Social Progress, by Ulysses G. Weatherly

Paul L. Sayre
Indiana University School of Law

Follow this and additional works at: https://www.repository.law.indiana.edu/ilj

Part of the Law and Economics Commons, and the Law and Society Commons

Recommended Citation
Available at: https://www.repository.law.indiana.edu/ilj/vol2/iss8/8

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the Law School Journals at Digital Repository @ Maurer Law. It has been accepted for inclusion in Indiana Law Journal by an authorized editor of Digital Repository @ Maurer Law. For more information, please contact rvaughan@indiana.edu.
Mr. Lewis gives more quotations from law review articles in explanation of his provisions than he does from text books. The labor in securing apt quotations or excerpts from various law review material for each particular clause must have been considerable. The reader is delighted to find how clear and helpful is this running commentary of excerpts from legal periodicals. For the lawyer who does not practice in New York there may be some objection to the choice that Mr. Lewis has made in that he emphasizes New York cases and gives material in exposition of New York doctrines. The reviewer feels, however, that this emphasis is more apparent than real and that the exposition of the forms is adequate for all jurisdictions.

At the end of the volume is an appendix that gives in full a large number of wills by prominent men. Thus in the will of the late William G. Rockefeller and Alfred G. Vanderbilt the humble of this earth may see how millions are disposed of; and in the wills of Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson we see how men of national distinction handle their estates. For instance on the death of Woodrow Wilson many of the newspapers announced that the estate had been willed entirely to Mrs. Wilson with the exception of a small legacy to Miss Margaret Wilson. In fact, it appeared in the will, however, that the estate is given to Mrs. Wilson for life while the entire property reverts to the children on her death.

The index is carefully done but like most all indexes could be more detailed with advantage to the busy lawyer who is seeking a particular point. There is a Table of Cases covering all the authorities from which quotations have been made in support of the author's proposed clauses in a will.


This is a kindly book in which the good points and the bad points of the various forces in social life and various theories of social progress are considered dispassionately and given a reasonable evaluation. It would seem that Professor Weatherly does not think that any one principle or any one group of values is likely to be the crucial one in determining social progress. The book deals with economic and sociological facts and their influence on social progress. It also deals with the various schools of political theory and the effect on progress of the various tendencies in political and social life, as well as the various factors in human pathology that must effect social progress regardless of political and social theories.

The book is divided into five parts: Conditions, Attitudes, Factors, Pathology, Process and Product. Under these somewhat general heads he deals with the economic, political, social and pathological questions that are set forth more particularly in the many separate chapters. The book is four hundred pages in length and contains many foot-note references with "suggested readings" at the end of each chapter. The foot-note references are admirable in that generally they give specific authorities for the statements made in the text.

The estimate of the general editor given in the introduction to the book that this is a scholarly book dealing with social progress in a sober way seems amply substantiated. Professor Weatherly refers to the statement of John Stewart Mill to the effect that it will be unfortunate if those who
believe that everything should be changed and those who believe that nothing should be changed cannot work together on particular undertakings apart from their general theories. Professor Weatherly says that his own outlook on social progress "is pluralistic and humanistic." No doubt it is; and probably it is positivistic also in that he looks out on conditions and finds that each theory or each explanation may have some truth but that it falls short of solving the whole problem.

Surely the book is excellent not only for the student in the field of Sociology but for the general reader who wants some comment pro and con upon the various factors in social progress that are constantly discussed.


This is an extraordinary book in that it attempts to give in a single small volume (400 pages) a summary of recent developments in six of the various social sciences—Sociology, Anthropology, Economics, Political Science, Cultural Geography, and History. Surely it is a rather large order. In order to accomplish the purpose the writers must be conceded great freedom in condensation and in generalization of their material. No detailed treatment is possible.

Perhaps it is fair to say that only a specialist in these several fields could give a fair estimate of whether this generalized process has been carried out in an accurate and scholarly manner. Thus the present reviewer is not qualified to pass judgment on the content of the book. We notice, however, that the social sciences mentioned above of which the book treats are discussed by Professors Ellwood, Wissler, Gault, Sauer, Clark, Merriam, and Barnes. In their respective fields this is a distinguished group of men. The general reader can see that the treatment is readable, informative and apparently fair and scholarly in its development.

Paul L. Sayre.

Indiana University School of Law.