

# Book Reviews

*The Fifth Amendment Today.* Erwin N. Griswold. Harvard Univ. Press, Cambridge, 1955, vi + 82 pp. Cloth, \$2; paper, 50¢.

We are a nation seriously frightened by the threat of communism. We recoil against inquisitorial techniques of the police state. We abhor the denial of free inquiry, free thought, and free expression of opinion. There are those among us who in the face of the danger would argue that we must fight fire with fire—that to achieve an end so important to our survival, abrogation of normal procedures is justified. Why, they ask, should we tolerate “fifth amendment communists”? If they are not communists, they must be perjurers, for how, if they are not communists, could they possibly incriminate themselves by testifying freely and completely?

In *The Fifth Amendment Today*, Erwin Griswold, dean of the Harvard Law School, clearly and logically presents the justification for the fifth amendment and for due process. He traces the growth and spread of these concepts from their origins in 12th-century England, shows how they were closely linked with the abolition of torture, and describes the way in which they became an essential part of the tradition of the free democratic societies of today.

By means of examples that are entirely hypothetical, but ones that the reader will immediately see are closely paralleled by real cases, it is shown how well-meaning persons completely innocent of wrongdoing, either legally or morally, may feel forced to invoke the fifth amendment to protect themselves or their equally innocent associates. Consideration is also given to the plight of the witness before an investigating committee who waives the fifth amendment privilege for himself but refuses to testify concerning others. In thus refusing to protect himself by bringing suffering upon others, whom he may have every reason to believe are innocent, such a person may find himself in strong moral position but with embarrassingly little to stand on from a strict legal point of view.

In a second chapter devoted to due process, Griswold reviews the relation of legislative investigating committees to the judicial branch of the Government and offers a series of suggestions on what a proper code of practice for such committees should be. In this he emphasizes that the responsibility for formulating and adopting such a code must rest solely and squarely upon the two houses of the Congress. Let us hope that all members of the Congress will read Griswold's little book.

As a final plea for the fifth amendment, the reader is asked to consider what it would mean to our society if this amendment were done away with. How could we then protect ourselves against those methods of the police states that could so easily undermine our whole system of free government?

The fifth amendment has had a long and honorable

history. It lies at the heart of the system of justice on which our society is based. To quote Griswold:

It is an ever-present reminder of our belief in the importance of the individual, a symbol of our highest aspirations. As such it is a clear and eloquent expression of our basic opposition to collectivism, to the unlimited power of the state. It would never be allowed by communists, and thus it may well be regarded as one of the signs which sets us off from communism.

It is a pretty comforting amendment to have around.

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*A History of Technology.* vol. I, *From Early Times to Fall of Ancient Empires.* Charles Singer, E. J. Holmyard, A. R. Hall, E. Jaffe, R. H. G. Thomson, and J. M. Donaldson, Eds. Oxford Univ. Press, London-New York, 1954. iv + 827 pp. Illus. + plates. \$23.55.

This first volume of a survey of the development of technology is written on a scale never before attempted. Later volumes will deal, respectively, with Greece, Rome, and the Middle Ages (vol. II), first impact of science on technology 1500–1700 (vol. III), beginnings of the Industrial Revolution 1700–89 (vol. IV, and the 19th century (vol. V). The present volume deals with the technical arts among primitive peoples and in the most ancient empires, for example, Egyptian and Babylonian. There are 31 chapters, each written by a different author, chosen because of his eminence in the subject. The skill of the editors is manifested in the way in which the separate contributions are integrated with one another as well as in the choice of authors.

An introductory set of chronological tables enables the reader to place the materials in the book in their proper time-scale. There are general chapters on such subjects as speech and language, time-reckoning, and discovery, diffusion, and invention. Special sections deal with food-collecting, domestic activities, specializing industries (for example, domestication of animals, cultivation of plants, textiles, tools, building), utilization of metals and woodworking, and transport. The concluding section is devoted to “Preparation for science,” recording and writing, measures and weights, ancient mathematics and astronomy. To make the work as useful as possible, there are bibliographies and a complete index.

Accurate, informative, and highly readable, this splendid volume presents the record of the growth of man's technical skills in the ages before the advent of science. It should be of the greatest interest to archeologists, anthropologists, engineers, historians, and scientists who wish to know more about the