

recognizes that the human psyche is a complex structure in which human drives, if blocked in one direction, will seek expression in another. Consequently, he argues, unless social organization can find adequate and socially desirable outlets for the competitive and possessive as well as the creative drives in men, our civilization will not survive. Third, where Mill saw the chief threat to liberty to lie in popular intolerance, Russell sees the current threat to lie in the excessive organization of our activities—political, economic, and social. The answer is sought, therefore, not in the modification of popular attitudes, but in a change in our organizational patterns so as to allow more creative expression among the individuals and small groups who form the elemental units at the base of our organizations.

This is a lucidly written and yet meaty little volume. Though Russell does not attempt a detailed analysis of how the specific difficulties in our situation are to be overcome, he does set forth some of the big problems in a thought-provoking fashion.

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The Open Society and Its Enemies. By KARL R. POPPER. (Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1950. Pp. xii, 732. \$7.50.)

Ever since its first appearance in England in 1945, this modern *Summa* of iconoclasm has established for itself a singular reputation—singular, in that it manages to offend such diverse schools as Platonists and Marxists, Aristotelians and logical positivists, the sociologists of knowledge as well as the admirers of Arnold J. Toynbee. Yet Dr. Popper's scholarly performance is formidable enough to impress even the unconvinced. Such a well-balanced author as W. Y. Elliott, for instance, cites him in his *Western Political Heritage* no less than ten times, almost—but not quite—accepting Popper's evaluation of Plato as the First of Fascists.

In putting his reader on the defensive (cf. G. C. Field's admirably reasoned but strangely subdued critique in *Philosophy*, November, 1946, pp. 271-276), Dr. Popper has so far escaped the danger of being attacked on his own grounds. It is easy to see that, like so many thinkers with German training, he tends to overestimate the role of the intelligentsia in politics. Thus Plato, whose greatness he concedes somewhat grudgingly, becomes *responsible* for two thousand years of statehood, and Hegel appears as a *Luciferian* figure without whom a Hitler could never have risen. In that respect, Dr. Popper is merely swimming in the strong tide which engulfed many a Western thinker during the late, anti-fascist war. But precisely because he is a serious scholar (in comparison, Crossman's

similarly inclined *Plato To-Day* seems an ephemeral effort), Dr. Popper ought to have resisted the temptation to project without restraint the issues of the present day upon a past society as dissimilar from ours as Plato's Greece or Hegel's Germany.

Dr. Popper's attempt to rewrite the intellectual tradition of the West in terms of a Catalaunian battle between freedom and tribalism leads him into the same prophetic fallacy which he combats so valiantly in others. What is it but another version of the hated thing, historicism, to assert that mankind is manifestly moving from the "closed" toward the "open" society? Had Dr. Popper confined himself to discovering an undulatory motion, his position would be much less open to the accusation that his main thesis is simply another example of too much reliance on a "self-evident truth." The preface to the American edition seems to indicate that Dr. Popper has become somewhat less confident: "Most of my positive suggestions and above all the strong feeling of optimism which pervades the whole book struck me as more and more naive, as the years after the war went by" (p. viii). But he strongly rejects the possibility that his "depression" which, by the way, "has passed, largely as the result of a visit to the United States" (*ibid.*), may have been due to a wrong premise.

It is likely that his renewed confidence is inspired by the belief that the United States is the most successful example of what he calls "piecemeal" engineering, in contrast to the "total," planned variety. It does not seem to have occurred to Dr. Popper that even in a liberal society, socio-economic acts do presuppose antecedent, if unconscious, choices between fundamental values. The instrumentalist approach in which he seems to see the ideal *modus vivendi* of a free community requires, no less than any other method, an agreement as to *ends*. With us, such agreement is, of course, the result of democratic compromise, not of dictation. But that is not the same as saying that our social engineering moves outside a given frame of general, if changing, predilections.

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The Prodigal Century. By HENRY PRATT FAIRCHILD. (New York: Philosophical Library, Inc. 1950. Pp. xvii, 258. \$3.75.)

This volume develops two major themes—our prodigality in the nineteenth century and the problem it left for the present one. The argument runs as follows:

Mankind was presented an unparalleled opportunity in the nineteenth century by "the synchronization of access to the land of a whole hemisphere on the one hand, with the creation of the physical instruments