

of government. At present the former is much overlooked, while the latter is chiefly given attention.

The applicant's mental attitude regarding American citizenship is a matter of vital concern to the citizens of America. The most practical way of ascertaining this is through a pre-examination investigation of the applicant's private life, his general conduct, opinion and views of American civic and social institutions, as reflected among those with whom he has been in contact during the immediately preceding years. In the absence of such intelligence regarding the applicants, many undesirable aliens, with an intellectual mind, are admitted into the common bond of citizenship.

Under the present chaotic conditions, as relating to Naturalization rules and proceedings, with the Bureau of Naturalization extremely handicapped for lack of adequate finances, the system now in vogue can probably be little improved upon, unless civic organizations could be persuaded to finance a private investigation of every citizenship applicant, according to some workable plan satisfactory to the Department. The foreign born who are protesting against such investigations are subjecting themselves to suspicion, and they reveal a deplorable state of mind regarding the sacred precincts in citizenship, whether they are naturalized or hope to be. The man who is afraid of an investigation of his conduct and speech, as a basis for recommendation or rejection of his application for citizenship, is guilty of thinking less of American citizenship than of his membership in a lodge. No lodge accepts an application for membership from anyone without a report from "the investigation committee." Surely Uncle Sam is entitled to as much protection as any lodge or fraternity. But that is just it. A man who knows that his conduct is such as to make it impossible for him to expect favorable action at the hands of a fraternity of clean law-abiding citizens, demands that he be given a citizenship certificate whenever he feels like asking for it, no matter though his moral conduct and personal opinion of America is such as to constitute almost open repudiation of the principles in citizenship.

The litigant before the American bar must possess one qualification to be heard—he must come into court "with clean hands." How much more important that one who is asking participation in the greatest and most sacred institution in America shall come into court "with clean hands."

The man who is clean, who came to America to find a greater opportunity than the old homeland could offer, can have no objection to a high standard of moral requirements and to America's insistence that those who expect to be granted the privilege of citizenship should be in sympathy with the American institutions in government. He should entertain no mental reservation nor preference for foreign governments and their machinery of operation. America can only be what we make of it. It is a flexible form of government, which more readily than any other known form, reacts favorably or unfavorably in the interest of the whole on the strength of individual influence, in speech and in action, but above all else in the exercise of the individual franchise.

The investigation of every applicant for citizenship constitutes a safety measure of no small importance

in its relation to the future of our country. Millions of aliens are standing on the threshold of the American Naturalization court. There is much good, of inestimable value, in this unnaturalized army of eligible aliens who have come here in a lawful way, but there is likewise an inestimable quantity of evil. In other words, there are enough misguided, uninformed illiterate aliens in this army of people to make the American institutions unsafe, if they are admitted to citizenship without any other training than that which they, in most places, obtain to pass a naturalization test, where careless examiners and indifferent judges are bungling the job.

Technicalities, now frequently applied, hindering substantial and worthy aliens who due to public indifference have been negligent in the matter of acquiring citizenship, should be speedily done away with. Many such people of splendid conduct—home-owners, tax payers, fathers and mothers of fine American families—should not be punished unduly for their negligence through which they are found to be aliens, after having resided in America from five to forty or fifty years.

The recent decision from the Department of Labor, revoking a precedent of twenty years' standing, by which such people could obtain *Nunc Pro Tunc* certificates, showing legitimate arrival—the first essential in an alien's proceeding to obtain citizenship—is creating a hardship that is unfortunate for many worthy aliens who have been residents of America for more than half of their lifetime. The matter of guarding well the certificate of arrival, showing name of steamer, date and port of landing, etc., is even today a matter sadly neglected by the great bulk of the immigrants. In the earlier immigration days few thought of keeping that precious little slip of paper. As the years have fled, the memory of many has become dimmed and the name of the steamer (of which the passenger list would show the names of America-bound immigrants), the date and even the exact year have been forgotten. The name of the port of arrival is probably the only thing clear in the mind from that event so full of confusion and incoherent sounds of a language strange and foreign to the non-English speaking immigrant. It is not likely that the Department of Labor abruptly changed a ruling of such a long standing for the purpose of causing injury to worthy aliens, but it is more likely that present immigration regulations, under the quota law, when almost as many aliens smuggle themselves into this country as are legally admitted, required that well established precedents be modified and even discontinued. Nevertheless the ruling should have specified some allowances respecting aliens who had become permanent residents of America long before the world war and before any thought had been given to plans of restricting immigration. The Department of Labor has undoubtedly become acquainted with any number of specific instances where the stated circumstances are at issue. After due investigation of the facts it is reasonably certain that the Secretary of Labor, who is himself of foreign birth, will find means by which those aliens may seek citizenship, without making the road to its attainment too difficult for them to tread.

The proposal to create a registration system