth. From 1940 to 1950 the lowest fifth of the population increased its income by 42 percent. The middle fifth of the population gained 24 percent, and the highest fifth gained only eight per cent. The highest five percent of the population actually lost two percent of its income during the same period. More wealth is being distributed to greater numbers of people and lower classes are increasing their wealth faster than the upper classes. Wages are higher and production increases make more goods available for more people.

The upper classes in America are composed largely of business executives and professionals, such as doctors, lawyers, entertainers, enterprisers and others. Most doctors earn middle or upper-middle class incomes, but there are specialists who earn $50,000 to $100,000 a year. On the average, doctors earn more money than any other occupational group. Comparatively few people are in the upper classes, for great wealth is difficult to accumulate. Fortunes are depleted by income and inheritance taxes. There is no well-defined "high society" today, as there was in the past. "Old" families, which have inherited wealth, still discriminate against "new" wealth, but the old families lack the power and influence which aristocracies once had. The new-rich often command more public attention. The rich are assured of status but wealth today has lost much of its advantage.

The rich may have more influence in politics than the poor, but political power ultimately depends upon popular appeal. Wealthy businessmen can exercise influence in economic affairs, but their power is offset by corporate management, labor unions and the government. The rich can afford the advantages of higher education, but they have no monopoly of intellectual leadership. Higher education is accessible to all classes. The upper classes do not even determine standards of taste and fashion. Tastes are influenced by fashion designers, advertisers and by motion picture and television entertainers. Instead of copying the upper classes, each class tends to set its own style of living.

The dominant class in the United States is the middle class. Most Americans are considered middle class not only by economic classification, but by commonly shared attitudes and customs. It is characteristic of the middle class that its members have enough money to enjoy material comfort but lack the financial security and social status of the rich. People in the middle class tend to be competitive, constantly striving to improve their social and economic positions. Unlike the very rich or very poor, the middle classes have no fixed social position. They have opportunities for success, but no guarantee of it. Encouraged by opportunity, they aim at high levels of achievement and worry about failure.

Social mobility is most evident in the middle class. It is not uncommon for individuals to move from lower-middle to upper-middle positions during their lifetimes. Most members of the middle class are employed workers who are promoted to higher positions as they advance in age and experience. Those who are talented and industrious may advance quickly. Others are left behind in the competition. Ability and intiative are most often rewarded in the middle class and its members come closest to realizing the ideal of an open-class society.

The middle class is composed of professionals, such as doctors, lawyers, engineers and teachers, administrators, technicians, farmers and skilled workers. The lower class is composed of a variety of occupational groups. Sometimes even teachers and clerical workers earn lower-class incomes. Unskilled workers and workers who are not represented by labor unions often receive sub-standard wages. Farm workers — as distinguished from farm owners — comprise one of the lowest income groups in the country. Migrant farm workers have no permanent employment and sometimes suffer extreme poverty. Seasonal employment, such as farming, brings no guaranteed income. Domestic servants, waitresses and sales clerks earn only a fraction of the income paid in other occupations. Many lower-class people have no regular income and are the first to be affected by unemployment, as they lack the skills needed to fill the more secure types of jobs.

There is less mobility between the lower and middle class, or between the middle and upper class than within the middle class. Industrial workers in the lower class may manage to send their sons to college to become professionals, managers, technicians, or teachers, but the cost of higher education today is often prohibitive. People do break out of the lower class but the transition usually takes more than a generation. Those in the upper class, on the other hand, are not in much danger of losing their wealth or status. Thus the upper and lower classes tend to show signs of stability which are not evident in the middle class. Although their manners and customs differ, the very rich and very poor adhere to traditions more than middle income groups.

Just as the rich enjoy financial security, the poor suffer from immobility. Free public education is provided through secondary or high school, but a college diploma is necessary today for most middle-class occupations. Many poor children fail to recognize the opportunities which education can bring,

and drop out of school to earn money. Because of their lack of success, people in the lower class tend to lose initiative. Even those who desire a better life some times do not find a legitimate means of attaining it. The lower class is most dependent upon the government's social welfare programs. It receives compensation for unemployment, public housing and low-cost rent, medical assistance for better health. and sometimes direct relief to provide food and clothing. Billions of dollars are spent for relief by the federal, state and local governments. However, more needs to be done to improve living conditions and provide economic opportunities for lower income groups. To attack this problem, in 1964 President Lyndon Johnson initiated an anti-poverty program designed to stimulate economic development in depressed areas.

Aside from the basic economic and occupational differences which determine class membership, there are a variety of factors which determine status. The incomes of most skilled workers enable them to live according to middle-class standards, while most clerical workers earn lower-class salaries. Yet there is a status distinctions between " white-collar " (clerical) and " blue-collar " (skilled) workers, according to which the clerks have a higher status. This distinction has little to do with talent or education, for the skilled industrial jobs usually require as much, if not more ability than clerical work. Nor is the difference really a matter of dress or a matter of getting one's hands dirty. Engineers and technicians often wear uniforms and work with their hands, but it does not affect their status. It seems that the clerical worker's claim to distinction is his association with managerial and administrative personnel — a social contact which industrial workers usually do not enjoy.

Material possessions are symbols of status, but often " taste " in the selection of products is as important as cost,

and social distinctions may be determined by styles of living. A large house is an important status symbol, but in some groups it is better to remodel an old house than to buy a new one. Automobiles are important — and two are better than one, but some people consider it to be in bad taste to own a very large car. Styles change frequently, and sometimes seemingly insignificant things are regarded as important. In the middle class today to have a home with two or there baths is considered an important status symbol. Since cars are common, ownership of a boat or a swimming pool may bring prestige.

Social distinctions may be marked in many ways. Differences between classes and within classes may be dependent upon religion, politics, racial origins, education, and habits of recreation. For example, an Anglo-Saxon Protestant often has a higher status than those of other religious or ethnic groups. There are more Republicans in the upper classes than in the lower, and upper class families generally have fewer children. Although tennis, boating and riding are becoming more popular in the middle class, they are traditionally upper-class sports. Baseball and football tend to be most popular with the lower and middle classes.

What is " higher " or " lower " socially is often a matter of perspective. The upper class sometimes thinks that the lower class is morally degenerate, and people in the lower class sometimes have the same opinion of members of the upper class. Intellectuals and artists tend to think that businessmen are narrow-minded and boring, but intellectuals and artists are commonly regarded as impractical and eccentric. Some people are proud of their conventional standards. The standards of the majority are often used as a basis for discriminating against minority groups, but minority groups are critical of the majority and of each other.

Social distinctions depend as much upon group membership as upon class membership. Individuals can identify with small groups more easily than with large economic calsses. Small groups are formed among fellow workers, neighbors and members of the same church. People frequently join fraternal organizations in which they associate with others of the same class or status. Thus, social status is measured largely by the company one keeps. Social discrimination is expressed by including or excluding persons from participation in group activities. Social discrimination, however, is largely a private affair. There are few forms of public discrimination. Americans are reluctant to give public expression to social differences. They profess a belief in social equality and try to demonstrate it by being informal in public. Social forms and rituals are usually reserved for special occasions, and even then Americans seem to be embarrassed by them. The use of first names, instead of the more formal last name or professional title, is common. On the street and in places of business, little or no attention is paid to social rank. Except in cases of publicly-known personalities, the honor and privilege of social position may be enjoyed only within a relatively small group of friends and associates. Americans recognize the right of all people to be treated as equals in public, but they also reserve the right to be discriminating in private life.

Minorities

The American society has been described as an open-class society in which most people have a chance to improve their social positions. However, it is also true that there are certain groups in America for whom opportunities have been limited, and to whom social recognition is often denied. Such groups — usually called "minorities" — have been discriminated against both publicly and privately because they differ from

the majority of the population. Such marks of difference have included the language, religion and customs of foreign immigrants, and the various physical characteristics of ethnic and racial groups. Parctically every large immigrant group has suffered from social discrimination. American Indians, Mexicans, Orientals and Negroes have also been victims of social prejudice. Because of social discrimination, these groups have been denied rights and opportunities enjoyed by the majority of Americans.

The distinction between majority and monority groups cannot be accounted for by class differences alone. It is a distinction which cuts across ordinary class lines and ignores individual merit or accomplishment. Under such conditions, there is little an individual can do to change his status. Such distinctions tend to become caste-distinctions, for they are based upon a person's birth or ancestry and not upon individual merit. It is true, however, that members of minority groups are usually members of the lower economic class. They suffer from discrimination because lower-class standards of living are associated with them. But because of social discrimination, they find it difficult and sometimes impossible to improve their standards of living.

The minority problem concerns not only individuals and groups but also the entire nation. Social prejudices have also prevented the nation from realizing its potential. As long as social prejudices continue to deprive individuals of rights and opportunities, the American society will not realize fully its ideal of an open-class system. Group prejudices have been overcome in the past, however, and progress is being made toward removing those which still exist. The economic and cultural differences between minority groups are less noticeable today than in the past. Ignorance, which has alientated minorities by breeding suspicion and fear, is being removed by better education and communication. The

very diversity of the American society has made Americans more tolerant of differences. Once, a rural people, very provincial in attitude, most Americans today are urban people who are cosmopolitan in attitude and appreciative of their cultural variety.

It would be a mistake to think that, in contrast to minority groups, there exists in America a well defined majority. The "majority" is itself simply a number of minority groups whose differences are less noticeable than their similarities. A minority group becomes assimilated with the majority when the characteristics which distinguish it as a group become altered, or when it is accepted by the majority. In the process of assimilation, both groups are modified. The minority groups adopts customs of the majority, and the majority in turn takes on some of the characteristics of the minority. Immigrant groups, for example, did not win social acceptance until they learned America's language and customs. However they brought with them languages and practices which, in many cases, have modified American speech and culture. Immigrants have likewise changed the religious composition of the United States, and they have introduced customs, songs and dances which are now popular throughout the nation. They brought with them skills and techniques which have improved American industries and professions.

The influences of Indian, Negro, and Oriental cultures are numerous. No account of the American arts, for example, can ignore the influence of Negro culture in literature, music, painting and sculpture. Indian themes have influenced American music, language and folklore, and Chinese and Japanese influences are conspicuous in music and painting.

The American Indians — so called because Columbus thought he had sailed to India — were the first people to live in America. It is estimated that, at the time of Columbus' discovery, there were about one million Indians in

North America. They did not represent a single homogeneous society but were made up of hundreds of tribes and languages, and several distinct cultures. The history of the Indians in America is, to a large extent, a history of tragedy and defeat. Naturally suspicious of European intruders, the Indians often waged war against the colonists and settlers who occupied their lands. The colonists, in turn, tended to regard the Indians as hostile savages who could not be trusted. Many Indian tribes, however, were hospitable and friendly; and frequently the Indians and the white settlers lived together in peace. Treaties were negotiated to protect the interests of both groups and cooperation was not uncommon. Yet the European settlers continued to occupy more land, and promises made to the Indians were often broken.

Throughout American history, Indians suffered from social discrimination. They were cheated in business. They were regarded as an inferior class and whites and Indians did not intermarry. Over the years, however, these abuses have been corrected. Today, for example, many Americans point with pride to the fact that they have Indian ancestors.

Although once deprived of free access to the land, most Indians have been relocated on reservations set aside by the Federal Government. Indians who live on reservations are subject to federal law and administration, but are permitted to govern their internal affairs and maintain their traditional customs. Today Indians are citizens and may vote in elections. Education, medical care, and agricultural aid have been provided by government agencies. Land on the reservations is free from taxation.

Many Indians still live on reservations, but large numbers have left to find a place in modern society. Indeed, because of the integration of Indians, it is difficult to know exactly how many Indians there are in America today. The estimated number is approximately 500,000. Perhaps the most difficult

problem presently facing individual Indians is that of making a choice between modern life and ancient tribal ways. Life on the reservations seems to be a retreat from the realities of modern life. Younger, better educated Indians have been tempted by opportunities open to them outside the reservations, yet they are bound by loyalties to their tribes and families.

The people who first settled in America came from several European nations. In the 15th and 16th centuries, America was explored by the Spanish, the French, the Dutch and the English. Most of the permanent colonies in North America were founded by the English in the 17th Century. However, there were also Spanish, French, Dutch and Swedish settlements. As a consequence, life in the early American colonies was influenced by Western European culture, and customs and institutions were largely English in origin. Although several languages were spoken, English predominated. The Colonies were governed by English laws and political institutions. Catholic settlements were founded in the Southern colonies and in Maryland, but the majority of people were Protestants. Indians and Negro slaves lived in the colonies, but they were not regarded as citizens. Thus to be an American citizen meant that one was White, Protestant, and English — or at least Western European in origin. These characteristics became the earmarks of the majority in early America, and throughout much of American history have served as a basis for discrimination against other groups.

Although people from several nations continued to come to America after the Colonial Period, there was no mass immigration until the middle of the 19th century. The Irish, in the 1840's and 1850's, were the first large immigrant group to come to America. They left Ireland because of agricultural failures. At mid-century many Germans also immigrated to America. There was a small percentage of Irish

and German settlers in the Colonies, but the newer immigrants arrived in large numbers and brought with them languages and customs which were alien to the majority of Americans. In the case of the Irish, who were mostly Catholic, social discrimination was based on religious difference. Most of these immigrants were poor and uneducated, and they found employment only in menial work. The Irish helped build railroads and canals and provided the labor needed for the expansion of industry. A political party called the "Know Nothings," which came into existence in the 1850's, tried to rid America of these "foreign" influences. The party was unsuccessful but was illustrative of the provincialism and prejudice of 19th century America.

Until 1890 most immigrants had come from Northern and Western Europe. After that time, until the 1920's, immigrants came also from Southern and Eastern Europe — from Italy, Greece, Poland, Russia, and Yugoslavia. At the turn of the century, immigration reached an all-time high. From 1900 to 1910, nearly nine million immigrants arrived in the United States. Most of the new arrivals settled in cities and became industrial workers. Some were unemployed. Although some immigrants became successful businessmen, poverty, lack of education, foreign languages and customs prevented most of them from entering middle or upper-class occupations. A distinction between the earlier settlers and the later immigrant groups became a basis for social discrimination.

Cultural differences between eastern and western Europeans, or between northern and southern Europeans also caused divisions. In many instances, old national jealousies and suspicions were renewed. Not the least of these differences was the religious opposition between Protestants and Catholics, or between Christians and Jews. At the beginning of this century, bigotry became a serious national

problem. In the 1920's, for example, social leaders, who considered themselves to be "100 percent Americans," waged a social and political campaign against Negroes, Jews, Catholics, and "foreigners." They seemed to have forgotten that all Americans — except the Indians — had come from foreign lands.

Usually the newest and largest immigrant groups suffered the most from social discrimination. First generation immigrants faced difficulties because of differences in language and customs and wherever immigrants arrived in large numbers, they were regarded as a threat to the native population. Because of their poverty and lack of education, immigrants were treated as inferiors. Feeling insecure in their new environment, they formed their own communities where they could live among relatives and friends. They kept alive their native languages and customs, and created the impression that they preferred to be segregated from other groups. Living among people of the same national background made cultural assimilation more difficult.

Since the 1920's immigration to the United States has been limited by quotas established by law. Immigration laws of recent history have been, in effect, an expression of social prejudice. Quotas set for the English and Western European nations, for example, are higher than for Southern and Eastern Europeans. The number of immigrants allowed to enter the United States from Oriental nations is extremely low. However, the limitations set upon immigration also indicate that the United States is no longer a frontier society. America no longer needs to increase its labor supply, for employment opportunities are limited. Massive immigration today would cause serious economic consequences.

Because immigration has been limited in recent decades, prejudice against various nationalities is less evident than in the past. Second and third generation immigrants do not

face the difficulties which confronted their parents and grandparents. Differences in languages and customs have begun to disappear. An assimilation has taken place, the so-called majority group has become more of a composite, containing many differences. These differences have been accepted as a fact of American life, and closer association between groups has bred tolerance and understanding. Intermarriage is now common. Immigrant minorities, formerly confined within the lowest economic classes, are now represented in the middle and upper classes. In large industrial cities, most of the elected officials are second and third generation immigrants. The 1960 election of President Kennedy, an Irish Catholic, would not have been possible a generation earlier.

Problems, however, still exist. The Chinese and Japanese, who have founded large settlements on the West Coast, are still victims of social discrimination — although the forms of discrimination are not as obvious as they once were. Mexicans have long been subjected to social prejudice in the Southwest. Puerto Ricans constitute a large immigrant minority in New York City. Jews are discriminated against privately, and sometimes there are public expressions of anti-Semitism. Negroes have suffered from social discrimination throughout American history. The extent of discrimination depends largely upon the region of the country, for it is most serious where minority groups are represented in large numbers. Socially dominant groups often regard large minority groups as a threat to their economic and political leadership, and they resort to discrimination to prevent minorities from exercising power. There is no rational justification for the prejudice against racial groups. Discrimination against Indians, Negroes, and Orientals has little to do with immigration. Indeed, racial discrimination seems to be a deeper problem than economic factors

or cultural differences alone can explain. American Negroes, for example, have been victims of discrimination, regardless of class, and their customs and languages are as characteristically "American" as those of any other group.

Discrimination against Negroes is one of the most serious and widespread social problems in the United States. The roots of the problem may be traced back to the beginnings of slavery in America. Unlike European whites, Negroes were not settlers or immigrants who chose to come to America. They were forced into slavery and sold for labor. Negroes, however, were among the first people to live in the Colonies. It has been reported that Negro slaves were brought to American shores as early as 1619. At first they were regarded as indentured servants — as were many whites. They were required to work for a number of years to pay for their passage to America and to buy their freedom. Many Negroes were, in fact, set free. However, because of the need for cheap labor, many Negro servants were kept on as slaves. By the end of the 17th century, slavery had become an institution in the South. Slavery made it possible for landowners to expand agricultural production and the profits from slave-labor brought a white aristocracy into existence. Because of the demand for slaves, the slave trade became a major business in the 18th century. No efforts were made to end the slave trade until the end of the 18th century, and it was not until the mid-19th century that slavery was abolished.

At one time the U. S. Constitution actually recognized the institution of slavery. In writing the Constitution, concessions were made to representatives of the southern states in order to win their support for federal union. Slaves were not to be counted as citizens; however, they were counted to determine taxes and the number of representatives from each state. When the Constitution was written,

the total population of America was approximately five million, of which about 750,000 were slaves.

The slavery issue, which divided southern slave-states from northern free-states, was brought to a climax during the American Civil War. Slavery was not the only issue of the war, for the North and South had long been divided on economic and political issues. The slavery issue, however, was intensified by the extension of slavery into new states of the Southwest, and by the growing feeling in the Northeast that slavery should be abolished. After Lincoln was elected to the Presidency in 1860, the Southern slave-states began to withdraw from the Federal Union. Since Lincoln represented the anti-slavery movement of the North, the South felt it had no recourse open within the Federal Government. The war began when President Lincoln, in an attempt to preserve the Union, directed the federal armies against the South. During the war, Lincoln issued his famous Emancipation Proclamation, freeing the slaves of the rebellious states. After the war, Congress enacted the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments to the Constitution so that the rights of citizenship would be granted to former slaves and after more than two centuries of slavery, it seemed that the slaves were finally free.

While it was relatively easy to enact laws, it has been much more difficult to make this freedom a reality. The Reconstruction Acts, passed by Congress after the Civil War, were used to punish Southern whites who had participated in the war. Occupation forces were maintained in the South, heavy taxation was imposed on property owners and most white men were deprived of political rights. Negroes, having the right to vote and hold office, were elected to important state offices. Several Negroes were sent to Congress as Representatives. The Negro population, however, was mostly poor and illiterate. Few slaves had had

experience in business or politics, and as a consequence Negro leaders were often manipulated by unscrupulous white politicians and businessmen. Freedom from slavery in most instances did not mean freedom for anything better. Negroes were paid for their work, but the post-war South was impoverished and few jobs were available. In general Negroes became servants where they were previously slaves. The Southern whites still regarded Negroes as inferior and discriminated against them. Pride, fear, and anger motivated the white South to use every means to prevent Negroes from exercising power.

During the last quarter of the 19th century, segregation replaced slavery as an institution in the South. By state and local laws, by customs, and sometimes by violence, Negroes were segregated from whites and forced into inferior social roles. Negroes were separated from whites in housing, transportation, educational and recreational facilities. State laws were enacted which made it almost impossible for Negroes to vote. Only those who paid a "poll-tax" could vote, and most Negroes could not afford to pay. Many could not pass the literacy tests required by state laws. Others were threatened with force. The courts were of little avail, for they were dominated by white jurors. Negroes were frequently punished for crimes against whites, but whites were rarely punished for crimes against Negroes. Cases of segregation brought to the Supreme Court of the U. S. were usually dismissed on the grounds that no federal laws were being violated. In 1896, the Supreme Court ruled that segregation was permissable under the law. Segregated facilities, it argued, are not in principle unequal. As a matter of fact, however, the "separate but equal" rights of Negroes were rarely equal.

Court decisions, and the inaction and indifference of executive and legislative branches of the government helped

to sanction segregation. However, progress toward the achievement of equal rights and opportunities for Negroes was not stopped. By the efforts of individual Negroes and privately organized groups, conditions gradually improved. Negro newspapers began to speak out against the injustice of segregation. In 1910, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was founded. Its aims were to promote equality, eliminate prejudice, secure voting rights, obtain justice in the courts and achieve better educational and employment opportunities for Negroes. Since its founding, the NAACP has won hundreds of cases in the courts and has been one of the most effective instruments of change. In 1911, the National Urban League was founded by Negro leaders to find better employment opportunities. Other organizations have since joined the cause of Negro equality. The Southern Regional Council, composed of members of various religious faiths, has provided moral leadership in working toward a desegregated society. HOPE (Help Our Public Education) has concentrated upon desegregation of the schools, and CORE (Congress of Racial Equality) has advocated non-violent protest against segregation in all areas. In 1964, the Reverend Martin Luther King, a prominent spokesman for Negro rights, received the Nobel Peace Prize for his leadership in the struggle for social equality.

In the 1930's, other private groups began to speak out against segregation and discrimination. The CIO (Congress of Industrial Organizations) sought to eliminate discrimination in labor unions. Several religious and civic organizations became active in the area of civil rights, and Negroes began to win cases in the Federal Courts. A Civil Rights Section was established in the Department of Justice. Although Negroes suffered severely during the Great Depression, the enactment of social security, unemployment insurance,

minimum wage laws, public housing and health benefits helped improve social and economic conditions. During the Administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt, many Negroes were appointed to Federal posts.

After World War II, President Harry Truman issued, several executive orders designed to eliminate discrimination. The previously segregated armed forces were desegregated and recommendations were made to enact and enforce civil rights legislation. In 1953, by order of President Eisenhower, segregation was ended in the District of Columbia. In 1961, President Kennedy ordered Federal agencies to eliminate discrimination in the employment of Negroes, and by 1963, twenty-one states had enacted fair employment practice laws. All business organizations which have contracts with the Federal Government are now required to establish fair employment practices.

In a series of descisions, the Federal Courts began to break down the legal obstacles to Negro equality. In 1941, the Supreme Court ruled that segregation in interestate commerce was unconstitutional. This decision was broadened and reaffirmed in 1946 and again in 1950. In 1948, the Supreme Court ruled that property owners could not, by force of law, exclude Negroes from neighborhoods or communities. In a monumental decision, the Supreme Court ruled in 1954 that segregation in schools was unconstitutional. Segregated school systems in the South were ordered to desegregate "with all deliberate speed."

Congress has been slow to act on civil rights legislation because of the opposition of Southern Congressmen. However, guided by the leadership of recent presidents and the Supreme Court, the Congress has recently enacted several laws intended to enforce desegregation. In 1964, under the leadership of President Lyndon Johnson, a civil rights law was passed to end segregation in all forms of public

accommodations — such as hotels and restaurants. The laws specifying equal rights for Negroes have been clarified and are now being enforced. The desegregation of schools is taking place throughout the South. Economic conditions and employment opportunities for Negroes have been improved. Negroes today have better opportunities to enter middle and upper-class positions. Many Negroes occupy places of leadership in government, business, science, education and the arts. Negroes have been appointed to top administrative positions in government, and many have been elected to local, state and federal offices. In 1967 President Johnson appointed Thurgood Marshall as the first Negro to serve on the United States Supreme Court.

Although considerable progress has been made toward the goal of total desegregation, much remains to be done. Negroes still do not have equal opportunities in many areas of life and the majority are still confined within the lower economic classes. While public forms of segregation are being removed, private forms of prejudice and discrimination still persist. In the North and in the West, as well as in the South, Negroes are often regarded as inferiors and treated as second-class citizens. Because many Negroes have migrated north to find employment in industry, the Negro population in Northern cities has rapidly increased. Although legalized forms of segregation do not exist in the North, segregation has been enforced by private compacts.

However, the crusade for racial equality in the United States has gained momentum and the nation is aware of the problems which still exist. In all parts of the country, community organizations of both Negroes and whites are exploring means of improving racial relations. Total desegregation may not be achieved for many more years to come, but few persons today doubt that it is coming. Despite racial disturbances such as that which occurred in Los Angeles (in the

summer of 1965), Negroes and whites have demonstrated that they can live together in peace; responsible Negro and white leaders have worked hard to prevent rioting, and both groups have shown a willingness to continue toward a solution of their differences. Certainly, if the American social ideals are to be realized, group prejudices must be overcome. Goals will not be fully achieved until the dignity of every person is recognized and everyone is given the opportunity to express his individual interests and abilities.

The American Family

The family is a microcosm of society. The roles and positions of status which individuals occupy within the famly prepare them for places in larger social organizations. The family is a training ground where children learn about their cultural heritage and learn to behave according to it. The first, most fundamental, and most lasting social relationships are established within the family. Larger social units are affected by character traits formed by family training; and characteristics of society as a whole are in turn reflected in the family.

There are differences between families just as there are differences between social groups. The customs of upper-class and lower-class families are not the same. Habits vary according to education, occupation, religion, region and ethnic group. However there are also patterns of behavior which tend to characterize American families, and differences between social groups are not so evident to day as they were in the past. A widespread distribution of wealth and standdardized products have minimized material differences. Even where material differences are evident, the mass-media have motivated people to seek the same goals. Transportation and communication have served to break down the barriers isolating one group from another. Thus, while it is

important to recognize differences, there are also similarities which may serve to indicate national patterns of family life.

The basic structure of the American family has been modified by changes in society. The traditional family in America was influenced by European customs. The first settlers came to America as family men, not as adventurers. The family became the basic economic and social unit, producing its own goods and consuming most of what it produced. Women and children had to shoulder their share of the work. In this traditionally patriarchal family structure, women and children had few legal rights. Religion played an important part, and obedience to the father was considered a religious duty. Discipline, however, was dictated as much by economic necessity as by religious belief. The father, by virtue of his strength, experience and skill, was a natural leader.

The family was also the basic educational unit. In Colonial America. there was little formal education available. Formal education was considered to be unnecessary for women. However, both parents performed the function of teacher instructing their children in family traditions and teaching them manual skills.

As long as social and economic conditions did not change, parents continued to exercise authority. But the American society did not remain as it was in the beginning. New industries came into existence and new skills were needed. When people began to move westward across the continent, family ties were broken and traditions were sometimes forgotton. Eastern culture did not have much influence upon people living on the western frontier. Frontier people looked to the future instead of the past. Opportunities tempted them to try new ways of life. Sons could no longer be expected to follow in the footsteps of their fathers. The status of women also improved, for there were not many women in the early West and women were as valuable as

they were scarce. They worked alongside the men and expected to have equal rights and freedoms.

The industrial revolution in the East also served to disrupt family unity and weaken parental authority. In rural areas, the typical family worked together on the farm, and fathers were present to direct family functions. However, in the cities, fathers left home to work in the factories. Much of the responsibility for directing family activities passed into the hands of women. In many cases, women and children were also employed in the factories and their separation from home gave them a taste of independence.

Another factor which served to transform the organization of families was immigration. The millions of people who came to America during the 19th and 20th centuries introduced a variety of cultural patterns into American life. The immigrants faced many difficulties in adapting to their new environment and their children often rejected the ways of their parents in order to win social acceptance. Since the children of immigrants tended to think of their parents as "foreign" or "old fashioned," the basis for parental authority was undermined. Children, it turned out, knew how to succeed in the new world better than their parents did. As a consequence, children, today are still expected to pursue careers different from those of their parents. Parents may still try to influence the decisions of their children, but they do not expect to dominate them.

The differences between rural life and urban life have had a major effect upon family organization. The family today, for example, is no longer a production unit as it was in the past. Instead of producing goods, the modern family purchases practically everything it consumes. In the past, large families were an asset, because children were needed for production. Today, children are a liability, for they increase the family's expenditures. Families are no longer united by a

need for cooperative, productive effort. Parents have little opportunity to teach skills because skills are not needed in family functions. Skills are learned away from home, on the job or at school. Even attitudes are picked up from authorities outside the home. Parents must compete with the schools and the numerous mass media for the attention of their children. Because children are often more alert and adaptable to social change, they can often exert considerable influence upon family decisions. And though children learn from their parents, parents often find themselves trying to keep up with their children.

Life in the cities is more impersonal than life in small towns. City people usually do not establish deep and lasting relationships with their neighbors as do rural people. Because people in the cities frequently move from one place to another, they are often separated from their relatives and old friends. Members of a family are sometimes separated socially as well as physically. As children enter different occupations, they sometimes achieve social positions which alienate them from their families. When young people marry, they usually move away from home and establish an independent existence. Independence, however, may breed loneliness and insecurity. Children sometimes grow up having little contact with their aunts, uncles, and grandparents. Yet, because families are isolated from their relatives, parents and children tend to be bound together by a need for love and security. Living in a world of strangers, they eagerly seek friends among their neighbors. Neighborhood acquaintanceships usually do not develop into deep and lasting friendships, but they compensate for a lack of permanent roots.

It is somewhat difficult to interpret the significance of these changes in family organizations. Without doubt, parents have lost some of their authority, and woman and children have more independence. Parents and children tend to regard

one another as equals and less emphasis is placed upon duty or obedience. Love and affection seem to have replaced duty as the bond of family unity. Statistics indicate that more marriages end in divorce today than in previous periods of history. But Americans have not lost faith in marriage. Most divorced people marry again, and young people look forward to marriage in planning their futures. Marriage brings with it social status and unmarried adults find social adjustment difficult. Divorce is probably an indication of the fact that people marry primarily for love and emotional security rather than for practical reasons. When individuals do not find love or satisfaction in one marriage, they obtain a divorce in order to seek it in another.

Traditionally, married women were hardly more than servants to their families. Families were large and conveniences few. Mothers were bound to a life of seemingly endless manual labor. Women were considered inferior to men. They had little formal education, no political rights and no opportunity to utilize their talents outside the home. In this century however, women were given a taste of independence which nourished their desire for equal rights and self-expression. As more women became employed, they became less satisfied with their role in the home. The employment of women outside the home demonstrated that they could perform tasks as well as men. Employment also exposed women to new social contacts and gave them a feeling of public importance.

Employment, however, was only part of the story. In the 19th century colleges began to open their doors to women. Educational opportunities opened new horizons for better employment and a more active participation in public affairs. At the beginning of the 20th century, women began to crusade for better working conditions and better jobs. They demanded the right to vote and got it. In an attempt to keep

their husbands at home, they marched upon the saloons and houses of prostitution and voted to prohibit the sale of intoxicating drinks. While wives and mothers tried to revoke the moral license traditionally granted to men, the younger generation of women sought greater moral freedom for themselves. They cut their hair, shortened their skirts and began to smoke and drink. They were able to win more lenient divorce laws, and they sought divorces more often to escape unhappy marriages. To avoid the drudgery and poverty of large families, women began to limit the number of children. By World War II, women were employed in almost every occupation. Young girls began to think about training for a career almost as much as they thought about marriage. Women today constitute approximately one-third of the entire labor force in the United States.

To a certain extent, women have been victims of the masculine image. In their attempt to find equality with men, they have paid men the compliment of copying their ways. Yet most women have not been happy in traditionally masculine roles. The woman's biological function of child-bearing and her desire to find fulfillment as a wife and mother have conflicted with her desire to have the independence of a man. Many a modern woman has been faced with the decision of choosing between a home and a career. The woman who sacrifices her career for a husband and children often feels cheated of the opportunity to display her talents. The woman who chooses a career at the expense of family feels lonely, unloved and unfulfilled as a woman. Many women compromise, attempting to combine both home and career. But, not infrequently, the working mother is ridden with guilt because she feels she is neglecting her children. Most women seek expression outside the home by working part-time, or by joining in community activities during leisure hours. Whatever the case,

the apparent freedom of the modern American woman has not always brought her contentment. She is faced with the problem of maintaining her feminine image without sacrificing her hard-won rights.

However, several social and economic forces have been at work which seem to provide solutions to the woman's dilemma. Modern science and technology have provided numerous labor-saving devices to relieve the woman's work in the home. There are appliances for cleaning and cooking, and most foods can be served with little or no preparation. The radio, television and telephone have provided means of communication and entertainment. The automobile has given the modern woman mobility. Birth-control has limited the size of families, and schools take children out of the home during much of the day. Nursery schools and kindergartens for very young children are common. Usually, only young mothers are confined to the home by the responsibilities of child-care. Although household tasks may be boring they are not physically difficult.

When children are in school, both parents are usually free to pursue their interests outside the home. The incomes of both husband and wife enable them to maintain a higher standard of living. Thus, most of the difficulties of married life are encountered in the early years of marriage, and it is in the first years when most divorces occur. Young married couples face the problems of adjusting to married life and to each other. They have young children to care for, and usually they must live on a limited income.

The problems of modern men do not seem to be as serious as those of women. The man's role in life is not essentially different from what it was in the past. The man does not have to choose between home and career. He is still considered to be the breadwinner of the family, and he normally finds satisfaction in his work. However, men have lost much of

their influence in family matters. They earn most of the money, but they do not always decide how it will be spent. Indeed, most of the property and money in the United States is in the hands of women. To prove their love, men either allow their wives to control the family budget, or they yield to the desires of their wives and children. Fathers who do not succeed in providing an abundant life for their families often suffer from feelings of inadequacy. Out of love for their wives and in recognition of feminine equality, men today also perform many household tasks. Men frequently wash dishes, clean the house and help with the children. Men have lost much of their authority in the home because they are away at work most of the day. As the work-week has been reduced, men have more leisure time to spend at home. In a consumer society, men as well as women have become concerned with fashions and tastes. Families spend more time together and family ties have been strengthened by more frequent association.

There is an old saying that " children should be seen and not heard." Today they are heard from a great deal. Many people claim that American children are undisciplined, and it is sometimes said that children run the home. Undoubtedly there is some truth in these observations. Since people have more money to spend, it is easier for them to indulge their children. Because few productive activities are carried on in the home, children are not expected to do many household chores. The discipline needed for work has been lost. The family as a unit, is not concerned with what it will produce but what it will consume. Since it takes no talent to have needs and desires, children may make their voices heard in family decisions. Children are exposed to television, magazines and movies at least as much as anyone else in the family and they are aware of the latest fads and fashions. Thus, in a consumer economy which is geared to things

that are, new children can exercise considerable influence no family tastes.

Parents usually indulge their children because they want to express their love. However, parents are sometimes surprised when children do not return their affection. Children's interests are directed outside the home at a very early age. They are influenced by their peer groups and by public authorities and personalities as much as they are by their parents. Most children also begin working, at least part-time, when they are in their teens. They marry young and usually leave home as soon as they can. They visit their parents, but do not welcome advice from them.

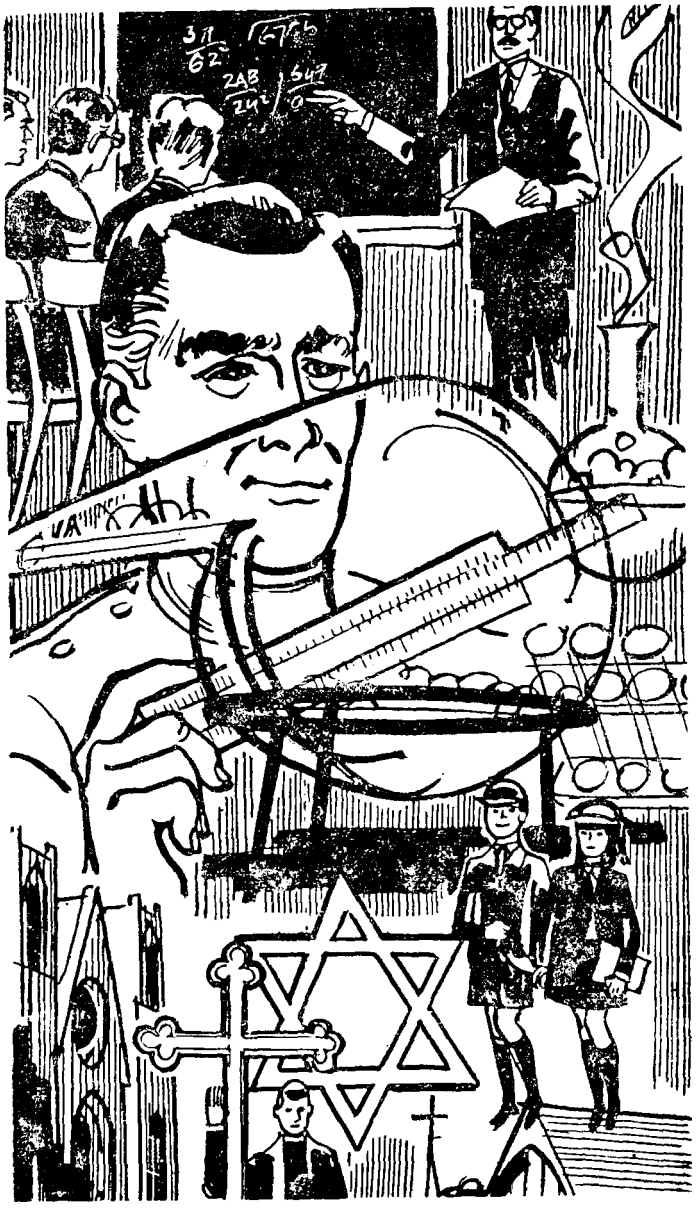
Growing up in the American family is not easy. Parents do try to discipline their children and they generally expect a great deal from them. If a family is economically successful, children are expected to do at least as well as their parents. If a family is not successful, children are expected to do better. It seems that every American parent thinks his child is a genius and should be the best in his class. Children are practically forced to walk, talk, read and play games sooner and better than the children next door. American children do not suffer from neglect as much as they suffer from too much attention. Worst of all, children, frequently do not know what is expected from them, because standards of child-rearing are apt to change frequently. The average family moves from one neighborhood to another several times during the period when children are growing, and each neighborhood tends to have its own customs and manners. As parents look to their neighbors for examples of how to live, they find that they must change their standards from one place to another. Even in one neighborhood, different families may have different points of view, so that there is little consensus of opinion about child care. Thus child-care is usually viewed as a problem and parents seek advice wherever they can find it. If they

ask their minister or priest as well as a physician or psychologist, they are likely to receive conflicting answers. Hence children must keep their eyes and ears open to find out what is coming next, and quite often make their own decisions.

During early childhood, children usually conform to the standards of their parents as best they can. However, they soon become sensitive to outside influences and learn to make judgments of their own. Most children make their first overt attempt to become independent in their early teens. In high school, if not sooner, they begin to have dates with the opposite sex and attend social functions. They stay out late at night, and frequently they drink and smoke. Eager to have the freedoms of adults, they engage in various degrees of sexual experimentation. Teen-agers usually adopt styles of dress and speech which irritate their elders, and adults are usually critical of teen-age music and entertainment. Indeed, the word "'teens" has come to denote a subculture in itself and teen-agers are often regarded as problems by their parents.

Amazing as it may seem to most adults, the majority of adolescents grow up to become decent citizens and conscientious parents. The transition, however, is not always easy. The life of teen-agers in America generally offers inadequate preparation for the realities of married life. The young people have a great deal of independence, but they do not have many responsibilities. They are strongly influenced by the image of romantic love presented on television and in the movies, and they seek a life of excitement and glamour. They marry young because they are "in love," with little thought of consequences. Perhaps love is one of the few areas of life in which Americans are impractical. They expect their partners in marriage to satisfy every need: men are expected to be lovers as well as providers of material goods and women are expected to be glamor girls as well as housekeepers. Too often marriage is disillusioning, for no one can fully live up

to the expectations. Girls who had considerable freedom before marriage discover that after marriage they are trapped with housework and children. Men discover that they cannot satisfy a wife's every need. However, the course of growing up in the American family has made them adaptable to change and their previous independence has taught them to make decisions of their own. Since husbands and wives regard one another as equals, they work together to create a new life for themselves. Chances are that they will rear their children as they were reared, and the same traits of character will be passed on to the next generation.



SCIENCE, EDUCATION AND RELIGION

4. Science, Education & Religion

It would be difficult to overestimate the importance of science in modern life. Civilization in America today is a product of science. The abundance of material goods in America has been made possible by the application of scientific knowledge. Modern industry, business corporations and labor unions would not exist in their present forms if it were not for scientific progress. The teachings and practices of religions, schools and families have been affected by the impact of science on society. Customs and morals have been altered by changes in communication and transportation and by mass production and mass consumption. Because of science, living conditions have changed more in the past 100 years than in all previous history. Even ideals have been modified by the application of scientific methods.

The discovery and exploration of America was motivated by the same spirit of inquiry that gave birth to modern science. By one of those wonderful accidents of history, Columbus discovered America when he set out for India to confirm a theory that the world was round. Subsequently explorers and settlers who had come to America exhibited much the same spirit of adventure and inquiry. They put into practice new ideas about religion, government and society in hope of discovering a better way of life. Thus, the desire to explore and experiment, so essential to the scientific temper, has characterized America from its very beginning.

During its early history, America's contributions to the exact sciences were negligible. America did not have the social organization, educational institutions, or intellectual sophistication needed for mature scientific research. There

were few men in the American Colonies to compare with Europe's famous men of science. A shortage of labor was an incentive to invention; yet the inventions in Colonial America were neither as many nor as important as those of Europe's industrial revolutions. A lack of mechanized industry made Americans dependent upon handcrafts; yet Colonial craftsmanship was generally inferior to that of Europe. Americans tended to be "jacks-of-all-trades" who could do almost anything — but they did not always do it well.

A few learned men in early America were exceptions to the rule. In the 17th century, John Winthrop, the governor of Connecticut, kept up a correspondence with Kepler, Newton, Boyle, and Galileo. Cotton Mather, a religious minister, was accepted as a member of the Royal Society of London for his work in science. In the 18th century, Benjamin Franklin conducted several important and crucial experiments in electricity. Franklin formulated a unified theory of electricity which has withstood the test of time, and he introduced into science several technical terms which are still in use. During the American Revolution, Benjamin Thompson devised a number of improvements in military weapons and conducted experiments in the theory of heat. The English scientist Joseph Priestly, who had done experimental work in electricity and chemistry, emigrated to America in 1794.

At the end of the 18th century the United States was still a century behind Europe in technology. England attempted to retain a monopoly of mechanized industry by prohibiting the transportation of machinery, designs or technicians to America, but in 1789 Samuel Slater arrived from England with plans for a spinning machine — in his head. Oliver Evans designed improvements in the steam engine. In 1812 Evans designed a railroad and by 1820 he had constructed a working model in his back yard. After a number of

expermiments and failures, John Fitch and Robert Fulton perfected the steamboat. Because American rivers were suited to steamboat traffic, the steamboat became a major means of transportation. In 1793, the first canal was constructed in South Carolina. In the next 30 years canals were built throughout the entire eastern region of the nation. The Erie Canal, completed in 1825, aided the growth of New York City by connecting it with a series of waterways leading to the Great Lakes. As a result, New York Harbor became a most important commercial link between Europe and the American Middle West. Eli Whitney's invention of the cotton gin at the end of the 18th century revolutionized the cotton industry in the South. By providing a mechanical means of separating cotton seeds from lint, the cotton gin made it possible for Southern growers to multiply their profits and salvage a dying industry. Whitney also put into operation the first system of mass production by using standardized, interchangeable parts. Unfortunately, the in vention also served to perpetuate the institution of slavery.

In the period from 1830 to 1860, the Industrial Revolution began to take root in America. Inventors began to apply for patents by the hundreds. In 1837 Samuel Morse, a portrait painter by profession, demonstrated a practical device for transmitting messages by telegraph. By 1850 telegraph lines were set up across the United States from Maine to Texas. Charles Goodyear discovered a new way of processing rubber by vuclanization. Other Americans applied their inventive minds to developing better ways of making plows, reapers and sewing machines. Several improvements were made in the construction of railroad locomotives. By 1860 there were more than 30,000 miles of railroad tracks east of the Mississippi River. By 1869, a transcontinental railroad was constructed from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific. By midcentury, American shipbuilders surpassed even the

English by designing swift and graceful clipperships for service on the seas.

During the same period, several Americans became distinguished for their work in the natural sciences. In 1833 John Beaumont published the results of original research in physiology, describing his discoveries in human digestion. In 1842 a physician from Georgia was the first to use ether as an anesthetic to relieve the pain of operation. Joseph Henry discovered that magnetism could produce electricity, and applied the principle to the telegraph, transformer and electric motor. Louis Agassiz, whose work in zoology inspired Charles Darwin came to America from Switzerland to continue his work in natural history. John James Audubon, a combination of painter and ornithologist, catalogued American wildlife in thousands of detailed paintings.

However, it was in applied science, not theoretical science, that Americans were most successful. The Americans of the 19th century believed they had a genius for invention and set out to prove it. In 1875, Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone and demonstrated a working model for the following year. In the 1880's George Eastman perfected the dry-plate process in photography and simplified the operation of the camera. Thomas Edison was such a succsessful inventor that he advertised he would produce inventions to order. He hired a team of investigators and organized what was probably the first research laboratory. But Edison was the mind behind his organization. He invented a practical electric light for home use. He designed improvements in the telephone and generator. He contributed significantly to the development of the phonograph and motion pictures. He was the first person to detect the flow of electrons through space — a phenomenon which was later put to use in the radio. At the beginning of this century, Ransom E. Olds developed assembly line techniques which

enabled him to mass-produce automobiles. Henry Ford manufactured an inexpensive car which could be purchased by the average family. In 1902, two farm boys from Ohio, the Wright brothers, made the first successful flight in a power driven airplane.

As American industry came of age, so did American science and education. After the Civil War American universities began to establish graduate departments for scientific and professional studies. J. Willard Gibbs created a whole new field of research — physical chemistry — by his pioneering work in thermodynamics. Albert A. Michelson devised experiments to measure the speed of light. By his invention of the interferometer, Michelson was able to correct previously-held theories about the passage of light through ether and he measured more precisely the size and distance of heavenly bodies. In his *Principles of Psychology*, written in 1890, William James extended the range of scientific psycology, to include the study of the will, memory and emotions. E.B. Titchener and James Cattell, students of Wilhelm Wundt, helped to establish psychology as an independent discipline. At the turn of the century E. L. Thorndike and John B. Watson founded the behaviorist school of psychology in America, stressing the importance of experimental methods.

Before World War I, Robert Millikan confirmed Einstein's theory of atomic structure by crucial experiments in electron research. George Hale, using giant telescopes, photographed the flames of the sun. Hale became a leader in astronomical research, dedicating much of his life to the study and explanation of sun spots. In 1903, Lee DeForest developed the audion tube to record radio waves. In chemistry, Irving Langmuir set forth a theory to explain the relationship between atoms and molecules. In 1923 Arthur H. Compton discovered a phenomenon known as the " Compton effect " demonstrating the particle theory of light.

The advance of theoretical science, as well as applied science, has proceeded at a rapid rate since World War II. Research in atomic physics,which was accelerated during the war for military purposes, has been turned to peacetime uses. Missiles and rockets, first developed as military devices, now enable scientists to explore space in order to learn more about the nature of the universe. Other important discoveries, such as penicillin and polio vaccine, have improved medical practice. Scientific discoveries and technological advances have produced new industries in television, business machines, and synthetic materials.

As American science has come of age, the status and role of the scientist in American life has been changed. In the past, science was a hobby for amateurs to pursue in home-made laboratories during leisure hours. Today scientists are highly trained professionals for whom science is a public career. Although many scientific discoveries are still being made by individual scientists working alone, all scientists have become dependent upon scientific journals and organized societies for the exchange of information. Much research is being conducted by teams of scientists who are employed by the government, business corporations and universities. Such organizations provide the money, equipment and organization needed for modern research and development. Scientists, in turn, have come to play an important role in the direction and operation of public institutions. Scientists serve as advisors in planning programs for both government and industry and the influence of scientists on university faculties has greatly affected American education. Science occupies a more important place in the American school curriculum today than ever before in history.

It is sometimes said that science has become the religion of the modern world and that scientists are its high priests. The statement is undoubtedly an exaggeration, but it has its

point. Science and scientists have much influence in the modern world. Science has not only produced the comforts of modern living, but it has also called into question many ancient beliefs. Yet, while science has attempted to substitute exact knowledge for myth and superstition, it has uncovered new mysteries about the world and man's place in it. Certainly, to the average person who understands little about science, scientific theories are themselves a great mystery. The discoveries and workings of science popularized by the mass media inspire more reverence for science than understanding. The scientist, by virtue of his specialized knowledge, belongs to an elite group from which the ordinary man is excluded. Like a priest, he seems to possess secrets about the universe which can determine the fate of mankind.

Scientists, however, have not been given the power todetermine the course of events. This power still lies in the hands of other agencies. Scientists provide the knowledge, but the administrators and managers of government and industry decide what to do with it. Most scientists who are employed by large organizations work on projects which are assigned to them. They may function as advisors, but usually they do not make policy. Although there is much popular reverence for science, there is also popular suspicion. The general public is reluctant to entrust power to any elite group — especially a group so far removed from popular understanding. The popular image of the scientist, as a man dedicated to knowledge for its own sake, detached from practical concerns, makes him an unlikely candidate for public trust. In the final analysis, he is respected more for his practical utility than for his dedication to truth. Thus, in spite of the great influence of science in modern times, scientists themselves tend to function more as servants of society than as leaders.

The subordination of science to practical ends is in keeping with the American tradition and is characteristic of the

American temperament. Scholars and educators pay a great deal of lip-service to the importance of knowledge for its own sake, but the test of importance which is usually applied is that of usefulness. A sizeable amount of money is spent by public and private agencies for pure research — but usually in the hope that it will yield practical results. This emphasis upon the practical application of knowledge is more than a concern for profits and comforts. It is motivated by a concern for the good of society. The most prominent American philosophers, reflecting popular sentiment, have insisted that the primary value of theoretical knowledge lies in its practical application. Pragmatists like William James and John Dewey have argued that there is no such thing as pure, theoretical knowledge. According to the philosophy of pragmatism, ideas are essentially plans for action. Ideas which have no practical consequences are regarded as meaningless. True ideas, they hold, are ideas which are instrumental in achieving human goals. Ideas are false if they do not work in practice. Thus American pragmatists have tended to subordinate science to morality by holding that the very truth of scientific theory depends upon its ability to satisfy human purposes.

Pragmatism emphasizes not only the practicality of science but also its creativity. Just as pragmatists regard scientific theories as proposals for solving practical problems, they also call attention to the fact that theories must be brought into existence by human imagination. According to Dewey a scientific hypothesis is not simply a description of experience but a plan for organizing experience into meaningful relations. The scientist does not simply discover truth — he creates it. The value of his creation lies in its ability to do the job it is intended to do. However, since there are many problems and many ways to solve them, pragmatists do not regard any statement of truth as absolute. They

believe that the value of any hypothesis is relative, and it can always be replaced by a better one. Thus they do not regard any statement of truth as final. All subjects, they think, are open for further investigation.

Practically all philosophies today recognize the limited, unfinished character of human knowledge. However, philosophers also tend to agree that mankind is making progress in its quest for truth. This belief in progress implies a faith in absolutes—a faith that there is an absolute truth toward which science is progressing. If scientists did not believe that there were answers to questions which science does not yet possess, the whole enterprise of science would be meaningless. Thus many people have argued that, in the final analysis, science is not far removed from religion. The apparent conflict between science and religion, which once troubled the Western World, does not seem to be a serious problem today. Whereas religion emphasizes faith, and science emphasizes knowledge, the two appear to be dependent upon each other.

Although there are various scientific philosophies — some of which reflect differences in national attitude — science itself seems to be immune to national differences. Scientific knowledge is, by nature, universal and objective, and scientists of all nations have a reputation for impartial dedication to truth. In fact, the international exchange of scientific knowledge may come to serve as a model for understanding and cooperation among nations. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), founded in 1946, has been most successful in helping to spread scientific and cultural information. It is also significant that, in the International Geophysical Year of 1957-58, scientists from 66 nations joined in conducting research and exchanging data. Everyone is aware that the power of science may be used in war for destrcutive

ends. Certainly, it must be the hope of all people that, in the future, this power will be turned to constructive purposes.

Education in the U. S.

The United States today has one of the most extensive and diversified systems of education in the world. There are more than 125,000 schools in America and more than 50 million students. With less than 6 percent of the world's population, the United States has approximately 40 percent of the world's college students. There are 2,000 colleges and universities which award half a million degrees every year. American schools are supported and administered by a variety of public and private agencies. Nearly 90 percent of the elementary and secondary schools are operated by the state and local governments. Most of the remaining number are supported by religious organizations. Approximately two-thirds of the colleges and universities are private institutions. The other third are maintained by state and local governments.

Each state operates a tax-supported public school system where students can attend the first 12 years of school free of charge. This makes it possible for every citizen to complete elementary and secondary school. Attendance at school until the age of 16 is compulsory in all of the states. Most high school graduates also have the opportunity to attend college if they wish. The standards of admission and tuition costs at private colleges tend to be exclusive, but tuition at state colleges is relatively low.

There is no centralized system of education. The Federal Government does not have authority over the states in matters of education. The Office of Education in the Federal Government is largely a center for collecting and and distributing information. It does not determine the

standards of education to be used throughout the country. It does not specify, for instance, which subjects should be taught in the schools. Each of the 50 states adopts its own standards and most of the financial and administrative responsibility for operating the schools has been delegated to more than 100,000 local districts. Counties, cities, and townships supply most of the money used for elementary and secondary education, and matters of school policy are decided by locally elected officials.

The relatively minor role of the Federal Government in education may be indicated by the fact that it contributes less than 5 percent of all the money used for the support of schools. This does not mean, however, that the Federal Government is uninterested in education. Throughout history, the Government has used various means to improve and expand America's educational system. A centruy ago the Federal Government offered grants of land to the states for the purpose of building colleges. These land-grant colleges have since become the foundation of many state universities. In recent years, the Federal Government has taken an active interest in education by giving financial assistance to the states and offering scholarships and loans to students. At the present time, the Federal Government spends about one billion dollars per year on higher education alone, and there is every indication it will play an increasingly important role in helping to finance the costs of the educational system in the future.

The American Colonies gained the initiative in education by founding schools long before the United States became am independent nation. Eight colleges had come into existence before 1769. Each Colony had its own school system and many schools were operated by religious institutions. Almost half the towns in the Massachusetts Colony had elementary schools. When the United States Consti-

tution was written, it made no new provisions for education. The Constitution seemed to imply that education would continue to be handled by private institutions and by state and local governments, as it had been previously. The First Amendment to the Constitution, which provides for freedom of worship, allowed public and private schools to develop independently. Thus, private organizations have assumed the right to operate their own schools, and public education became the responsibility of state and local governments.

The decentralization of schools in the United States is in keeping with American ideals. The autonomy of schools and the diversity of educational systems give expression to the ideals of free inquiry and free expression. Because private agencies and local governments are free to operate independent school systems, individual citizens and groups can exercise a direct influence upon education. The separate school systems can express various needs and interests in education, and they can experiment with new programs and methods of instruction. The freedom to teach and to learn have provided an incentive for improving schools and increasing their number. New schools are continually coming into existence to meet the demand for more education. The demand for education is an expression of the democratic ideal since democracy depends upon enlightened and informed citizens who are capable of taking an active part in public affairs. Thus, American schools attempt to prepare students for active participation in a democratic society, and they have taken upon themselves the task of educating as many people as possible. Today more than 95 percent of the children between the ages of 6 and 17 years are enrolled in school.

However, not all educators and public leaders are in agreement about the wisdom of universal education. Because of rapid population increases, existing schools are

overcrowded. New schools are being constructed, but the cost in taxation is burdensome. The supply of teachers does not meet the demand. Educational standards have been lowered to accommodate students of average and sub-standard ability. Opponents of universal education have been critical of compulsory attendance which forces the schools to accommodate students unwilling and unable to learn. Some critics also feel that higher educational facilities should be used to educate only the most talented. Historically, this position was set forth by Thomas Jefferson who founded the University of Virginia. However, President Andrew Jackson held the opinion that everyone should be educated to the full extent of his ability. From all evidence, it seems that the Jacksonian idea has won public acceptance. Yet many people are still concerned about rising costs and declining standards.

As a matter of fact, the quality of schools varies greatly from state to state, and from one local area to another. Schools in metropolitan areas tend to be superior to rural schools. Large cities and wealthy suburbs can raise more money in taxes to construct buildings, purchase equipment, and hire teachers. Since people in urban areas tend to be more sophisticated than people in rural areas, they are more aware of educational needs. There is also a difference between public and private institutions. Private schools, because they can be more selective than public schools in admitting students, have a better chance of maintaining high standards. State colleges, for example, are usually required by law to admit any student who has a high school diploma. Private colleges may admit only those students who have demonstrated high scholastic ability. These differences have made it difficult to measure scholarly achievement. Students who transfer from one school to another cannot always be certain that their previous studies will

be accepted. Courses of instruction and requirements for graduation differ, making it difficult to measure the value of a diploma or degree.

However, there are certain nationwide practices which tend to minimize these difficulties. Practically all schools are organized to include the same number of years of instruction. According to the traditional pattern, elementary school lasts eight years and high school, or secondary school, lasts four years. Many school systems today have six years of elementary school, three years of junior high and three years of senior high, but both systems have the same total length. The bachelor's degree, which is the first degree in liberal arts or in the sciences is granted after four years of college. Professional degrees vary with respect to the years of study required. The master's degree in academic work normally requires one or two years of study after the bachelor's degree, and the doctorate in philosophy takes at least another two years. Credit for study is standardized by measuring the number of hours a student spends in the classroom for each course. For example, a student who attends a class three hours a week will normally receive three credits for successful completion of his work. The average full-time student earns at least 15 credits each semester, or 30 credits each year. These credits are counted toward graduation and usually may be transferred from one school to another.

Each state establishes minimum standards which must be satisfied on lower levels of education. They specify, for example, that certain basic subjects be taught in the schools, and they control the certification of teachers. In higher education, national and regional accrediting associations have been estabilshed by voluntary cooperation among colleges and universities. Accrediting associations usually rank institutions according to their physical facilities.

the courses they offer and the number of advanced degrees held by their teaching staffs. However, it is practically impossible to measure objectively the quality of teaching at any school. Students who are selecting a college usually depend upon some subjective estimate of its worth. In the final analysis, it is the public image of a school which is of practical importance, for the value of a degree is measured largely by the prestige of the institution which confers it.

American students attend classes from nine o'clock in the morning until three o'clock in the afternoon. They go to school five days a week for eight or nine months a year. They are given 10 weeks vacation in the summer, two weeks in winter, and one week in spring.

Elementary school children are taught what are popularly known as the " three R's " reading, writing, and arithemetic — together with some literature, science, history, government, geography, art, music and health. Each grade ordinarily has one teacher who teaches all subjects, but sometimes special teachers are employed to teach art, music or physical education to all the grades. Many schools today are experimenting with the teaching of foreign languages on the elementary level.

In early America, there were basically two types of secondary school : the Latin grammar school and the academy. The first type prepared children of upper-class families for college and placed great emphasis upon classical studies. The second type taught science, mathematics and modern languages. A distinction between college-preparatory schools and other types of high schools is still maintained, but most high schools today have a similar, basic curriculum. In the four-year high school, students are required to study physical science, social science and mathematics for at least one year, and English for at least three years.

At most schools, students must select an area of concentration which will determine the courses they study. They may choose, for example, a college-preparatory course, a business course, or vocational training. Students preparing for college spend more time studying academic subjects, and they often include in their programs at least two years of a foreign language.

Foreign languages are usually elective subjects in high school. Some private schools require students to study foreign languages for at least two years and sometimes even four. Latin, Spanish, French and German are the most popular foreign languages taught in American high schools. French and German are often required for students who plan to take advanced degrees. Russian has been introduced in some high schools and colleges, and departments of Eastern European, Far Eastern, and African languages have been organized in several universities. However, Americans generally have little knowledge of foreign languages because they have little need for them. A person can travel three thousand miles across the United States without having to speak any language other than English and most Americans have little contact with people of other nations. Nevertheless, more emphasis is being placed on language studies today, because more Americans are traveling, studying and working abroad than ever before.

Most high schools offer many subjects in addition to the basic requirements. Students may take courses and earn credits toward graduation in art, home economics, typing and music. Vocational training is offered in many high schools and some regions and cities have special schools for agricultural or industrial training. A variety of subjects are taught to satisfy the talents and interests of individual students and to prepare them for the types of work or study they will pursue after graduation. However, basic academic

subjects are usually required for all students to insure a minimal knowledge of the liberal arts and sciences.

American students are encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities which include sports, dramatics, musical performances, journalism, dancing and other forms of art and recreation. There are academic and social clubs which sponsor activities after school hours, and there is usually a student government which enables students to regulate many of their own affairs. Educators have sometimes argued that extra-curricular activities are just as important as academic training. Such activities satisfy the recreational and social needs of students and encourage them to become more active in the social and political life of their communities.

The schools today perform many teaching functions which in the past were performed by other social institutions. Formerly technical and moral training was provided by economic institutions, religious organizations and the family. Today, much of this instruction is provided in school. When parents are dissatisfied with the behavior of their children, they frequently think that the schools are to blame. The schools, in turn, are burdened with tasks which they were not orginally designed to perform. Much time and money are spent on extra-curricular activities which have little to do with formal instruction.

The program and practices of colleges and universities vary according to the type of institution. The most common type of higher educational institution is the liberal arts college which offers a four-year program leading to the bachelor's degree. Other types of colleges include business schools, teacher's colleges, engineering schools and professional schools. Practically all colleges offer courses in the liberal arts in addition to technical subjects, and most schools confer at least the bachelor's degree. Some also

offer advanced degrees. Junior colleges and technical institutes offer programs of less than degree length.

A university is ordinarily a group of colleges organized under one administration. A university always has a liberal arts college as its foundation, and it will usually have a graduate school for advanced studies. Universities may also include a number of technical and professional schools. Thus a liberal arts college, a teacher's college, a business college, a law school and medical school may all be parts of one university. Names are confusing, for the words "college," "university," and "school," are often used interchangeably to indicate any kind of higher educational institution.

In colleges, as in high schools, all students are required to study certain basic courses before they can graduate. In liberal arts colleges, for example, students spend about one-fourth of their time studying subjects required by the school. Students are also required to select a field of concentration in which they will spend approximately another one-fourth of their time. For the remainder of their studies, students may choose any courses of instruction offered by the school. Non-required courses are called electives, and they are counted, together with required subjects, toward the number of credits needed for a degree.

Although there is a certain amount of specialization in undergraduate studies, scholarly concentration in one subject usually does not begin until a student enters graduate school. In graduate school, students do almost all of their work in one, and only one, field of knowledge. Professors usually spend more time in research than in teaching, and they try to produce students who are dedicated to research. As a result, persons who hold advanced degrees often have considerable knowledge of a limited field of study, but they are often ignorant of others. It is practically

impossible for any one person to master many fields of study, and it is becoming more difficult for persons in different fields to communicate with one another. Because studies are divided into separate departments, schools are finding it difficult to offer a well-integrated program of study, and students are-faced with the problem of relating one subject to another. However, students are expected to acquire a general education before they enter graduate schools. In undergraduate colleges, there has been a tendency to form inter-departmental committees to coordinate studies. On the undergraduate level, students are normally required to take courses in all major areas of study regardless of their field of specialization.

The modern university, organized into departments of knowledge and teaching a variety of academic and technical subjects, did not come into existence in America until the second half of the 19th century. In early America, the liberal arts college was the dominant type of institution. The purpose of the liberal arts college was to provide a general education for upper-class gentlemen. Its function was to preserve and teach inherited traditions. There were no graduate schools. The university, by contrast, came into existence to offer specialized programs of study and to conduct research. It professionalized education and made it more practical in purpose. As the university expanded to include more subjects, it eventually became a complex of schools and departments in which anyone could study almost anything. The new university was also more egalitarian than the traditional liberal arts college, for it offered a variety of subjects to students from many segments of society. However, their practical emphasis posed a threat to purely academic disciplines, for technical instruction tended to replace theoretical studies. The academic disciplines are still fighting for survival, but most schools today attempt

to effect a compromise between academic and technical instruction.

In college, as on lower levels of education, recreational and extra-curricular activities are an important part of a student's life. Students can attend dances, atheltic events, musical performances, and dramatic productions, all of which take place at the school. A large number of the physical facilities, and much time and money, are dedicated to the student's social and cultural life. Athletics at many universities is a serious business. Foodball games and basketball games, for example, are not only a source of entertainment for students but also a source of income and publicity for the schools. Athletes sometimes receive scholarships and expense money as payment for their services, and athletic coaches frequently earn higher salaries than professors. From time to time there is talk about deemphasizing athletics, but students, alumni and the public continue to demand that their schools have winning teams.

American higher education, like American politics, may seem confusing to an outside observer. In some ways, American schools are restrictive, and in other ways liberal. They are practical in orientation, yet they try to encourage critical and imaginative thinking. Most schools demand regular attendance at classes — even on higher levels of education. In a manner similar to elementary and secondary schools, college professors often teach from carefully prepared textbooks and teach exactly what the students are expected to learn. They give specific homework assignments and frequent quizzes to keep students motivated and working. Thus, adult students are sometimes treated like children who must do what they are told, instead of being allowed to do creative work on their own. Yet it is a standard practice to allow time for questions and discussion during lectures. Students are expected to develop

habits of critical and independent thinking by presenting their ideas openly in class. Although they are guided in their work, they can choose their own topics for research and develop them as they wish.

School authorities make every attempt to encourage students to use their time well. By course requirements and by counseling, they try to insure that each student will profit from a well-rounded and planned program of instruction. Students are encouraged to specialize to a certain extent in one area of study — but not so much that they will become totally ignorant of others. However, students have a great deal of freedom in deciding what they will study when they will study, and how much they will study. They can choose their work from a wide variety of courses and programs of instruction, and they decide for themselves how much time they will use for study or recreation outside of class. If they waste their time, they risk failing in their studies and possible dismissal from school. The schools' requirements are only minimum requirements. Good students are expected to do more than merely satisfy them.

American schools are criticized more often for being too easy than for being too hard. The claim is that standards for admission and graduation are often too low, and that much time is wasted on non-academic concerns. If this is true, it is because American schools, on all levels of education, have generally accepted the responsibility for educating as many people as possible, as much as possible, and in as many possible subjects. The schools are concerned with cultural, social, and moral training almost as much as they are concerned with professional and academic work. A truly democratic school system, as most Americans understand it, is supposed to discover ways of educating all people according to their interests and abilities. To do this, American schools have had to admit and graduate more students than is done

in many other societies. They have also had to include in their programs a wide variety of subjects and activities. Yet there is no evidence to indicate that the best of American students accomplish less than the best students of other nations. Comparisons based on averages are misleading because other nations educate a much smaller percentage and, hence, a more select representation of their population.

Greater educational opportunities have been provided form ore people, not only in formal programs, but also outside them. There are, for example, programs of instruction which have been designed to reach people who cannot attend school regularly. There are extension courses which are taught by universities in towns and communities which do not have institutions of their own. There are evening classes for adults who work during the day. There are correspondence courses for people who cannot attend classes, and there are on-the-job training programs in many occupations and industries. Local communities often sponsor classes and discussion groups for adults who are interested in current events and cultural activities. On lower levels of education, special schools have come into existence for retarded children and for those who are specially gifted. Thus, Americans believe that there is more than one way to education and they recognize that everyone's needs are not the same. Indeed, by educating many people in many ways, the American school system risks a certain amount of inefficiency and confusion about standards. However, Americans hesitate to correct these faults by denying anyone the right to teach or to learn.

Religion in America

The United States is essentially a Christian nation. People of many other major religions live in America, but their numbers are small. The combined membership of the

Protestant and Catholic churches represents more than half of the population. More than 35 percent of the American people belong to approximately 250 different Protestant denominations. About 25 percent of the population is Catholic. Judaism is the next largest religion. There are about five and one-half million Jews in the United States. Nearly 40 percent of the people, however, are not registered members of any organized religion. Among these may be included many young children who have not yet been counted on church registers and other church members who, because they have moved from one place to another, have not been counted. Undoubtedly, there are many people who choose to worship God in their own way, some agnostics and a few atheists.

Because of the dominant role of Christianity in the history of Western civilization, American culture has been greatly influenced by Christian beliefs and practices. Christianity has had a major impact upon politics, morality, law, education, art and family life. The influence of Judaism has not been so significant. There were not many Jews in early America, and even today they represent only a small fraction of the population. However, historically, Judaism has had much influence upon Christianity. Also in recent years, Jews in America have been very active in public affairs. Since Christianity is an outgrowth of Judaism, the two religions are in agreement on many points. Thus it is common to refer to the Western tradition as Judeo-Christian, and the United States is sometimes regarded as a three-religion culture in which the Protestant, Catholic and Jewish faiths are dominant.

Jesus Christ, the founder of Christianity, based his teaching upon ancient Jewish laws and customs. Christians inherited from the Jews a belief in only one God and the moral law expressed in the Ten Commandments. Christians

have accepted the Jewish belief that man is alienated from God by sin and, consequently, that mankind is in need of salvation. Jewish prophets had predicted that God would send a savior to earth to lead men back to God. Christians believe that this savior is Jesus Christ. The basic difference between Jews and Christians is that Jews do not regard Christ as the Savior.

Because the early Christian church came into existence during the period of the Roman Empire, Christianity adopted many Roman customs. In the West, Latin became the language of the Church and Roman practices influenced religious rituals. The philosophies of Greece and Rome were used to interpret Christian doctrine. When the political structure of Rome began to disintegrate it was replaced by the organization of the Church. The Pope became the recognized leader of the Church in the Western World. In the Middle Ages, practically all Europeans were converted to Christianity, and the Roman Catholic Church became the dominant institution in European life. The Church was influential not only in matters of religion and morality but also in civil affairs.

However, during the Renaissance the position of the Roman Catholic Church began to weaken. As modern kingdoms came into existence, political leaders sought independence from Rome. Religious reformers in several European states also challenged the authority of the Pope in matters of religion. The result was the Protestant Reformation, which began in Germany when Martin Luther published his Ninety Five Theses in 1517. Luther attacked the teaching authority of the Church hierarchy, basing his arguments upon passages in the Bible. He felt that the Bible, which records the teachings of Christ, should be regarded as the source of Christian belief. Luther also taught that "faith alone" is necessary for salvation. Every

Christian, he held, is a priest and can interpret the Bible for himself.

In 1535, King Henry VIII broke off relations with Rome and set himself up as head of the English Church. In 1536, John Calvin published his Institutes of Christian Religion; like Luther he rejected the idea that participation in the Church is necessary for salvation. According to Calvin, man is essentially evil and he can do nothing to achieve his salvation — only God can determine who will be saved. Thus, Calvin interjected into Christianity a strong emphasis upon man's evil nature and the providence of God. Separatists and Puritans, who were influenced by Calvinism, began a reformation in England. They emphasized a strict and austere morality in daily living, and they sought to strip Christianity of its Roman elements. Members of the Church of England, the Separatists and the Puritans established the first permanent settlements in the American Colonies.

Because there are many types of Protestantism, it is difficult to generalize about Protestant beliefs. In most cases, Protestants have differed from Catholics in denying the authority of the Pope and the powers of the priesthood. They have reduced the number of official doctrines, and they have minimized the importance of religious rites. Most Protestants tend to think of themselves as more individualistic than Catholics. In some Protestant chruches, the congregation may elect its minister and vote to decide upon matters of doctrine. However, some Protestant churches are more similar to the Catholic. Many members of the Anglican and Episcopal churches do not consider themselves to be Protestants at all, and Lutherans are conservative by comparison with many other denominations. Evangelical sects, such as the Baptists, tend to differ considerably from classical forms of Protestantism. They tend to emphasize

religious emotions more than the intellectual content of belief.

Religion has played an important part in the settlement and development of America. When Christopher Columbus came to America, he was commissioned to convert the Indians to Christianity. Spanish Catholic missionaries established the first settlements in North America, and French Catholic priests explored much of the interior of the country. English Anglicans and Protestants founded the first permanent colonies on the Atlantic Coast. The Church of England was established in America when Virginia became a colony in 1607. English Separatists, called "Pilgrims," landed at Plymouth Rock, Massachusetts, and started a colony there in 1620. The Puritans established the Massachusetts Bay colony in 1629, and within a few short years, Puritanism became the state religion. Pennsylvania was founded as a colony in 1649 by the Quaker, William Penn. A few Roman Catholics lived in Maryland under a Catholic governor, Lord Baltimore. Members of the Dutch Reformed Church settled in New York. Lutheran communities were founded in the Middle Atlantic States. Presbyterians from Scotland and Ireland settled in New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

Most of these groups came to America to be free from the religious wars and persecutions in Europe. Each group tended to establish a separate colony in which it would be free to practice its religion. However, the presence of so many religions created in America many of the same problems which had troubled Europe. Religious intolerance and persecution were not uncommon. Some colonies, such as Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Rhode Island, tolerated religious differences, but many did not. The Quakers in Pennsylvania were pacifists who were tolerant by conviction. The governor of Maryland had to tolerate Protestants

because he served under a Protestant King. Roger Williams established religious toleration in Rhode Island because he himself was persecuted in Massachusetts. But the largest colonies, Massachusetts and Virginia, had state churches which were intolerant of religious dissenters. A theocratic society was founded in Massachusetts under the leadership of Puritan ministers. In Virginia, only members of the Church of England were able to hold office.

New sects came into existence during the Great Awakening of the 18th century. The Baptist denomination, which was founded in 1760, spread from New England into the frontier states and the South. Methodism was introduced in America in 1766. The Great Awakening was charactrized by a revival of intense religious feeling which spread throughout the Colonies. This revival created in the Colonies a sense of religious unity which tended to transcend doctrinal differences. It probably provided much of the spirit which bound the Colonies together in the American Revolution. However, after the Revolution, the problem of religious pluralism in America had to be faced. In demanding a Bill of Rights, representatives from the states felt that religious freedom should be guaranteed by the Constitution. Thus, the First Amendment to the Constitution specifies that the government cannot make laws respecting the establishment of religion or preventing its practice. The Constitution also states that there shall be no religious test for holding political office.

The principle of religious freedom, expressed in the Constitution, is sometimes referred to as the "separation of church and state." Its purpose is to prevent the government from supporting any religion to the exclusion or detriment of others. However, neither the law nor the government is opposed to religion. The American Revolution did

not seek to overthrow organized religion. In fact, religious beliefs were cited to justify the ideals of the Revolution. Most of American's political leaders have been religious men. They have reflected the religious sentiments of the majority of the American people. Indeed, the government has actually encouraged the practice of religion by exempting religious property from taxation.

Thus, there is no state church in America. Church membership is voluntary, not compulsory. All churches are self-supporting institutions. They receive no money from the government. As a consequence, church leaders in America tend to be very active and competitive in trying to increase their membership and strengthen their organizations. Practically all churches sponsor community activities and encourage people to participate in church functions. Most churches attempt to teach their doctrines to nonbelievers. Differences in belief sometimes cause heated verbal disputes over matters of doctrine or social practice but usually the competition is friendly and peaceful.

Religious bigotry became a major problem in the United States in the mid-19th century. At that time, large numbers of Irish Catholics came to America. These Irish Catholics were publicly criticized and socially ostracized by the Protestant majority. Protestantism was opposed to Catholicism in principle, and America was by and large, a Protestant country. Since Catholicism had been the official state religion in many countries, many Americans felt that Catholicism could not be reconciled with freedom of religion in America. Because Protestants regarded Catholicism as authoritarian, they felt it was undemocratic. Then and since, bigots have accused Catholics of being agents of the Pope and a threat to the democratic way of life. When, at the end of the 19th century, large numbers of Jews came to America, public emotions were aroused by anit-semitism.

In the 1920's, Catholics and Jews, together with Negroes, were made the object of vicious public attacks.

Undoubtedly, religious prejudice still exists in the United States, but it is not a seirous problem today. In public life, Catholics and Jews are well integrated with the Protestant majority. Indeed, the Catholic Church in America is no longer a minority religion. It is larger than any one Protessant denomination, and it is nearly as large as all the Protestant Churches combined. In the past, children of Catholic and Jewish immigrants sometimes changed their religious affiliation simply to win social acceptance. Today, this rarely happens. People are usually proud of their religion and regard it as a mark of social identification. A generation ago, the question, "What are you ?" usually meant, "What is your nationality ?" Today it means, "Are you a Protestant, Catholic, or Jew ?"

The growth of Catholicism and Judaism in the United States was largely a result of immigration. Since most immigrants moved to industrial cities to find employment, the large cities of the North-east have relatively large Catholic and Jewish populations. Because of their numbers, Catholics and Jews have been able to exercise considerable influence in politics. Although religious discrimination does exist in large cities, bigotry is not as common as it is in rural areas. City dwellers have become accustomed to living among people of other faiths, and they are more tolerant of religious differences. By comparison, people in rural areas have fewer immediate contacts with those of other faiths and thus tend to be less tolerant.

Protestantism was founded when America was still an agrarian society. Throughout most of American history, the Protestant ethic was associated with the virtues of rural living. The Protestant American farmer worked hard and

allowed himself few luxuries. He considered hard work the mark of a good Christian, and he found pleasure in simple everyday activities. By contrast, the cities were believed to be places of vice and corruption, and they were to be avoided by good Christians. Many Protestants live in cities today, but the Protestant ethic still contains traces of its rural past. The dominant Protestant attitude — which has been influenced greatly by the Baptist and Methodist sects — is still largely puritanical. Drinking and gambling, for example, are still frowned upon by many Protestant ministers. However, American Catholics also tend to be puritanical in outlook. The puritanism of American Catholics may be a result of Protestant influences, but it is also a result of Irish leadership in the Church. Since the Irish provided most of the Church's religious leaders, they also tended to set the tone of American Catholicism.

In recent years, leaders of the Catholics, Protestant and Jewish faiths have begun to take a more liberal attitude, toward their own doctrines and practices. Fundamentalism, based upon a purely literal interpretation of religious doctrines, has tended to give way to more sophisticated interpretations. Theologians of several faiths have proposed non-literal interpretations of scriptures. Moral attitudes have also been modified to accord with changing times. In early America, for example, Protestants generally regarded divorce and birth control as sinful, but today these practices have been accepted by most Protestant denominations. Jews have split into different groups because they hold different opinions concerning the importance of ancient customs and beliefs. Orthodox Jews, for instance, still retain traditional practices, but Conservative and Reformed Jews have adapted their life and worship to modern conditions. Even the Catholic Church, which has guarded its traditions with care, has begun to yield to change.

Arguments between the churches still arise over questions of morality and social practice, but they are not as serious as in the past. Catholics and Protestants tend to disagree, for example, about the interpretation of the First Amendment. Catholic leaders have argued that the governments should provide financial assistance to students attending religious schools. They feel that, because Catholics pay taxes for the support of schools, tax money should be allotted for children in Catholic schools. Protestants have argued that public support of religious schools is unconstitutional. The Federal Courts have usually agreed with the Protestant viewpoint. Other issues have arisen over divorce laws, birth control and censorship of literature and movies. However, the three dominant religions in America are in basic agreement on most questions of morality. This agreement has enabled them to unite on many questions of social and political importance. For example, leaders of all faiths have cooperated in the fight against crime, juvenile delinquency and segregation.

Compared with other countries in which religion influences almost all aspects of living, America cannot be considered a religious civilization. Religion does not appear as the dominant influence in the lives of Americans; neither is it reflected in the arts or in literature today as much as in the past. The biggest buildings in America are not temples of religion but temples of business. Most people go to church on weekends, but they do not seem to think about religion very much during the week.

Yet there is much respect for religion in America, and most people consider religion to be an important part of their lives. Undoubtedly, many Americans have deep religious convictions. Perhaps many others attend church because religious affiliation provides social identification and status. In many social circles, people are expected to

attend church, and those who do not may be ostracized. Although most people do not worry about the religious beliefs of others, they do expect other people to have some religious belief. People who openly profess to be atheists are rare.

Christian doctrines have had an influence upon laws and customs. Because Christians believe that a man should have only one wife, polygamy is against the law in all states. Since, traditionally, Christian churches have regarded divorce as sinful, many states have strict divorce laws. In some areas, there are "blue laws" which prohibit business activities on Sundays, because Christians regard Sunday as holy. Religious groups are responsible for laws in several states which censor indecent movies and literature. The church is one of the strongest forces working against the disintegration of traditional morality in the United States. However, since freedom of religion allows people the right to reject religious beliefs, the courts have been reluctant to enforce legislation regarding private moral practices. Laws on birth control, for example, are practically unenforceable, and standards of "decency" are difficult to fix.

Christian beliefs have also been wedded to political ideals. Although, historically, Christian churches have supported widely varied government, many Americans think that the words "Christian" and "democratic" are practically synonymous. They feel that the democratic principles of the United States are founded upon Christian beliefs. This confusion of religious and political faith is expressed in the American's reverence for the U. S. Constitution. For Americans the Constitution is a political Bible. Like the Bible, the authority of the Constitution is almost never questioned. Other things are evaluated by reference to it. The Constitution is part of the "revealed truth" which

every American accepts. He may never read it, but he is certain to know what it teaches.

The Christian bias of the majority tends to make Christian belief a popular requirement for political office. Until this century, a politician did not have much chance of winning an election unless he were Protestant. In this century, many Catholics and Jews have been elected to local, state and even federal offices, but the only Catholic ever elected to the Presidency was John F. Kennedy. Politicians who do not have strong religious convictions often appeal to God and Christian ideals to win votes. After they are elected to office, they usually make a point of going to church. Although divorce is common in the United States, more than one candidate for office has ruined his public career by obtaining a divorce. The people, it seems, expect their officials to be more highly principled than they are themselves. Although a certain amount of corruption is probably inevitable in any government, the American people expect their leaders to be beyond reproach.

There has been a religious revival in the United States since World War II. More people have been attending churches than during previous periods of American history. However, religious leaders have disagreed over the significance of this fact. Some authors believe World War II, the Cold War, and threats of atomic destruction have sobered many people, causing them to be less optimistic about the future. Others feel that society today is more complex and impersonal than in the past, and that many people are turning to religion for emotional security. Perhaps others are confused by changing moral standards and look to religion for guidance. Undoubtedly many people are dissatisfied with secular standards and are seeking spiritual values. Some critics, however, argue that the present-day religious revival is based upon emotions rather than intellectual conviction.

Religion, they feel, has lost much of its influence in intellectual life. Secular learning has replaced theological studies in the schools, and the churches themselves seem to have become more concerned about practical affairs than about theology. Many people complain that priests and ministers are concerned about building schools, contributing to charities, and organizing social activities, instead of emphasizing the spiritual life. There is much truth in these criticisms. However, the fact that people are more critical today suggests that they have begun to look beyond the external practices of religion to discover its deeper meaning. Side by side with the religious revival, religious reform has also been taking place. Ths reformation has affected all the churches, and it has begun to revitalize the practice and study of religion.


OPEKA

AMERICAN ARTS AND POPULAR CULTURE

5. American arts and Popular Culture

In 1820 an English critic asked with sarcasm, "Who reads an American book?" The question sums up fairly well the state of American arts in the beginning of the 19th century. The people of early America were too busy with practical affairs to be much concerned about their artistic accomplishments. They became accustomed to importing from Europe the few refinements of life which they required. Today, however, American books are translated and read in every major language, and American artistic works have received international recognition. It must be admitted that even today American art is heavily indebted to the traditions of other civilizations — to Asia and Africa as well as Europe — and, throughout most of the 19th century, it was practically dominated by European forms. But American art has come of age. No longer is American culture simply an appendage of the European. American artists have developed distinctively American styles, and they have begun to occupy positions of influence in the world of art.

The Colonial Period

America was still a rustic, frontier civilization during the 17th century, and its participation in the arts was limited to its folkways. American Indians employed primitive dances and songs in their religious ceremonies. Their

instruments were crude, and their music consisted of simple rhythms and tunes. The European settlers had little more. They sang hymns at church, but they had no secular music except simple folk songs. No one knew how to write music. Folk songs and folk stories, which have been popular among rural people throughout American history, may be traced to early Colonial times. But there was no literature as such. The colonists wrote diaries, journals, and histories of life in the settlements, but their works possessed little literary merit. The dominant intellectual influence was religious, and the Bible was a primary source of reading and inspiration. Puritan morality, especially in New England, was austere and intolerant of artistic adornment. However, the writings of Calvinist ministers about the wrath of God, the Devil, Predestination, and Original Sin later provided major themes for more romantic authors of the 19th century. Perhaps the most enduring artistic achievements of the early Americans are to be found in their handicrafts. Their native sense of the beautiful was expressed in simple, functional tools and furniture of rich natural texture. Their somewhat rustic homes of wood and stone had such a feeling of warmth and comfort that their designs have been an inspiration to American architects ever since. Copies of "Early American" homes and furniture are still in fashion today, and the use of native materials is one of the characteristic features of modern American building.

The elite arts suffered from neglect in Colonial America until the 18th century when a small but culturally conscious class of wealthy landowners and merchants began to import and copy European works. Various kinds of music became popular in the performances of European acting troupes. High society in cities like New York, Philadelphia and Charleston could enjoy chamber music and concerts performed by European musicians. By the time of the

American Revolution, there were a few native composers. However, even the best of these, Francis Hopkinson, contributed more to politics than he did to music.

Eighteenth century painters followed the lead of Benjamin West in travelling to Italy and London to study Renaisance styles. After their apprenticeship abroad, they returned to apply the teachniques they learned to American subjects. At the time of the Revolution, portraitists John Singleton Copley, Charles Wilson Peale, and Gilbert Stuart became famous for their paintings of American heros. At times their works were so lifelike that they have been said to "fool the eye." In a manner which had nothing to do with European fashions, these painters were at their best when they approached their work with typical American honesty and frankness. They sometimes succeeded in penetrating beneath outward appearances to capture the inner characters and personalities of their subjects.

American builders of the period constructed replicas of Georgian-style English mansions. Sometimes, American architects introduced creative variations on English designs. Thomas Jefferson was himself an amateur architect of considerable accomplishment. He was very much impressed by the buildings of ancient Rome, and he introduced in America classical Roman designs which have come to characterize public buildings in the United States. The White House, the Capitol building in Washington, D.C., and Jefferson's home at Monticello, Virginia, all feature the domes, columns and balustrades which are earmarks of the Romanesque style.

During this same period, America's achievements in literature were embodied mainly in her political document. The pamphlets of Thomas Paine, written as propaganda in support of the Revolution, and the Declaration of Independence, composed chiefly by Thomas Jefferson, are often

ranked as literary works. They were written with flourish and show that the Founding Fathers had a deep appreciation for literary expression. But there was little that might be classified as *belles letters*. The beginning of the century produced America's first important philosopher and theologian in the person of Jonathan Edwards. Edwards' "Freedom of the Will" and other essays in defense of Calvinist doctrine are memorable for both wit and logic. Edwards could aslo be highly emotional. Sermons, such as his *Sinners in the Hands of An Angry God*, must have frightened many wayward souls to return to their faith. Benjamin Franklin, however, stands out among all other Colonial authors. In addition to his many other talents as statesman, scientist and philosopher, Franklin started a whole tradition in American letters by his good humored moralizing and common sense criticisms. Franklin has been depicted often as the typical American Yankee, for he personified the ideals of his time. He was moralistic in a puritanical sense, but not especially religious; businessminded, but still appreciative of literature and art. Although he is well known for his short, pithy epigrams, in which he set forth a practical, no-nonsense philosophy, he is perhaps remembered most fondly for his good humor, sincerity, and love of humanity.

The Romantic Age

At the beginning of the 19th century, the United States was still an infant among nations, and her artists suffered from feelings of inferiority in the face of Europe's cultural maturity. Creative architecture declined as the period of Roman influence was followed by other "revival" periods in which Americans copied Greek and Gothic designs. The dignity of pure classical styles was preserved in public buildings and in the large plantation houses of the South.

American cathedrals and mansions sometimes achieved the majestic proportions of Gothic structures. However, the Gothic style became essentially ornamental. American houses and buildings were too often decorated with designs wholly unrelated to their structures — or to the American way of life. Notable exceptions to the rule were buildings designed by H. H. Richardson whose designs were both original and tastefully conceived. Although Richardson was influenced by the Romanesque style, he is recognized as one of the forerunners of modern design in America. He emphasized that the design of a building should be in keeping with the purpose for which it is used.

America's growing appreciation for music in the 19th century may be indicated by the number of theatres and orchestras which came into existence in major cities throughout the nation. The New York Opera opened its first performance in 1825, and America's first permanent orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, was founded in 1842. By the end of the century, America could boast of a half-dozen distinguished orchestras in major cities throughout the country. But practically all of the serious music and the greater number of accomplished musicians were from abroad. Native composers such as William Henry Fry, Charles Loeffler and Edward McDowell began writing serious music, but they did not compare with European masters. Stephen Foster, perhaps the best remembered composer of the century, was not even a trained musician. Foster wrote highly sentimental songs about rural southern life which made a direct appeal to popular feeling. Such memorable melodies as his *My Old Kentucky Home* and *Way Down Upon the Swanee River* have become perennial favorites of the American people.

Romantic painting of the early 19th century did not measure up to the realistic standards set by the late 18th

century portraitists. In keeping with the temper of the times, members of the fashionable "Hudson River School" of artists turned to nature for inspiration. However, their idealized representations tended to look more like landscapes of heaven than America's rustic wilderness. Some of the more interesting paintings of the period were created by anonymous folk artists who were not trained to paint at all. Their pictures were simple and naive like those of children, but their two dimensional designs had an original, abstract quality not often found in more sophisticated works of art. Later in the century, several more distinguished painters emerged from the ranks of commercial artists to create perceptive studies of American life. George Inness and Winslow Homer, both illustrators, became leading landscape painters. Inness discovered serenity and beauty in American's eastern hills. Homer was attracted by the power of the sea and the romance of naval life. Other painters, such as George Caleb Bingham, George Catlin, and Frederic Remington, used the illustrator's style to paint trappers, cowboys, and Indians in scenes of the American West.

Very near the beginning of the 19th century American authors began to attract international attention — even if sometimes it was in the dubious form of attacks by English critics. It was considered a compliment when an English critic said that he could not believe that William Cullen Bryant's poem "Thanatopsis" was written by an American ! James Fenimore Cooper's romantic *Leatherstocking Tales* about the American frontier lacked sophistication, but he had a knack for telling exciting stories. Cooper's work in effect was the beginning of "the American novel." Somewhat more urbane in manner, Washington Irving gave impetus to the short story form in his humorous *Sketch Book* and other stories. These authors initiated the romantic move-

ment in this most creative and productive period of American literature.

Romantic writers characteristically chose themes of mystery and death. Authors like Edgar Allen Poe and Nathaniel Hawthorne became masters at creating a sense of the supernatural. Both wrote "ghost stories," and both were consummate stylists. In poems like *The Raven* and *Annabelle Lee* Poe employed several poetic devices — particularly the repetition of ominous sounds — to make the reader feel the presence of supernatural powers. Hawthorne's novels, such *The Scarlet Letter* and *The House of the Seven Gables*, are psychological studies of human character. Hawthorne's works reveal his preoccupation with the Calvinist doctrine of inherited sin. He claimed that no matter how hard he tried, he could not get the Devil out of his inkwell! In *Moby Dick* and other mysterious romances of the sea, Herman Melville, a disciple of Hawthorne's, used symbolism and allegory to signify the presence of demonic forces in the lives of men.

Puritanism continued to exercise an influence upon New England writers. But a break with religious tradition and the influence of more liberal, humanistic ideals was becoming more apparent. Ralph Waldo Emerson, an ex-minister, became the spokesman for a group of idealistic writers called the "*Transcendentalists*." In numerous essays and lectures, Emerson championed individual freedom and cultural independence. He defended the rights of the free human spirit against enslavement to tradition, social conformity and materialism, and he called for a new breed of writers who would bring forth new ideas. Emerson was also influenced by the romantic temper of the period in his mystical approach to "nature." He tended to deify nature as the source of intellectual and artistic inspiration. His young friend, Henry David Thoreau, actually lived in the woods for two years to

" confront nature," as he tells us in his classic work *Walden*. Thoreau's " practical idealism " was even more radical and individualistic than Emerson's. He waged a verbal war against the tyranny of social conventions, commercialism and governmental restrictions.

By the middle of the century, the leading writers of the Romantic period had produced their most mature works. The so-called " Golden Age " of American literature had reached its climax. The novels and short stories of the period are still read today. Much of the poetry has gone out of flashion, but poets such as Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, John Greenleaf Whittier, and James Russell Lowell brought poetry to a peak of popularity during their lives. Not since then has poetry been a popular art in America. Walt Whitman was more modern than other poets of his time in his departure from traditional poetic forms and in his realistic treatment of life. However, he was also a romantic in his idealization of nature and his optimistic faith in the goodness of man. Like Emerson, Whitman rightly saw America's future in its frontier. But he was somewhat naive in his belief that democracy could be founded upon the passions of the people alone. He had forgotten that democracy in America was forged by reason and by law as well as by the will of the people.

Postwar Realism

Romanticism rapidly declined after the Civil War. Artists became disillusioned by the bitter contest between fellow Americans. They seemed to lose some of their faith in human nature. The late 19th century became an age of scientific realism, as rapid advances were made in both science and technology. It became also an age of social pretension as wealthy industrialists sought new ways to display their riches. Neither of these influences seemed conducive to artistic

creativity or imagination. Artists once again travelled abroad for study, atmosphere, and appreciation. In Paris, Thomas Eakins learned a realistic technique of painting which he introduced into American schools. Eakins placed great emphasis upon anatomical studies of the human body. John Singer Sargent had such a natural gift for capturing human likenesses that he became the most fashionable portraitist of his time. But Sargent rarely attempted to penetrate superficial appearances. Mary Cassatt, America's foremost woman painter, went to Paris to learn the style of the French Impressionists. However, she was not well appreciated by the people back home. Unlike most other American painters of the time, who tried to paint people and nature in a lifelike way, John McNeill Whistler anticipated the modern movement toward more abstract pictures. Being more concerned with the technique of painting than the subject represented, Whistler advocated the doctrine of "art for art's sake." Using flat tones and two-dimensional figures, he painted pictures which resembled traditional Japanese art.

Regionalism, expressed in paintings by Inness and Homer and in music by Stephen Foster, also gave new life to American literature. Regional artists drew inspiration from familiar scenes and the manners of ordinary people, using techniques born of America's folk traditions. Writers like Bret Harte, Joel Chandler Harris, and Mark Twain, in the spirit of America's oral tradition, were tellers of "tall tales." They wrote in the native dialects of the South and West, and they brought back to American fiction a refreshing sense of humor. Although deeply attached to rural life, these writers were more realistic than their predecessors in depicting the actual language and habits of the people. Mark Twain, for example, was a humorist of great sensitivity, but he was also a serious writer. He used his humor as a vehicle for penetrating social criticism. Twain insisted that the job of the writer

was to tell the truth as honestly as he perceived it, and he loved to satirize the social pretensions of the rich.

Several of America's authors began their careers as journalists, just as many of her painters began as commercial artists. Twain was a practicing journalist before he became famous as a novelist. Another newspaperman, William Dean Howells, insisted upon a more realistic style of writing. In *A Traveller from Altruria*, Howells satirized the injustices of America's social system. In *The Rise of Silas Lapham* he signalled the importance of the American businessman as a new type-character in American fiction. Stephen Crane, a newspaper correspondent, wrote with bitter irony of a society whose idealistic pretensions were simply a mask for inhumanity. In his *Maggie : A Girl of the Streets*, he tells the story of an innocent girl whose social environment forces her into a life of prostitution. In his masterpiece about the Civil War, *The Red Badge of Courage*, he portrays the fears of an ordinary soldier who must fight against unknown and impersonal forces which have no regard for his existence.

American authors were sobered by the impact of industrialization on America's social and economic life. They saw a contrast between older, more romantic ideals, and newer, more realistic facts. In his autobiography, *The Education of Henry Adams*, the historian Henry Adams spoke of the " Dynamo " as a symbol of irrational, mechanized forces which he felt were transforming the life of the nation. A member of an old, aristocratic family, and one trained according to traditional standards, Adams spoke of himself as a man born out of his time. In *Mont.-St.-Michel and Chartres*, Adams looked back to the Middle Ages for an example of unity and order to contrast with the confusion he found in the modern world. Novelists such as Frank Norris and Jack London, writing at the turn of the century, were no less pessimistic than Adams, but they affirmed rather

than rejected the new age. Inspired by the scientific philosophies of Darwin and Spencer, they tended to depict men as victims of nature, struggling for survival in a non-moral world. They celebrated the virtues of physical strength, instinct, and cunning, rather than reason, as a means for escaping destruction by the forces of nature. These writers tended to reject conventional moral standards, and they were frequently criticized for being indecent and vulgar. By contrast, Henry James combined a realistic approach with a more refined manner of expression. An aristocrat like Adams, James was not comfortable in modern America. Preferring European society, he spent most of his adult life abroad. Yet he frequently wrote about Americans, and he liked to compare America's new-rich with Europe's old-nobility. In novels like *The American* and *Daisy Miller*, James characterized Americans as innocent, awkward, and generally lacking in social graces. However, he also recognized in America an honesty and frankness which he found lacking in European society. A master stylist, much like Poe and Hawthorne, James wrote novels which were psychological studies of human behavior.

Twentieth-century Naturalism and Experimentation

By the beginning of this century, a strong sense of nationalism in the arts was becoming evident throughout the Western World. American artists were consciously striving to develop a national style. At the end of the 19th century, Edward McDowell had succeeded in creating an independent style in music by experimenting with folk tunes and Indian melodies. Twentieth-century composers continued to turn to native music for inspiration. Although trained in the classical tradition, composers Charles Ives, Aaron Copland and Virgil Thomson experimented with folk themes, jazz idioms, and religious hymns. They attempted to create serious music

which would be representative of American culture. Ives has exercised a strong influence upon modern composition by his use of quarter tones and dissonance, a basic element of jazz. Copland and Thomson contributed significantly to America's musical theatre by writing operas, ballets, and background music for the motion pictures. Perhaps the most popular composer in America, George Gershwin, excelled in several musical forms. In his famous symphony, *Rhapsody in Blue*, he combined a theme of Tchaikovsky with elements of American jazz. The experimental character of his music may be exemplified by his composition *An American in Paris*. In it, he employed actual street noises to capture the feeling of the city. In his opera *Porgy and Bess*, he showed himself to be a master of the " blues " which expresses so well the folkways of the American Negroes.

The dance and musical theatre, in a variety of forms, proved to be among the richest sources of creative music in America. Folk music and popular music have always had accompanying dances in which people could participate. Composers such as Copland and Thomson began writing for the ballet in the 1930's when formal ballet first became popular in the United States. Since then, the American Ballet Theatre and the New York City Center have been successful in developing and displaying the talents of American dancers. Earlier in the century, dancers Isadora Duncan, Ruth St. Denis, and Ted Shawn were pioneers in the development of " modern dance." Modern dance is a free-style dancing similar to ballet but not restricted to its traditional forms. Modern dance reached its height in the 1940's under the direction of Martha Graham. Eventually both ballet and modern dance became part of the evolving musical-comedy form in Agnes de Mille's choreography for the 1943 musical *Oklahoma* !

What is known as " musical comedy " today came into existence during the 1920's and 1930's when popular music

began to be used more extensively in the theatre. Musical comedy is symptomatic of America's love of variety. It combines the sentimental love themes of light opera with the low humor of burlesque. It mixes popular music with jazz and folk music. It incorporates tap dancing, modern dancing and ballet. Parts of it are spoken and parts are sung. The story for a musical is usually based upon some theme familiar to the people, and colloquial speech or slang is often used to achieve local flavor. Jerome Kern's *Showboat*, first produced in 1927, marked a transition in the development from light opera to musical comedy. *Oklahoma* !, written by Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II, brought this type of show to its modern form. Rodgers collaborated with Lorenz Hart and Oscar Hammerstein II in composing a number of successful Broadway hits including *Pal Joey, Carousel, South Pacific*, and *The King and I.* Recently the Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe musical *My Fair Lady* and Leonard Bernstein's *West Side Story* have received widespread acclaim from both audiences and critics. Since Broadway hits are usually made into movies, they are seen throughout the United States and in many other countries.

Jazz is recognized everywhere as America's music. It was first put together by untrained Negro musicians around the turn of the century. In its earliest forms, it was a brassy, noisy music which sounded something like a marching band. However, jazz contained unsettling rhythms, unusual tones, and instrumental variations which could not be found in more conventional types of music. Originally, jazz was not written down but improvised by musicians as they played. The characteristic beat of the music, called "syncopation," is probably derived from African rhythms which were brought to America by Negro slaves. The "blues," an original type of jazz, undoubtedly contains elements of the work songs of slaves and religious hymns. The blues are sad and melan-

choly like the laments of the slaves. However, they usually express the disappointments of unrequited love rather than the miseries of slavery. Somewhat paradoxically, the blues have comic overtones. Jazz, known in its earliest forms as "ragtime," "Dixieland," and the "blues," took on new names and evolved into new forms. Each successive generation invented its own accompanying dances. In recent decades, jazz has become a more sophisticated kind of music, intended for listening rather than dancing. Sometimes it is played even in concert halls. Jazz musicians such as Duke Ellington, Benny Goodman, and Louis Armstrong have won international acclaim for their performances. Today, jazz music is not only appreciated but imitated by enthusiasts and musicians around the globe.

Experimentation with new techniques and forms has been characteristic of the arts in this century. A break away from European styles in architecture was initiated by Louis Sullivan during the last decades of the 19th century and it has received renewed emphasis in this century by the pioneering work of Frank Lloyd Wright. In the 1880's and 1890's, new inventions and more efficient production techniques made possible the construction of very tall buildings. In larger cities, tall buildings were more economical than traditional structures because of crowded conditions and expensive real estate. These buildings, called "skyscrapers," had a skeleton frame of steel which was covered with concrete walls and glass windows. Skyscrapers were constructed according to principles never before used in architecture, and Sullivan saw in them a structural form which offered new possibilities for artistic expression. Sullivan believed that the massive, towering form of the skyscraper had a beauty of its own which should be augmented only by related designs. He argued against the use of Roman or Gothic decorations which were not related to it. Emphasizing the essentially practical

nature of architecture, he insisted that the design of a building should be dictated by its function. Frank Lloyd Wright, a student of Sullivan's, crusaded for new styles in architecture according to the doctrines of his teacher. He adhered to Sullivan's principles of "functionalism" and "organic unity of design." Wright was sensitive not only to America's characteristic practicalism but also to her native instincts for beauty. He used natural materials as well as manufactured materials to create buildings and houses which were both efficient and esthetically satisfying. He removed interior walls, raised ceilings, and enlarged windows in order to create a feeling of space within a house and a sense of unity with the out-of-doors. Since he believed that a building should be in harmony with its environment, he designed structures which, in texture, color, and shape, blended with their surrounding landscapes. Many of Wright's experiments were radical in nature and have been modified by contemporary architects ; but his ideas have left a clear imprint upon modern building in the United States.

As the growth of modern industry began to change America's landscape, and people began to move from the farms to the cities, painters naturally turned from rural scenes to urban life for subject matter and inspiration. Some attempted to symbolize the power and efficiency of the new machine-civilization. Others, motivated by movements toward social reform, chose as their subjects industrial workers and the urban poor. Near the beginning of the century, the "Ashcan school" of painters earned its name by representing city streets, slums, and poor, depraved people. Members of this group used a free and sketchy style which was impressionistic in manner and romantic in mood. This school produced such prominent painters as Robert Henri, John Sloan, George Bellows, William Glackens, George Luks, and Stuart Davis, all of whom seem to be filled with a passion for street scenes

and city people. However, during the depression years, several regional artists continued to look for an image of America in country life. Thomas Hart Benton, John Steuart Curry, and Grant Wood painted in bold relief the people and scenes of America's 'heartland,' the Middle West. Each had his own, individual style, and each perceived his subject in a different light. Benton painted rich, colorful scenes which symbolized the passions of the people and the life-giving forces of nature. Wood depicted Mid-eastern farm life in colorless pictures which were drab and dreary. In recent decades Andrew Wyeth has used a crisp, illustrator's technique to paint solitary figures in bleak and empty rooms against backgrounds of golden meadows. Wyeth has created moods which suggest the alienation of modern man from his natural environment.

European experiments in painting, originating mainly in Paris, produced a major movement in the United States toward non-representative, abstract art. Instead of merely copying nature, artists began to exaggerate and distort the things that they saw. Eventually, several artists concentrated upon composition alone, using arrangements of forms, lines and colors, without regard for objective content. In a movement called "abstract impressionism," led by Jackson Pollock and William De Kooning, it seemed that the sole purpose of the artist was to unleash his own emotions in bold, decorative splashes of color. Such experiments, stil in vogue, seem extreme and incomprehensible to most people, and perhaps it is too soon to seek an evaluation of them. They represent however, a tendency in modern art to focus critical attention upon the internal qualities of the work itself, without reference to external criteria. These experiments have enabled artists to explore the possibilities of their media without being restricted by pre-conceived notions of what a painting ought to be. Abstract painters have emphasized

technical innovation and emotional expression. Other artists, however, have continued to believe that pictures should have an objective meaning which can be communicated to a viewing audience. Although they have taken advantage of modern techniques, painters such as John Marin, Edward Hopper, and Walt Kuhn have created pictures which are realistic in content.

American literature continued to follow realistic trends set by writers at the turn of the century. Twentieth-century authors have been disillusioned by social and economic injustices, and by the effects of war and economic depression. The dominant literary figures of this century have focused upon tragic themes which reveal their dissatisfaction with the romantic ideals of the past. A young group of writers emerged after World War I to establish new styles in American fiction. They became known as the "Lost Generation," because they rebelled against traditional standards of morality and taste, and because they seemed to live their lives without moral purpose. Reacting against the conventional standards imposed upon them by society, they sought personal expression in intense emotional experiences and extravagant forms of play. However, they regularly failed to satisfy their desires and often uncovered tragedy instead. Their rebellion against traditional standards led them to seek new values and new techniques to express more realistically the conflicts which they experienced. They gave birth to a new cycle of American literature which, in creativity and productivity, compares favorably with the Romantic Period of the 19th century.

F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, John Dos Passos' *Three Soldiers*, and Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* are novels which record the tragic experiences of servicemen returning from war. These novels are representative of the revolution in morals which was initiated by the post-war

generation. Turning from war to civilian life, several authors found heroes for their novels among America's wealthy industrialists. Many of the characters of Theodore Dreiser's *An American Tragedy* and Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* are obsessed with lust for financial power, social prestige, and sexual conquest. Typically, they are destroyed in the end by their own ambitions. Sinclair Lewis chose the middle-class businessman as his subject. In his novel, *Babbitt*, he characterized the businessman as a narrow-minded and uncultured person interested only in making money.

Sinclair Lewis and Sherwood Anderson wrote revealing novels about small-town life in the Middle West. In his *Main Street*, Lewis depicted the small, rural community as drab and dreary. Anderson portrayed the characters of his mythical *Winesburg, Ohio* as people emotionally frustrated by restrictive moral standards. Tempted by the possibility of a new and more exciting life, Anderson's characters seek escape from reality in sex, dreams, and delusions. Other writers such as T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, Gertrude Stein, and Thomas Wolfe went abroad to find a more congenial atmosphere. Eliot, Pound, and Stein seemed to prefer Europe to America, but Wolfe was never really happy abroad. However, each of them helped to initiate experiments in literature which have established major trends in American writing.

The years of depression seemed only to intensify the feelings of dissatisfaction among American writers. Yet, beneath a surface of apparent pessimism, it was possible to detect in their works a deep love of humanity. Many of these authors believed that men may achieve spiritual satisfaction in spite of unfortunate circumstances. James T. Farrell, John Steinbeck, and John Dos Passos found new subjects for social criticism in the poor, starving farmers and underpaid industrial workers who were suffering from the economic depression.

Yet it is courage and hope, rather than defeat or despair, which sets the tone of their works. In *To Have and Have Not* and *For Whom The Bell Tolls*, Ernest Hemingway continued to concentrate upon violent actions and intense emotional experiences. His heroes were almost always luckless souls whose lives ended in tragedy. However, Hemingway clearly celebrated the virtues of human courage and fortitude which are able to turn physical defeat into moral victory.

One of the more significant literary movements in this century has been nourished by racial conflicts and social unrest in America's South. In the works of William Faulkner, Erskine Caldwell, Tennessee Williams, and Robert Penn Warren, the history of slavery and segregation in the U.S. has been made to seem even more troublesome to the conscience of the nation than the injustices of modern capitalism. These writers have been witnesses to the degeneration of the South's old, white aristocracy after the Civil War. They have dramatically portrayed the southern white man's bitterness at defeat, his wounded pride, and his subconscious feelings of moral guilt. In *Tobacco Road*, Caldwell brought to light the dire poverty and animal-like existence of poor, white sharecroppers who were dispossessed of their land. In plays like *The Glass Menagerie*, and *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Tennessee Williams contrasted the romantic ideals of the genteel poor with the shabbiness of their actual lives. His heroes are usually humiliated by having their dreamworlds destroyed by reality. In *All the King's Men*, Robert Penn Warren depicts the Southern politician as a demogogue who rises to power by arousing public emotions and creating mass hysteria. A number of Faulkner's books, beginning with *Sartoris*, focus upon the decline of Southern society. The tragic themes of his works have universal significance, for they symbolize the fall and corruption of the entire human race. In revealing man's inhumanity to man, Faulkner dramatizes

the effects of sin and guilt upon the human consciousness. His choice of themes, and his mysterious, obscure style, are not unlike those of Poe and Hawthorne. Faulkner used the "stream of consciousness" technique in which scenes and images are presented without regard for logical relationship or chronological sequence. His characters are frequently abnormal people who suffer from extreme forms of pride or guilt. Faulkner and other writers have used such bizarre techniques to accent the extremes of depravity to which people may be driven. In so doing, they have made possible a deeper understanding of man's spiritual needs and the complex social problems which arise from them.

Writing for the theatre, as a serious form of literary expression, began to flourish during this century. The first, and one of the most outstanding playwrights of the 20th century was Eugene O'Neill. O'Neill borrowed themes and techniques from ancient Greek tragedy, but he applied them to modern subjects and introduced innovations of his own. In plays like *Emperor Jones*, *The Hairy Ape*, and *Mourning Becomes Electra*, O'Neill set forth his dominant theme : that modern man's primitive and creative urges are denied expression by the conventions of society, and by an impersonal, mechanized pattern of living. He used devices such as drums to express primitive passions, and masks to contrast the outward appearance and inner reality of his characters. Maxwell Anderson attempted to revive the use of verse in the theatre in his plays such as *Elizabeth the Queen*, *Mary of Scotland* and *Winterset*. But poetry failed to become a popular mode of expression in American drama, probably because poetry itself has ceased to be a popular art form. There was a resurgence of writing for the theatre in the 1930's which produced several notable playwrights, such as Clifford Odets, Lillian Hellman, and Thornton Wilder. Many depression-plays were preoccupied with social and economic

problems. They were usually marred by obvious moralizing and propaganda. But there were also several significant works. In *Our Town*, Thornton Wilder experimented with the use of the open stage, omitting the usual background scenery, in order to focus attention upon the actors and draw upon the imagination of the audience. In the past two decades, Tennessee Williams and Arthur Miller have been outstanding among a whole field of productive playwrights. Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire*, and Miller's *Death of a Salesman* are just two of several plays which are already recognized as classics.

Poetry today is no longer limited to the use of poetic diction, or restricted by traditional forms and rhyme-schemes. Twentieth-century poetry has been subjected to a variety of experiments which have altered its form, its language, and its subject matter. Sometimes rhyme has been eliminated completely. The length and arrangement of lines has been varied to create new rhythmic effects and visual appearances which accent the meaning or mood of the poem. The language of modern poetry is usually the language of ordinary speech. However, poets have taken liberties with the structure of language by disregarding many of the ordinary rules of grammar and logic. In the choice and representation of subjects, poets have ceased to express romantic sentiments about nature and rural life. Instead, they have sought to reconstruct, as graphically as possible, their immediate impressions of the world around them. The technique known as "imagery." which is characteristic of much modern verse, has been used to accomplish this effect. Such prominent poets as Ezra Pound, Amy Lowell, and T. S. Elliot, for example, have been leading exponents of the imagist technique. Eliot presented in his poems disconnected scenes and details of experience which are supposed to suggest themes of philosophic and religious significance. However, usually only those familiar

with Eliot's ideas have been able to understand him. Edwin Arlington Robinson, like Eliot, developed a mystical and obscure style which he used to describe psychological phenomena and convey metaphysical insights.

Such poetry, academic in nature, seems limited in its appeal to literary scholars. However, several outstanding poets of this century have written in straightforward language about subjects for which there is far more popular appreciation. Robert Frost, for example, has written in a simple manner about rural life in New England. Although his works have a profound philosophic message, his style is clear and direct. Carl Sandburg has won a reputation for being the people's poet. Sandburg has used colloquial language to represent familiar scenes in a manner which focuses sharply upon the realities of daily life.

Modern authors have often shocked contemporary readers by their apparent immorality and stylistic innovation. Obviously, they have also been critical of much of American life, and they have revealed the superficiality and hypocrisy of many social practices. Their work, however, is partly a reflection of the times. The rapid changes of modern life have naturally encouraged experimentation in the arts. Experimentation, by its very nature, calls attention to what is new and questions what is old. Doubting the adequacy of traditional concepts and practices, artists have sought new techniques to represent more realistically the truths of human experience. If, at times, the "truths" embodied in their works appear to be partial and one-sided, perhaps it is because their enthusiasm has led them into exaggeration. In reaction against the romantic and idealistic conceptions of life, they have sometimes overemphasized what is sordid and ugly, and they have overlooked much of the good and the beautiful. By refusing to employ objective categories of thought and

experience, their conception of truth has also been distorted by their subjective point of view.

However, the freedom of expression of the American artist is in keeping with the American tradition. Art critics in America have argued that it is not the function of the artist merely to reflect popular opinions or official attitudes. The artist's role is essentially imaginative, creative, and critical. Perhaps this is why artists, as well as intellectuals, often stand apart from the rest of society. They are expected to see aspects of reality which are overlooked in ordinary experience. Thus, the job of the artist is conceived to be an important one. By reconstructing the world of experience in an original manner, he enables others to perceive new dimensions of life. By pointing to the possibilities of human existence, he helps others realize the good which is in them.

The Popular Arts, Mass Media, and Entertainment

Traditionally, the so-called elite arts were the property of the better educated upper classes, whose tastes were more refined than those of the masses. The popular arts were, by contrast, an expression of the folkways of the less sophisticated working classes. Indeed, the elite arts still retain their name because they are considered to be superior to the popular arts. But the elite arts no longer belong exclusively to any one social group. Widespread educational opportunities have helped to educate the tastes of people on all levels of society, and modern methods of communication have brought the arts to the masses at negligible costs.

Popular art, however, continues to flourish alongside elite art. Unlike folk art of the past, popular art today is similar to elite art in many respects. Instead of being produced by amateurs as before, almost all popular art today is produced by professionals. And, instead of making its appeal to the lower classes alone, popular art tends to be

enjoyed by all classes of people. To a certain extent, popular art and elite art tend to influence one another. Popular themes sometimes become the subject matter for serious compositions, and the technical discipline provided by training in classical forms is sometimes applied to popular works.

The distinction between the popular and elite arts is not simply a matter of technical competence. Basically, it is a distinction between triteness and originality. The individualism, honesty, and critical attitude of the creative artist is not often found in the popular arts. The popular arts, almost by definition, tend to be conventional and uninspired. Popular art is a commercial product put together by professionals to make money. Since it appeals to ordinary, public tastes, radical ideas or technical innovations are not to be expected. Thus, commercial artists are apt to adhere to trite themes and techniques. However, creative artists also compose works for the commercial media, and commercial artists sometimes use their media with creativity and imagination.

Composers of popular music turn out songs by the hundreds every year. The formula for success is fairly simple : a romantic love theme, a simple rhyme scheme, and a tune which is easy to remember. Many popular songs are highly sentimental. The song lyrics are simple, repetitive, and easily sung. Most popular music is also written for dancing, and each generation of young people usually invents new dances to accompany it. Since the songs are written to achieve quick commercial success, they are not often of high quality and they are usually forgotten after a short period of time. A few popular songs find a place in the hearts of the people and are retained over the years as "old favorites."

Folk songs are also very popular today. Folk songs are sung by professional singers, but most of them were

composed by amateurs in rural areas during earlier periods of history. Some of the folk songs which are popular today were composed by people in Colonial America, and some may be traced to old medieval ballads. Many folk songs were sung by the pioneers and cowboys on the Western frontier. Others were composed by Southern mountain people who have been isolated from modern civilization. Unlike popular music, folk songs are simple and preserve patterns of speech which have begun to vanish from the American language. Jazz contains folk elements and is very popular. However, while jazz features horns and percussion instruments, most folk music is played on strings. Other folk songs and dances, such as Slavic polkas, have been brought to America by European immigrants. European folk music tends to be most popular in areas where there are large immigrant settlements, but it is also enjoyed throughout the nation. Hawaiian and Spanish music have also had considerable influence upon popular composition.

Since the radio, movies and television have become popular media for the arts, many people predicted that reading would decline. Reading, however, is not a lost art in America. The mass media seem to have stimulated at least as much interest in reading as they have taken away from it. There are also more educated people than ever before, and a greater number and variety of books are being printed. Paperback books, printed in large volume at low cost, make books available to practically everyone. Hardbound books are expensive, but they are also selling in record numbers ; and a great many people take advantage of the free loan of books from the public libraries. Undoubtedly, many of the books sold and read are low-quality fiction stories. Most popular novels are fast moving adventure stories with romantic heroes and trite plots. However, serious writers of fiction are also widely read, and non-fiction is also popular. Poetry is no

longer a popular art. Creative poetry is confined almost exclusively to academic magazines and textbooks.

Magazines published in the United States number in the thousands, and many of them have millions of readers. They specialize in subjects ranging from literature, art, and theatre to housekeeping, automobile repair and gardening. News magazines, such as *Time* and *Newsweek* offer weekly summaries of world news, and periodicals like the *Saturday Review* and *Atlantic Monthly* offer critical articles on literature, the arts, science and politics. Magazine publishing has become a very expensive and competitive business. Those which are most successful today appeal to many types of readers by covering a variety of subjects. Unlike books, most magazines are read quickly for a brief review of the news, or for momentary entertainment. Thus, most magazines feature short stories and reviews, and many, like *Life* and *Look*, are primarily picture magazines which are notable for their excellent photography.

The daily newspaper is the American's primary source of detailed information about world events. The influence of newspapers in forming public opinion is considerable. Because of their influence in public affairs, the news media are sometimes considered to be the fourth agency of the government. Thus, freedom of the press is considered to be one of the most important rights granted by the U.S. Constitution. Most larger cities have more than one daily newspaper, and most newspapers present more than one political point of view. Editors regularly comment upon and criticize public policies, and nationally known columnists present their opinions about national and international policy. Newspapers, perhaps more than any other medium, have been responsible for initiating important movements for social and political reform. As a consequence, newspaper editors are often among the most influential men in communities.

They are sometimes able to command the attention of state and even national officials.

The original works of creative painters and sculptors, which were at one time mostly in the hands of private collectors, are now publicly displayed in museums throughout the country. Reproductions of sculpture and painting are sold commercially, and many excellent reproductions are contained in popular magazines. Photography itself has become a creative art medium, and it is often used with imagination in magazine illustration. In popular art, commercial artists of high technical skills are largely employed in advertising and fiction illustrating. Perhaps the most notable work in popular art is industrial design. Some of the most beautiful things produced in America are the tools and utensils of daily living. Even machines — automobiles, business machines, and electrical appliances — are often designed with taste and imagination. At their worst, industrial products are crass and pretentious, but at their best, they are simple and functional in design.

Most popular art reaches people through the mass media. The radio, once a medium for dramatic performances, now features popular and classical music, newscasts and discussions of current events. The dramatic plays once heard on the radio have been taken over by television. Domestic love scenes, cowboy stories, detective stories, and war stories are perennial favorites and may be seen at almost any time. Many critics have complained that the average viewer gets a steady diet of sex, crime, and violence — but it is doubtful whether such themes really have any harmful effect upon normal people. They carry on the American myth of rugged individualism, and they serve the function of popular epics or fairy tales such as may be found in any civilization. Much television time is also devoted to singing, dancing, and light comedy. These television performances are a somewhat more

accomplished version of the old vaudeville stage shows. Television variety shows feature nationally famous comedians and popular singers, modern dancers, and even circus acts.

Two decades ago television was welcomed with great enthusiasm, but it has been severely criticized ever since. Today, practically every home has a television set, and in most areas there is a choice of at least three or four programs at any time of day. Yet too many of the programs are of low quality. Perhaps it is too much to except quality productions every hour of the day, every day of the year. In the elite arts, it is considered to be a good season if a dozen notable works are produced each year. But television performances are not all bad. Many shows feature dramatic actors from the legitimate stage, or from the motion pictures, performing in plays by accomplished play-wrights. Much creative writing is done specifically for television. Operas, concerts, and ballets are also presented from time to time, and several stations have devoted time to educational programs. One of the great accomplishments of television has been the presentation of documentary films on historical subjects. Television also has the advantage of offering on-the-spot news coverage, picturing events as they happen. The big problem, aside from the lack of preparation time and volume of work, is commercial control of the networks. Advertising pays for the programs, and business organizations want to be certain that their commercial advertisements reach the largest possible audience. Often the best shows last only a season, but the worst continue year after year. The viewer can watch TV free of charge, but he pays the price of seeing poor performances which are constantly interrupted by commercials.

When television became a commercial medium, everyone wondered what would happen to motion pictures. Film producers did not go out of business, but they did modify

their techniques. In the first place, motion pictures have certain advantages which television lacks. In the darkness of a theatre, the viewer is not as likely to be distracted as he would be in his own living room. Also, the film screen is much larger than the television screen ; when a person goes to the theatre he remains for a few hours and is able to concentrate. Thus, because of competition with TV, the motion picture industry made its screen larger and its pictures longer. It has gone to great expense to reproduce in color the grandeur of natural landscapes. To achieve realism, motion picture companies have travelled to locations throughout the world, and they have constructed scenery at the cost of hundreds of thousands of dollars. They have purchased the most popular stories and hired the most expensive stars. The result has been the Hollywood " spectacular," costing millions of dollars to produce and advertise. Hollywood has been able to achieve excellence in photography and sound technique, but its stories are often lacking in dramatic content. The best pictures have sometimes been low-budget productions which emphasize story and acting rather than magnificent scenery. Many such films have been influenced by European films which have become popular in recent decades. Small, independent companies, whose directors are dedicated to drama, have introduced more serious themes and technical innovations. Large companies, which dominated Hollywood in the past, have either gone out of business, or else they support themselves by selling films to television.

In spite of these criticisms, American films of the ' fifties' and 'sixties' have been a great improvement over those of the previous two decades. As in the past, Hollywood still produces a large number of second-rate pictures, intended to supply the movie houses and satisfy the undiscriminating movie-goer. However, it has also produced a number of first-rate films. Film stories today are frequently adaptations

of best-selling novels, Broadway plays, and musical comedies. Hollywood directors and writers have sometimes demonstrated a mastery of their craft in making such adaptations. Many distinguished actors from the legitimate stage make motion pictures, and many competent actors have been developed by the movies themselves. Thus, if the movie-goer is selective, he frequently has the opportunity to see first-rate entertainment.

The production of original stage plays is limited mainly to New York City. Just as Hollywood is the capital of motion pictures, Broadway is the capital of the legitimate theatre. The success or failure of an original play usually depends upon the reception it receives in New York City. Its reception, in turn, depends largely upon the newspaper critics who may either recommend it or condemn it. Most plays are commercial failures. The successful ones, however, may run on Broadway for years and make considerable profits. After their run on Broadway, the plays are usually produced by road companies in major cities throughout the country. Many cities also have repertory theatres and dramatic "workshops" which present classical plays and contemporary favorites. Summer theatre groups have been organized in small towns, and universities regularly produce dramatic plays. Thus, although New York is the center of the theatre in America, the "live" theatre is not unknown in other parts of the country.

Athletic events are enormously popular in America as elsewhere. Millions of people fill the stadiums, arenas and gymnasiums every year to see their favorite games. Most organized sports in America — especially on the professional level — did not come into existence until the late 19th century. The most popular games today were not even invented before then. Besides, most Americans received enough exercise doing physical work, so they did not need to participate in

sports. But, as the nation became more prosperous, people in the cities had more leisure time and money to spend.

The sports which attract the largest crowds today are baseball, football, and basketball; many of the larger cities support professional baseball and football teams, and the games are broadcast on television and radio. Baseball has been known as " the great American sport " and is everywhere popular. Children begin playing baseball as soon as they are old enough to enter school, and teams have been organized in elementary school. The competition is so keen that very few players can expect to enter the professional leagues. However, in recent years, professional baseball seems to have been declining in popularity. As in other sports, players are so highly paid that the owners of teams find it difficult to make a profit. Football and basketball, it seems, are faster-moving and more exciting spectator sports. Next to boxing, football is probably the closest thing in America to a gladiator sport. Most high schools and colleges have football teams, and the games are always well attended. Track and field events are popular as an amateur sport, but there are no organized teams on the professional level. Golf has attracted much attention in recent years as a professional sport, and many people play golf for recreation. Bowling is one of the most popular indoor sports for the masses of people. Other sports receive attention within limited classes or groups of people. Swimming is a popular means of recreation, but it is only a minor sport in most schools. Professional boxing and wrestling have been on the decline for years. Some sports, such as soccer, which are popular in many other countries, receive little attention in the United States.

Outdoor sports and recreational activities have steadily grown in popularity in recent years. Instead of attending athletic games, more people are participating in sports for recreation and exercise. Golf, swimming, tennis, skiing and

boating have become favorite leisure-time activities. Americans spend millions of dollars on outdoor sports equipment every year, and the manufacture of sporting goods has become a major industry. America is rich in natural scenery, and every summer there is a mass exodus of people from the cities to the hills, forests, and lakes. American history and legend are filled with stories of Colonial days, Indian wars, trappers, pioneers, and cowboys' exploits. Today, Americans are still trying to preserve that tradition by seeking enjoyment in camping, hunting and fishing.

Many Americans are seeking an escape from the world of mass produced entertainment. Instead of being merely spectators they are seeking to become active participants. Participation in sports and hobbies gives them a feeling of individual accomplishment, and enables them to express creative urges which their jobs do not provide. During evenings and on weekends, many men turn to their gardens or workbenches to achieve the satisfaction of doing something on their own. But, whether they seek physical expression or some other form of entertainment, they have a wide variety from which to choose. The average American is literally surrounded by opportunities for recreation and cultural enrichment, and has the leisure time to take advantage of it. His biggest problem, it seems, is deciding what to do.


VOTE
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CHOICE
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THE AMERICAN CHARACTER

6. The American Character

What is America ? What are Americans like ? Foreign observers, interested in understanding America, have been asking such questions ever since America was first discovered. Few visitors have left America without forming some opinion about it. Many American commentators, in turn, have offered their own analyses. The estimate usually depends upon the author's point of view. Some critics simply look for examples to confirm their prejudices, but others have been genuinely surprised to find that America is quite different from what they expected. Of course, America and Americans are many different things. The list of characteristics which have been attributed to them is practically endless. Both praise and criticism of Americans have been widely varied and often contradictory.

Most commentators have noted that Americans tend to be idealistic. But, at the same time, Americans are supposed to be practical and inventive. Some critics have argued that Americans are materialists. The 19th century French writer Alexis De Tocqueville was fascinated by American democracy. He was afraid, however, that America's egalitarian habits would lead to mediocrity. Americans themselves are convinced that they believe strongly in such ideals as social equality and individual freedom. But most critics point out that Americans discriminate against minorities, and others complain that Americans surrender their freedom to a life of standardization and conformity.

Americans are said to love what is big and strong, and they are supposed to measure the quality of things by quantity

alone. Yet they regularly use diminutives to express affection, and have a reputation for defending the weak. Americans are supposed to be aggressive, but usually refuse to start a fight. When they fight, they feel a moral obligation to win. But when they win, they are supposed to help the loser.

Americans are critical of politicians. They are especially critical of strong government. Yet the United States has one of the strongest governments in the world, and the American's attitude towards it is reverential, almost religious in character.

Americans are supposed to be a friendly people — yet they are strongly competitive. They are criticized for being unintellectual, but their technical achievements are unquestioned. They have a reputation for naive sincerity, but they are sometimes called hypocrites. They are usually optimistic about the future and seem to be in a hurry to arrive there — yet they are uncertain about what the future will bring, and are supposed to be afraid of losing their youth !

The list of characteristics could be extended. However, such lists are confusing and even meaningless without interpretation. Whatever traits Americans have must be viewed against the background of their history and environment. Habits and beliefs are influenced by the conditions under which people live, and by the problems they face. Civilizations are also bearers of traditions which have been handed down from the past. Traditional ideas and practices constitute at least part of the cultural environment which influences the way people think and act. Thus, in generalizing about the American character, one must take account of the events and traditions which have shaped Americans history.

People, however, are not simply products of their environment. By their actions, they contribute something to making themselves what they are. People determine the course

of history as much as they are determined by it. Americans, certainly, are not a tradition-bound people. They have inherited much from the past, but they are constantly adapting themselves to new circumstances. Thus, we should want to see the influence of tradition upon American thought and behavior, but we should also want to see how traditions have been modified to accord with changing conditions.

Americans are said to be idealistic, even moralistic. Traditionally, they have talked much about ideals, and they are sometimes quick to measure things in terms of good and bad, right or wrong, This idealism may be said to be an outgrowth of the whole development of western civilization. It has been nourished by the philosophies of ancient Greece and Rome, and by the moral doctrines of Christianity. It has been influenced by the Protestant Reformation, and by the rise of modern science and technology in Europe. America retains, for example, much of the philosophic spirit of the 18th century enlightenment: a belief in the essential goodness of man, and a faith in the powers of human reason. But this faith has been modified somewhat by an awareness that evil, too, is real, and by the religious belief that sin must be fought with a vengeance.

Perhaps American idealism is essentially a belief in the idea of progress. The American tends to view history as a record of human achievement. He believes that, because of human effort and intelligence, the future will be better than the past. But if Americans are usually optimistic, they are not wholly unrealistic. They have inherited from the English some of their common sense practicality. Americans have also discovered in their own experience that things do not always get better. In this century, they have been sobered by a depression and two world wars. Yet Americans even today are not often pessimistic. Their optimism may be restrained, but it is rarely quenched.

Traditionally, Americans have been gamblers. They have frequently bet everything they had upon their confidence in the future. They now gamble even more heavily on what the future will bring. The average American, for example, lives on borrowed money. He buys most of the things he owns on credit. It has been estimated that, if he should lose his source of income, he would he bankrupt in a matter of months ! But he seems confident that, even if he fails, he will have the opportunity to try again.

Certainly, it must have been optimism which brought the first discoverers, explorers and settlers to America. They had to face many dangers and hardships in coming to an unknown and uncivilized continent. Many of them died in the attempt. But they were attracted to America by the promise of adventure, economic gain, social improvement and political and religious freedom. Their faith was eventually confirmed when, after nearly two centuries of colonial life, they united to form a new, prosperous and independent nation. The founding fathers dreamed of establishing a new kind of society in America. They hoped that human dignity would be respected and that individuals would have the freedom and opportunity to live as they wished. They attempted to establish a government which would be free from tyranny and representative of the people. They wanted to allow as much freedom for individual thought and action as the limits of decent behavior and social justice would allow. These are the principles which were given classic expression in the Declaration of Independence. They are also the ideals which became the foundation of the law and political system set forth in the Constitution of the United States.

The Declaration of Independence is an idealistic document. It expresses a belief in man's God-given rights to life, liberty, and opportunity for happiness. The Constitution, however, is a practical document. Its purpose is to provide a method

for protecting the rights set forth in the Declaration of Independence. Both of these documents express a deep respect for the individual man ; but, characteristically, this respect is mixed with a feeling of distrust. The men who wrote the Constitution had just finished fighting a revolution against a government which they considered to be tyrannical. They did not want to create another government of the same kind. They suspected anyone with power, so they wrote into the Constitution laws which would limit the powers of men in government. Ever since then, Americans have been critical of politicians. Politicians, it seems, are a little too eager for power, and they are easily corrupetd by it. But Americans respect their government, because it provides a means for limiting the powers of such men.

Thomas Jefferson, chief author of the Declaration of Independence, expressed the idea that the government which governs best governs least. He felt that government is, at best, a necessary evil. Jefferson thought that the powers of government should be limited, to keep it under popular controls, and to make it subject to popular interests. Traditionally, most other political spokesmen have echoed his opinions. Yet, today, the United States has a bigger and stronger government than any government in history. This growth has been slow but necessary. The nation has become so large that the government has had to accept greater responsibilities in both foreign and domestic affairs. However, it is also true that, since Jefferson's time, the American government has become more democratic. Americans are still critical of big government but they realize that it is necessary for their own good. They also have confidence that their democratic traditions will continue to keep the government responsive to their interests and needs.

The United States, under the provisions of the Constitution, was conceived to be a land where rigid class distinctions

and exclusive class privileges would be abolished by providing equal rights under the law. During the 19th century, the vast extent of unsettled land in the West served to weaken class differences by providing new opportunities for America's growing population. The difficulties as well as the opportunities of frontier life were an important equalizing factcr. On the western frontier, rugged individualism was necessary for mere survival, and every man had to fend for himself. Since there was no well-organized society in the early West, social rank was of little importance. However, while social equality could be taken for granted, law could not. The rule of law was sometimes replaced by the rule of force. Men were not only expected to do their own work ; they were also expected to fight their own battles. They received little help or hindrance from the government, for government was not well-organized in the West.

The Frontier in American history has had considerable influence upon the American character. It strengthened America's faith in the common man, and it helped to realize the ideal of social equality. It also renewed a spirit of individualism deeply rooted in the American character. Although individualism has not always been compatible with law and order, it has been a much celebrated ideal in America. Popular American heroes are people who, by their individual action, change the course of events — sometimes by taking the law into their owns hands. The western cowboy, for example, seems to be a permanent character in American legend. His violent actions, portrayed in the movies and on television, keep alive the myth of rugged individualism. The cowboy's actions are not always lawful, but they are usually justified in the name of law and order. According to popular fiction, the organized forces of government are too incompetent to do their jobs properly. Heroic citizens are necessary, it seems, to help government do its work.

All this is mostly myth and is recognized as such. The modern American tends to be a law-abiding citizen who has little opportunity for heroic action. Even in the so-called Wild West, there was more law and order than the stories suggest. Rugged individualism was necessary at times, but so was cooperation. Individualism, as an ideal, has had an important place in the American's concept of life. It emphasizes that a man must stand on his own two feet, do his own work, and make his own decisions — instead of depending upon others to handle things for him. Individualism is essential to the American's concept of freedom, for Americans tend to regard dependence upon others as a form of slavery. In American family life, for example, children attempt to become independent of their parents at a very early age. Older children in establishing their independence often refuse to accept assistance from their parents.

The American ideal of individualism also expresses the spirit of the Constitution. Americans believe that the powers of government can be restrained only if individuals accept the responsibility of governing themselves. This means that private citizens must try to solve their own problems, instead of surrendering to the government the authority to impose solutions upon them. When acts of the government have seemed to encroach upon the rights or interests of the people, American individualism has been expressed in defiance of the government itself. Americans respect their government, but do not have a slavish attitude towards it. In fact, a certain amount of disrespect for government is considered healthy.

If American fiction seems to glorify criminals, it is not because Americans do not respect the law. The criminal, like the cowboy, seems to personify the virtues of individualism, in contrast to the organized forces of government. But one should notice that it is government, not law, which

is made the object of criticism. Americans tend to view the law as something, separate from government. The government enforces the law, but the law is created by the people to protect their rights and to serve their interests. Thus, while people may oppose government officials, they do not oppose the system of government which has been created by law.

Traditionally, Americans have argued that it is more important to be free than to be comfortable. They have claimed to prefer an uncomfortable freedom to partenalism of any sort. They have developed a do-it-yourself philosophy which requires that every man make his own way in life. Sometimes, however, this attitude has conflicted with the Christian ideal of charity. Many people suffer misfortunes and are incapable of helping themselves. Yet, ignoring circumstances, Americans tend to blame individuals who fail, just as they praise those who succeed. The poor, it is often believed, are simply too lazy to help themselves. However, Americans often talk a tougher game than they play. Most of them are friendly people who are naturally inclined to help others in need. In fact, Americans regularly cooperate with their neighbours and fellow citizens in solving community problems. Significantly, there are thousands of voluntary organizations which have been formed for charitable purposes. Americans respond more readily to local, cooperative actitvities than they do to government welfare. They feel that they understand their own problems and can solve them better than the government can.

The growth of industry in the 19th century resulted in changes in American society just as the frontier did. Factories and machines brought new wealth and a promise of more comfort for more people. The growth of industry also created extreme social differences between the rich industry owners and the impoverished workers. Several American

critics felt that the material blessings of industry were causing people to lose sight of the old ideals. For example, it seemed that many people began to seek wealth, comfort and social prestige for themselves, while denying rights and opportunities to others. Many thinkers argued that the new machine civilization, created by man to be his servant, was becoming his master instead.

Because America's ideals were founded upon its agricultural beginnings, many Americans were temperamentally opposed to industrialization. Thomas Jefferson had said that he never wanted to see the free American farmer turned into an enslaved industrial worker. The 19th century philosophers, Emerson and Thoreau, eomplained of the loss of freedom in a commercial world where people seemed to honor money more than human values. The historian, Henry Adams, predicted the coming of a machine age when men would be dominated by their own inventions. Adams saw in the machine a symbol of a mysterious power which would transform the structure of society and possibly destroy it. Intellectuals ever since have echoed these criticisms. They are still complaining of materialism, standardization and conformity, and detect a loss of individual freedom in today's highly complex and regulated society.

It is claimed, for example, that people today worship machines. They spend their lives building machines, buying them and repairing them. They celebrate every mechanical invention without realizing that they are becoming dependent upon their own creations. Automation is causing unemployment. Mass production and mass advertising have led people to want the same kinds of things, producing conformity in thought as well as material living. People are supposed to have surrendered an active intellectual life for material comfort. Worst of all, we are constantly

reminded that men have created machines of war which may destroy civilization itself.

However, the critics of modern civilization often fail to realize that the machine is one of the greatest liberating forces of all time. Machines have freed men and women from long, hard, physical work. In the past, the majority led lives of monotonous labor. New machines not only have provided new comforts, but they have also created more interesting types of work. Machines today do physical and routine mental work better than humans, who are thus freed for creative and intellectual tasks. Machines also increase human responsibility. Given more power, men must be better prepared to weigh the consequences of their choices and actions.

The fear of materialism and conformity, however, seems partly justified. The strongest forces in American life today — mass production, mass advertising and mass education — tend to unify the people rather than divide them, by standardizing their lives. And the desire for comfort and social recognition tends to express itself in a constant seeking after wealth. But these factors which standardize also serve to equalize American life. They have created widerspread opportunities for wealth, education and social improvement.

The quest for material things is a natural consequence of the fact that more goods are available than ever before. People who are just beginning to acquire wealth seek material possessions as an expression of status. Many of the virtues and faults of Americans are characteristics which can be found among the " new rich " anywhere in the world.

But if Americans seem preoccupied with the acquisition of material goods, it is not always because they place a high value on the goods themselves. They seek wealth because it gives them freedom to do what they desire. Wealth is a measure of personal success, and is considered not as impor-

tant to have as to use well. Americans are, in fact, not only liberal but wasteful of their wealth. Things become obsolete and are discarded rapidly in American life. Emphasis is constantly being placed upon acquiring the newest that science, industry, education and the arts have to offer. Americans do not believe that material forces determine their destiny. They believe strongly that material things are simply instruments which may be used to achieve happiness.

Perhaps the real danger to individual freedom and creative human effort is not materialism but passivity. It has been claimed that the average American is no longer a contributing member of society, but is only a spectator. Not only the production of things, but the production and dissemination of ideas, has been taken over by institutions and experts. As a consequence, the individual sometimes feels he is unable to contribute anything of importance to his society. Since he is supposed to feel unqualified for leadership in most areas of life, he looks to others for advice and direction. Because he wants to win social recognition, he simply copies the ideas and practices of others. Thus, supposedly, he conforms to the standards of others instead of making decisions for himself.

Critics who make such objections overlook the fact that men are social creatures. There is no society in which men are not influenced by the people around them. Material conformity has always been common to people of the same society and social class. A certain amount of conformity is even good, for it adds economy to daily living by simplifying routine and trivial choices.

The real danger is conformity in thought — when men are afraid to risk the expression of new ideals, individuals and society alike begin to suffer from a want of courage and creativity. As Emerson and Thoreau said, men who do not test their own powers of reason and action can hardly

be called men. But even Emerson and Thoreau admitted that it is the rare man — the genius, the hero, the saint — who is capable of true individuality. Perhaps it is only great men who have the courage and ability to challenge conventional practices and popular opinions.

Is there more conformity in America today than ever before ? Probably not. Perhaps people are only more aware of its dangers. But it is significant that the criticism should still be made, for it shows that individualism is still strong in the United States. Americans still take pride in their individual differences, and American life should be seen as much for its varieties and extremes as for its sameness. Most important, the ideal of individualism has made of Americans their own severest critics. They are critical because they are idealists who sometimes expect more from themselves than they can possibly produce.

The spirit of individualism keeps Americans alert to changing conditions and possibilities for improving the future. They are not only aware that modern society is undergoing rapid changes — they are conscious of changing it. No worshippers of tradition, authority or convention, they are constantly reexamining old values to see how they might build a new and better life in the future. Modern man is facing new problems, but he is also finding new ways of solving them. Modern problems demand greater cooperative effort, more tolerance and understanding than was needed in the past. Because the rugged individualism of the Wild West is out of date today does not mean that all differences must be suppressed. Difference in point of view, in manner, and even belief is esstential to a dynamic society and its purpose is individual expression and continual improvement.

In the competitive struggle for America's wealth during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, opportunities were becoming limited for an increasingly large number of indus-

trial workers. People were forced by economic conditions into the factories and mines to work long hours, under poor workng conditions, for low wages. Without opportunities for changing these conditions, the ideals of rugged individualism and free competition were practically meaningless. These ideals actually seemed to work against the interests of the workers. Successful bussiness leaders appealed to traditional principles to justify their own positions of power and advantage. They argued that it was nature's law, even God's law, that the " best " people should survive the competition to prosper and rule. Those who were poor, weak, or simply unlucky were blamed for their failure and lack of initiative.

The Industrial Revolution in America created a small group of wealthy, politically influential businessmen. But the nation did not accept their wealth as a claim to superiority. While some people enjoyed temporary success, it was not recognized to be their exclusive privilege. The new rich, unlike the old aristorcrats, did not enjoy intellectual leadership, for they were not equipped to provide it.

This is one reason why the American labor movement did not develop into a social or political revolution. The rich enjoyed privilege and had a strong influence upon the government, but the government did not deprive the workers of political rights. The workers were not denied opportunities for education and economic gain. They did not think of themselves as a separate class because they were free to own land and profit from their work. But they did become a well-defined economic group which eventually was forced to organize to protect its interests. Thus instead of trying to overthrow the government, the workers attempted to win government protection of their rights. They used their strength of numbers to gain from industry a greater share of the nation's wealth.

While the means of production rapidly improved, the main problem in the United States was to find ways of insuring a fair distribution of goods. Against the great power and wealth of the corporations, the government seemed to be the only agency strong enough to effect necessary changes. It began to regulate the economy by limiting the power of big business and protecting workers' rights. Influenced by the liberal policies of Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson and Franklin D. Roosevelt, the government began to play an essential role in the nation's economy. It began to destroy monopolies, to tax incomes and profits, and to provide a measure of economic security for farmers and workers.

While this seemed to concentrate greater powers in the hands of government, the nation was actually becoming more democratic. Greater political power was extended to more people by amendments to the Constitution which provided for woman suffrage and the direct election of Senators. Business became bigger, but it was regulated by law. Ownership became more widespread, and customers had more buying power. Protected by legislation, labor unions arose as a major force in the national economy.

Business and industry, which had created extreme economic differences, eventually opened new opportunities for individuals. These opportunities served to weaken class differences and restore America's faith in its old ideals. Tremendous increases in production created a wealth of consumer goods which made it possible for more Americans to enjoy the benefits of wealth. And the problems of distribution, most evident in the last economic depression, have practically been solved. Since World War II, Americans have entered a new age of leisure and abundance.

The debate continues between those who support a more conservative, highly competitive, individualistic society and

those who argue for more governmental regulation. This is not simply an argument between those who have wealth and those who do not. It is not simply a question of which class will control the government. The question is whether or not private agencies still have the means to solve national problems. In modern society, where all groups have become highly dependent upon each other, it is becoming more difficult for any individual or group to exist without the cooperation and support of others. Thus the answer still seems to rest upon the practical constitutional method of balancing powers — not only between the branches of government, but between social and economic groups as well. The problem is to see that public needs are satisfied, without destroying individual freedom and initiative.

Americans talk about social, scientific and technical progress. At the same time they are driven by a desire to achieve personal success. Social progress and personal achievement are closely related in American thinking. Individuals motivated by their personal desires for success are supposed to contribute to the improvement of the society in which they live. This improvement enables other individuals to find more opportunities for achievement and success.

To work hard and develop one's abilities to the limit was considered a moral responsibility by the early Puritans. They saw that work was necessary for survival, and they also regarded it as a sign of religious salvation. Indeed, it seemed only natural for the practical American temperament to wed religious and moral duties with social and economic realities. Social success was interpreted to be a reward for hard work and a sign of moral virtue. Unfortunately, this created a tendency to associate wealth with virtue and poverty with evil, but Americans believed that the individual was personally responsible for whatever happened to him.

Somewhat inconsistently the Christian concepts of " Providence " and " Salvation " gave Americans a sense of destiny. Ever since the time of the first settlements, Americans have expressed the feeling that they had found the " Promised Land. " Mixing religious feeling with politics, they believed it was their " manifest destiny " to conquer a continent in the 19th century, and they preached about making the world " safe for democracy " in the 20th. Americans believed in their political institutions with an almost religious fervor because they had succeeded so well in preserving freedom and promoting peace and prosperity.

This " moralizing " character of American beliefs and expressions is not so evident today as it was in the past. But Americans still have a strong sense of purpose which directs their attention and energies toward the future. They are optimistic because history has given them good reason to be so. Americans have seen more progress in the past two centuries than had been made in the previous history of the world.

To people from older nations, such optimism may seem naive. Things do not always improve — they sometimes grow worse. But, to an American, beliefs are something more than predictions about what may or may not happen. As the American philosopher, William James, has said, beliefs motivate men to make things happen. The American philosophy of Pragmatism, so characteristic of the American temperament, recognizes that man has the power to shape this world as well as observe it. This philosophy not only accounts for change but even advocates it. Because Pragmatists have recognized that the quest for truth is never finished, they have advocated creative thinking and experimentation. Pragmatist John Dewey defined thinking as a problem-solving activity which constantly seeks to revise its processes and test its results by experience and action.

Thus Americans are sometimes considered to be non-intellectual. In the manner of modern science, they tend to regard ideas as hypothetical rather than absolute in character — as plans rather than conclusions. Americans are not systematic thinkers. They have no grand plan for the world. They are not Utopians. Since they believe the future depends upon what men will do, the future is left open for what men will make of it. Americans doubt that anyone knows the limits or possibilities of human accomplishment.

Thus Americans prefer to leave their future open and undecided, because they will grant no one the authority to determine the future for them. In fact, they seem to enjoy change simply for its own sake ; and they want to feel free to do whatever they wish. The ideas of progress and success give Americans a measure of accomplishment and a sense of direction. However, because the American is constantly looking to the future, he cannot rest with his accomplishments. He considers that his work in life is never finished — he must constantly become involved in new activities to assure himself of his vitality and freedom. Thus, the real emphasis in American life is not upon the end of activity — as might be suggested by the concept of success — but upon the means or process of attaining that end.

The whole spirit of America has been summed up in one word : " Process." A process is a way of doing something, a method, an activity. It may be used to characterize America because Americans seem to be so concerned with the processes of living — more than they are with their products or achievements. For instance, Americans are well known for their technology, especially their mass production methods. But they are not as well known for the quality of their products. This is because they are more concerned with the means of producing things than they are with the things themselves.

Taking the U.S. Government as an example, the Constitution is greatly honored by Americans, but it is not considered a finished masterpiece. The government and society have evolved since it was written, the Constitution has been amended, and will continue to be amended as government and society continue to evolve. The basic document, however, is important because it provided a method of representing popular interests, balancing governmental powers, and reconciling the nation's many political, economic and social differences. Such examples could be multiplied in America's economy, social structure, education, arts and intellectual life. While American Pragmatism does not provide a theory about the nature of the world, it does provide a method for studying the world.

But the question is often asked : Where does the process end ? What are America's goals ? The answers, of course, must be found among America's ideals. In a sense, every ideal may be used to interpret only one — the ideal of freedom. Freedom, for Americans, is both a means to an end, and an end in itself. It is a means to happiness because it enables a man to use his individual powers for self-expression and personal satisfaction. But it is also an end in itself, for there is no self expression or personal satisfaction without the exercise of freedom. Thus, the purpose of the process may be said to be the process itself. The purpose is to keep freedom alive by creating more opportunity for its expression.