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THE SOCIAL UNIVERSE

BY

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TO
EUNICE TEMPLE FORD
FEARLESS OF FACT

PREFACE

It is time that sociology should be thoroughly rewritten in terms of the economic interpretation of history.

The task is so vast as to be well-nigh beyond the range of any individual; but it is possible to sketch suggestively the line such a comprehensive treatise would take.

The present volume is designed to do in simple form this preliminary job, and perhaps to interest a new generation of laymen in the science that has become so puttering since the War and so badly in need of reconstruction.

The present plight of sociology in the United States is due to the fact that our capitalist system does not dare look at itself in any comprehensive fashion. If this book has any positive merit, the merit consists in a candid facing of obnoxious realities that the academic world fears.

ARTHUR WALLACE CALHOUN,

Gaffney, S. C.
January 1, 1932

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CHAPTER I

THE FOCUS OF LIFE

THE most revealing feature of recent literature is the vogue of biography. At a time when the world is putting forth no great men, there seems to be a boundless interest in great men. The demand for heroes or villains is so strong that the recesses of history must be combed for personages on whom to hang the hopes and the fears of humanity; and any person ostensibly above the level of mediocrity can count, if the fad lasts, on having his life recounted three or four or half a dozen times.

Obviously the world is smitten with the need of salvation. It must have saints to intercede for it, saviors to die for it, and satans on whom to blame its predicament. Caught in a labyrinth of collective helplessness and lacking the imagination to rise confidently

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to a communal program, mankind succumbs to a backward-looking romanticism and creates a revised pantheon of demigods and demons on whom to shuffle off responsibility for what befalls the race.

Such is not, to be sure, the conscious motive at work; but when people are trying to run away from reality, from responsibility, to become children again, any benign old man or old woman of the tribe will serve as a refuge, and any malignant hag or sorcerer will stand as an excuse for running. We fancy ourselves too sophisticated for the solace of fairy tales or mythology, but we do not hesitate to take comfort for the moment in the bosom of the saint and to enhance our self-righteousness by abhorrence of the demon.

It is too late in the day, however, for infatuation with distinguished individuals to prevail. The very cult of biography itself is preparing its own solution. The better biographers know too much about economics and sociology really to believe in hagiology

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and demonology. They know that the individual is but a product of the environment, and they write his life accordingly. Even the psychoanalytic school of biography has to fall back in desultory and amateurish fashion on the same principle, though its work is ordinarily of secondary significance because it is more interested, as a rule, in eccentricity than in normality, and it is more concerned with exaggerating individuality than with showing the man as a product, a symbol, a focus, a channel of his time.

It is possible, however, to write a biography that will use its hero as a pretext. Woodward's "George Washington", for example, is less a biography than a social history of a period. Perhaps it is legitimate for persons of social vision to undermine thus the cult of the individual while seeming to accede to it. Perhaps the only way to dissolve a false hero-worship is by setting the hero in true social perspective. The process does not need to be precisely an exercise in

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debunking. Indeed a hero will melt faster under the rays of sociological analysis than under the heat of invective.

But on the heels of it all, the bona fide heroes will remain, and they will stand out in new significance, not as divine or semi-divine creators, but as the most complete embodiments in their day of the forces pregnant with the ultimate future; not as prime originators of social forces, not as miracles, but as types, as foreshadowings, of the new society. It is in such a light that we read such a book as Schnittkind's "Eugene Debs" or Marcu's "Lenin".

There is thus a legitimate biography to which we must still have recourse by way of illustrating and interpreting the play of social forces. The time will doubtless come when social science will so reveal life that there will be no more occasion to feature distinguished individuals than there is now to feature distinguished toads in our study of biology. Meanwhile it is our business to see that personages are represented for what

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they are rather than as miracles or prodigies; and the mere gossip monger might better write pure fiction than spend his time in tickling morbid interest in inconsequential details about the personal aspects of a life. As things are, most of the biography written is no better than gossip, and most of the rest does not rise above the level of trivial catering to the pointless fancies of shallow souls that like to splash about in the puddles of life instead of plunging with the throng into the sea of social reality.

The point of the discussion is that a competent study of man and his needs will not focus on individuals but on groups and relationships. Even the psychoanalyst is beginning to be aware of such a perspective. If he tries to adjust his patient to an abnormal social environment, he is in process of making the last state of the man worse than the first. Better be outright crazy than be calmly poised in an unsocial universe. Accordingly psychoanalysis must either degenerate into mere quackery or else it must

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learn to take groups of people and so re-orient them collectively to life as to make them communally effective in the socialization of civilization. Common sense has taught us that team-work is the only solvent of human problems, yet our current social order, while paying lip-service to co-operation, is rooted in competition and conflict. No individual and no totality of individuals as such can rise to the emergency that inheres in the present clash of empires and of systems. Institutional change mediated by collective action growing out of group interest is the only competent approach to the human problem.

There is need, then, of a science of society that will be something more than an intellectual twist in the minds of a few closet philosophers and far more than a sentimental creed of abstract humanitarianism. If the educated people of the world are to be really cultured in a sense vital to the world's urgent need, a whole range of social concepts and principles of social relation-

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ship must become as intrinsic, as matter-of-course, to them as is their own self-consciousness. Unless modern culture can be so infused with an implicit apprehension of the essence of social forces, social relations, social institutions and social trends, the would-be élite will continue to be as politically illiterate and as economically impotent as are the unlettered. If, however, there can be a genuine diffusion of real knowledge about how civilization actually hangs together and operates, there may be something better in store for mankind than self-annihilation in another world war or self-immolation on the altars of cent per cent.

But as yet hardly any person, however enlightened, has really got past the "common-sense" interpretation of life in terms of individuals and personalities. The drama of history is viewed in terms of heroes, villains and accessories, and statesmen fumble with situations instead of handling them. So it will be until such time as we learn to

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think in terms of relationships rather than of personalities.

The student of affairs must come, that is, to see that the individual is but a nucleus of social interests. Abstract from his personality all the relationships, economic, political, ecclesiastical, familial, educational, recreational, and what is left? Where is the personality? It is easier for our feeble intelligences to envisage a set of human organisms in place of the baffling complex of super-personal world forces that hold us collectively under a weird spell, but our convenience of imagination does not change the fact that the unit of the social problem is not the person but the relationship, and that the network of relationships together with the institutions that embody them constitute the abiding fabric of society, in which particular individuals are but the transient vehicles of impersonal forces vaster than any individual or any totality of separate individuals and compelling us all pretty much alike through the channel of our subcon-

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scious or unconscious mechanisms of behavior.

Of course we flatter ourselves that we are controlling the march of events, whereas the march of events is as yet controlling us. Whether or not the human race can so gather itself together as to master its own destiny remains to be seen; but the task will certainly never be achieved by such as think in terms of great men, or indeed in terms of individuals of any sort. We do indeed have to handle individuals, but that is because in the individual the social forces are exposed to view and brought tangibly to the surface. The individual is like the manhole into which the telephone lineman descends in order to manage the manifold connections of the underground cables that are otherwise beyond his reach. But the civilization that we aspire to administer is a vast impersonal system embodied in books and records, in formulas and graphs, in tables and scores, in constitutions and codes in a manner quite independent of any individual or even of

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the existence of any particular mass of individuals.

In a dim and shadowy way we realize something of this fact. We comprehend after a fashion this impersonal quality of modern life. We are impressed with a sense of our individual and collective helplessness in the face of a labyrinthine complexity of life that leaves us no effective initiative and gives us no rôle but that of mechanical conformity to the good of the machine. We are even appalled at the thought that mankind as a whole is caught in the grip of a material destiny whose tone and tempo, whose route and goal seem incapable of human comprehension let alone of human mastery or revision. It may even now be too late to get hold of the forces that are driving the world toward an incalculable fate, but we must turn the trick or perish in the attempt.

There is room, then, for a practical sociology, for a science of society that will deal with the vast impersonal web of give and take, of pull and strain, of pressure and

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drive, that makes up the sum total of human existence and that uses us as pawns in the game of business, of politics, of religion, of morals, of recreation, of culture. Beginning not with the person but with the institution or the casual relationship, such a science will unravel for us the tangle of the world maze and show us how to build afresh on a basis of order, co-operation and security, to the end that the life of man on the earth may endure and flourish in happiness and peace.

Before, however, the average reader will let us unfold such an impersonal science, he will have to be shown that personality is not a prime creative element in human affairs but rather an incident or a by-product in the ongoing of the stream of life as a whole. After sensing this fact the reader will be ready for an objective analysis of the social universe, after which it will be in order to revert finally to an acknowledgment of personality as the element of meaning in the whole outcome, the principle of value in the

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scheme of existence, the fact that makes all other facts worth while.

It will appear, then, that the science of society does not ignore or belittle personality in not using it as the dynamic factor or as the causal principle of human history. Sociology merely recognizes that the group is prior to the individual and creates the individual, and further that the group itself acts not of its own will but as a vehicle of vast impersonal forces that come only dimly to consciousness and that remain after centuries of civilization as an abiding challenge charged with the fate of the human race.

CHAPTER II

THE CREATION OF PERSONALITY

IT would be altogether unnecessary for the student of society to deal at all with the individual were it not for the fact that "common sense" thinking has been so thoroughly steeped in the primacy of personality that even the social scientist rarely escapes from it. Only by knowing how personality arises and what it accordingly is can we qualify ourselves to set it properly aside until after the main lines of our analysis of society have been worked out. Then it may finally appear that personality is what gives meaning to the whole, in the sense of making anything worth while. But such a place for individual experience is very different from that assigned it by thinkers that try to treat society as a sum in addition or a product of multiplication.

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We start, then, with the manifest fact that while the individual as a physical organism is ushered into the world as a self-contained entity with the main lines of bodily development pretty thoroughly fixed in the germ, such is by no means the case with that aspect of his being that we are pleased to call personality. The mind, in other words, is so completely a social product that it would be entirely incapable of significant development save through the impingement of social influences.

To be explicit: If the child could be segregated from the hour of birth and left immured in an incubator to imbibe food through pipes and valves and to grow up without even animal companionship, it is as certain as anything could be that he would never develop even a passable animal mind. The indirect influence of the human touch conveyed through the mechanism necessary for his preservation to the usual age of human self-sufficiency would, to be sure, stamp him unavoidably with at least faint traces of

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humanity, but it cannot be imagined that he would gain enough mental development to be able to fend for himself at any stage if turned loose from his incubator. He would not be a human being in any significant sense. He would not be an animal in the sense of the mammalian mind. He would not have an animal mind comparable to that of any of the social animals. His being would be on the borders of the vegetable kingdom.

This factitious analysis would seem so unreal as to be valueless were it not borne out by common observation of circumstances in slight degree parallel. We observe in fact that the bulk of mankind never attains to any high degree of civilization. Externally most of us manage to look like human beings and to observe the minimum of civilized decorum. Our contacts have been sufficient for the achievement of such a modest degree of refinement. But relatively few ever have an opportunity for broad enough and deep enough contacts with the stream

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of culture to be made over in its likeness. Thus many children are arrested in development at a certain stage, primarily because the level of culture in home and neighborhood proves insufficient grounding for higher flights. There is not much doubt that this is the prime reason why some students from retarded races have such difficulty in assimilating the higher levels of culture. It can hardly be doubted that every racial group in our society has sufficient organic capacity for the appropriation of the very meager degree of development that it suits us to call civilization, but comparatively few families and neighborhoods provide a background adequate to sustain the higher grades of development. Consequently it is for many persons impossible to become genuinely civilized save as they chance to fall in with richer enviroing influences. We would not be human beings at all if not made such by our social contacts. We would not be civilized human beings were it not for the civilizing power of our social en-

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vironments. We would not be able to grasp the meaning of culture had there not been in our surroundings some elements that imparted to us that sense.

Personality is thus entirely a product of contagion. Some details may, indeed, vary according to bodily diathesis, particularly in respect to glandular or neural structure and function, so that we may, for instance, be over-irascible or temperamentally unstable. It is by no means certain, however, that most of the significant physiological differentiae are not the result of the reaction of mind on body, or, in other words, of the impingement of social influences impressing the individual. The variations in individual experience, even as between older and younger members of the same family of brothers and sisters, may well be sufficient to account for a large part of the variation in bodily function to which some students are so prone to attribute differences of character. Thus the experiences of the younger brother in conflict with the prerogatives of

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the first-born are well calculated to produce the habit of anger that calls for a plentitude of adrenalin and may well occasion a hypertrophy of that glandular function.

At all events, the details in which character differences seem to reflect original bodily differences are not themselves sufficient to compose personality. They may be ripples on its surface, but the personality itself comes from the social environment by way of the process which we call imitation. If there were no personalities to serve as patterns for imitation, there would be no personality in the new individual.

Indeed there is no such thing as originality in any strict sense. What seems to be original is but the crossing of two or more lines of imitation. The most that can be conceded to the biological determinist is the bare possibility that the shuffling of germ plasms may produce variations in responsiveness to environmental stimuli, but even so the innovations that occur could not arise in any significant degree save as part of the

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texture of a social milieu. To be sure, the existence of the biological substratum of life has to be taken for granted, but biology never gave an individual inherently capable of serving as a unit of human society. The human group is not attained by adding together biological units. It is created by a running process of cultural experience and transmission, which creates successive generations of new personalities as vehicles of the stream of social process. The social scientist, however, deals with the movement and the stream and only incidentally and peripherally with the individuals created, shaped and employed by it.

As for human nature in the large, it is an accumulation of social habits transmitted through the ages in continually augmented form. The bodily organism does, indeed, provide a seat for it, but does not in any crucial way determine its form. Thus we could not have families if there were not bodies differentiated as to sex, but the individual would never know, unless by acci-

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dent, that a being of the opposite sex is the proper completion of personality were not the knowledge picked up by observation of the social environment. That is to say that even so intrinsic and vital an aspect of culture as our sex relations has to be acquired by social experience, and it is a matter of common knowledge that the varieties of sex and family institutions are so innumerable as to preclude any suspicion that they may be given by instinct.

The significant aspects of human nature, then, are acquired characteristics impressed at wholesale on the developing lives by the surrounding folkways and ordinances. Sociology cannot get much direct aid from biology in the interpretation of historical development. Humanity, and society in the human sense, properly begin after biological evolution is complete.

Such considerations pretty completely dispose of sundry difficulties thrown in the face of the social scientist. He is told that "you can't change human nature", as if this

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human nature were a fixed thing resident in an iron law of life, whereas in reality there have been as many different types of human nature as there have been different cultures to create them. There may be a broad and general sameness underlying the varying patterns, but that is only because there is a broad and general sameness in the material environments that produced both the tribes of men and the ways of the tribes. The atmosphere is of substantially uniform composition in all parts of the world, save as affected by altitude. The characteristic liquid provided by nature in most parts of the world is water. The range of temperatures is notably limited. So we can scan all the essential conditions of life the world over and not find any so diverse as to lead us to expect wider divergence of bodily types and of cultural forms than actually occur. Likewise with what we are pleased to call "human nature", though the term is but another name for the prevailing cultural system, and we know that cultural systems change

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profoundly with the passage of time and with change in conditions of livelihood. There can be only a pedantic satisfaction in insisting that our "human nature" today is identical with that of our blue-painted ancestors in the woods of north Europe two thousand years ago. It may fit the same outline but the content manifests a world of practical difference. And what has made the difference, save the fact that each new generation of infants (born, so far as we can tell, substantially identical with the infants of earlier centuries) has been taken and molded by a changed and changing social environment, an altered culture, until the original "human nature" would no longer know itself?

We are warranted in believing that the child at birth possesses a single propensity—the disposition to self-assertion, which is the universal ear-mark of life. The lowliest organism, if let alone, would reach out, and expand, and multiply till it possessed the world. Nor would the human child fare bet-

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ter than the puniest micro-organism were it not for the environing aid of society. As it is, he is ordinarily shielded and sheltered long enough to permit his original self-assertion, encountering all manner of utilities and all manner of obstacles, to branch out by experience into all the diversified interests that characterize self-conscious humanity. He is made, in other words, by his group, and has to be explained by it. It would be futile to try to expound the culture of the group in terms of inborn nature, but it is easy enough to explain the individual in terms of the transmitted culture.

It may thus be said that an account of the stream of civilization as it passes from generation to generation is a sufficient subject-matter for social science. The fact that the stream is conveyed through human personalities is, for the moment, of less consequence than the fact that it creates and determines those personalities. Among other things, it imparts to us an interest in the course and trend of the stream itself, so that

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we are disposed to embark on a study of it. We shall be aided, however, in our study if we can grasp the concept of prodigious, objective, impersonal social forces, operating indeed through human interests but too vast to be fathomed in terms of mere personality and too powerful to be controlled by any simple act of the will. If we can quit trying to interpret history in terms of personages and can begin to see in it the effort of cosmic forces to fulfil themselves in this mundane sphere we shall be in a better position to understand what goes on and why, and then to comprehend the personalities involved and the values that shine back from them upon the way.

Such a generalization may sound highbrow or even metaphysical, but it is possible to tell the concrete story without pedantry and without metaphysics and to come out at the end with a tangible grasp of the whole that will banish the original impression of oversophistication. It is such a matter-of-fact tale that awaits our telling.

CHAPTER III

THE STREAM OF HISTORY

IF we are clear now on the fact that an understanding of man's collective problems is to be sought, not by focussing on persons and personages but by concentrating on the types of human relationship that constitute the network of civilization, it is an easy next step to a realization of the fact that civilization itself is not a random tangle of stray forces and fortuitous events but is rather an ordered whole, all of a piece, and all hanging together in a significant unity that can be lifted by a single thread. It is in this fact of the unity and coherence of human problems that all hope of solution lies.

Everything goes back, of course, to the simple fact that man is of the earth earthy. As Professor Small so significantly reminded us, every human problem, from the

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election of a pope to the laying out of a country road goes back somehow or other to the fact that mankind is set here with the job of making its way on this planet of limited size and limited resources.

In other words, the human problem in all its ramifications is a question of the struggle for existence and of the selective influence of the material environment. Since man became man he has been putting forth countless feelers in the face of a challenging milieu. All manner of social experiments, innovations in industry, in government, in family, in religion, in education, in culture generally, have shot forth from the seething mass of human life. It is not for the social scientist to account for the fact that man is alive, or for the fact that life is pushing and restless. The trials that occur, the variations that are offered, have to be taken for granted as a normal expression of the live material that lies at the basis of history.

The significant thing, however, is not the occurrence of the variation, of the experi-

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ment. Countless new ways, new methods, new institutions have been tried and have failed, not because of inherent unworthiness (if such a concept is thinkable) but because they did not fit well enough the exacting standards set by a rigorous material environment. If, for instance, capitalism ever raised its head among the Eskimos in their undisturbed native habitat, it certainly came to a timely end, simply because the struggle for existence was so harsh that only complete communality would keep a tribe alive. Any tribe that would nip in the bud the principle of profit and exploitation would speedily become extinct. On the other hand, communism proved unable to take hold in a continent so easily appropriable by separate family effort as was the central core of North America in the nineteenth century. Only in so stubborn a habitat as Utah could semi-collectivism flourish on a large scale, and there because joint enterprise was necessary for the reduction of the desert. In each case, the nature and behavior

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of the material environment determined the characteristic social institutions, if not by direct imposition, at least by selection of some ways for extermination and others for prevalence.

Material conditions constitute thus the bed of the stream of history and determine its main current and its main direction. Here and there all along the way, side currents strike off in this direction or in that, but only to return presently to the main stream or else to lose themselves in thirsty sands or in aimless swamps. Such is the parable of the tortuous course of civilization. Man can try anything that occurs to fertile imagination, but the result depends in last analysis not on brilliance of conception or doggedness of effort or purity of purpose but upon the inescapable question of how the scheme bears on the business of group survival and group prosperity on this planet. To date, man's margin of safety is not great enough to allow much room for neutral customs. Everything is either good

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or bad; everything either helps or hinders survival of the group; and the scores are kept and finally cast up by Mother Nature.

To be sure, there is something in the remark of the old elder challenged by the prosperity of the ungodly to the effect that "God does not settle his accounts every Saturday night." But the debris of races, nations, institutions, customs, ideals, strewn along the course of history is convincing evidence that accounts do get settled, and we cannot be sure even yet that the human race may not presently exhaust its credit. It is possible, for instance, that the institution of warfare, which has so long been regarded as a fit element making for group survival, may prove to be the final means for the extermination of the human race. Nature's limits of tolerance may be flexible, but they are set. The stream of history may meander and sprawl, but after all it has ultimate banks, and its whole course is an experiment in human adjustment to an exacting material environment. This fact means that un-

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less one's interests are in the ephemeral things by the way he must regard as the significant items in history those that lie along the line of successful adjustment to the conditions imposed by the material environment. Such is the truth contained in what is popularly referred to as "the materialistic conception of history".

Now while man was still but an animal, he had to bear the direct impact of material forces. Nature beat on him directly and shaped him and his ways. But since man became man—that is, since he learned to make tools—he has gradually interposed a buffer between himself and Nature. He has set up an elaborate paraphernalia of tools, machines, substances, structures, that shield him from the direct impact of the material surroundings and make his dependence less direct. This alteration in the picture does not, however, change the operative principle. It merely means that man's correspondence to Nature's requirements occurs mostly through the medium of the economic sys-

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tem that he has devised to this end. Nature does not, on the whole, change very much, nor has man gone on evolving in his own frame and substance; consequently it is to changes in economic procedure that we must look for the dynamic element in history.

If it be asked why economic method changes instead of staying put, the answer is to be found in population pressure, in soil exhaustion, and in the increase of wants produced by previous economic improvement. The story is told in part by the old proverb, "Necessity is the mother of invention"; but the necessity in question is not so much the sheer animal want as it is the developed desire that comes from past achievement. Thus invention is the mother of necessity. Every fruitful means of satisfying wants produces new and costlier wants, new necessities, which become in turn the stimulus to new inventions.

Historians have long been aware that economic development is the key to the

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course of history. They have pointed out a series of historic stages, based in the first instance on the improvement of tools and then on the improvement of power; so that we have become used to thinking of the Old Stone Age, when tools were simply rough stone; the New Stone Age, when they were of ground and polished stone; the Copper Age, the Bronze Age, the Iron Age, the Steel Age, each marking an advance in tool substance and consequently in tool use; then the Age of Steam and the Age of Electricity, each registering a further command over the instrumentalities of production. Few historians, however, have taken the necessary next step of essaying to correlate the various phases of culture with the underlying advances in the methods of production.

This negligence of the historians is a great handicap to social progress. Thus we have political histories in abundance, but only lately and fragmentarily any attempts to show how political development registers

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and expresses economic changes, interests and needs. We have the history of religion, but only here and there a worthy attempt to show how man's supernal interests are correlated with the changes in the work-a-day world. We have histories of science, but they usually proceed as if science were an independent stream going its own way by its own momentum, and there has been little attempt to show how science has unfolded according to economic conditions and needs and the resulting social circumstances.

So it is with the history of art, of music, of philosophy. Each is ordinarily presented as a single-track record of a special phase of human interest, and it is looked upon as vulgar and profane to attempt to show how the exalted musings of the metaphysician or the rhapsodies of the artist are really a veiled expression of some very tangible material interest or conflict in the everyday world of affairs. It is supposed to be in bad taste to show that the theory of the philosopher who saw the universe as an unstable

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flux destined to be swallowed up in flames was but an unconscious reflex of his own experience as representative of a beaten aristocracy overcome by a triumphant democracy. Critics in the field of art and letters can still seriously maintain that art is a thing in itself, to be judged by its own standards. They do not seem to realize that whatever is a thing in itself is inhuman and dead, because all live human interest hangs together, and human life is all of a piece; so that it is a travesty on art and letters to try to judge them save as an integral part of the whole social texture of civilization.

These strictures on current provincialism of thought and interest are intended to show the point of social science and to develop some awareness of the need for it. If we had a worthy social science, a sociologist could take a fragment of the art, or philosophy, or faith of a period and from it reconstruct the general outline of that period's civilization just as a palæontologist is expected to be able to take a bone or two

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and reconstruct a departed animal. If we had such a social science it would enable us to develop intelligent social policies about industry, or government, or religion, or education, or what not, for we should understand the ramifications of influences set in motion and should know what to expect from a given procedure.

That is to say that if we understood the stream of history we might essay to control it. Possessed of such an understanding as is contained in the foregoing suggestion of the "economic interpretation of history" we should know better than to tackle social evils and abuses directly one by one with a view to immediate cure. Instead of resorting in a random way to hit-or-miss proposals for miscellaneous reform, we should realize the necessity of getting in on the ground floor by control of the economic system. Only by controlling industry and business from a social point of view and in the common interest is it possible to get a grip on those factors of social change from

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which our social problems arise and on which their solution hinges. Whoever controls livelihood controls life, because he holds in his hands the springs of life; he controls the universal means to the satisfaction of all interests.

Because people fail to realize the strategic import of the economic factor, most reform efforts are pointless and futile. Infinite energy and money are laid out in the attempt to "clean up politics" or "restore government to the people", and with no appreciable results, simply because government is bound to be a tool of the dominant economic class and no amount of jockeying can change the fact.

Likewise limitless funds of spiritual energy have been expended in the attempt to reform religion, whether by getting "back to Christ" or on to the millennium. But the representative religious organizations and movements remain the spiritual expression of the propertied class, and there have been only fleeting and fugitive

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attempts to give bona fide expression to the interests of the proletarian masses. Social creeds of the churches are nothing but ethereal welfare work. They cannot get beyond that level as long as the economic system is not socialized.

Likewise there can be no genuine cultural uplift, whether in the field of art, letters, science or philosophy until such time as we arrive at collective control of the whole means of life, and attempts at cultural advance are sterile save in so far as they are directed at mastery of the economic system as the key to civilization, for all elements and classes in society are inescapably subject to the dominant economic class.

In particular, we live today in a business man's world. To him, in the last analysis, the statesman defers, the prelate bows, the professor yields, the scientist genuflects. To him art and letters pay homage. Even when there is no consciousness of servility, the fact that our whole social atmosphere is

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that of profit and exploitation and that nearly every one takes these procedures for granted exercises a subtle influence that tinctures our whole culture. Thus our own age illustrates with the utmost of completeness the economic interpretation of history.

Some critics contend, indeed, that other ages were "intellectual" or "spiritual". A little study will show, however, that such an "age of faith" as the medieval era corresponds perfectly to the economic interpretation. Every significant aspect of the Dark Ages expresses man's material helplessness in the face of the rigors of western and northern Europe. Only as man's efforts to conquer Nature began to prevail did European civilization emerge from the clouds of fear. Economic competence gave the Renaissance and the Modern Era. In like fashion must we look to a more advanced economic system under better control as the means to a genuinely human culture to replace the narrow and predatory civilization that still fetters us.

CHAPTER IV

THE ORGANIZATION OF CONTROL

THE purpose of social science, as of all science, is control. After the scientist has had his inning, things no longer just "happen"; they are brought to pass. But this statement of the case makes it evident that as yet there has been little social science. Our civilization is not steered. It drifts; and none of the fragmentary efforts of kings or priests or statesmen or professors to direct its course seems to accomplish anything worthy of mention.

But if the course of history is to be controlled, it is necessary for us to understand thoroughly the secret of control and to locate power at its very seat. This task is not so easy of performance; for power is a

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deceptive thing, and the appearance of it is often far from the reality.

In the United States, for instance, we are used to thinking of the government as sovereign. Supreme power seems to reside in the political state; indeed we find it hard to think of "society" save in terms of political constitutions and governmental structure.

This bias is natural enough because until recently there were in the United States no comprehensive institutions of sufficient scope to symbolize America. There was no predominant church, no national university, no distinctly outstanding corporate body. If plain people were to think in terms of "the public and its problems" they would have to envisage the one notable institution that seemed to stand for us all. Hence the genesis of "Uncle Sam" as a convenient symbol of our common political integration.

This mental shorthand naturally carried with it the concept of a common public interest safeguarded by public power. The government was supposed to be the supreme

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authority in the country and it hardly occurred to the ordinary citizen that there could be, short of revolution, any serious challenge to its authority. Moreover, inasmuch as the personnel of the government was mainly chosen by general suffrage, most people never seriously questioned the popular character of government. A particular administration might be corrupt or unrepresentative, but government itself, the mystic and intangible something overshadowing administrations and pervading constitutions, was the one fit object of "patriotism", the one spiritual nucleus of collective loyalty.

Today, however, it ought to be relatively easy for realistic people to see that government is not really sovereign and not really representative. The voters are no better than pawns in the game of erecting puppets for the business interests, and both the suffrage itself and the puppets erected by it are useful chiefly as devices for concealing from the citizenry the fact that money rules.

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Occasionally this fact is formally certified, as in the famous remark of Mr. Taft to the effect that the law works on the side with the longer purse; but the bare-faced illustrations are not very significant because they are ordinarily taken as abuses, as instances of corruption or of betrayal of the purpose of government and it is supposed that by the correction of such flaws democracy can be achieved. It is not generally understood that under our present system there is no legitimate purpose for government save as the tool of capitalism. We are allowed to play with the machinery of politics as a means of diverting our attention from basic grievances, but the machinery is invariably geared against us.

All this is perfectly natural. Since the dawn of history, the purpose of government has always been as an agency of the privileged class in its game of exploiting the masses. What class is at any given moment the possessor of privilege depends on circumstances, but the passage of power from

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one class to another never changes the exploitative essence of government until such time as the powers of government get into the hands of the working-class, which has no one below to exploit.

The history of the United States illustrates perfectly the general thesis. The United States constitution was made by a convention of property interests for the express purpose of preventing democracy and with the positive aim of keeping the propertyless masses in subjection. The constitution was designed as a frame-work of government to operate for the purpose of carrying out a supreme principle antecedent to the constitution and possessing untouchable sanctity, namely the sacredness of private property, which no government was entitled to infringe. One may read the constitution with considerable care and not detect its capitalistic nature unless he is primed for the discovery. Unless one knows all about the making of the document and the "higher law" that it was ordained to

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carry out, he may still cherish fatal illusions about "the charter of our liberties". The best corrective of such fallacies is the behavior of the United States Supreme Court, specifically in its refusal to take jurisdiction for the protection of life and personal property of an ordinary sort, whereas it will comb to the limit any case in which a state is charged with confiscation of capitalist property. If Sacco and Vanzetti had been proprietors of a little electric plant in a small Massachusetts town, the United States Supreme Court would have been glad to see that justice was done them in a rate case by the state courts. So sacred is capitalist property. But no federal judge could be found to guarantee their rights to life and liberty against the fatuous and bungling travesty on justice perpetrated by the Massachusetts courts. The constitution professes to give the same protection to life and liberty that it does to property, but the profession amounts to virtually nothing in any crucial case.

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All this is entirely natural; for inevitably the central purpose of government must be to safeguard the economic system that prevails at the given time. Any other procedure would be suicidal. Consequently those that support the capitalist system have no ground for objecting when government lends itself as a tool to the capitalist interests.

We arrive thus at the central question as to the nature of power and the secret of control, a question at the very heart of all interest in the future of the world.

Most persons are rather unreflective in this matter. Observing the operations of government, they assume that in the very nature of the case government has power. They observe that in case of test the government uses physical force, which is the final title to power.

A little reflection, however, will make it clear that force is too troublesome a device for constant use and must be supplemented by subtler sanctions. Thus acquiescence and

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loyalty, produced in rare instances by substantial governmental services, but as a rule by a continual stream of veiled or open propaganda, combine to make frequent application of sheer force unnecessary.

The prime way in which popular acquiescence is used as the basis of power is through the establishment of control over livelihood. As long as some special-interest group is allowed to control resources and instrumentalities of production, its control over livelihood makes it the real sovereign of society. Even the government remains subsidiary to this economic control unless in some revolutionary situation the government by sheer force changes the title to resources and other capital goods. So long as government leaves property titles undisturbed, government cannot be sovereign. Only in so far as government takes over property rights can the government attain sovereignty.

So far as the United States at present is concerned, it is necessary to begin with the

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fact that capitalist control over the means of life results in capitalist control of all the major channels of education and general publicity. The capitalist system is taken for granted as natural, and to all practical intent final. Consequently every typical American when he goes to the polls votes for a party committed in one way or another to capitalism. If it is not the party of Big Business, it is the party professing to "help the man that is on the make", as Woodrow Wilson so euphemistically expressed the rôle of the Democratic Party in behalf of the business climber. Thus we get governments that are the handmaidens of business interests and that have no higher conception of patriotism than the maintenance of the *status quo*. Political reform is never more than a matter of detail, and no administration ever wants to infringe on the essential prerogatives of the property system. It is too early in the day for an American government to assume responsibility for the elevation of the whole level of

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welfare. The most that can be expected is that it will help private interests. The only difference of opinion is as to whether it should help the already successful capitalists or those that are on their way.

But if the capitalist interests of the country are the actual sovereigns, by reason of their control over the means of life and their consequent ability to dominate popular imagination and will, it may be wondered why they trouble at all to have a government—why they do not work their will directly through a bureau of their own choosing.

On this point it may be said that in capitalist countries the government is but the administrative center for the capitalist interests. Occasionally a statesman gets out of hand and blackmails the capitalist interests or assails them in overt fashion, but such irregularity is no more common than truculence or insubordination within the staffs of the businesses themselves.

Nevertheless the business interests nor-

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mally prefer to carry on through their own
avowed instrumentalities. Not long since a
convention of business men was told that
government regulation is unnecessary and
that if industry needs regulation a business
congress can be organized to legislate in ap-
propriate fashion. If the typical capitalist
interests could follow their own first tend-
encies they would strive for the abolition
of all government save the departments for
protecting against labor uprisings and for
pushing capitalist interests abroad, and
there could doubtless be found capitalist
interests willing to take over and operate
even the army and the navy. In default of
such a solution, every means will be used
to keep the government itself as a docile
underling of Business, and the task is not
likely to be difficult as long as the world
dominance of American capitalism con-
tinues to keep the American people hyp-
notized and reverential so that they have no
desire to manage their own public affairs.

It turns out, in fact, that the thing we call

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democracy has had as its main function the delusion of the citizen with the semblance of power so that there might be less disposition on his part to reach for actual power. It is doubtless a growing realization of this fact, as evidenced by the total lack of substantial issues in the average political campaign, that has produced such boredom with the political game and such indifference to public interests that would really be of prime concern to a democratic people.

Such considerations ought to suffice to illustrate the thesis that Politics is but a phase of Economics and that the prime public issue, whether overt or latent, is always the control of livelihood. A history of Government would be a history of exploitation, with only such exceptions as come when power slips during the struggle between an old ruling class and a new one rising to claim mastery. Even what is called "social legislation" turns out to be but a part of the standardization and regimentation required in the interests of the integra-

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tion and efficiency of capitalist business and capitalist statesmanship, whose ideal is a working class and an army composed of sleek, healthy, contented cattle.

Even in the current Russian situation, government in the hands of a Communist dictatorship supported by the industrial workers is under the unwelcome necessity of "exploiting" (as it seems to the victims and indeed to some of the dominant group) the peasantry through heavy taxation, high prices for supplies and forced collections of produce at nominal prices. The difference from capitalist exploitation lies in the fact that the communist dictatorship is striving with all its might to equip agriculture with all the modern scientific appliances and to organize it into industrial units so that the peasants will themselves become industrial workers and thereby be assimilated in interest and outlook to workers in mill and mine and transport. The success of this process ought ultimately to bring a classless society in collective con-

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trol of the means of life, in which even
government would lose its historic signifi-
cance and fade out into economic adminis-
tration.

CHAPTER V

THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT

IT may not be very hard for the average reader to realize the identification of politics with economics in the process of social control. Some illusions about patriotism may perhaps have to be relinquished, but the major realm of spiritual values which is commonly called religion may be supposed to remain as a sacrosanct realm superior to material correlations. The "debunking" of the state leaves the church intact.

If, however, the whole of life is really a social universe, then there must be as complete correlation between religion and economics as between politics and economics. Life is all of a piece.

It must be understood at the outset that religion and theology are not synonymous.

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Religion is the substance of which theology is at times a symbol. Conceptions of God are transfigurations of people's social ideals; whereas it is the ideals themselves that constitute the essence of religion.

From the standpoint of social science, indeed, it appears that religion is but a social attitude toward one's universe; it is allegiance to what the group regards as the highest social value. Ordinarily such values or ideals have been personified into deities and have thus given rise to theologies, but such symbolization is not necessarily central to the attitude. Patriotism, for example, presents a social ideal not necessarily bound up with a theology, though the fatherland or the mother country usually is personified by a mental process identical with the development of a theology.

The definition of religion as a social attitude toward one's universe furnishes a prime criterion of "spirituality". It includes those instances in which one personifies Nature and experiences fellowship with

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her, but it is aimed primarily at attitudes toward the universe of persons. Religion is thus broad or narrow according to the scope of what one admits within his universe. The man that couched his table prayer in the form, "God bless me and my wife, my son John and his wife, us four and no more" was undoubtedly religious, not on the score of his addressing God, but because he manifested a social attitude toward his universe. It was, to be sure, a narrow and petty universe, but much wider than that of some persons, whose universe is themselves.

Over against such limited loyalties stand those great souls whose allegiance takes in all mankind. Such persons are religious in the largest sense, whether they personify their faith and loyalty and adhere to a theology or whether a matter-of-fact tie suffices them. In other words, theology is but an incident to religion, and its absence does not argue the absence of the devotional attitude. Religion is, indeed, a matter primarily of emotion and will, while theology

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is an intellectual formulation belonging in the precincts of philosophy.

These matters of definition are preliminary to an exposition of the social correlations of religion, which, like the correlations of government, are rooted in economics. In fact the core of all religion is in those things on which group survival and welfare depend. The case is well illustrated by the experience of an observer in India who was sojourning among a tribe that lived by the dairy. On inquiring about the religion of an adjoining tribe, he received the answer: "What! They have a religion? Why the beggars have no cows!" A people whose religion was a sublimation of cattle culture could not conceive of religion in other terms.

The correlation of religion with the material basis of life is explicitly set forth in scripture. Thus after the Hebrew bondmen in Egypt "heard that Jehovah had visited the children of Israel, and that he had seen their affliction, then they bowed their heads

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and worshipped". The prospect of emancipation was sufficient to evoke the religious attitude. The case is even more pointed in the book of the prophet Joel where, after a declaration that agriculture is going to pick up and material abundance ensue, comes a prediction of spiritual revival. "Afterward I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions; and also on the workers, both men and women, will I pour out my Spirit." Here the outburst of spiritual interest comes naturally upon the heels of material prosperity. Religion is thus a transfiguration of social experience.

The whole record of the Hebrew-Christian religion is a prime illustration of the assertion that religion correlates with economics, of which it is, indeed, the spiritual expression. Thus the whole burden of the work of the Hebrew prophets whose work is recorded in scripture was the proletarian-agrarian protest against landlord and capi-

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talist exploitation. Their appeal in behalf of the faith of Yahweh was the symbolization of their social protest, inasmuch as Yahweh was the personification of the fierce tribal loyalty and brotherly justice of the original Hebrew desert clansmen as against the commercialistic wealth worship of the older residents upon whom the Hebrews had intruded. "Yahweh against Baal" was the slogan of farmer and laborer against landlord and trader, and it signalized justice versus greed. It was on such a substratum of material class struggle that the spirituality of the better faith of the Hebrews was built up.

In like manner the essence of the work of Jesus was revolt against the exploitation practised by the landed class (the Sadducees) and the business class (the Pharisees). Jesus himself aptly summarized the case in his famous epigram, "You cannot serve God and Mammon." From this standpoint, spirituality unfolded as a transfiguration of the struggles of the proletariat for a social

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commonwealth of justice, or, in Palestinian parlance, "the kingdom of God", whose origin, development, and final triumph on earth comprises the central plot of the scriptures from the idyllic garden of Genesis to the ideal city of the Apocalypse, which is not heaven but a perfect commonwealth here among men.

The primitive Christian movement was, in fact, a world-wide revolt against Roman commercialism and imperialism; and a reading of the Apocalypse, particularly of chapter eighteen, makes clear the vindictive and malignant fury with which the "saints" contemplated the ways of Roman commercialism, and the glee with which they anticipated its overthrow. In other words, religion was the sublimation of economic protest and social revolt.

That it was such is clear from the reaction of official Rome. The Romans never persecuted on theological grounds. Any deity was welcome to the Pantheon; but Christianity was social insurgency and po-

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litical disloyalty. The refusal of the Christians to drop a pinch of incense in the flame at the foot of Caesar's statue was equivalent to a refusal to salute the Stars and Stripes. It was sedition. Accordingly in the literature of the Romans the Christians are stigmatized as infidels, atheists, enemies of the home, enemies of business, enemies of the human race, just as if they were outright Bolsheviks.

In the course of time, however, members of the upper classes worked into the Christian fellowship, and Christian leaders became distinguished respectables, with the result that the movement was sold out to the ruling classes and made a cheap sideshow to the imperial Plunderbund. This is the famous event ordinarily referred to in history as "the Christianization of the empire". In reality it was the imperialization and paganization of the church. Thenceforth there was no place for the bona fide followers of Jesus save as stray persecuted groups, that appeared and reappeared here

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and there through the Middle Ages with varying notes of social insurgency ranging towards communism.

Nevertheless the church of the Middle Ages itself reflected the aftermath of social revolution. The early church fathers taught a social radicalism verging on communism and it was not easy for their official successors to get entirely away from the tradition of social responsibility. Interest-taking was forbidden, and wages and prices were to be "fair". The medieval church professed, in fact, the moralization of the economic life, however far short it may have come of practising what it professed.

The Reformation was a capitalist and nationalist repudiation of even the nominal restraints that the church had put on capitalist practises and of the inordinate claims made by the papacy on national resources; but the ferment of the times gave new occasion to incendiary movements of the lower classes attempting to revive the revolutionary fervor of the first followers of Jesus.

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Thus the Anabaptists, the forerunners of the modern Baptists, contained strong elements of anarchism and communism. Protestantism came, however, under the control of middle and upper classes and has never included any considerable element of anti-capitalist spirit.

Thus the church has in large measure fulfilled the same rôle as the state in the maintenance of the status quo. Although the central theme of the Bible is the establishment of a commonwealth of brotherhood and co-operation here on earth, the teachers of religion have commonly transferred the consummation to a region beyond the skies, even though, in the language of the scripture itself, the ideal city is seen "*coming down out of heaven*" and set up among men. This very explicit picture of a redeemed earth is constantly perverted into an account of the realm of departed spirits and thereby the hopes of man for an earthly paradise are thwarted.

In keeping with this distortion is the re-

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versal of emphasis as between life here and life beyond. At least nine-tenths of the Bible is taken up with mundane interests, and the part devoted to life beyond the grave is very slight, yet the ordinary stress in churches is just the opposite. To be sure, the Judgment Day and the fires of hell are slurred over in the churches of the well-to-do, but they prevail with full force in the churches that are most distinctly devoted to the proletariat. Thus attention is distracted from the battle for right and justice here and now, and thousands are led to tolerate exploitation on the theory that in a future life the tables will be turned, or at least the poor will be compensated for their present privations.

Moreover, while the church claims responsibility for morality, and even invades the fields of economics and politics, as in the case of the prohibition movement, in no instance does the church really face the question whether the present social order is organized on moral and Christian lines.

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The capitalist ownership and control of the means of life and the capitalist domination of our whole culture is taken as a matter of course. Specific evils and abuses are, of course, recognized and condemned, but no religious body really challenges the system itself. Great interest is taken in the conversion of individuals, but none in the conversion of basic institutions.

When this point is pressed, the ordinary answer is that if men's hearts are put right other things will naturally follow. In purely individual matters, however, the church feels it necessary to give moral instruction. It is not assumed that conversion automatically perfects a man's life. There must also be preaching about Bible reading, church attendance, private prayer, Sabbath observance, honesty and fidelity, abstinence from liquor, and like matters of personal morals. It hardly seems reasonable to suppose that a regiment of redeemed souls will know better what to do about the ownership of industry and the problems of

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industrial and social democracy than about the simpler individual and personal questions, yet the church neglects to lay down a program on these points. Such documents as "The Social Creed of the Churches" are at best the expression of a few radicals in church circles and have no official force. The sovereign denominations themselves offer no moral challenge to the principles of capitalism.

This situation is just as natural, just as normal, as the similar position of government. The church, like the state, is an established institution of the established order and cannot be expected to challenge the foundations thereof. It will satisfy its moral pretensions and its spiritual ideals by efforts for the incidental improvement of odds and ends of conduct, but so far as the social system itself is concerned, the church will continue to take it for granted.

Some readers may wonder, however, why no insurgent ecclesiastical bodies are formed as a revolt against the existing order. Such

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movements have arisen repeatedly in the past. Indeed, mankind has ordinarily felt the need of spiritual symbols for its social protest. At the present time, however, insurgent movements, such as Socialism and Communism, remain purely secular and do not give rise to new churches or churchly sects. Has man begun to outgrow theology and to dispense with its sanctions?

Theology, perhaps, but not religion. The Communists may repudiate church and theology, but their intense emotional devotion to the world commonwealth is psychologically and sociologically of the essence of religion. They think they are not religious because they have not learned to distinguish between religion and theology. But, as we have already seen, religion is not dependent on theology: in fact, devout atheism is itself religion of a sort, even when not attached to a social movement.

We come thus to a realization of the fact that the life of the spirit is not a thing apart. However transcendental it may some-

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times seem, it is not in reality so. Its roots are just as deep in the earth as are the roots of hunger and thirst and it is just as definitely correlated with the processes and problems of livelihood as are purely worldly matters such as business and politics.

Accordingly the manifestations of religion change to correspond to changing economic conditions. The modern bent to secularism, with its indifference to theology or repudiation of it, as illustrated in the Socialist and the Communist movements, is a direct product of the Industrial Revolution. When peasant dependence on seasons and weather is replaced by industrial control through buttons and levers, gears and clutches, man tends to develop a sense of human powers and to drift farther and farther from a realization of Divine Providence. Thought becomes matter-of-fact, and religion becomes humanistic. It no longer seems that theological symbols possess much reality or power. Even when re-

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tained they are formal and nominal as contrasted with the ways of the older piety.

How permanent this secular tendency will be remains to be seen. The widening of the circle of human knowledge and power brings man to wider frontiers of the unknown and to wider reaches of the not yet possible. Perhaps here lies the germinal source of a new mysticism, but if so it will be a cult very different in complexion from the old communions.

In any event, religion can never again be regarded as a thing-in-itself, as something distinct from the ordinary business of life. It stands forth unmistakably as a transfiguration of workaday experience, as a symbol of common needs, as an expression of social aspirations. The battle that is on is not a battle for and against religion, but rather a battle between religions, notably between the recognized churches, all accepting the capitalist order, and the new revolutionary humanist cults that stand for communism or socialism. In other words,

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the communist parties are religious bodies
in the psychological and sociological senses,
and they bear testimony to the universality
of religion as a normal human experience.

CHAPTER VI

THE WAYS OF THE FAMILY

THE traditional analysis of society made the family, the church and the state the three "divine institutions". The last two have turned out, however, to be sufficiently human in their essence and in their correlations, and the same will hold of the family. Whatever sanctity any of these institutions possesses evidently consists in its correspondence with the conditions of life.

It might be supposed on first thought that an institution such as the family, growing out of what is commonly regarded as a fundamental instinct, would have forms of its own independent of social circumstance, but such is not the case. In the first place there is no "sex instinct". Certain bodily changes do occur at puberty and create tensions that demand release, but the subject

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of these new interests would not know that a person of the opposite sex is the appropriate agency of satisfaction if he had not learned this fact by observation of the ways of the social environment. The family is not the expression of an instinct. In fact there are no parental instincts either. Mother and father learn fondness for offspring, the former during the period of pregnancy, or, if not then, during the period of infantile helplessness. The father learns mostly after the child's birth. It is not likely, however, that either parent would learn many appropriate reactions toward the child were it not for the patterns offered and the instruction furnished by the social milieu.

Thus we may safely affirm that the relations between men and women, parents and children, that go to make up the ways of the family, are distinctly a social product. It follows that the evolution of family institutions answers to the same principles that control social evolution in general, and it is

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easy to illustrate the dependence of family forms on economic development.

For instance, even though the sexes are everywhere born in approximately equal numbers, so that monogamy would offer the simplest solution of sex relations, various peoples have practised plurality of husbands or of wives. In view of the tradition about male jealousy, it would be hard to see how a group of men would be content to share a wife did it not come to mind that prostitution is essentially such a phenomenon. Polyandry, or plurality of husbands, occurs as a recognized institution as a solution of the problem of poverty. If a region or a situation is too unproductive to enable one man to support a family it may seem well to allow a group of men to assume the responsibility, as in the Scandinavian legitimation of all children, with the correlate paternal responsibility. Prostitution is largely a correlate phenomenon of more extreme form.

There is no reason, of course, to assume

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that male jealousy is stronger than female jealousy. The difference consists in the fact that males have ordinarily been more able to enforce their will. Hence it is not surprising that polyandry as an institution is rarer than polygyny—the plurality of wives. But the latter is also an economic institution, occurring either as a form of female slavery for the benefit of the male or as a conspicuous advertisement of the husband's wealth in cases where the harem is a vehicle of reputable extravagance. Where the middle classes, whose moderate circumstances dictate monogamy, have set the social and moral standards, plurality of wives, even for such as can afford it, is taboo, and plurality of mistresses, who can be maintained without open avowal, takes its place.

Ordinary sociological theory stresses the rôle of the family as perpetuator of the race. The mere begetting of offspring requires, of course, no formal organization; but some arrangement for the protection of mother and child during pregnancy and

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suckling, at least, would appear essential, and the family answers in a measure this need. Such functions, however, could be otherwise performed, and it is doubtful whether the family would have developed and persisted save as a property institution, having to do with the accumulation and transmission of material goods. In the more developed property civilizations, at least, the family becomes, among the fortunate classes, outstandingly a property institution. The feudal family and the capitalist family need be no more than devices for guaranteeing legitimacy and purity of property transmission.

Under such conditions the proletarian family also tends to be distinctly an economic institution. Children are domestic animals, useful either in the household economy, or as bringing in wages, sufficient, perhaps, to excuse the parents from labor. The legal tradition of the common law recognized this state of affairs, notably in the principle that the seducer of a girl was

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liable to the father for damages for the loss
of her services. To the same purport was the
husband's title to his wife's wages as well
as those of his minor sons.

The shift of the family to the position of
a liability rather than an asset came with
the increase in economic productivity
whereby children have been excused from
labor and wives made more and more the
vehicles for display of family wealth. Then
the opening of public industry and business
to women altered once more the center of
gravity in the family and weakened its
economic base by lessening dependence on
the male head.

Virtually all the distinctive problems of
the family today are fruits of the Industrial
Revolution. By removing industry from the
home, it took away the economic rôle of the
family in production and latterly in con-
sumption, so that in extreme cases the
family is little more than a caravansary and
the home is little more than a bunk-house.
When the members of the family separate

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at dawn to go their ways to separate employment, and stay apart till midnight in the process of individual expenditure of income, it is a question what is left of the family as a social institution, especially since the educational requirements of a machine age take the children away for schooling and the economy of space leaves them no play room in or about the home.

Along with this disintegration of the family as an agency for production and consumption goes an evaporation of paternal supremacy. Being absent from the home during the working day, and engaged in pursuits that keep him alien to the interests and activities of the family, the father is in no competent position to dictate. Moreover the wife, as actual or potential wage-earner, is no longer in the old dependence, and can not so easily be coerced. Besides, the scattering of relatives to the ends of the earth dissolves the authority of the clan, and there is nothing to reinforce the dwindling sovereignty of the family head. He seems to have

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burdens and responsibilities without appreciable power. A business-like state, unwilling to pay for needless charity, holds him to his responsibility even to the extent of involuntary servitude, and protects its potential laborers and fighters against his abuse or neglect. Moreover the secularization of life that has come with man's mastery through the machine removes the spiritual sanctions that once enshrouded the patriarchal power, and the father stands stripped of prestige and naked to the world.

With all this change has come an astounding approach to sex equality predicated on approximation to equality in the eyes of the boss. In so far as the employer recognizes the equality of woman as a candidate for work, or even gives her preference, equality will tend to characterize more and more all the social relations of the sexes, and since the prudential reasons for family limitation have diffused the knowledge of birth-control, another element of inequality has been sloughed off, and woman becomes freer and

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freer in sex relations. Even within the family, this phase of the freeing of women, by relieving them of intolerable burdens has produced an amazing release. It is no longer necessary for a man to use up three wives in the course of an ordinary lifetime. Indeed the wife has pretty much an equal chance so far as the handicaps of parenthood are concerned.

The Industrial Revolution as affecting the home has not yet, however, borne its complete fruits. The burdens of labor in the home have been somewhat lifted from women, whether in their capacity of mothers or in their rôle as housekeepers, but the resulting leisure, such as it is, is not ordinarily correlated with opportunity for stimulating and creative employment of the same. It still seems necessary to keep up the home, and it is usually the wife that is tied to the wheel with a realization that the job is hardly commensurate with the newly won importance of the sex, and that the years are cheating her out of the career that

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her abilities and training qualify her to achieve. In spite of all the thought given to this question, there have been no appreciable steps toward a worthy solution, and thus economic advance has created a new tangle in domestic relations that it will require further economic advance to resolve.

In all the jumble of new freedoms and old constraints, the institution of marriage has surely held its own, but divorce has grown with startling strides. This new escape has been mostly to the advantage of women, a fact closely correlated with the opening of industrial and business careers that enable them to snap their fingers at unsuitable husbands. At the same time the lingering of the traditional disparity has burdened the males with alimony, which makes divorce a rather one-sided proposition. The growing impotence, however, of religious taboos in the matter of marriage and divorce testifies again to the extent of the secularization that has come to the modern world with the mechanization in-

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roduced by the inventor. Human ingenuity seems to be taking the place of Divine Providence, and supernal sanctions fade accordingly.

The Age of Surplus has brought another set of problems in the prolongation of infancy. The increasing intricacy of the industrial and business systems has made necessary a more and more elaborate preparation, and the increasing productivity of industry has made it possible to spare the young from labor, so that education even through adolescence has become the normal lot of an enormous proportion of our youth. During one generation, at least, this process lifts them above their parents and extends juvenile emancipation. Besides, most of the education is at state charge; so we arrive at a sort of collective parenthood that displaces family care. Even in the matter of prevention and treatment of disease and the provision of adequate nutrition, the state steps in, as is natural in a system requiring competent workers and fighters to promote

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the cause of capitalist profits at home and abroad. In consequence an additional process of standardization and regimentation replaces the old family heterogeneity and diversity. We bid fair to be all taken care of as well as the shrewd farmer's fat cattle.

Such a material analysis as the foregoing must seem cold-blooded to such as have been brought up on moral and spiritual conceptions of the family; but the idealistic element in the family tradition yields also to economic analysis. Thus chivalry with its peculiar tradition of romantic love was predicated on a situation in which lack of economic opportunity for female independence left women at the mercy of men. Under such circumstances it was natural for men to plume themselves on their superiority. In the lower classes, wife-beating might be a seemly expression of such a situation, whereas among those that professed a degree of refinement, chivalry came in as a kind of camouflaged superciliousness. Men would treat women decently as long as

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women deferred to their strength and admitted their superiority. When, however, women were welcomed into public employments, the basis of chivalry was gone, and the manifestation itself withered. At this point, for instance, there is a notable difference between the Old and the New South.

It is the same with ideals of feminine purity. Men of property have never wanted their goods to pass to other men's children; at least this is true since descent in the male line has prevailed. Accordingly female chastity came to be regarded as a *summum bonum*, and a husband was entitled to slay an adulterous wife and her seducer. Even when no property was involved (other than property in the wife herself) a man did not care to be burdened with other men's children; hence the virtuous ideal was extended even to women of the lower classes. Moralists have always been vexed, however, by the impossibility of applying the same standard to men. They have not usually seen

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that the difficulty hinged on the lack of an economic necessity for male chastity. A man's vice did not saddle his wife with the burden of other women's children; hence she had no valid ground of complaint so long as he did not neglect her and her household. Thus it was that women of slaveholding families were constrained to accept the male's intercourse with women of color, just as women of the bourgeoisie had to wink at their husbands' irregularities. Not even Puritan frugality of bodily energy was able entirely to curb male lasciviousness; so how could women in any clime lift an effective voice?

Changing economic conditions, however, have put a change upon the situation. Aside from the fact that the spread of birth-control makes it possible to cancel out the factor of economic burden from illicit love, there is the further fact that woman's economic opportunity outside the home increases her prerogative in the family relation so that she is increasingly in a position

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to hold her husband to a virtue like her own or else to claim for herself a license like his. Thus the artificial halo around womanly chastity is lifted, and a new equality of morals is on its way, though on which basis, strictness or looseness, is not yet apparent.

All in all it is clear that the modern materialistic world will insist on regarding marriage as a business contract rather than as a churchly sacrament, and that whatever spiritual values the family develops will have to grow out of the new social situation free from the old legal and ecclesiastical constraint. The whole subject of the family and its trends is too vast, however, for remotely adequate treatment in a chapter. The author has done greater justice to the theme in his "Social History of the American Family".

CHAPTER VII

RACE AND NATIONALITY

MANY of those not content with an economic interpretation of history have sought to posit alternative explanations on political, or religious, or familial interests, but still others fall back on race and nationality with their correlate loyalties and patriotisms. It is consequently particularly necessary to subject these phenomena to economic analysis.

Now race is an extremely elusive concept, as is also nationality. If by race is meant the idea of purity of descent from a single original stock, then there is no such thing as a race. Intermingling has gone on from time immemorial so that every race is an inextricable blend. Even so distinct a people as the Hebrews are indescribably mixed with all manner of strains, as is

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amply apparent even from the Hebrew scriptures with their account of the "mixed multitude" that accompanied the refugees from Egypt and the record of intermingling and intermixture in the Promised Land itself.

Nor is it apparent that any of the distinguishable human strains possesses all-round superiority as compared with others, or that there is any of them notably incapable of participating effectively in the stream of civilization. Consequently it is childish to attempt to build a theory of history on racial gradations.

As to race antipathy, it is clearly an acquired characteristic produced by the social environment. Children do not possess it natively. On the contrary it has to be developed in them by adult society, whether by a process of more or less unconscious infiltration or by formal instillation.

There is, in fact, no "race question" as such. If left alone, without social pressure or restraint, race mixture would go on at

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a rate rapid enough to produce in due course a uniform human kind, and would thus duplicate on a world scale what has taken place repeatedly in the past in local areas, such as Palestine or England.

Certain reasons exist, however, for the drawing of racial lines. As was remarked at the outset, we are here on a planet of limited size and limited resources, and the shiftlessness of mankind leaves the race in continual deficit, so that the problem of material income is universal and constitutes a perennial basis of conflict. Now it is true that better results would be had if the whole human family would pool its productive energies instead of cancelling them in conflict, but we have not yet arrived at such a degree of intelligence. Consequently we welcome plausible grounds for division into rival groups that will feel justified in robbing one another outright or in carrying on a running process of exploitation.

Herein lies the essence of what passes for a race question. It is hard to give plaus-

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ible grounds for discrimination against persons approximately like ourselves, but it is easier to justify the exploitation of groups that are unmistakably different in one respect or another. Almost any sort of difference will serve in a pinch, so that we have conflict between age groups, sex groups, religious groups, and so on. But the basis par excellence is notable difference in physical appearance. The medieval English master was under the troublesome necessity of putting an iron collar about his slave's neck as a sure badge of servile status. What a boon it would have been to him (or would be today to the Pittsburgh mill barons) if something could be fed to the working class to color it indelibly purple or green or orange, or some other hue that could become associated with a permanently servile status! If that could be done, a first-rate race question could be created in short order out of what previously had to pass as an economic relation.

But there are to hand racial groups that

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do not need to be colored, and hence the relations of economic power and weakness can be masked as a race problem, and accidental and incidental advantages or disadvantages can be measurably converted into durable stratification, a caste system. In other words, wherever a "race question" exists, the psychologist has no difficulty in determining that there is some process of exploitation that demands a cover. Moreover, if there is ever a "race war" it will be a revolt of suppressed peoples against the nations controlled by world exploiters.

Such an outcome is not unlikely. The Japanese have already forced recognition on a parity, and their defeat of Russia in 1904-5 sent a thrill into the heart of Africa at the thought that a dark race had beaten a white one. Now India is hammering at the door, and the demands of the Filipinos are only momentarily in abeyance. But such struggles are in no real sense race conflicts. They are battles between exploited and exploiter, and if the under peoples are suc-

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cessful, will open the way to internal conflicts of a like nature without any color mask. Thus the Japanese capitalists now have to reckon with a Japanese Labor and Socialist and Communist movement; and the same will be true of India or the Philippines, or of any other area that escapes from white sovereignty while capitalism is still in force.

Most people with a crusade on the race question, whether of intense discrimination or of radical levelling, quite miss the point and thus confuse the issue. Thus most "friends of the Negro" would be satisfied if the individual Negro had the same chance as the individual white man. Most abolitionists, for instance, went no farther in their thinking than an emancipation that would convert chattel slaves into wage slaves, with the same chance of rising that the white wage worker enjoyed. And the "equality" sought today by persons that have specialized on the cause of the Negro

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would consist mostly in the opening of "careers to talents" irrespective of race.

In other words, the race situation is thought of in terms of unfairness to individuals, and it is rarely recognized that a much greater problem than individual frustration is the problem of the depression of a whole industrial proletariat, and with it of the whole region where mass purchasing power is lowered. Moreover the attitude of the New England mill owners toward the nondescript white population of mill-workers, and the attitude of the upper classes in the South toward the white mill population are in essence identical with the attitude toward the Negro. There is the same contempt, and the same feeling that the workers are properly underlings. Of course the situation may be regarded as in some degree mitigated by the opportunity for an occasional white worker to rise to heights impossible to the Negro, but it is only a bourgeois ideal that can take comfort in such a distinction. So long as the

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majority stays down, the question of whether a stray individual is allowed to escape is a rather negligible one. That is to say, a proletariat is a proletariat, whether white or black, and the issue is in the main a conflict of Labor and Capital, with the race question functioning mostly to confuse the issue.

Such being the case, white workers bent on discriminating against Negro workers will find that the low economic conditions of the Negroes will hold their own wages down, and they will pay dearly for their indulgence in race feeling. The policies of many American trade unions in excluding Negroes are likely to prove suicidal. On the other hand, champions of the Negro who confine themselves to trying to force opportunity for the individual Negro to become a "success" must more and more realize that it is not worth while to try to convert a stray Negro here and there into a prosperous bourgeois citizen.

The whole issue is of course clouded by

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the question of "social equality", which is in itself a misnomer. It is a well known fact that people associate freely with others whom they do not regard as physically, or intellectually, or morally their equals, and on the other hand that a recognition of formal equality does not argue such congeniality as leads to association. In other words, economic equality, leading to political equality and equality of social condition, is not in itself a creator of companionship and comradeship in the recreational phases of life. Just what effect would be produced on race association if white and black Labor made common cause in the face of the employing class cannot easily be foretold. The probability is, however, that the ultimate effect would be such a breaking of race barriers as would leave the question of companionship optional with the individual. This is one of the contingencies that have to be faced by any region that accepts industrialization, with the resultant class struggle.

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Moreover the key to nationality and patriotism is the same as the key to race and race loyalties. The concept of nationality is just as elusive as that of race, and just as tangible among world issues. It is hard to tell what a nation is, or what nationality is. A nation can exist without unity in race, language, religion, economic interests; and nations possess varying degrees of essential unity; moreover, the question of dependence or independence is elusive, hinging to a great extent on size and wealth. Yet international relations are tangible enough to constitute the traditional gist of modern history.

Now what is the basis of international relations whether pacific or bellicose? There is, to be sure, much talk of "international law" and "national honor", but in reality the relations between nations are always at bottom sordid and mercenary. The question is as to how each nation may get the greatest sum total of material wealth for the profit of its ruling class. Thus the

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developments in international politics follow the trend of economic change and of the consequent business relations.

In such a setting it is futile to talk of national honor. National honor would consist in adhering deliberately to some policy adjudged permanently harmful to the nation but adhered to nevertheless because of some understanding or agreement recognized as binding. It would be the counterpart of the personal honor attributed by the Psalmist to the man "that sweareth to his own hurt and changeth not".

But the case with a nation is not like the case with the individual. He chooses as an individual and takes the consequence. In a nation, however, it is the government that chooses, and in view of existing notions of national sovereignty, for a government to do something regarded as working net harm to the country would be treason. In other words, the honorable thing would often be treasonable; inasmuch as the theory of nationality refuses to admit that there is a

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higher claim than national welfare. Not until current doctrine on this subject has been discarded can there really be a beginning of "national honor".

Meanwhile it is dishonest to pretend that there are any standards of moral integrity in the relations of sovereign states. Diplomacy is a tissue of manipulation and overreaching, and the diplomats of any considerable power would regard with amused contempt any neglect of other diplomats to push any national advantage to the limit. In fact it would not be believed that they were actually foregoing an advantage. Their behavior would occasion grave suspicion of something more deadly up their sleeves.

So far are we carried by rival claims to the earth's surface, the earth's opportunities, the earth's resources; and it is such rival claims that engender patriotism.

To be sure, patriotism is usually regarded as a spiritual value akin to if not identical with religion; but having viewed religion as a transfiguration of mundane interests,

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we are perhaps prepared to see patriotism in the same light.

The paradoxical thing about patriotism is that the masses seldom have any sound reason for being patriotic, inasmuch as none of the country belongs to them, and yet they commonly manifest a sacrificial loyalty; whereas the propertied classes, who own the land and the capital, are never any more patriotic than business interests require. While the masses at the front fight with condemned rifles, march in paper-soled shoes, and eat "embalmed beef", the masters at home coin such sufferings into excess profits and are willing even to trade with the enemy if the chances of greater gain seem to point in that direction. Such a situation is characteristic of ordinary warfare.

It happens, thus, that patriotism is a device for exploitation and profit far more frequently than it is a genuine social virtue. The masses may cherish it in all good faith, yet if it is merely a trap for their generous emotions misled by cunning propa-

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ganda, it is a consummate vice rather than a virtue. Indeed no modern nation has had a public opinion enlightened enough to be the seat of an intelligent or virtuous patriotism. The standard correlation of national loyalty has not been with morals and the soul, but with situations of economic exploitation and social befuddlement.

Nevertheless there may be situations in which it is to the momentary interest of an exploited working class to support the international interests of their exploiters, as, for instance, in Great Britain, where the Industrial Revolution has so packed the country with population dependent on foreign markets that it seems to be necessary for the workers to be loyal to the Empire for the sake of guaranteeing lines of connection that will keep mills and mines running. Thus we may expect to see the British Labor Party, with the support of the organized workers of Britain, deny India's aspirations for independence for fear that an independent India would raise serious

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obstacles to British trade and thereby complicate the problem of unemployment in Britain. Even if the Labor Party were in majority control of the government, such would be the normal reaction, and there is small response to the demand of radicals for the dissolution of the empire, and slight willingness to admit the prophecy of one British Labor man that a generation hence England may be about as important as Switzerland or Sweden.

Of course the policy finally adopted will not be put on the cold basis of mercenary self-interest. It will be tied to patriotism, and even to professions of interest in the welfare of the subject races; but unless the under levels of British Labor take control and ally with Russia, ways will certainly be found by the existing leadership to reconcile Socialist professions with imperialist practice.

International relations are thus in reality nothing more than a struggle over resources and over economic opportunity, and patriot-

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ism is but a transfiguration of national self-interest, which in capitalist countries means primarily the interest of the propertied classes. Racial and national interests are in no sense prime elements in modern civilization, or, for that matter, in the stream of history, but are, rather, particular manifestations of the underlying struggle for existence as occasioned by the meagerness of the world's resources in proportion to human needs. The solution is not sermonization but the development of a world system of economic efficiency on a service basis.

CHAPTER VIII

THE MOVEMENT OF ART

WHEN we come to the less utilitarian and "practical" phases of life, it is harder for most persons to recognize the correlation of interests. Particularly such as specialize in the "cultural" pursuits are prone to assert the autonomy and self-sufficiency of their sphere and to repudiate with scorn any offer of the sociologist to show a material basis for the things of the spirit. Such devotees fail to realize that if their work is not knit into the whole web of life it is spurious and worthless.

In the case of art, the correlation with workaday interests is obvious. In the first place, the principle of harmony and rhythm means such a stimulation of the bodily senses as conduces to an equilibrium of soundness and health. When the whole

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bodily system is working smoothly together with a free flow of all powers and energies we have the emotional system of Joy, which spells health, and likewise efficiency. But it is such a flow that art work gives, whether in its creation or in its enjoyment. Obviously such a heightening of the pulse of life and such a release of exuberance together with the establishment of a wholesome equilibrium is "practical" in the highest degree. There is a reason why unspoiled folk like to sing at their work, and why factory managers want to introduce music into their welfare work.

This correlation of the rhythm of art with the rhythm of work is well illustrated in the industry of primitive peoples, as when the women of the tribe sat in a circle around the fire and sang and swayed as they wove their basketry. Thus the rhythm of sound was translated into the rhythm of form and color and entered doubly into the whole balance of life. Indeed it is hard to disentangle art from work among primitive peoples,

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and ornament often preceded "use", as in the matter of original clothing, which was neither for protection, nor for modesty, but for adornment. If there were in those days Puritans to bewail the "waste" of time and material, at least they have left no record.

Even so practical a business as the procural of food was in those days intermingled with art. When the cave man drew the picture of the reindeer or the bison on the walls of his home, he was not merely whiling away an idle hour nor yet giving vent to a purely artistic impulse. His occupation was with primal magic that would increase the food supply. The drawing of the likeness was supposed to set up a telepathic process in the ethereal realm that would draw to the region herds of animals for slaughter. In other words, his drawing was a sacrament by partaking in which he put himself in the way of salvation. The reasoning may have been fallacious, but at any rate he drew no line between beauty and utility. Indeed it is doubtful whether he

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was capable of thinking in such terms, at which point he may have been greater than the casuistic philosopher.

But however erroneous his theory was his work had actual survival value in that it forced him to be more observant of the shape, the proportions, the poise and the anatomy of his quarry. Furthermore it heightened correlation of eye and nerve and muscle and tool. In both ways it made him a better hunter, more likely to fasten on a vital spot and more likely to wing his arrow automatically to that mark. Thus he builded better than he knew, and his esthetic proclivities expressed and reinforced his practical interests. Soul and stomach were indistinguishable.

It was not otherwise with collective art as expressed in the drama. When the primitive war party on the eve of an assault on the enemy gathered round the campfire and indulged in the pageantry of battle, going through in mimic fashion the typical events that were to occur on the morrow, the exer-

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cise was something more than an idle time-killer. It was a rehearsal of a drama, and the effect in heightening zeal and courage and in nerving heart and arm for the struggle was of great importance. It was the same with the rehearsal of past events, whether of recent memory, as on the return of the war party, or of traditional occurrences in tribal life. The collective morale required in the struggle for resources was heightened, and sustained at a higher level, as by the martial music of the later armies.

It is obvious, thus, that art grew out of workaday interests and expressed and sustained them, so that it was normally a central and integral part of a balanced existence, whether of the individual or of the social group. Accordingly we are warranted in looking for specific correlations between work and art, and between the general scheme of civilization and its artistic counterparts. This principle has been excellently illustrated by W. Flinders Petrie in his "Revolutions of Civilization", in which he

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exhibits visually the fact that the ups and downs of history are indexed by the art products of the several periods in the life of a nation.

That art should be correlated with general social development is perfectly obvious in view of the fact that it depends on materials, substances, contrivances in the same category as those of everyday industry and that it is produced by people whose personality is an organic product of a social environment. Both these bases of correlation are central to the history of art.

If one considers architecture as an illustration, it is obvious that sizes and shapes on which effect depends are conditioned by the available materials and by the development of technique for their use. Now, to take a current illustration, cement and structural steel were scarcely invented for the artist, but once invented they have of themselves created art works that could not have been conceived by architects unaware of these substances.

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On the other hand, the architectural possibilities are as definitely conditioned by the stage of civilization. For instance, the dangers of medieval life crammed cities within walls and made impossible a type of architecture depending on broad spaces, long vistas, and roomy perspective. Likewise today our preposterous scheme of land ownership and city congestion creates a type of structure that is no more than a tower or a combination of towers—a type that would never have arisen, no matter what the technical possibilities, if rent and dividend-seeking capitalism had not insisted on squeezing masses insanely into constricted spaces. It is very doubtful whether we should consider these new works of art beautiful if we were not schooled to the psychology of fantastic land values.

The work of the painter is similarly conditioned. Much depends directly on the invention of media and pigments, and indirectly on the question whether these are of such a nature as to survive from age to

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age. Thus the Renaissance painters were conditioned by the fact that the ancients had made limited use of paint and that ancient paintings did not endure, as contrasted with the fact that buildings and books were commonly available as models for artists in those fields. Modern painting is affected on the same principle, and the artist has to face the contrast between the commercial colors of today and the individually wrought pigments of an earlier period. On the other hand, the relative abundance and cheapness of canvas today has given per-durability to many an art specimen that would otherwise have been destroyed for the sake of re-use of the material on which it was painted.

Likewise with social correlations. Landscapes belong normally with immuration in city life. Portraits belong with an era of individualism. Pictures of rare fruits and game were appropriate to a time before market gardening, cold storage, and quick transportation. Today they are an anomaly,

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an affectation, at least when hung in prosperous homes. Or, to come to a more modern theme, the flourishing of cubism and futurism in the period before the War was symbolic of the chaotic scene-shifting that characterized the dissolution of capitalism on its way toward the grand catastrophe. Obviously, too, allowance has to be made for the fact that the plutocracy, with its purchasing power, is able to overrule all standards of art so that "whatever will sell is good art".

In the field of music, the same principle holds as in the visual realm. The musical instrument is a tool or a machine and corresponds to the general range of economic technique. Thus organ music depends now on the electric motor, and the whole psychology of all music production is conditioned by the fact that it is to be recorded and transmitted by phonograph and radio. Moreover the permanent preservation of the voice and the technique of the master on phonographic records lends to music the

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kind of historical continuity that has hitherto been impossible, and is bound to produce a cumulative quality, which may be greatly to the good, or greatly to the bad, according as the art remains flexible or succumbs to traditionalism.

The type of music that will be cultivated in any period, however, depends on the social tone of the times. Thus jazz betokens the abandoned, reckless irresponsibility of a period when human passions, released by a brutish war, are unable to find any wholesome footing again in the decadent capitalist order and when the battle for a communist society is still too crucial to admit of great balance or great tranquillity.

The same principles apply to the drama. Its structure and performance are vastly dependent on the development of material technique, as for instance in the matter of light effects; and its tone and quality mirror the civilization of its period. Specifically, Richard Wagner used the theatre as an illustration of his thesis that true art is im-

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possible in a capitalist society. The rich man, he said, goes to the theatre sated and bored by a meaningless round of stupid social conventionalities and can be moved only by something hectic and dazzling. The poor man goes benumbed and deadened by a ceaseless routine of purposeless humdrum toil and can be reached only by the lurid and sensational. Hence, said Wagner, a social revolution is necessary before art can come into its own.

In the realm of letters, the correlation of art with material and social development is even more obvious. The problem of a supply of writing material long limited and handicapped the writer. It was only with the invention of cheap paper and printing and of the free public library that literature could be much more than an esoteric art. Naturally the quality of the whole performance has been profoundly altered by the change. But these mechanical determinants are less significant than the influence of social conditions and interests,

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as for instance the cult of biography referred to in the first chapter as over against the socialistic trend in the period before the War. Authors may affect to hold themselves superior to the current of the times, but their avoidances no less than their choices are determined for them by the social interests of the period, so that the whole trend of letters is determined by the social forces.

All this is to say that there is no such thing as eternally great art. To be sure, the underlying principle of organic rhythm and symmetry and harmony wholesome for man may be present permanently in a work of art, but as a rule we fail to detect or be much influenced by such qualities unless they are couched in the forms to which our age lends the weight of its approval. One of the best illustrations of this relativity is in the realm of fashions in dress. In any period the prevailing style seems beautiful, but a few years removed nearly all seem impossible. Likewise the Negro in central

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Africa is shocked by the ugliness of the first white man he sees, while the Negro in the United States patterns after the white type of beauty. Thus it appears that in esthetics as elsewhere everything depends on time and place and circumstances.

One principle that requires treatment before we close the subject is that of the compensatory significance of art, which has already been hinted. If we can't build castles in New York, we will build castles in Spain; if we can't build castles on earth, we will build castles in the air; if we can't spend the winter at Palm Beach, we want a Florida landscape over our fireplace (or else we don't want it, because we shrink from being reminded); if we can't have a beautiful wife or a handsome husband, we want portraits and statues of nymphs and gods to make up. If life is a dull grind, we want a touch of grace and beauty and charm in music or painting or poetry. Thus art is not merely a handmaiden of work; it is also a vicarious service that fills our aching voids

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and takes the place of reality. It is a tangible heaven for such as find their souls tuned to it.

Some students of man and society have been led by such considerations as the foregoing to pronounce the doom of art. Modern man does not want sympathetic magic to bring him food; he pushes buttons and pulls levers and rings cash registers. Modern man does not want imaginative irradiation of prospective exploits; he studies cold-blooded treatises on advertising and salesmanship. Modern man does not want to be kidded and soothed; he wants to know; and science crowds out art.

To be sure there are not so many modern men. Life is still incomplete enough to require compensations. Modern high-power efficiency will presently offer tangible satisfactions of all kinds on the installment plan so as to discount and cast out the spiritual, the immaterial. In other words, it is alleged man will become so completely the master of material forces and material substances

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that there will be a solid utility to satisfy every want, and art will disappear.

Such reasoning is plausible but fatuous. Release from toil means abundance of leisure, so that, in last analysis, man is thrown back on himself for something to make life full and satisfying. It must be in the organic rhythms of his own body and mind that he will live, and all material utilities must correspond more and more to this craving. Already, furniture, house decoration, clothing, is becoming more esthetic. The automobile appeals as much to the eye as to the itch for speed. Eyesores are being removed from our highways. Magazine advertisements rival the old masters. Art is surely coming into its own. To be sure there are discordant, jangling elements that perhaps more than ever screech through the world. Thus our world of art is like our whole civilization, an inconsistent blending of the old and the new, of the coarse and the fine. Naturally we cannot look for the triumph of symmetry and harmony and bal-

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ance in art, so long as industry, government and society are organized on the principle of conflict and so long as most of the population lacks the means to live well. Society itself must be a model of proportion and equilibrium and stability before art can take on its appropriate excellencies in full measure. But when we get a social order with human values uppermost, we may expect a flowering of human nature into the levels of beauty and power.

CHAPTER IX

THE CURRENT OF THOUGHT

COMING to the realm of the intellect, we approach a territory whose inhabitants are prone to claim independence. The philosopher or the scientist does not like to be regarded as a mere product. He likes to believe that he partakes of creative power, the ability to fashion something out of nothing by drawing on his inner consciousness or by applying certain pure powers of the mind to the analysis of external realities. Social science, however, will not admit such a claim to autonomy. There is a sociology of thought, and a complete study of this phase of sociological research pretty completely covers the work of both scientist and philosopher.

To begin with, thought is in itself a social process. No one would be able to think un-

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less he had grown up in an environment of thinkers, which is another way of saying that the power of the intellect grew up imperceptibly from less to more by reason of the fact that man was a social animal that developed the power of speech.

Normally, then, thinking is not the act of an individual brain, but a process of interstimulation. Even when most alone with ourselves, our minds are engaged in no unique and original process. On the contrary, our thinking in solitude consists of making comparisons between our own present ideas (themselves the product of past social experience) and the ideas of others retained in memory or gained at the moment from books; or else of comparisons between different ideas of our own, which go back to earlier social experience. Nothing comes out that was not first put in, nor were any ideas put in by heredity.

Thus we are compelled to assume that all systems of thought reflect the social experience of the thinker, and that all schools of

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thought amount to a mirroring of the social
experience of some group; often, to be sure,
in representative or symbolic form, but none
the less precisely and significantly.

For example there was a certain ancient
Greek philosopher who taught that the
whole universe is unstable, a continual proc-
ess of flux, destined to be destroyed finally
by fire. Such a formulation seems abstruse
enough and suggests no social situation, but
it is tremendously illumined when we note
that the philosopher in question belonged
to the party of beaten aristocrats superseded
by the democracy. Naturally everything
looked as it did to President Taft in 1912—
nothing stable, nothing dependable. There
were no foundations under the feet of the
old Greek's social class. Ruin was in sight.
Thus his philosophy reflected, doubtless un-
consciously, the social experience of which
he was a part.

On the other hand there was an opposing
teacher who saw unity and meaning under-
neath and came to the conclusion that "all

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is one and that one is God". Here again we have an abstract doctrine, but it, too, is irradiated when we learn that this thinker belonged to the triumphing democracy. Now the democracy naturally stands for the alleged sovereignty of the social whole—"the voice of the people, the voice of God"—and the social experience of the party furnished a base for the philosopher's metaphysics, whether or not he himself dreamed of any connection.

Indeed the very existence of philosophy is an index of a social situation. Philosophy grew up in ancient Greece as a result of the development of trade, which brought a flood of varying traditions, customs, ideas to focus at a common center in Asia Minor. It was associated with the appearance of a wealthy class in touch with the currents of trade but living a roomy life in proximity to the warehouses yet not in them. In Phœnicia the space had been too cramped to provide a roomy perspective, and in Egypt life had been too provincial to provide adequate

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Philosophy was thus a product of towns and trade. As someone has remarked, reflection on existence does not arise until the freshness of existence has faded. Moreover Greek philosophy showed two well marked periods determined by the degree of urbanization. In the earlier period, while man was still close to Nature, philosophy was couched in terms of cosmology. It was a sort of transfigured physics and chemistry. In the later period, when the environment was an environment of men rather than of Nature, philosophy became social science—psychology, ethics, sociology—of a sort. This type of philosophy explains itself in social terms and does not have to be decoded.

Nevertheless, even in the field of social philosophy it is necessary to account for the conflicting schools of opinion. How, for instance, in one period of English history could one school of thought follow Hobbes,

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with his vindication of autocracy; another, Locke with his rationalization of parliamentary supremacy; another, Harrington with his premonitions of Jeffersonian democracy; and so on? The difference was not, of course, due to variations in mental capacity or acquired intelligence. It was due rather to a conflict of class interest. Peculiarities of individual experience might account for difference in personal viewpoint, but the more significant thing is that there were rival social groups requiring spokesmen and leaders and ready to line up behind the appropriate formulas. Intellectual giants may flatter themselves that intellectual battles are fought and decided on intellectual grounds, but in reality such battles are always primarily emotional, and the significant ones are those that mirror class interests.

American history does not give us much scope for the study of philosophy. In a new country it is cheaper to import philosophy than to divert labor from pioneering and

THE CURRENT OF THOUGHT turn it into intellectual channels. But in the field of importation there are some interesting sociological parallelisms.

For instance, the seventeenth century was the century of Stuart autocracy with its pretensions to absolutism—a perfect foil for the Calvinist theology, with its notions of divine sovereignty, immutable decrees and arbitrary choice. By the next century, however, deism came in, with its notion that God is himself limited by the laws of Nature and its repudiation of special providence. This philosophy reflects perfectly the coming of parliamentary supremacy with its curbing of the power of the sovereign. Then in the nineteenth century came pantheism, with its doctrine of divine immanence—God in everything; which, again, parallels the introduction of political democracy, with its theory of diffused popular sovereignty.

Someone has said that before the introduction of the steamship it took ideas a generation to pass from Europe to America;

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but the steamship came, and forthwith German transcendentalism appeared in America. But its vogue here was due to an American situation. New England was shifting from a basis in shipping to a basis in factories. The old order was undermined and the new was not yet predominant. Consequently lacking solid ground under foot, men of promise soared into the clouds. The tendency was furthered by the fact that the triumph of Jacksonian democracy for the time deprived young New Englanders of national political careers. Thus there was sufficient reason for the flighty forties—the so-called “hot air” period of American history, with its visions of millenniums. Brook Farm symbolizes well enough the philosophic vogue. The rise of the Republican Party, however, brought dreamers to earth and offered careers in the official ranks of advancing capitalism, so that Transcendentalism lay low till the constriction of the old prosperous middle class brought Chris-

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tian Science as the reincarnation of the
older cult.

The uncanny philosophy of Mother Eddy is, indeed, explainable in the same general way as its forerunner. It is the cult of a segment of the well-to-do middle class, whose prosperity is, nevertheless, inconsequential as compared with the fortunes of the new plutocracy. Finding its material base crumbling with the advance of Big Business, a certain portion of the respectable bourgeoisie rises anew into the clouds. "No matter!" Of course not. If you cannot control material forces, make as if they did not exist. That is to say, the metaphysics of Christian Science is a sour-grapes philosophy signaling the decay of middle-class power.

It brings in, however, the additional factor of strain and tension in modern high-pressure civilization, whose crass materialization of life has failed to "build a safety for the soul". Medical practice has been kept under the spell of physical, material

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technique and has thus failed to keep up with the needs of the times. It has had little capacity for dealing with neurasthenia induced by the rattle and bang of predatory capitalism. Consequently there was room for a pseudo-science that would, even in a bungling, amateurish fashion, afford relief. But the necessary rule-of-thumb procedure required a philosophy to justify and dignify it, and thus there was an additional ground for the metaphysics of Mrs. Eddy.

Only in the past generation, however, has the United States arrived at the stage for a sure-enough, genuine native philosophy. The amassing of capital wealth, the completion of the job of pioneering and the approach of the United States to world imperialism furnished the basis for the formulation of American thought.

The first expression of this state of affairs was William James's pragmatism, with its repudiation of abstract theoretic criteria and its reliance on the practical test of workability. Whatever will work is good

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and true. "The proof of the pudding is in the eating." This was a very normal philosophy for a people with unlimited natural resources and a big job of development. It was in fact a glorification of the philosophy and practice of the man of affairs impatient of theory and strong for results.

John Dewey's philosophy is an advance beyond pragmatism. It is characteristically American, however, in its insistence that thought must develop in the process of handling things and situations. In fact it is itself an expression of the need for intelligent social control in the ordering of world affairs, and is wonderfully illuminated by the fact of Professor Dewey's activity in the Labor movement, as also his presidency of the People's Lobby, with its attempt to inject a progressive influence into national politics. Philosophy has descended from the clouds, it has come out of the closet; it assumes leadership of affairs. In other words, it avows its own social correlations.

CHAPTER X

THE PATH OF SCIENCE

THE western world has indeed made thought tributary to things, so that there is no anomaly in finding a philosopher functioning as a man of affairs. If such is the case with the philosopher, how much more with the scientist! The industrial laboratory offers such incentives to the expert that it requires a man of extraordinary self-denial to devote himself to pure research or even to the teaching of science. So much is this subordination of science to utilitarian interests the vogue that the fountains of pure knowledge are in danger of drying up.

And yet the scientist likes to think that he is the pioneer of civilization, the vanguard of progress. He regards himself as the custodian of the claims of the intellect and would be insulted if told that he is only

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a product, a tool, a vehicle for the social forces.

He cannot, however, escape from the fact that research is a collective pursuit dependent on uniformity of measurement and standardization of method, and that an isolated savant would be utterly helpless. Neither can he miss the fact that his materials, tools and scales are the products of the evolution of business and industry. The present-day scientist would be virtually helpless if moved back into the period before the Industrial Revolution.

The history of science itself testifies to its social nature. If it were not for a fairly complete periodical literature reporting the progress of research and thereby preventing to some extent unnecessary duplication, the most common phenomenon in the scientific world would be approximately simultaneous arrival at specific new truths by men unaware of one another's existence. The occurrence of such coincidence shows of course that a scientific discovery is not a

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product of the individual brain but a product of the times, and that the new truth pushing toward the light is bound to find an outlet in this or that or the other quarter.

But science is quite incapable of autonomous development. The inconsiderable advance of science in the ancient world after the first beginnings had been made was due to the fact that there was little industrial demand for it. The prevalence of slavery in the Mediterranean world and the absence of fuel prevented an Industrial Revolution in ancient times, and this absence of necessity for industrial improvement nipped science in the bud.

In the Middle Ages, moreover, the economic world was too undeveloped to call for science. Roger Bacon could talk of suspension bridges and ocean liners, of automobiles and airplanes, but his dreams aroused no interest because technique had not developed into sight of such a stage and there was no demand for the method or the results of science.

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It was not, indeed, until after the development of trade had given rise to the modern business man and the capitalist economic system with its zeal for profits that there was any place for science; and even then it took time for the business world to get to the point of definitely supporting research. Francis Bacon, at the beginning of the modern era, was able to block out far more in the direction of scientific method than could be lived up to at the time. In fact it was only after the Industrial Revolution, with its burst of technical innovation and its prodigious increase of output, that a real impetus to science set in.

Moreover the inventor has till now taken precedence over the scientist. Men like Edison mean more to the generality of mankind than do the scientists, and their work creates the momentum that makes whatever demand exists for the work of the pure scientist.

Thus the scientist has occasion for due humility, and ordinarily he feels it. If he

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has any practical intelligence at all, he observes that the world is dominated by the business man, and ordinarily the scientist is not of a militant and worldly enough temperament to dispute this control. He usually does the expected thing, and it is decidedly abnormal when a scientist like Soddy refuses to lend himself to the capitalist business of war-making. More typical is the great American biologist who pronounced the opinion that since the capitalists have succeeded they are therefore evidently the fit and entitled to our deference. Most scientists may never formulate this philosophy, but they live by it.

Thus an organization such as the American Association of University Professors may be supposed to contain a reasonable modicum of the scientific interest and the scientific spirit, yet in all the years of its existence it has hardly done a thing for academic freedom. It talks and investigates, but its professional self-respect is not high enough for action of an effective sort. It is

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apparently willing to let vested interest set the tone of the higher learning in America.

That is to say that science is an after-thought and an underling in the American scheme of things. Its humiliating position is of course rationalized by the argument that it is not for the scholar to take sides or be an advocate, and that "the passionless pursuit of passionless intelligence" is the worthy scientific ideal.

This profession shows, however, that our perverse social order does not allow scientists to be scientific. An elementary knowledge of psychology would assure the savant that there is no such thing as an emotionless interest and that in all lines save the most abstract and theoretical formulations of remote knowledge some one always has an axe to grind; so that every advance of science is a partisan issue and subject to the play of emotional preference; so that it is only after science is fossilized that it ceases to be controversial. It is argued, nevertheless, that the scientist must not take sides in social

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conflict; whereas social science makes it as clear as anything can be that the only way the scientist can count for anything positive in the advance of civilization is by allying himself in the class struggle with the group to whom the future belongs—namely the working class.

This is particularly the case with the social scientists—the economists, sociologists, political scientists and the like. Their specialties are mostly a product of the modern era, particularly of the period since the Industrial Revolution, which has made it necessary to take stock of human resources and organize their utilization.

But the social scientists have not gathered themselves together in any clear-headed fashion with a view to taking sides with the future. On the contrary, most of their work consists mainly of rationalization to justify the existing order of things, and it is change in the social order rather than abstract intelligence on the part of the social scientists that leads them on step by step from one

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position to another. As some one has said, the influence of the economists on industry has been about equal to the influence of grammarians on language.

Thus when we call the present the scientific age we are using the term in a very relative sense. Science is still in the main an afterthought and it never throws its beams very far ahead or very far from the path marked out by the dominant social class. Any persons calling themselves scientists who seriously question the established social order or suggest the probability of intrinsic change in it are outlawed as quacks or cranks or Bolsheviki, not only by the business régime that presides over the higher learning, but by the fraternity of scientists themselves.

All this is to be expected in view of what we know about social correlation. There can never be a real Age of Science in a class society because conflicting group interests will prevent. There can never be a real supremacy of intelligence in a class society,

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because pugnacious emotions will always prevail over cool reason. In the nature of things, science can never be the guide of life so long as the ruling class profits by obscurantism and shrinks from the disclosure of ultimate realities. The only ones that can be real friends of science are such as have nothing to lose by its revelations.

On this basis of interpretation it would seem that the best prospects for science today are in Russia, where the régime in power is freer from traditionalism than in any other land and more in need of every conceivable resource for the achievement and consolidation of welfare. It may be that the triumph of the working-class throughout the world will provide the economic and social basis for the supremacy of science and for the intelligent governance of human progress. As for the existing capitalist régime, it seems far more likely to succeed in the scientific annihilation of mankind than to turn over the direction of human affairs to those who know.

CHAPTER XI

THE ROLE OF EDUCATION

THE general ineptitude of our social order is in spite of centuries of ostensible effort to direct human affairs through education; nor is there much reason to think that the situation is greatly improved since "Education" has become one of the "social sciences". Or perhaps the educational specialists have not yet sufficiently realized that Education is a social science. It is only a couple of decades since the author of a text on the "Principles of Education" naïvely remarked in the preface that he had intended to include a section on the Social Principles of Education, but had left it out for lack of room; just as an architect might say that he had intended to put a foundation under the house but needed all the money for the superstructure.

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But at any rate no one is likely to deny the social correlations of education inasmuch as every educational system is deliberately adopted or sanctioned by some social group with a definite aim to serve. There may, however, be considerable clash of opinion on details of interpretation.

If, for instance, it is affirmed that the reason for the persistence of the classic languages and formal mathematics as the core of a liberal education was due to the fact that, being of no practical use, they served as an advertisement to the world that the person proficient in them belonged to a class that could afford to waste time and money in futile activities, the protagonist of the authenticated culture will be sure to allege the disciplinary value of such subjects and he will steadfastly refuse to budge from his position even though it is conclusively shown that discipline comes from the method of teaching and not from any particular body of subject matter.

The persistence of empty tradition and

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inane imitation of the materially successful classes cannot be better illustrated than by the infliction of these medieval subjects on the average run of American high school students, and for a long time on the generality of American college students, even including the Negroes newly delivered from chattel slavery.

A more vicious reflection of the perverse social order consists in the assumption that worthy education is primarily intellectual, whereas the most elementary acquaintance with psychology would assure us that all bona fide education is primarily a matter of action and secondarily of emotion, with the intellectual element ancillary. For instance, the president of a certain college, objecting to the attempt to bring the college work to bear on certain local community problems, maintained that it is not the function of the college to make over the local community but rather to take young people and train them for four years that they may go back and assume leadership in their own com-

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munities. In other words, college education is to be an abstract intellectual process carried on as nearly as may be in a vacuum, with no provision for the emotional strain engendered in such an abnormal situation.

At the same time a leading alumnus of the college in question was lamenting the fact that the graduates were apparently not assuming responsibility in their own communities. For that matter, it is the rarest thing in the world for college graduates as such to take actual leadership at any point in the real world. If they are possessors of wealth or of recognized business standing, they may be leaders, but otherwise they usually defer to the business man. And it is natural that they should inasmuch as their education has been as a rule too unreal to give them self-confidence in a real world, and too censored and apologetic to give them self-respect as intellectual leaders or community guides.

That is to say, the arbiters of our social system do not want a type of education that

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would give leadership to intellectual eminence, because such a state of affairs would be injurious to the prestige of the mere money maker who now dominates the average American community. Consequently any attempt of the school or college to treat the community as a social laboratory in which students may learn the ways of life is sure to be frowned upon and choked unless the scheme is narrowly limited to meet the petty prejudices of the business community.

This limitation on education is particularly marked in the matter of the personal interests and activities of the teacher. Even if he is measurably free to speak his mind in the classroom, the responsible authorities wax uneasy if he tries to accomplish in the real world of social interests and group conflicts any work that would develop in him a mind worthy of respect by the students. He may be a professor of the social sciences with the same need for active participation in politics and in the economic activities of

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the community that the professor of physics has for performance of laboratory experiments, but in most cases his job would be imperilled if he made free to perform the rôle of free and independent citizenship according to the varied needs of the social situation.

Another detraction from educational values lies in the fact that teachers' salaries are so notoriously meager that, in a world where worth is measured by the dollar, it is impossible for students in general really to respect the instructors. Indeed in America today it is psychologically impossible for children or youth to respect a teacher whose income is insufficient to maintain a standard of living equal to that of the students' own households; and herein lies one of the major problems of school discipline.

Education is indeed a mere makeshift until such time as intellectual eminence and moral worth are given a chance to develop such practical capacity in the workaday world that the educator will be the most

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respected member of the community solely by reason of his office and his practical qualifications for it; or, in default of that standard, until the educator's income is made equal to the best incomes in the community. That is to say, if our civilization refuses to rate people on their merit, then the only way to get a really respected educational system is by granting the pecuniary insignia of social esteem; but neither alternative will be met by our present-day society.

The crux of the matter is that those in charge of our present civilization do not really want for their own edification the light that might be shed by an untrammelled educational system; nor are they willing to take the chance that society may turn to any other leadership. Modern industrialism cannot, however, carry on without an increasing amount of routine training; and that is what our educational system is, in general, prepared to give in lieu of education. Rarely is the student brought face to

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face with any serious challenge to the current scheme of things. Rarely is he led seriously to question the constitution of the established order. To the conventional business man the universities may appear nests of Bolshevism, but that impression of their mild and gentlemanly dealing with social realities merely serves to show up more sharply the benighted condition in which prior education has left the bulk of the population.

But all this is to be taken for granted. It is not within the power of the teacher to accomplish a social revolution. Minds are not really formed in the class-room, and it is not possible for mere instruction to offset the total influence of the social environment, even if the schools had an opportunity to work primarily on those classes in society that would profit most by social change. The lure, for instance, of "American opportunity" is so great that it would be hard for the most enlightened teacher, even if guaranteed perfect freedom, perma-

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nently to eradicate the disposition to individual climbing from the make-up of even the children of the working class. A university professor may on occasion manage to make liberals out of a few students, but most of them succumb shortly to the pressure of a competitive environment controlled by standards of material success.

Another line on the social correlations of education may be had by an analysis of what academic status amounts to. Ostensibly an academic institution is devoted to the pursuit of truth without bias, without fear or favor. If law were sound and well applied, the degree-granting power would be confined to such institutions as make no discriminations on the score of opinions and affiliations. As it is, however, all academic institutions have a profound social bias, whether denominational, political, economic or what not. The fact that during the War virtually all institutions of the higher learning manifested themselves as appendages of a national war machine in-

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stead of adhering to their legitimate rôle as arenas for truth-seeking ought to have been sufficient to convince even the most naïve that education is not in any sense scientific but is rather a matter of emotional propaganda.

The same fact is very evident from the ordinary attitude toward unionization of teachers. The typical school board would not object to its teachers joining the local Chamber of Commerce, but it would be up in arms if they should identify themselves with the Teachers' Union. It would not object to their being openly identified with the dominant political party of the locality but it would take exception to their being known as Socialist or Communist voters, or, sometimes, even as members of the unpopular one of the old parties.

On the other hand, the origin of our modern free public school system itself was not from a pure interest in the abstract merits of formal instruction. On the contrary, the movement of a century ago that

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finally led to real public instruction was in large measure a Labor movement. The newly enfranchised working-class seemed to need education for intelligent use of the ballot, and it was hoped that free schools might meet this need. Consequently the Labor movement of the time pushed hard for the establishment of a general public school system and won its demand. Thus in its origins the school system of today is in large degree a product of the implicit class struggle.

Its achievement, however, could scarcely be construed as a Labor victory. The demand of the workers was granted, not that it was an effective Labor demand, but because it was a general civic and social demand that fitted into the requirements of the new commercial and industrial system for somewhat intelligent workers. Moreover, the public school system has done virtually nothing to enlighten the children of the workers about their position in society or about their rights and interests or about

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the possibility of improving the status of the working-class as a whole. On the contrary, it has made for the decapitation of Labor by encouraging members of the working-class to climb out of it and by equipping them for identification with the upper classes.

Here again, education is a reflection of the social situation in a country that until recently had an abundance of good free or cheap land and a plethora of "careers open to talents". It would, indeed, have been strange if the educational system had really prepared the masses to face the future that is now upon the nation, with free land gone, the farmer bankrupt, the professions walled in by educational requirements at increasingly prohibitive cost, and the old lines of business enterprise absorbed by large-scale organizations that leave less and less opportunity for independent careers. Nor is any considerable educational effort being devoted today to preparing the rising generation of Americans for such a situation.

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The most that is being done is to prepare the youth to be shrewder hirelings of Big Business and thus to find a career as dependent underlings.

The correlation with the social system is further apparent in the scheme of ratings, marks, grades. Normally students would work in groups, assisting one another, and turning out a joint product; but the schools are unable to get away from the idea of competition and individual grading. Naturally enough in view of the fact that the young are being prepared not for a world of social co-operation but for a world of private competition; not for a world of collective bargaining, but for a world of individual contracts; not for a world of communal achievement, but for a world of individual rivalry certified by competitive wage and salary ratings.

All in all, education turns out to be what might normally be expected—a parallel of the social system, an instrumentality for its confirmation, a vehicle for conservatizing

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tradition and conformity. Consequently the students have to find inspiration proper to youth in extra-curricular activities; but these, in turn, are mostly idle waste of time and energy, and are very seldom anything but thoughtless mirrorings of the aimless recreational activities of a predatory adult world. They are a refuge, a release, an escape; for an educational system that reflects a hackneyed social order does not of itself contain enough vivacity to engage the normal buoyant interest of youth. Theoretically education might be the vehicle of social rejuvenation, of social revolution; but to expect it to perform such a function in a class society is the height of naïveté.

CHAPTER XII

THE STRUGGLE OF CLASSES

IDEALISTS would like to believe in the feasibility of progress through education or moralization, and intellectuals would like to make out that civilization is in some sense a function of human intelligence; but whatever modicum of truth there may be in such an approach to the social problem it is pretty evident from a survey of history that progress in the past has been entirely a by-product. Individuals may have pursued their ends with some degree of intelligence and so may small groups, but masses of men, and certainly society as a whole, can be thought of only as drifting in the current of social forces. Whatever general world progress may have taken place was certainly unplanned and uncontrived. It was an incidental by-product of the multi-

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furious pulling and hauling of interest groups pursuing each its own end, nor can it be said that the consciousness of the interested individual or group ever gave a perfect representation of the forces producing the action.

Consequently, whoever today wishes to participate effectively in the stream of history must needs attach himself to some group engaged in social conflict. Co-operation universal is the ultimate norm to be attained when mankind has become sensible enough to eliminate the causes of conflict, but the pacifist millennium is not to be attained by ways of peace, nor is the rule of reason to be achieved by sweet reasonableness. On the contrary, abstract reason and abstract morality have no other effect than to leave those that indulge in them to any great degree stranded and futile. In particular, the intellectual who prides himself on his scholarly detachment and his scientific impartiality thereby confesses his own negligibility in the current of his-

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tory. He is too scientific to be effectually scientific. He is in the same case as the moralist so good that he is good for nothing. His worship of an intellectual fetish blinds him to the dynamic realities of progress, just as the other's conscience tangles him in casuistry.

There is, indeed, such a thing as being so right that one's rightness is of no consequence. The pure moralist or the abstract pietist is no better instrument of social progress than is the detached intellectual. It might be well if every person could be so evangelized as to make him fit perfectly into the music of universal harmony, but since only a negligible minority is at present so adaptable, some other counsels are in order.

The lesson of sociology, then, for the intellectual, the idealist, the Christian, is that the only way to count in the world is by identification with the universal struggle, and identification with the side to which

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belongs the future. This is a hard lesson, but it has to be learned.

A cursory survey of human history shows, in fact, that the vital principle of historical momentum lies in class struggle. The struggle may be between different exploiting classes, as between nomad brigands and settled landlords, or between landlords and capitalists, or between merchant capitalists and industrial capitalists, or between industrial capitalists and financial capitalists. Such struggles for the privilege of exploiting the masses have characterized from the outset the history of civilization, and in the order indicated they mark accurately enough the great stages in human progress. It may be no more comfortable to be plundered by an investment banker than by a brigand, but it is more advanced. If we are indeed falling under the domination of actual yeggmen and racketeers, then perhaps capitalist civilization has boxed the compass and returned to its cradle. It is

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in fact not hard to believe that capitalism is in its second childhood.

The profounder struggle, however—that between exploiter and exploited—has gone on parallel with the other conflict between exploiters. Cultivator against raider, slave against master, serf against lord, yeoman gild against master gild, wage-earner against capitalist—all these revolts of the ultimate productive forces constitute the inmost core of history, and, from the standpoint of present-day interest, are what gives history its practical meaning.

This is true inasmuch as the clashes between exploiting classes have reached their final consummation. Beyond the financier there is no more advanced, no more refined exploiting interest conceivable. The investment bankers of different countries may, indeed, fall foul of one another and threaten the end of civilization, but there is no other exploiting class in reserve to take the scepter of power and refresh the system of predation.

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That is to say, the next transfer of power must be from the hands of Property to the hands of Labor; not that the working-class is nicer, or nobler, or purer, or lovelier, or brighter, or sharper, but merely that it is next in order of historical succession. Either it comes to power or civilization peters out and perishes.

Now such considerations give pause to the professor. No Labor organization, whether Right or Left, regular or Bolshevik, is just such as the professor would plan. If his pure intelligence were made omnipotent he could contrive and impose a much sounder, a much more effective organization than the American Federation of Labor, or than the Communist Party. But the Labor movement is as it is and not as the professor would have it. Consequently he is forced to reflect that it was not by reason of superior virtue or superior nobility that the capitalist took the world from the feudal lord. It was merely that the development of production and exchange had

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They may be right; for it is quite conceivable that the business-man's quarrels will exterminate the race in the next World War but barring such a simple solution it is as certain as anything human ever can be that the working-class will take the world away from the propertied class and replace capital by community.

Not that the process is absolutely simple. There may yet be contests between technicians and craftsmen, or between craftsmen and laborers, for priority and privilege, just as there have been between various types of proprietors; but such clashes can be taken care of when Labor rules. The thing for every intelligent and honest person to decide now is whether he

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thinks that the rule of the business man is to be permanent or is to be replaced by the rule of the worker, and to take sides accordingly, either in defense of the established order or in behalf of a new day.

A candid thinker will of course admit that, however intellectual his reasonings may be, his final decision will be the result of his tastes and desires as developed by his experience. In other words, class-consciousness rather than abstract logic or pure reason will finally swing his choice. Thus we return to the original proposition that the destiny of man hinges, as yet, not on pure reason or abstract right but on the resultant of class conflicts.

In such a situation most old-fashioned Americans are lost, inasmuch as they belong to the middle-class, which no longer has any basis of power. The farmer is helpless in the face of railroad, machinery company, fertilizer company, commission merchant and banker, nor will the business interests allow co-operation or government

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relief to go far enough to reinstate the agrarian in power. The small business group are helpless in face of wholesaler, banker and chain system. The professional people are destined to become wage-employés of corporations if they have not already done so. There is still a class in possession of moderate incomes, but income is not the crucial test, and the social power of the middle class is gone.

Nevertheless the old middle-class psychology appropriate to Jefferson and Jackson, and Lincoln and Johnson—and Wilson—persists and makes it well-nigh impossible for its possessors to recognize their real position as exploited proletarians. The ordinary member of this class finds it easier to let his professional or his property psychology align him with the major capitalist interests than to allow himself to take his place with Labor, where he actually belongs. On the political field, this situation registers itself in the waning of the Democratic Party, the historic expression of the

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“climbing” interests, and the rapid approach in national politics to a one-party system. Quixotic attempts to launch a Liberal Party of some persuasion or other corroborate the analysis by their very futility; and a Labor Party is not yet in sight.

For not even the wage worker is able to take a Labor viewpoint. His mind is still responding to the conditions of the nineteenth century when free farms, small business, and easy professions held open a way of escape from the wage class. These doors are virtually closed, but the chance of inflated earnings for a few favored workers sustains the illusion and staves off class-consciousness.

Even if an effective Labor Party were established, however, it would doubtless turn out, just as in Great Britain and Germany, to be the inmost entrenchment of capitalism. This is so inasmuch as there is not the slightest reason to suppose that the transition from a capitalistic to a communal social order can ever be by parliamentary

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or constitutional process. Constitutions are always for the purpose of confirming the status quo, and while they may admit of variations in detail, they cannot provide for peaceful revolution. At least no constitution so far has ever made such provision. The process of amendment is bound to be dominated by existing vested interests so as to preserve the essence of the old order.

Neither is there any probability that in the United States a revolutionary Labor group will be able to overturn capitalism in the ordinary course of events. American capitalism is presumably impregnable until the next World War. Then the United States (like Germany in 1914) will have to fight all the rest of the capitalist world, headed up by Great Britain, who will cheerfully choose the ordeal of battle rather than suffer permanent economic eclipse by the capitalist interests of the United States.

In such a contest, the United States will be compelled to accept the support of Soviet Russia alert for the opportunity to

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undermine British imperialism and Old World capitalism in general and thereby spread the soviet system through the eastern hemisphere. It may be that in the course of such a titanic conflict, the American working-class will be driven to the point of overthrowing its capitalist masters. It may be, on the other hand, that the outcome will be a world divided between a communist eastern hemisphere and a capitalist western; in which case the ultimate event for the United States will wait till the next world clash, this time between a unified capitalism and a unified communism.

Again the professor is appalled at the prospect. He would gladly contrive a more tranquil outcome. He does not like to envisage Ramsay MacDonald leading the old world coalition of capitalism in a war to the death against the United States, as the pacifist Scotchman will probably have to do if he lives long enough. Nor does the professor like the impending departure from sweet reasonableness and the menace

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of overwhelming chaos. He would rather
be a Liberal, even at the cost of inane futil-
ity. He is too tender for the class struggle.

And yet the class struggle makes its way
in spite of him and brings with it the only
tangible prospect of a durable future, of a
genuinely "social universe". Because the
working class is easily able to assimilate to
itself all mankind, its triumph means the
dawn of a classless society that can be de-
liberately organized on a social basis.

CHAPTER XIII

THE SENSE OF THE WHOLE

AND thus we return to the individual; for when we talk about the organization of civilization on a social basis the only meaning possible is such a plan of life as will contribute effectively to the development of personality, which is the highest product of sociality. If it is true that the test of every social phenomenon is its contribution to sociality, it is likewise true that the worth of sociality is in its contribution to personality.

Philosophers have made a prodigious muddle in their antithesis between the part and the whole, between the individual and society. Sinister interests have confirmed a predatory social order by magnifying its alleged scope for individuality and by stigmatizing all socialization as the enemy of

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individuality. Of course the argument was purely verbal. Individual ownership, or private ownership in general, sounds like individuality and personality, whereas in reality they have next to nothing in common. Paradoxical as it may seem, socialization has come to be the only means to individuality.

Certainly it requires no elaborate argument to prove that our individualistic civilization is very sparingly productive of individuality. In fact the premium it places on the performance of identical feats of bootless climbing with identical hopes of futile arrival at selfish "success" stereotypes the generality of aspiring folk into a machine-made pattern of narrow-minded inane exertion toward meaningless goals. The regnant values are all material values outside the individual, and the only persons that achieve notable personalities are such as ignore or flout the standards of pecuniary society and despise its privileges. Indeed our individualistic civilization is outstand-

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ingly productive of nonentities and mediocrities, as is inevitable in view of the fact that communal co-operation is the only creator of personality.

If one doubts so incisive a commentary on current civilization, it will suffice for him to endeavor to name a distinctly great man in the present-day United States, which is the quintessence of capitalism. Now a civilization like that of Russia, in process of socialization, does not need great men and has no cause for embarrassment if they can not be pointed out. If, however, a civilization based on private initiative has ceased to produce great men, as ours has, then it is evidently bankrupt. There are, to be sure, plenty of men and women with the potentiality for greatness; but our system not merely does not elevate them to places of distinction but so thwarts them at every turn that their possible greatness is nipped in the bud and their potential eminence is thwarted. In the field of social science we need go no farther than Thorstein Veblen

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and Scott Nearing for illustrations of master minds "cribbed, cabined and confined" by an unappreciative generation, while platitudinous nonentities fill the outstanding places in the realms of sociology, economics, and politics.

Thus we need no other reason for repudiation of the present social order than its failure to sanction such communal life as would produce admirable personalities, its failure to give worthy recognition to such persons of half-way greatness as show signs of emerging, and in general its ceasing to put forth even the narrow and limited type of greatness that characterized pioneer times. Such a result is of course inevitable in a pecuniary civilization gone to seed and blighted by standards of predatory success.

If one takes seriously, however, the lessons of the "social universe", he will not regret the passing of prodigies or the waning of the categories of traditional greatness. He will rather look forward to a culture based definitely and consciously on

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the concept of the social whole, every part of it organically interwoven with every other in such wise that largeness and fullness of all personality rather than sporadic greatness of occasional individuals will be the normal criterion of civilization.

There is profound significance in John Dewey's testimony to the revolutionary quality of culture in Soviet Russia. He is right in his assumption that the core of the revolution is not mechanism but education, and it is for this reason that a distinguished American engineer brings back word that the Russians do not care for material things but rather for culture. Soviet Russia is in fact the first considerable opportunity since the dawn of civilization for the generality of men to be human, and it is in its release of personality that the revolution has scored its major triumphs. We Americans would lack the grace to undergo the shock of the pioneering that now prevails in the Soviet Federation. It remains to be seen whether

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we shall discover easier bridges to the commonwealth.

Sociology is, then, the science of the meaning and value of life. It is social science because the essence of life is sociality, and because the sum total of existence constitutes an inseparable social whole, greater than the sum of its parts and infused with meanings inconceivable save in the totality of a common experience. It is because mankind has not yet learned co-operation that our achievements and our worths are so paltry and trivial. Nothing short of a world commonwealth of Labor and Enjoyment will disclose the possible range and scope of personality or bring to the individual a sufficient richness of experience to make life worth while.

THE END

