





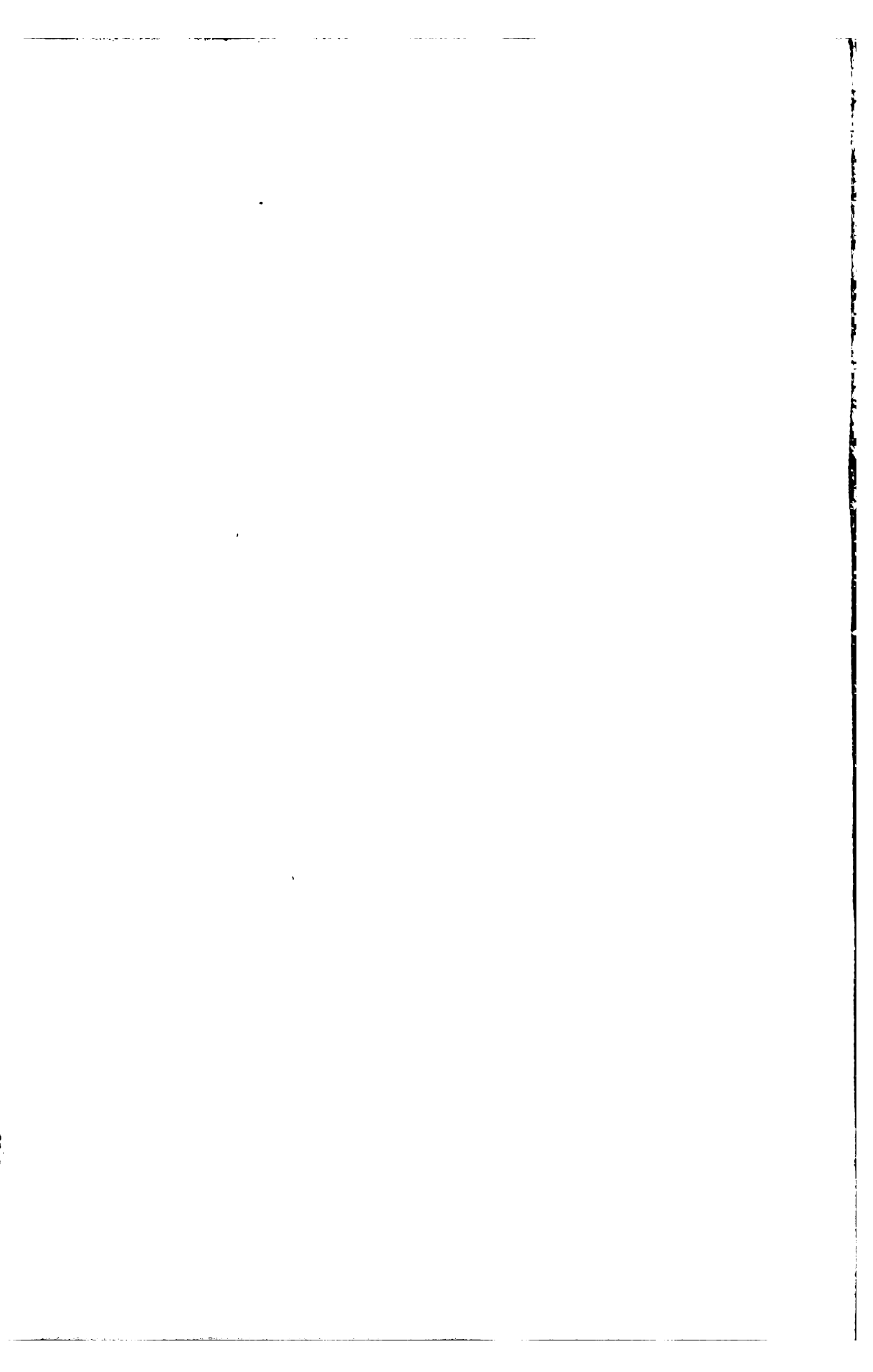
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73

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THE ESSENTIAL FACTORS OF SOCIAL EVOLUTION

BY

THOMAS NIXON CARVER

PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL ECONOMY EMERITUS AT
HARVARD UNIVERSITY



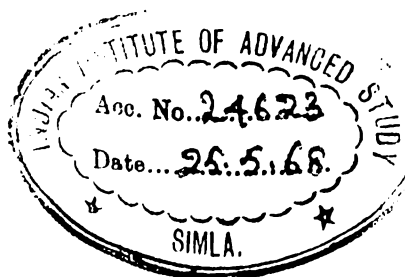
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PREFACE

GOLFERS sometimes play against an invisible adversary named Par, formerly Bogie. Sociologists who take their work seriously find themselves engaged in a struggle against another invisible adversary, not yet named. It may be called The Sociological Press. The game consists in trying to keep up with the output of sociological literature as it pours from that Press. It is a pleasant game, if not too much prolonged. It is, however, somewhat tantalizing to realize that no matter how long one plays it, one can never really catch up, or read the last word written on the subject.

The writer has been engaged in this pastime for forty-two years. The present volume is a condensation of a mass of notes, quotations, citations, comments, and observations accumulated during that period. He had, at one time, hoped to publish a monumental work on the general subject of Social Evolution, but was finally convinced that the task was too great for any one not endowed with the genius of a Herbert Spencer. The present modest volume is a compromise between the writer's ambition and his ability.

No one can go very far in the study of the fundamental problems of sociology without discovering for himself that these are among the oldest problems of human speculation. Though the name, sociology, is relatively modern, the subject is ancient. Men have been puzzled about the essential problem of sociology, the problem of living and working together in large numbers, quite as long as they have been puzzled over problems of cosmogony or biology. They have made their guesses, and have supported their guesses as plausibly in this field as in the others. Most theological dogmas were scientific hypotheses in their day. They ceased to be scientific and became theological when they were adhered to in spite of lack of evidence or in the face of positive evidence to the contrary. Not only theologians, but philosophers, men of science, and economists have hazarded

guesses on the basic problems of social origins, social conflict, the social nature of man, and the genesis of social institutions. No modest scholar will hold in contempt these early guesses or hypotheses. He will have contempt only for those who continue to cling to them as dogmas in the face of contradictory evidence.

To sift out of an accumulated mass of materials those which seem essential to an understanding of the processes of social evolution, has been no small task. The writer wishes to acknowledge his indebtedness, first, to his students who have, during thirty-eight years of college and university teaching, listened patiently to his expositions, raised difficult questions, supplied information and fruitful suggestions, and thereby contributed to whatever of consistency and constructive scholarship may be found in this volume. Mention should next be made of his colleagues in the Departments of Economics and of Sociology at Harvard for the great courtesy and consideration which they have shown while the writer was engaged in this work. The author feels justified in singling out for special mention the late Professor Allyn A. Young whose profound interest and understanding were a constant inspiration.

The author is under special obligation to the former Harvard University Committee on Economic Research and the present Harvard University Committee on Research in the Social Sciences. Grants made by these committees have made possible the research which was a necessary preliminary to the preparation of the manuscript.

For special and painstaking help in the preparation of manuscript, in looking up citations and verifying quotations, the author wishes especially to thank Mrs. Henry B. Stevens, Dr. Olive I. Reddick, and Mr. Bernard L. Gabiné; also his most patient and cheerful of helpers, Miss Helen Prescott. If he were to name all the others to whom he is indebted, the publishers might object to so long a list.

T. N. CARVER

Cambridge, Massachusetts
July, 1934

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PART I

THE PROBLEM OF LIVING TOGETHER
IN LARGE NUMBERS

CHAPTER I

A PRELIMINARY SURVEY

SOCIOLOGY may be defined as the study of the efforts of human beings to live and work together in large groups called "societies." A society is something more than a conglomeration of individuals. It is an organized group, having a conscious purpose and, in the interest of that purpose, exercising some control over the behavior of its individual members. Even if its purpose be nothing more than its own perpetuation, that purpose can only be achieved by controlling its members, encouraging such behavior as tends to strengthen and perpetuate the group, and discouraging such behavior as tends to weaken the group, or to threaten its continued existence.

The continued existence as well as the growth of the group requires associated effort on the part of its members. This associated effort is essentially teamwork, though it may require some stretch of the imagination to conceive of a team as consisting of millions of men, women, and children, and to think of the multifarious associated activities of all these individuals as teamwork. Moreover, it is a team which plays a perpetual game called the "struggle for existence," and the stake is the survival or extinction of the team. This does not mean that the team is an end in itself, or that individuals exist for the benefit of the team. The team, even the great team called the "nation," exists for the benefit of individuals, but it has been found, through millions of years of experience on this planet, that individuals cannot live, or carry on successfully the struggle to live, except by teamwork in large groups. This has made it necessary for individuals to "play the game" as members of a team, to behave in the interest of the team, knowing that they as individuals — the vast majority at least — get on better as members of a successful than as members of an unsuccessful team. Any student who has been a member of an athletic team should understand

this. If he does, he will understand the first and greatest of all the leading principles of sociology, namely, that social life is essentially teamwork, and that the essentials of teamwork are the same whether the team consists of eleven men or of millions of men, women, and children. Teamwork consists in doing with all one's might whatever is necessary for the success of the team. That is all that real, as distinguished from conventional, morality is,—or patriotism, or social obligation, or true religion,—for that matter. However, it must be remembered that the great team is the great society. More of this later.

Individuals may be led to behave in the interest of the team by several motives. First, their intelligence may enable them to see the superior advantage to themselves of belonging to a successful over that of belonging to an unsuccessful team. Second, they may develop a kind of emotional interest in or loyalty to the team to which they belong. Having been for untold centuries compelled by the necessities of existence to live and work in groups which we are here, temporarily, calling teams, it would have been strange if we human beings had not developed a certain capacity for teamwork, or even a certain love of it, which would seem to include an emotional loyalty to the team itself. That loyalty to the greatest of all teams is called patriotism. When it is felt toward smaller teams it goes by various names, such as sectionalism, sectarianism, Christianity, Romanism, Judaism, club spirit, gang spirit, class feeling, etc. etc.

The so-called humanitarian may dispute the statement that the nation¹ is the greatest of all teams, and insist that humanity is a greater one. "Above all nations is humanity" is a mouth-filling slogan, but humanity is not in a position to discipline any nation; in fact, humanity is not organized and therefore lacks one essential of a team. We may as well be frankly realistic and admit that humanitarianism is only a natural prejudice in favor of one's own kind,—a feeling which seems to be felt by all the higher mammals. Besides, if one insists on being so very broad-minded as to divest himself of all such prejudices

¹ Nation is here used in the American sense.

as nationalism, family feeling, or group loyalty, why harbor such a prejudice as humanitarianism? Why not do as certain Orientals pretend to do and take all the kindly animals into the circle of our universal brotherhood? If one begins to show preferences, such as the preference for human beings as against other creatures, what logical reason can one give for stopping there and refusing to show other preferences, which Professor Giddings summarized under the term "consciousness of kind"?

A third method of inducing men to behave in the interest of the group is sometimes necessary. In those cases where the individual's intelligence and loyalty combined are not sufficient to induce the desired forms of teamwork or associative effort, the group itself must assume some active authority over the individual. It must inflict something unpleasant as a penalty for unsocial behavior, and award something pleasant for social behavior,—social behavior being the pedantic equivalent of teamwork.

The necessity for some degree of control by the group over the individual is universally recognized. In animal and insect societies, social behavior seems to be largely instinctive. Human beings, however, seem to be rather poorly equipped with instincts. At any rate, no human society seems able to dispense with intelligence, emotional loyalty, or even with positive law with penalties, as guides to social behavior. Every form of social life, whether in the human species or among lower species, is characterized by the behavior of individuals in the interest of the group. That socialized behavior may have become instinctive and automatic; it may be the result of intelligence which will lead individuals to sacrifice their lesser interests in favor of the larger and more durable interests which center in group life. It may be the desire for the good opinion of one's team-mates, and the fear of their displeasure. It may also be the result of the fear of punishment.

The notion that animals and primitive men enjoy unabridged and complete freedom of individual action is erroneous and unsupported by fact. Studies in insect, animal, and primitive human society clearly show that the individual's behavior is guided by certain outward as well as inward forms of inhibition

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which arise from the presence of other members of its own species. No individual can behave in a society exactly as he would if he were isolated. The rigidity of his behavior in a society of his own kind is exhibited by the complete coöperation of the members even of insect and animal societies in performing specialized functions that insure group survival. In primitive human society, especially, individual behavior is limited, and always within the bounds of social constraint. Individual motivation is so intertwined with social purpose that it seems to have no separate existence. Describing the social behavior of some of the most primitive of people, Malinowski says:

The natives (in the Archipelagoes of Melanesian New Guinea) obey the forces and commands of the tribal code, but they do not comprehend them: exactly as they obey their instincts and their impulses, but could not lay down a single law of psychology. The regularities in native institutions are an automatic result of the inheritance of the social forces of tradition and of the material condition of the environment.¹

The same point of view is arrived at by Spencer and Gillen, W. H. R. Rivers, and others.²

Anthropologists and ethnographers clearly show the existence of a social organic structure in primitive society, at least in the most primitive societies which they are able to study, having a definite organization with its functions institutionalized just as in modern society. Social development, however, depends on the interactions between the individual and the social group to which he belongs. Both the individual and the group must be of an acquisitive as well as of a contributory character if society is to be of a dynamic nature. Each must make its demands upon the other and each must respond to the demands of the other.³

¹ Bronislaw Malinowski, *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (George Routledge & Sons, Ltd., London, 1922), p. 11.

² Baldwin Spencer and F. J. Gillen, *The Native Tribes of Central Australia* (The Macmillan Co. Ltd., London, 1899). By the same authors, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia* (The Macmillan Co. Ltd., London, 1904).

W. H. R. Rivers, *Social Organization* (Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1929).

For a good summary of the views of various authors on primitive social organization see *Revue de l'Institut de Sociologie Solvay*, March, 1922.

³ "For the strength of the pack is the wolf
And the strength of the wolf is the pack."

In other words, a dynamic society may be conceived of as a continuum within which individuals work together, each making demands upon others and responding to their demands, and each making demands on the group as a whole and responding to its demands.¹ This, then, implies that social organization — the mechanism which crystallizes society in its functioning — is in a constant process of adjustment. Our study, therefore, since it has to do with organized groups called societies, may be defined, in more scholastic terms, as the study of social organization,— its nature and function,— and the process of adjusting the group organization to the needs of individuals, and of adapting individual behavior to the demands of the group.

Let it not be imagined that this is a new subject. Men were studying it for thousands of years before the word *sociology* was invented. As will be shown later, the attempt to systematize it and bring its various phases under one comprehensive survey is recent; but the essentials of the problem of living and working together in large groups called societies had not escaped the attention of philosophers, statesmen, and moralists of previous centuries.

Why it was necessary or advantageous to live and work together in groups seems to have been less puzzling at first than the question, why we have so much trouble when we try it. The advantages of group life have seemed so obvious as to need no explanation and to call forth no discussion. The advantage of numbers and organization in coping with the huge beasts which were the contemporaries of early man, and in the struggles for the possession of hunting grounds and pasture lands, must have left no room for verbal argument. Their advantages in modern industry are clearly set forth in treatises on economics; nowhere better than in Adam Smith's famous discourse on the Division of Labor. But the puzzling question for a long time was not why we live and work together in large groups, but why we have so much trouble with one another when we try it. It did not seem necessary for early students to explain the ad-

¹ (See p. 8).

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vantages of that large-scale teamwork called social action. Students have very properly economized their energies by trying to answer questions which seemed to need answering rather than questions which seemed to need no answers.

Five great questions have perplexed students of the problem of living together in large groups, and directed their studies. They are arranged here in their logical order and not in the chronological order in which they have been studied.

1. How did men come to live and work together in those great groups called societies?
2. Why do they have so much trouble getting along with one another when it is so obviously to their advantage to live and work together?
3. Are we making any progress in the art of living together?
4. Have we a social nature, and if so, how was it acquired and in what does it consist?
5. How does group action help us to solve the great problem of trying to fit ourselves into the universe in which we find ourselves?

The modern student of sociology will do well not to assume a too supercilious attitude toward the various answers to these great and puzzling problems. Some of the old answers seem naïve to us now, but so, in all probability, will the most sophisticated answers of the ultra-modern students of today look to students of the future. It should be a sobering thought that, outside the fields of physical science and the mechanic arts, men are not able to do better work or to think any more clearly or comprehensively today than they did in the past — even in the remote past. No new social problems have arisen in recent times except those created by physical science and the mechanic arts, and, except for statistics based on printed records, themselves the product of a mechanical invention — the printing press — no new technique for studying social problems has been developed in modern times.

The first of the great questions stated above, How did men come to live and work together in those great groups called societies? has been approached from two different directions.

One group of students has tried to answer the question by studying historically and descriptively the forms of social organization, or the ways in which people have actually lived and worked together in different times and places. Another group has tried to understand the factors and forces which have compelled men to live and work together, and to change their ways of working together to meet new conditions. The method followed by the first group is called historical or descriptive sociology. That of the second group is called dynamical sociology.

The central thought of the first group seems to be the accumulation of historical and archaeological facts, and a comparison of the facts discovered. By putting these facts together they hope to gain some light on the question as to how group life started and the course of its development. It is obvious that, without this historical and archaeological knowledge, no comprehensive or complete answer to the problem can be found. However, this does not, alone, give us a complete answer. It can not tell us a great deal about the nature and function of social organization. To state the fact that a given social group at a given stage in its history lived under this or that form of organization, or that it had this or that form of religion, marriage, family organization, property, or government, does not tell us the reason for its existence, for its particular form of organization, or for the institutions which it has developed.

In all purely descriptive statements we are likely, unless we exercise great care, to fall into the error of ascribing functional activities, or to imply that certain functional activities are inherent in the forms we are describing. It is difficult, in other words, to be purely descriptive, no matter how strongly one may condemn attempts to interpret the phenomena described. Structure and function are so interdependent in every organism, especially in what has come to be called the social organism, as to make it difficult to separate them even for purposes of description. One common implication is that social action is merely a manifestation of collective energy expressing itself in definite historical forms. Another is that social institutions are merely the instruments or the vehicles for the expression of

social impulses of men. These are as truly "interpretations" as the assumption that types of social action as well as the institutions through which social action expresses itself came into existence sporadically, for no particular or assignable reason whatever, but survive, if they do survive, because they have survival value. They help to "keep the tribe alive" is a formula which the dynamical sociologist, as distinguished from the historical or descriptive sociologist, is fond of using. The dynamical sociologist frankly goes beyond mere structural description.

The forms and structures of institutions are, the dynamical sociologist believes, of less importance than the functions they perform. These must be carefully analyzed if we are ever to understand the nature of society. Whatever be the mechanism whereby one form of social organization has given rise to another, the processes involved in the transformation are essentially dynamic and causal. Institutions are not merely the expression of the whims or even the fundamental traits of the people who develop them. If that were true, we should have little trouble living together under our own institutions because our institutions would be the expressions of our own natures. Institutions are, however, sometimes imposed by circumstances entirely apart from human nature. Instead of being an expression of human nature, an institution imposed by the conditions under which human beings have to live, may be hostile to human nature, at least at the beginning. Human nature must then go through a long process of adaptation and re-adaptation until it is brought into harmony with the institutions which it has to adopt in order that men might survive.

Of course, any conception of social organization as a dynamic unity is incomplete without a knowledge of evolutionary history. Thus the two ways of looking at society — the historical description of the structure of society in different times and places, and the functional analysis — really supplement each other and are both essential to a proper understanding of society and its workings. Each approach, by itself, gives only one aspect of the process of social evolution.

All evolution proceeds, as suggested above, by a combination

of two processes, namely, variation and selection. Without variation there can be no such thing as the selection of the more adapted and the extinction of the less adapted, for the simple reason that there would be no individuals who were either more adapted or less adapted than their fellows. This is as true of the evolution of societies as a whole and of social institutions as of biological forms. Human beings are known to be inventive and therefore capable of inventing all sorts of social institutions. A description of all such institutions as have existed in the past or as now exist is like a catalogue of biological variations. That, however, is only half of the evolutionary story. How these institutions work, and what is their survival value, are at least equally important questions to an evolutionary sociologist.

Not only social institutions, but moral codes, religions, educational systems, fashions, and everything else connected with social life must be considered as having a place, potentially at least, in the process of human adaptation. A social evolutionist must consider them very much as a biological evolutionist would consider teeth and claws, horns and hoofs, fur, feathers, blubber, and protective coloration, as having possible functions to perform in the survival or extinction of the species.

An analogy may be useful. A geologist, looking at a geographical spectacle like the Grand Canyon, is not content with a mere description of it as it now exists. Even if he were able to get descriptions of it at different stages of its existence, he would not be satisfied with them. He would desire to know how it came into existence. If he found that its form as described at different times was not always the same, he would want to know why it changed. When he tried to explain this question he would become a dynamical geologist. The significance of Darwin's work in biology lies in the fact that he was not content with a mere description and classification of species. He wanted to know how they originated and why their forms changed. In answering those questions he went beyond history and description and became what might be called a dynamical biologist. That is what it means to be a true evolutionist.

Similarly, the sociologist is not content with a description of forms of social organization at different times and places. He wants to know how and why they originated, and how and why they changed. He becomes a dynamical sociologist only when he tries to answer these questions. In order to answer such questions he must understand the factors and forces which produce social change. That is what it means to be a true social evolutionist.

This is clearly the method which must be used in order to find the answer to the first of our five great questions. No one can give a satisfactory answer to the question as to how men came to live together in societies by merely describing the forms or structures of primitive societies, important as such descriptions are. There must also be a study of the forces which bring them into existence and cause them to survive longer than disorganized masses of men. This question will be discussed more in detail in Chapter II.

To the second, also, of these great questions, namely, Why do we have so much trouble among ourselves when we try to live together in groups? two general answers have been given, though each has been elaborated and explained almost beyond recognition. 1. Men have trouble living together because of some taint or evil tendency which has entered human nature from the outside, or because human nature has been degenerated or debased by some outside influence. 2. The trouble is the result of the incomplete development, or the unfinished evolution of human beings; for if men are to live in societies they must become adapted to the conditions of social life just as they must become adapted to physical conditions which surround them; and this process of evolution or re-adaptation is not yet complete, consequently, we are only partially fitted for life in great groups.

The first answer is given, in somewhat different terms, by two widely separated groups of thinkers. Among certain Christian theologians, the outside influence which degenerated human nature was the Devil, and the degeneration took the form of original sin, human depravity, or the fall of man. Among more

sophisticated social thinkers, the source of the degeneration is found in some of our social habits, institutions and tendencies, such as private property, commercialism, machine production, materialistic philosophy, or the doctrine of evolution. Among these modern thinkers, our social institutions, habits, and tendencies play the same rôle as the Devil in the older theology. Under both theories, human nature has been degenerated by outside influences which are not inherent in human nature itself.

The other answer, namely, that we have trouble living together because we have not yet evolved into a thoroughly socialized species, is more in harmony with the evolutionary philosophy of the day. It recognizes, or at least assumes, that we are an unfinished race of beings, still in process of becoming adapted to an unfinished universe; that, in this unfinished state, our race is only partially adapted to the conditions under which it has to live and that there must be an adaptation of human nature to social as well as to physical conditions before we can live together in a state of social harmony. So long as the evolutionary philosophy prevails, this explanation of the source of conflict will seem more reasonable than the theory of human degeneration through the debasing influence of outside agencies.

Explaining conflict on the ground of human degeneration led to the formulation of policies and programs for economic and social improvement which left out of account some of the fundamental factors which now seem to limit and determine such improvement, with the result that the remedies suggested and sometimes applied now seem about as efficacious as patent medicines. Even those who account for the trouble on the ground of incomplete evolution do not always realize the full import of their theory. They are sometimes reluctant to surrender the idea that human beings live under a special dispensation and are not subject to the laws or observed tendencies of biological evolution. They point out, for example, that men can and do, within limits, adapt their environment to themselves and thus, to some slight degree, escape the necessity of being adapted. They fail to see that before men could assume this active rôle and begin remaking their environment to suit them-

selves, they had to go through a preliminary process of biological evolution which resulted in an erect posture, a hand adapted to other purposes than locomotion, and a large bulb on the upper end of the spinal cord, called a brain. Nor do all who call themselves evolutionists realize that the sole and only process of evolution is trial and error, variation and selection, survival and extinction, success and failure, all of which mean the same thing, namely, that evolution comes because the less adapted fail and the more adapted succeed. Up to the present moment, practically every social reform is a blind but determined fight against the only theory of evolution which has any scientific standing.

While, as suggested above, most social problems are old, and while no new technique, aside from statistics, has been developed for studying them, nevertheless modern science has given a new point of view from which to approach them. This is called the evolutionary point of view. They who take this point of view look upon all evolution as a process of adaptation of living forms to their surroundings. The true social evolutionist looks upon organization and teamwork as a means of successful living, that is, of adaptation and survival. The human species has carried this method of survival somewhat farther than other creatures, though some of the social insects could, if they were able to argue with us, support their claim to first place among social creatures with a respectable show of evidence.

The thesis that the reason we have so much trouble getting along with one another is because of some taint or special degeneration of human nature seems to be based upon the assumption that human beings are unique in the world of life and do not come under the same general biological laws as other animals. The evolutionary thesis looks upon the human race as an interesting biological species which has developed somewhat specialized but by no means unique methods of adaptation and survival. They who hold this point of view are willing, without being admonished like the sluggard, to "go to the ant" and to "consider her ways." Much can be learned by the sociologist by reading such books as *Social Life Among the Insects*, by Pro-

fessor William Morton Wheeler,¹ and other studies of animal and insect societies.

Rather obviously, a part of the process of adapting human life to a more or less hostile world was organized teamwork. This teamwork was necessary for the fight against powerful enemies and for the securing of adequate sustenance. Equally obvious, to a true evolutionist, was the necessity of adapting individuals to social life, that is, to teamwork on a large scale. If human beings were perfectly adapted to that kind of teamwork, we should have no difficulty getting along together. Since the process of evolving a social creature is not yet complete, we are only partially adapted to social life. Consequently, we have trouble which shows itself in all kinds of conflict among individuals in the same society.

Chronologically, the problem of conflict within the same society was studied earlier than the problem of the dynamic origin of social life. Conflict has been characterized as social friction. The overcoming of friction is a very pressing problem for social engineers,—variously called moralists, tribal leaders, lawmakers, and statesmen,—as well as for mechanical engineers. This problem will be more elaborately discussed in Chapter III.

The third of the great questions which have perplexed students of social problems, namely, Are we making any progress in the art of living together in large numbers? has been answered both yes and no. The answer has never been unanimous, even among intelligent students. At one time, one answer seems to be popular; at another time, the opposite. At one time the golden age seems ahead; at another, behind. At one time men look hopefully to the future; at another, regretfully to the past. The glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome are at one time contrasted with the poverty and the sordidness of the present. At another, men “dip into the future, far as human eye can see,” to glimpse the glory of the world.

From the discovery of America until the World War general optimism predominated in the Western World. The opening

¹ Harcourt, Brace & Co., New York, 1923.

up of new sources of food definitely removed the menace of famine. The gold and silver which poured into Europe from the Americas through Spain raised prices and stimulated enterprise. Power-driven machinery multiplied productive power. Colonies absorbed all the labor displaced by machinery. All these gave men a sense of mastery over their own fate and left little room for pessimism or despondency. Then came the doctrine of evolution, to give a philosophic justification for belief in progress. Evolution, to the average man, became a synonym for endless progress. Since the World War, however, a distinct note of pessimism is noticeable. Men have lost their belief in the certainty of progress and are even beginning to question its reality or even its possibility.

Whether it is called progress or not, there is no doubt that in the field of physical science the modern world knows many things which were unknown to the ancient world. In the field of mechanic arts, it is equally certain that men can now do many things that their ancestors could not do. Through physical science and the mechanic arts, men are solving one phase of the problem of living together in large numbers,—that of sustenance. We can supply the wants of large numbers of people more amply than was formerly possible; we can provision more and larger cities through superior means of transportation and more efficient instruments of production. Since one of the problems of living together in large numbers is that of economic subsistence, it may be said that, on this side at least, there has been some progress. Beyond that, there is not much that can be said without starting an argument.

The fourth of these great questions, *Has man a social nature?* has, likewise, been answered in two general ways. One answer is that man has no social nature, but that he is intelligent enough to see the advantage of teamwork,—of group action toward a common end. The other answer is that man has a social nature; that he, like other animals, has at least a preference for his own kind as compared with other creatures; that he at least prefers ^Tsociety to solitude, but that the scarcity of many desirable things creates a conflict of interests and causes

him to quarrel with his fellowmen in spite of his inherently social nature.

Both answers seem to contain a measure of truth. It is difficult to see how even unsocial creatures could quarrel if their interests did not in some way conflict. It is easy to see how moderately social creatures might quarrel if the interest of one conflicted with that of another. When each is pursuing his own interest, and the success of one interferes with the success of the other, unless they are more thoroughly socialized than human beings are supposed to be, there will certainly be a conflict. On the other hand, it could be said that if human nature were thoroughly socialized, even scarcity could not produce conflict among individuals or between groups. That is, if every individual were so constituted as to be able to enjoy food on the palates of other people exactly as much as on his own, or on the palates of strangers exactly as much as on those of his own kin, even famine could not cause such individuals to quarrel. Probably, therefore, it would be safe to say that human nature is somewhat socialized, but not sufficiently to prevent a conflict of interests wherever a scarcity of desirable things shows itself.

The fifth question, namely, How does group action help us to solve the great problem of trying to fit ourselves into the universe in which we find ourselves? includes the first four and tries to bring them all together under a comprehensive system of social thought. The fact of adaptation in nature and man is so evident as to have been recognized from the earliest times of which we have any record. Theologians, philosophers, sages, thoughtful men everywhere have recognized and marvelled at it. The way things fit together, the harmony of the universe symbolized in such poetical expressions as "the music of the spheres," the interdependence of all forms of life, the nectar of the flower for the bee, the spreading of the pollen by the bee, the marvellous ways in which the various organs and glands of the body support one another and maintain the life of the whole, all these and thousands of other harmonious interdependencies have excited the wonder and admiration of thinking persons.

Unthinking brutes, lacking the capacity to marvel at anything, would never try to explain. Rational creatures simply could not help trying to explain any more than a fish could help using its swimming or a bird its flying organs.

Earlier students saw in these marvellous and minute fittings together evidences of design on the part of a supreme artificer designer. They could think of no other adequate explanation. The modern evolutionist recognizes the same set of facts, and has added to the list enough to increase our amazement and perplexity,¹ but he sees in them evidences of adaptation through the process of variation and selection, trial and error, a general shuffling and shifting about of materials with occasional and accidental fittings together. It almost looks as though matter were intelligently seeking adaptation, or opportunities for a fitting together of parts; but the more rigid evolutionists account for all adaptations on the ground of accidental combinations which, when favorable, survive. A particle of wind-blown dust, for example, can never rest in an exposed place. When it happens to find a low place or a sheltered spot, it remains quiet until the low spot becomes a high spot because of the wearing away of the high grounds which, for a time, protected it. An unadapted organism can not remain in a state of unadaptation. It must undergo changes, or become extinct. If it can manage to reproduce before it does, the species may live longer than the individual. Even the species must die, however, unless it can adapt itself. If an individual happens to be born which is adapted to its surroundings, and can reproduce itself, the species can live an unchanging existence until the conditions change. Then it must readapt or die.

The variations which take place among the new individuals that are born may be either accidental and sporadic, or they may center around a norm,² like bullet-holes around the bull's eye of a target. In the latter case, matter would seem to be

¹ One of the most striking additions to our knowledge of the intricate way in which things fit together is found in Walter B. Cannon's *The Wisdom of the Body* (W. W. Norton & Co., New York, 1932).

² Sometimes called orthogenesis.

intelligent, or, if not, some support would be given to the long-discarded doctrine of design. Evolutionists generally assume that natural variations are accidental and sporadic, and that natural selection is likewise unplanned and accidental, not like the purposeful selection of the plant or animal breeder. If a variation happens to fit into the general milieu, it survives, otherwise not. Even though the variation happens to be one of those extreme forms popularly called sports, but now called mutations by scientists, unless it fits into the general conditions of life it perishes. If it fits, it lives.

Deeply as the world has been impressed by the fact of adaptation, or the fitting together of parts, not only within the organism, but within a general milieu, including many organisms, nevertheless, it has not been able to close its eyes to another and seemingly contradictory fact, namely, maladaptation, or incomplete adaptation. So contradictory has the fact of incomplete adaptation in the midst of many adaptations seemed as to call for explanation. Until the concept of a continual process of adaptation and readaptation came with the doctrine of evolution, the only satisfactory explanation seemed to be a kind of mystic dualism, a belief that the universe was a battleground between rival and antagonistic forces. If the universe is complete, and not in process of creation by the method called evolution, how else could one account for the many obvious contradictions? Many things obviously fit together, indicating, it was believed, a beneficent design. But many misfits are equally obvious; what better explanation could be found than that of malevolent design? Ormuzd and Ahriman in the Persian dualism, God and Satan in the Hebrew dualism, personified these opposing forces.

The conception of evolution, or of creation by an endless process of trial and error, of variation and selection, destroys the necessity for any sort of dualism. An unfinished universe, still in process of evolution, must show many maladaptations or incomplete adaptations,—situations still in process of readjustment of parts. An unfinished race or species, still in process of adaptation to an unfinished world, must likewise show many

incomplete adaptations. Under this theory, Ahriman and Satan become superfluities.

Under this theory, if we still possess a vermiform appendix which gives us trouble, it is not because Satan put it where it doesn't belong, but because the process of evolution has not eliminated it from the human organism. If we show inclinations to do unsocial acts, it is not because Satan tempted us, or introduced a taint into human nature to make us susceptible to wrong influences, but because the process of evolution has not yet bred a race of thoroughly socialized human beings. Or it may be that we developed traits which adapted us, more or less closely, to the conditions under which we (our germ plasms) once lived, but which traits unfit us for the conditions under which we are now forced to live. Under this theory evil becomes neither more nor less than incomplete adaptation.

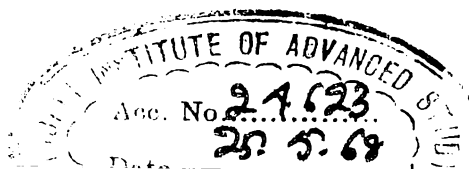
Every species develops in the course of its evolution a group of characters which help it to survive in the environment in which it lives. The long neck of the giraffe, enabling it to browse on the leaves of the mimosa tree, a kind of glorified alfalfa, is a classic example; but the long neck has to be accompanied by other anatomical and physiological readjustments. Intelligence is the human specialty, but intelligence also has to be accompanied by several anatomical and physiological readjustments, a large brain, organs of speech, an opposing thumb, an erect posture, and a skeletal and muscular development which permit the hurling of missiles. But all these combined would not have given the human species its dominant position had it not also developed a capacity for teamwork. This capacity for teamwork has never been analyzed into its elements, consequently it is impossible at the present moment, to say exactly in what this capacity consists. Obviously intelligence has something to do with it. Organs of speech have a great deal to do with it. Apparently, also, there is what can only be named as a feeling of kinship, possessed by all the higher animals, especially the gregarious kinds. Perhaps sympathy is a better name.

That living and working together in groups is a form of

adaptation which may help a species to survive is easily recognized when we study the social life of lower creatures, especially some of the social insects. It ought to be equally easy to see in social life a kind of human adaptation, a means by which human beings can live more comfortably and in larger numbers than would otherwise be possible. To one who understands this, with all that it signifies, it will also appear that those physical and mental characters which make it possible for men to live and work together are as definitely phases of adaptation as the long neck of the giraffe or the flippers of the seal.

Each of the five great questions which we have been discussing in this preliminary way, has, in its turn, attracted the attention of students of social life and given unity and consistency to their studies. Except for some unifying concept, students must have wandered over a wide range of subjects from linguistics to skyscrapers, all of which are the results of the efforts of human beings to live and work together in large numbers. The study of sociology should aim, not at encyclopedic information, but at understanding. The five great problems mentioned above have puzzled men for many generations. The answer to any of them will contribute to our understanding of that many-sided and complex thing called society. This understanding is what we want, rather than the collection of stores of information with which to make a show of erudition and which only befog or obscure the real facts about social phenomena.

The attempt to make sociology an encyclopedic collection of facts regarding everything done by men in society must necessarily lead to confusion. No one works or lives to himself alone. Everything done by human beings is done in society. If the sociologist were to take for his province every field and every product of social action, he would have to become an expert linguist, because speech is a social product; an expert architect, because architecture is a social product; an expert physician, because the study and treatment of disease is social work, etc. etc. This could only lead to confusion. So long, however, as the sociologist confines himself to the essentials of the problem of living together in large numbers, he will be prevented from



wandering over the whole field of human knowledge. The essentials of that problem are found in the five specific questions outlined above. The writers who have made significant contributions to our knowledge of sociology have attempted to answer one or more of them. True, they have not all been called sociologists, but their contributions are none the less valuable on that account.

In this preliminary survey of the field of sociology we have glimpsed the general contour of the ground to be studied more in detail in the following chapters. The student who has read this chapter should have a pretty clear notion as to what sociology is, and what its leading problems are. The solution of each of these problems is a study in itself.

CHAPTER II

HOW MEN CAME TO LIVE TOGETHER IN SOCIETIES

1. The Familistic Theory, p. 24
2. The Intelligence Theory, p. 33
3. The Militaristic Theory, p. 36
4. The Economic Theory, p. 39

THE fundamental and all-sufficient reason why human beings have always, so far as we know anything about them, lived together in those great groups called societies, is that it paid better than trying to live singly or in small groups. It paid better in the sense that they were safer against enemies of all sorts, and that they could provide more amply for their needs by associated than by isolated effort. This fact is basic and underlies every thing that may be said about social life, sociology, or social evolution. In spite of all the difficulties and conflicts that arise when men try to live and work together, they can not do otherwise and survive.

The basic fact is not that men have a social nature, or that human nature can express itself only in social life, but that the conditions under which men have had to live made group action or teamwork necessary. If men have even a partially developed social nature it must have come as a result of the fact that they have had to live and work and fight together for survival. They have had to evolve some capacity for teamwork in order to live in the only way they could live successfully, namely, in organized groups. This capacity for teamwork or associated effort is all that can properly be called a social nature. If human beings have made any progress in the art of living together in large groups it is partly because, through variation and selection, they have evolved a greater capacity for teamwork than their remote ancestors possessed, and partly because they have learned the art of government by means of which the more unsocial traits of human nature can be held in check.

If there is a creature which finds it, on the whole, unprofitable to live in groups, that creature is not only solitary in fact, but it has not developed a social nature for the reason that there was no survival value in a social nature. It has learned no way of influencing or controlling individual behavior in the interest of a group for the reason that there was no group to exercise such control. A possible case is the tiger; another is the eagle. Beyond mating and the process of reproduction, there is no advantage to either species in teamwork. Either can defend itself without help, and gather its food without coöperation. Besides, if there were too many of either species in the same neighborhood, they would frighten away the beasts or birds on which they prey. There would, therefore, not only be no advantage, but a positive disadvantage in trying to live together in large numbers.

Men, on the other hand, in common with many other species, have found a positive and overwhelming advantage in teamwork, or associated and organized effort. How they discovered it, may never be known. Like many other products of evolution, it may have been by the mere process of trial and error. They who managed, for any reason, to live and work together in groups, got on better than those who did not, and survived where others perished. Having somewhat higher intelligence than other animals, they could learn from experience, and eventually plan their teamwork.

The Familistic Theory. Just what form the first social groups took may never be known. Several reasonable conjectures may be made, however. A reasoning creature, who wants to know why things happen, is pretty likely to make guesses, otherwise called hypotheses, where final knowledge is impossible. One guess is that the first social groups were mere biological groups, called families, consisting of parents and children. With some species, the family, if such it can be called,—that is, the union of male and female for reproduction and the resulting union of parents and offspring,—is a very unstable and transient affair. The young grow quickly to maturity and begin to shift for themselves before others are born of the same parents. Some-

times mating is for a season only, though in other cases it is permanent. At any rate, the family does not approach in permanency that with which we are familiar under the name of the human family.

A physiological reason for the stability of the family among human beings is found in the prolongation of infancy. Among human beings the period of infancy accompanied by helplessness is so prolonged as to require parental care for a period of years. Parental feeling has evolved or been selected into the human race to provide a motive for the care of children during this prolonged period. Besides, younger children are born before the older ones are able to shift for themselves. This not only necessitates a prolonged period of parental care, but results in a group of several children to be cared for at the same time. Having learned to live together in a considerable group, it is not difficult to imagine them playing and working together, and engaging in teamwork of various kinds.

The writer who did most to impress upon students of sociology the vast importance of the prolongation of infancy was John Fiske.¹ He found the essential character of human evolution to be the growth of the psychic from the organic. In the complex life which human beings have to live there are more adjustments to be made than can be made by instinctive responses alone. Most of these responses and adjustments have to be learned, and there is a vast amount to be learned. The young bird or animal seems to be born with all the instincts it is likely to need to help it through a normal life. It does not need to learn a great deal, or, at any rate, it does not learn a great deal. Since it does not have to learn a great deal, it does not need a long learning period. Its capacity to make the few necessary responses is born with it and may therefore be called organic or instinctive. The human being, on the other hand, having so much to learn, needs a long period in which to learn it. Infancy is the learning period.

¹ See his *Outlines of Cosmic Philosophy* (Houghton Mifflin & Co., Boston, 1874. 2 vols.).

We need not here stop to appraise the philosophic value of this theory. It is conceivable that other creatures might find it to their advantage to learn many responses if they only had the capacity to learn. It is also conceivable that we human beings, in final analysis, really have no more which it would be advantageous to learn than other creatures, but having the capacity to learn, we learn. An individual living in a society of learners must needs learn or prove himself unfit for such a life. If unfit, he fails and, in the long run, perishes. Thus, it is quite conceivable that the capacity to learn came first, and the necessity to learn or be eliminated in the struggle for existence may have followed as a consequence. However, this is somewhat like the problem of the priority of the hen or the egg.

Waiving all questions of priority, there can be no doubt as to the vast importance of the prolongation of a learning period on the intellectual development of the human race, and of the prolongation of a period of helplessness on the social development of the race. The fact that the learning period and the period of helplessness are identical does not detract from its importance. As Bernard points out:

Very probably the prolonged period of infancy in the child has been selected into the race because of the greater adaptive intelligence of the human mother. Rather it would be more nearly correct to say that a prolonged infancy, involving the birth of the child prematurely from the standpoint of lower animal life, and immediate survival efficiency, has been selected into the race because of the ultimate survival value of a longer learning period or a more varied capacity to make adjustments (greater flexibility of characters) which permits the acquisition of a vastly greater store of adjustment technique.¹

Moreover, as Fiske showed, the period of infancy is correlated with the growth of parental feeling. The growth of parental feeling he believed an important phase of progress; for, in this growth, he saw the germ of the family, and so of social life and all that is psychic. This significant fact is clearly recognized by all students of social psychology. Professor McDougal goes so

¹ L. L. Bernard, *Instinct, A Study in Social Psychology* (Henry Holt & Co., New York, 1924), p. 327.

far as to say that the parental attitude is the only truly altruistic element in nature.

It is no exaggeration to say that this one instinct (parental) is the mother of both Intellect and Morality. For without it, Intellect could not have been evolved; and its impulse is the only truly altruistic element in nature; and, though many philosophers have ignored the fact, the moral tradition, by which all moral character is shaped, could never have been built without this altruistic factor.¹

Fiske's contribution to family history, his account of social origins, has finally become so largely associated with his name, that it overshadows somewhat a very vital background. It is well to remember that he laid great stress on the family partly because he saw in it the essential training ground for the developing of human sympathy. This was too narrow an assumption. He was a personal combatant of selfishness; and he tried to strike at it, sometimes quixotically, in his writing. The important part of his work — the part, at least, that might lead the sociologist for a very great distance — is his theory that progress consists in the growth of the psychic, in the increasing complexity and effective organization of intelligence. The prolongation of infancy and the development of the family are important as they relate to the growth of the life of the mind.

Lest it be too hastily assumed that Fiske was a psychologist rather than a sociologist, it is necessary to call attention to the vast scope of his work. A striking personality, a contributor to the sum of human knowledge in several fields, including history, government, biology, philosophy, and even cosmology,— it is difficult to classify him. While his theory of the growth of the psychic from the organic may seem to be primarily a contribution to psychology, yet he connected it so closely with biology, physiology, and sociology as to give it a wide significance. The prolongation of the learning period called infancy carried with it the necessity of a long period of parental care. This in turn necessitated a more or less permanent association of individuals

¹ William McDougal, *Outline of Psychology* (Charles Scribners Sons, New York, 1923), p. 130. See also his *Social Psychology* (John W. Luce & Co., Boston, 1921), pp. 170-171, 274-275.

in a family group and became one of the dynamic factors in the development of domestic institutions. The central position of domestic institutions in organized society is attested by the large number of studies that have been made and of books written about them.¹ The prolongation of infancy becomes, therefore, one of the original data for the study of sociology.

The prolongation of infancy, supplemented, as Professor Wheeler has pointed out,² by the prolongation of the lives of parents, constitute two biological facts which, in combination, give us a considerable overlapping and intermingling of generations.³ The long period of dependence of the young compels them to remain under the control of their elders. The long period of maturity on the part of the parents enables them to exercise that control. There is a long period of contact between the old and the young, the mature and the immature, the teachers and the learners; between those who have already learned through contact with their predecessors and those who are in process of being taught by contact with their elders. The elders thus become the transmitters of the accumulated wisdom and superstition, knowledge and prejudice, sense and nonsense, skill and awkwardness of the past, while the young become the transmitters.

Says Goldenweiser:

The significance of the family as a transfer point of civilization cannot be overestimated. In the socio-psychological domain it serves as a bridge between the generations, between fathers and sons. Truly organic, biological in its foundation but with important psychological and sociological correlates, the family is thus seen to be an universal possession of mankind.⁴

Anthropological studies clearly indicate that the family lies at the root of the cultural inheritance of primitive social life. "Biologically speaking," says Raymond Firth, "human society is

¹ Some of the most scholarly works ever published in the field of sociology have been on the subject of the family. Their titles would fill a small catalogue.

² *Social Life Among the Insects* (New York, 1923), p. 10.

³ See also Galton, *Hereditary Genius* (D. Appleton & Co., New York, 1870).

⁴ Alexander A. Goldenweiser, *Early Civilization* (Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1922), ch. XII, p. 239.

founded on the family of parents and children, a group which has its ultimate beginning in the union of two individuals."¹ The family, thus, is not merely an extension of the sex-function. In actuality it has a far deeper significance in influencing the character of social formation and enabling society to maintain its continuity unimpaired. In transmitting to its children, through education, the characteristic ways of behavior called family tradition, a definite mental attitude or social culture pattern is established and social heredity is made possible. In short, prolonged infancy is one of the basic factors in the mechanism of social heredity. It is natural then that society, far more than the individual, becomes a creature that looks before and after.

Nothing in the whole field of sociology can exceed in importance this long period of overlapping and intermingling of generations. It gives a continuity to social life and social practices comparable to that given by the instincts to the life and practices of lower creatures. And yet it is less rigid than instinct in its operation. If there is a learning period, there must also be the possibility of learning new ways of behaving,— a possibility that seems to be lacking in those creatures whose behavior is controlled by instinct. We are often reminded of the rigidity of social tradition. We need to be further reminded that it is also plastic as compared with instinct. As a member of the family [says Bogardus], the child learns fundamental rules of conduct, gains respect for the law, and acquires principles of coöperation. Since the family has the characteristics of a social microcosm, the child in a social visioned family acquires many of the habits basic to constructive participation in public life.²

Yet the plasticity of the youthful mind is not left to be molded wholly by the haphazard experiences of time and place. The learning period makes it possible to test even the old traditions, to "prove all things." This tends to develop an attitude of crit-

¹ Raymond Firth, *Primitive Economics of the New Zealand Maori* (George Routledge & Sons, Ltd., London, 1929), p. 106.

² Emory S. Bogardus, *Fundamentals of Social Psychology* (The Century Co., New York, 1924), ch. v., p. 49.

ical reflection, and thus paves the way for diversity and originality so essential to progress. For just as in the organic life, so in the life of society, variability whether minute in character, or so extreme as to be called mutation, is the fundamental principle of development. On the other hand, the overlapping of age on youth makes it possible to "hold fast that which is good." The learning process, therefore, has two aspects which, in a proper state of balance, make progress possible. First, the young can learn of their elders. Second, they can discover.

Learning is largely by imitation. The overlapping and intermingling of generations have given to imitation the vast importance which led Tarde¹ to regard it as the essential social fact. It may be objected that as a general rule society tends to hold on too fast, that it tends too much toward an unerring conformity to the social heritage. But as Professor Karl Pearson points out:

One of the strongest factors of social stability is the inertness, nay, rather active hostility, with which human societies receive new ideas. It is the crucible in which the dross is separated from the genuine metal, and which saves the body-social from a succession of unprofitable and possibly injurious experimental variations.²

The accumulation of social habits, traditions, customs, and *mores*, to which William G. Sumner devoted his prodigious learning, and which seemed to him the very essence of sociology, was made possible by the prolongation of the contact of the plastic minds of youth with the molding attitudes of age. Before the age of printed books there was a vast body of lore handed down from parent to child on the thin air of oral instruction. Some of it, of course, was false, as is much of that which is preserved in printed pages, but this body of lore and the responses of individuals to it, constitute what is sometimes called the social mind. Assuming that there is, as every physical scientist believes, an objective test for distinguishing truth from falsehood, progress might be said to consist in a gradual clearing of the social mind of accumulated falsehoods and the substitu-

¹ Cf. Gabriel Tarde, *The Laws of Imitation*, tr. E. C. Parsons (Henry Holt & Co., New York, 1903).

² *The Grammar of Science* (Adam and Charles Black, London, 1911), p. 1.

tion of accumulated knowledge. Another aspect of the significance of imitation is the fact that diffusion as well as the building of culture,—material and ideological,—is due primarily to it. As McDougal says:¹

If imitation, maintaining customs and traditions of every kind, is the great conservative agency in the life of societies, it plays also a great and essential part in bringing about the progress of civilization. Its operation as a factor in progress is of two principal kinds:

1. the spread by imitation throughout a people of ideas and practices generated within it from time to time by its exceptionally gifted members;
2. the spread by imitation of ideas and practices from one people to another.

As to the mechanism of imitation itself, its nature and origin, I shall merely quote the statement made by one of the outstanding psychologists in the field of educational psychology. Says Professor Thorndike:

On the whole the imitative tendencies which pervade human life . . . are, for the most part, not original tendencies to respond to behavior seen by duplicating it in the same mechanical way that one responds to light by contracting the pupil, but must be explained as the result of the arousal, by the behavior of other men, of either special instinctive responses or ideas and impulses which have formed in the course of experience connections with that sort of behavior. Man has a few specialized original tendencies whose responses are for him to do what the man forming the situation does. His other tendencies to imitate are habits learned nowise differently from other habits.²

Human society in its functioning seems to show that there is nearly always some semblance of intelligent awareness of certain ends that are being pursued. Yet it is a sad fact that, in most of our social behavior, something of the element of purposelessness tends to persist. Activities are carried on in all of our groups and societies which are more in the nature of imitation pure and simple with no intelligent motive behind them. Pareto's emphasis on the fact that most human social

¹ *Social Psychology* (Methuen & Co., London, 1926), p. 341.

² Edward L. Thorndike, *The Original Nature of Man* (Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, 1913), p. 122. See also M. Sherman and Irene Sherman, *The Process of Human Behavior* (Williams & Norgate, Ltd., London, 1930), pp. 103-113.

actions are illogical, or rather allogical,—*i.e.* no coördination of actions and ends,—is too true to reality, and must be recognized in explaining social behavior. It must be borne in mind, however, that in some cases and in some forms imitation is essential to the maintenance of social unity and social cohesiveness. Likewise is it true that in trying to explain social behavior Sidgwick's cautious remark that "imitation will not explain everything, but explains a good deal" is perhaps the sounder approach to reality. But, discarding the various theories of causation of social behavior such as "Imitation" of Tarde, "Consciousness of Kind" of Giddings, or the "Collective Representations" of Dürkheim, the fact remains that one of the main factors in social behavior is the desire for uniformity and the fear of non-conformity which motivates human actions.

The prolongation of infancy and of parenthood, with the resulting overlapping and intermingling of generations, provides a physiological basis for the transmission from generation to generation of the vast body of lore which goes by the name of custom and tradition,—forms of imitation which constitute the greater part of civilization. Before the invention of writing and the keeping of records, that body of lore could only be transmitted by word of mouth. Without a long learning period and a wide overlapping of generations, the transmission of such a body of lore could scarcely have been possible. The broad contacts between generations supply a conductivity for the transmission of ideas over long periods of time, somewhat analogous to the high conductivity of certain metals for the transmission of physical energy. The family, based on the prolongation of infancy, becomes, under this theory, not only the original form of social grouping, but continues, down at least to the age of printing, the chief agency for the prolongation of civilization.

A learning period, however, would not be of much use without the capacity to learn. Lester F. Ward has suggested another physiological modification of the human species quite as important as the prolongation of infancy, namely, a superior brain development. Endowed with a plastic mind, "wax to receive and marble to retain," the prolongation of the learning period

made the human race a conserver of tradition and a storehouse of accumulated knowledge.

2. *The Intelligence Theory.* According to Lester F. Ward, the genesis of human society lay in the fact that man early "perceived the advantages" which association yields. It derives its existence "only in proportion" as its advantages become actual and are perceived by the individual.¹ It is obvious that he means by the genesis of human society not the precise historical form in which it first appeared, but the underlying reason for its appearance and its continuance. These two concepts, that of the first form in which social life showed itself and the reason why it showed itself, while closely linked, are not identical and are logically separable. Ward's theory that the genesis of human society is found in the intelligence which perceived the advantages of group life does not contradict the theory that the first actual form of group life was the family, beginning with parents and children and enlarging to include a considerable group of kindred. The success of groups thus formed may have convinced human intelligence of its advantage.

Groups may have been brought together under other circumstances than those of mating, birth, or descent from a common ancestor. However they were formed, if they proved advantageous there would be empirical evidence to appeal convincingly to human intelligence. Furthermore, some modern anthropologists would be inclined to doubt whether primitive men were as intelligent as Ward seems to assume. However the first groups may have been formed, the fact that the individuals who belonged to them flourished and survived, increased in numbers and spread over more land, driving out smaller groups as well as isolated individuals, would be a sufficient explanation

¹ "This, then, is the essential prerequisite to all true social union, that there shall be sufficient brain development to enable the individuals interested to perceive, however dimly, the advantages of association." *Dynamical Sociology* (D. Appleton & Co., 1898), vol. I, p. 452.

"We are compelled to reject the doctrine of Aristotle, so prevalent everywhere, that man is naturally a gregarious animal, or, as it is less objectionably stated, that man is naturally a social being. Civilized man is undoubtedly a social being, but this quality has been the result of a long and severe experience by which a great change has been produced in his constitution." *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 221.

of the fact that all men now live in groups. Those who did not were 'ong ago exterminated.

On the other hand, the hypothesis that the first actual groups grew out of the family may have been based on an overemphasis on the solidarity of the family. It is at least conceivable that the prolongation of infancy may have been a product as well as a cause of group life. Since infants could not survive a prolonged period of dependence unless there were something on which to depend, it looks as though there must have been some form of or approach to group life before infancy could have been greatly prolonged. Besides, in mild or semi-tropical countries, the period of infantile dependence is less prolonged than we northerners are in the habit of thinking. Where shelters are cheap and transient, where food requires a minimum of cooking, and where hearthfires are not indispensable to physical comfort, the family as we northerners know it, is a rather unstable and transient affair. Few of us realize how important to family life, and to group life as well, is a permanent shelter and a hearth or fireplace. The sacred fire, tended by the Vestal virgins, was apparently a Roman recognition of the fundamental importance of the hearth. Here was a gathering-place for those seeking comfort and cheer in cold weather. Here was the one place where every one felt physically comfortable and mentally cheerful, where every one liked to be. This feeling of comfort and cheer came to be associated with the persons one met in that place. Hence family affection and group loyalty.

Cooking also, in a cold climate, becomes an important ceremony. In connection with the fireplace as a place of congregation, came the eating place and the common meal as a place of satisfaction. The socializing influence of a common meal is fully appreciated by practical persons, if not by academic sociologists. A good dinner is known to be an excellent means of securing a "meeting of the minds" when agreement on important matters is desired. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper is probably a religious idealization of this fundamental fact, just as the Vestal fires were of the socializing power of the hearth.

The hearth, the common meal, and the permanent shelter called the home, are factors in the solidarity of the family, and possibly in the beginnings of group life, at least in northern latitudes. These factors, in combination, may be more important even than kinship. That is to say, those who are brought into close association by a combination of these three factors may be more closely bound together than those who are united by blood relationship. To be sure, there is likely to be a combination of blood relationship and all these other factors, but where, for any reason, there is not, there is likely to be a stronger emotional basis of unity among those who are closely associated under a common shelter, before a common hearth and around a common table, than among those not so associated but united by ties of kinship.

In southern latitudes, however, these factors are of less importance than in northern. Consequently, family solidarity is not so conspicuous and does not figure so convincingly as an explanation of the historical origin of group life. Shelters are not only less permanent but less necessary than in northern latitudes, fires are less necessary for comfort, and besides, the custom of eating together around a common table is less prevalent than among northern peoples. The expressions "home" and "home fires" do not call forth the same emotional responses as among northern peoples. The word "family" does not suggest the same idea. The suggestion that the origin of group life is found in the family does not thrust itself on the student of life among the southern races.

After all, there is no reason for assuming that group life everywhere began in the same way. Under some conditions, it may have begun with the family which later grew into a clan and a tribe based on kinship. Such historical illustrations as the "seed of Abraham" which developed into a cluster of tribes and later into a nation, do not touch the real point. Abraham himself came out of an ancient eastern city to start a cattle ranch in the Far West of Palestine. The city from which he came had developed a civilization in many respects as highly evolved as our own. As well argue from the Mayflower Com-

pact that social life began with formal contracts as to argue from the case of Abraham that it began with the family. However, there are other evidences which are more convincing. Studies of clan organization seem to indicate that some societies may have been based on descent from a common ancestor, which, in turn, would suggest a familistic origin for some societies, but not necessarily for all.

One difficulty is to determine at what stage in their development our ancestors could really be called human. The most primitive tribes yet studied have at least developed a language. This development was probably an elaborate process extending over long periods of time. They also possess all the peculiar anatomical characters which we are accustomed to associate with the word *human*. If we assume a brain development which makes a language possible, it is reasonable also to assume a degree of intelligence which would enable men to see the advantage of group life when it was once demonstrated in real life. Intelligence may very well be included among the original factors in the development of social life.

3. *The Militaristic Theory.* Another plausible theory is that group life may have grown out of the necessity for protection against enemies. That ten men fighting together are more powerful than one, and that a hundred, if well organized, are more powerful than ten, must have been sufficiently obvious to appeal to the intelligence of any creature that could properly be called human. Even if that were not true, the fact that those who happened for any other reason,—such as kinship or subjection to a bully,—to fight in organized bands, commonly prevailed against those who did not, would have been sufficient. The only survivors, in the long run, would be those who fought in bands.

Strength in fighting both against other human beings and against huge beasts,¹ has two aspects, both promotive of group

¹ Native African hunters, armed only with javelins, do not hesitate to attack the lion if they can hunt in bands. When the lion charges, a number of javelins are hurled at him. At least one is likely to strike him, whereupon he invariably turns to attack the javelin, giving the hunters ample opportunity to dispatch him.

life and action. One is the possession of a situation, such as a cave, a cliff, or a lake village suitable for defense. The other is an organized group with a technical equipment suitable both for attack and defense. The balance of power between attack and defense has shifted back and forth, even down to the latest wars. The classical example is, of course, the mediaeval castle which, before the invention of gun powder, gave the defenders the advantage, but, when cannon came into use, were easily battered down around the defenders' ears, thus changing the whole political and social organization of Europe. The promptness with which Belgian forts were demolished by German cannon at the beginning of the World War seemed, for a time, to show that the balance of power was still on the side of attack. However, defense came out ahead when the art of trench warfare was developed. One evidence of this is the fact that, in spite of all the improvements in the technique of killing, a smaller percentage of those engaged were killed than in any other great war. The contest between the makers of cannon and the makers of armor plate is another illustration of the same age-long shifting of the balance between attack and defense. The above allusions are merely by way of illustration.

From the most primitive times, this balance has been shifting. Those people who tried to live in settled habitations were successful only so long or in so far as they were able to beat off the wandering bands of fighters. They were successful, apparently, only when they occupied positions which were easily defended, such as caves, cliffs, and lake villages supported on piles driven into lake mud.

Another phase of the military theory is found in the suggestion that organized society may have begun, in some cases at least, as a band of fighters under a war chief. The war chief may have won a following by pommelling weaker men, women, and children into subjection and organizing them under his arbitrary rule. If he possessed not only brute strength but some degree of organizing ability and intelligent foresight, the group thus formed might grow in power and numbers. The modern

gangster may be a throwback to the founder of that form of early social life.

Instead of a mere bully, the primitive strong man may have been a leader in battle. Partly because of his power to compel obedience, and partly because of a popular recognition of his ability as a leader, or admiration of his prowess, he was able to organize a group of followers. If his ability was real, and his group was successful, his following would grow and become, eventually, a large and well integrated social group. The war chief and his following in certain modern fighting tribes may be a modern reproduction of the early beginnings of group life.

This strong-man theory does not necessarily contradict the familistic theory. The strong man may easily have been the head of a family which, because of his success as a leader, grew into a considerable group. His many wives and children, together with accretions from outside the family, of those seeking his protection and of others conquered by him and subjected to his government, could conceivably grow into a great society, especially if the head of the group were something of a statesman who could organize it into a superior fighting and producing organization.

One thing is certain, namely, that however the first groups came to be organized, no group could grow, or even survive in competition with other groups, unless it were efficiently organized either for fighting or producing, or both. This is rather more important than the question of the way in which the very first groups happened to start. In all probability, groups started in various ways and took on various forms. This variation among groups would play the same part in the evolution of groups that variation in biological organisms played in the evolution of organisms. But variation, in either case, must have been accompanied by selection if there was to be evolution in the Darwinian sense. Selection, in the evolution of social groups as well as in that of individual organisms, is determined by the ability to meet the conditions of life. Two conditions especially must be met: first, it must avoid being killed by enemies; second, it must avoid being destroyed by starvation.

No social group can survive, or be selected for survival, if it fails in either of these particulars. Therefore, it must be effectively organized for defense and for subsistence. Primitive statesmanship must have met this test, however the group happened to be organized in the first place.

In fact, this seems to have been the fundamental reason why men came to live together in groups. From the standpoint of fighting, no individual could defend himself against an organized group. They who lived and fought together could kill or dispossess any one who tried to live and fight alone. That being the case, it was certain that, in the course of time, no land could be held by isolated individuals if any group happened to want it. The process must have gone on, the stronger or more efficiently organized groups destroying or dispossessing the weaker or less efficiently organized, until surviving groups began to approach the optimum size. With poor means of transportation and communication, a group might outgrow the capacity of its statesmen. When that point is reached, it could not extend, or even defend its frontiers against the more compact groups which surrounded it. A kind of balance, resembling what the biologist calls the "balance of nature" would result.

4. *The Economic Theory.* As just suggested, one limiting factor in the growth of efficient organization is and always was the means of transportation and communication. Another is the capacity of the people for organization. This latter factor will be discussed in Chapter V on The Social Nature of Man. Transportation as a factor in determining the size of social groups has two aspects: first, the transportation of people to their food supplies; and second, the transportation of food to the people. The scarcity of food in any spot must have necessitated foraging over wide areas. Obviously, the people must have wandered in search of food, or they must have sent out foragers to bring food to their settled habitations, if there were settled habitations. Some fairly primitive people are known to have lived in caves. In those cases at least there were settled habitations necessitating the bringing in of food.

It used to be assumed, rather widely, that primitive men

lived by hunting and fishing, and, at a later stage, by herding. The only thing of which we can be reasonably certain is that primitive men must have lived, as the higher animals do, on what they could find. If the findings in the form of fruits and vegetables were good, they hunted for fruits and vegetables. If the findings were better in the form of shell fish, they hunted for shell fish. The vast extent of the kitchen middens found in various parts of the world would indicate that considerable numbers of men, over long periods of time, must have lived largely on shell fish. If, however, there were supplies of food in the form of animals that had to be stalked or chased, or fish that had to be lured and caught, men turned to hunting or fishing in the active sense.

The meagerness of the food supplies that could be found, before men learned to till the soil, made it impossible to support large groups in fixed settlements, unless there were means of carrying food from wide areas to the settlements. Before men learned to build boats there were no such means. Consequently, fixed settlements must have supported small groups. Wandering groups could, by following the food supply, forage over wider areas and thus support somewhat larger groups. Because of their numbers, these larger groups must have had the advantage in fighting, unless the smaller groups were well fortified in caves, cliffs, and other fastnesses. The villages built on piles over lakes were also well situated for defense. But wandering groups left few marks of their existence for archaeologists to study. Those groups who lived in well fortified places, such as caves and cliffs, or lake dwellings, were, apparently, the only ones who left durable evidences of their work. This may have given us of today an exaggerated notion of the importance of the cave, cliff, and lake dwellers.

Wandering groups which could follow the game as it followed the grass, or move to rivers when fish were running, and back to the hunting grounds when game was migrating, could support larger numbers of people than stationary groups until the latter found means of increasing their food supply. The cultivation of food crops, or the building of boats were, evidently,

the first means of supporting large numbers of settled people.

The superior fighting power of wandering over settled people may have been, for a long time, the effective reason for the frequent failure of settled people to survive. This superior fighting power was, in turn, the result of the larger numbers which could live together in one group by wandering in search of food and foraging over wider areas. The discovery of maize, or Indian corn, is now believed to have been the basis of the first civilizations of inland America. This discovery solved the food problem, temporarily at least, and enabled large numbers of people to live together in one place. It must have been a precarious existence, however, as evidenced by the fact that, except where protected by water or mountain fastnesses, as around the lakes of Mexico and the mountains of Peru, those civilizations decayed, or the settlements disappeared. A failure of the maize crop, or its destruction by enemies, would have meant wholesale starvation.

In other parts of the world, water transportation seems to have given fixed settlements a somewhat safer source of food. Perhaps it was a combination of cheap transportation and the protection afforded by a water front. Wandering nomads, not having boats, were stopped by water. The settled village, having boats, could bring food from greater distances. It is, apparently, no accident that, in most parts of the world outside of America, the first permanent or durable settlements were located on rivers or other waters where transportation by boat was easy.

This suggests another theory as to how men first came to live together in groups or societies. It may be called an economic theory, to distinguish it from the familistic and the militaristic theories already considered. The economic theory is that the necessities of economic existence may have brought men together in certain places. A source of food, such as an oyster bed or a clam flat, may have drawn men to a certain spot, as sources of food will draw animals, birds, and insects. The mere fact of geometrical propinquity and a common interest in the food supply, without regard to family or kinship, may have

been a sufficient basis for group consciousness and associated effort. Assuming a sufficient degree of intelligence to see the advantage of peace and coöperation, when once demonstrated, we have an adequate explanation of group activity and teamwork.

However, as suggested above, there is no compelling reason to think that group life everywhere began in precisely the same way. It may have begun in different ways in different times and places. The biological family may, and very likely did, in many cases, develop into a larger social group called the family, the clan, or the tribe. In other cases, a war chief may have gathered around himself a considerable body of fighters and servants, with their women and children. In still other cases, men may have reasoned it out and got together and agreed to live and work together, both for defense and subsistence. In still other cases they may have been drawn to the same spot by the presence of food, and, from the fact of actually being together with a common interest, may have learned to work together. Doubtless other ways can be suggested. It can not be too frequently repeated, however, that no matter how they first came to live and work together, the habit could not have spread and become universal if there had not been survival value in it.

If group life is so superior to isolated living as to make the latter impossible in any spot of land coveted by a group, why do men have so much trouble living together in groups? Why, in other words, is there so much conflict among people in the same group? One might easily understand how there might be conflict between groups. When one group becomes so great as to need more land as a source of subsistence, it has a motive for trying to get more land. If, in order to get it, it has to dispossess another group, the other group, also needing more land, will have a motive for resisting. This is clear enough, and it may throw some light on the source of conflict among members of the same group. That, however, will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III

CONFLICT

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1. *The Reality of Conflict.* It is difficult to imagine any human relationship — whether between individuals within a group, or between groups, societies or nations — that does not contain, in some form or other, elements of conflict as well as elements of harmonious coöperation.¹ This applies to the most intimate and tender of all human relationships, as well as to the most perfunctory, business-like or diplomatic. Even the relationship between husband and wife,— if they permit themselves to think of such things,— has elements of conflict, arising from an antagonism of desires or interests. Such questions as the division of the income, who shall have the auto on a given afternoon, the selection of names for the children, whether to go to the theatre or stay at home, contain elements of potential conflict. Likewise does their relationship have many elements of harmony. Each needs the other; they complement each other. There are large fields of activity in which their interests do not compete but rather coöperate, and in a great multitude of ways each gains in proportion as the other gains. Whether they live in peace and harmony or in a state of antagonism will usually depend upon which aspect of their relationship they let themselves think about most frequently. If they permit themselves to forget their need of one another and the many ques-

¹ See T. N. Carver and H. B. Hall, *Human Relations* (D. C. Heath & Co., Boston, 1923), p. 239.

tions on which their interests harmonize, and to think only of the questions on which there is a conflict of desire or interest, they are not likely to live a harmonious life. If, on the other hand, those questions on which there is a unity of interests occupy their minds to the exclusion of those questions on which their interests conflict, they may expect nothing but peace and harmony.

Likewise, the most perfunctory and businesslike relationship has its elements of harmony as well as of conflict. The producer, for example, needs the consumer, and the consumer needs the producer. The producer gains in proportion as the consumers increase in number and in purchasing power. To that extent at least, it is to the producers' interest to see the consumers prosper. If they prosper, they are likely to make better customers for the producer. It is likewise to the interest of consumers to see producers increase in number and efficiency. In their own interests the consumers must contribute to the prosperity of the producers by paying prices that will stimulate productive activities. In many other ways it is easy to demonstrate that the interests of producers and consumers are in harmony. But, on the other hand, when they meet face to face as bargainers, the price which suits the one is very likely to displease the other. In the price-making process they discover a very definite conflict of interests. The producer would like to sell at a high price; the consumer would like to buy at a low price, and there may be a great deal of higgling of the market. At such times, in the heat of argument, they may forget the larger field in which their interests harmonize. If they forget their need of one another, and fail to see that there is somewhere a price which will partially harmonize the interests of both and probably create the least sum total of dissatisfaction on both sides, the conflict may become destructive to the interests of both, in which case, the psychology of conflict may displace the psychology of coöperation.

It is a part of the psychology of conflict to be willing to suffer injury if only we can inflict greater injury on our opponents. In conflict we seek what may be called a negative profit,

that is, a smaller loss or injury than we cause to the enemy. It is a part of the psychology of peace to seek a positive profit, that is, to be willing that the other fellow should gain if only we can gain by the same transaction. It makes a vast difference in all social relations whether we are under the general motivation of war or peace, of conflict or coöperation.

As stated in Chapter I, this fact of conflict in human relations was, chronologically, the first great social problem to attract the attention of students. A more complete statement would probably be to the effect that it was the baffling fact of a combination of harmony and conflict,—obvious harmony in some cases and obvious conflict in other cases,—which attracted the attention and puzzled the minds of students. So baffling was this apparent contradiction as to tempt men to try to eliminate it by shutting their eyes to it. In this world of harmony, they said, there is and can be no real conflict of human interests. To assert that there can be any real conflict is to impugn the beneficent Creator of the universe, is a more extreme statement of the same thesis. On the other hand, others said that human relationships are only another manifestation of “Nature, red in tooth and claw,” “Man eating man, man eaten by man,” etc. “Big fish eat little fish” is said by such pessimists to be the formula of human as of marine life.

To those extremists who assert one or the other of these views, it does not seem to occur that human relationships are sometimes harmonious and sometimes inharmonious. Common observation should convince any one of this. One problem of the sociologist is to explain the situation. However, this situation had been discussed voluminously before the term *sociology* was coined.

2. *The Psychology of Conflict.* It has been stated on good authority ¹ that war is the natural condition of mankind. Something depends, of course, upon the way we define the word *natural*. That men as well as other creatures have always had

¹ The gist of this paragraph is elaborated in ch. VI of the author's book entitled *The Present Economic Revolution in the United States* (Little, Brown & Co., Boston, 1928).

to struggle for existence is now an axiom of biology. Among the ancestors of the peoples of Europe this struggle was carried on against enemies, both human and non-human, as well as against the impersonal factors of their physical environment. In the earlier stages of the human struggle for existence some of the non-human enemies were huge and ferocious beasts. As Sumner so forcibly expresses it: "When man came to take his seat at the banquet of life, he found the places all occupied, and to get a seat he was forced to expropriate a crowd of table-companions who were no less ravenous than he."¹ In the later stages the enemies which we fight against are mainly of the invisible sort, such as disease germs.

In fighting against our ancient enemies, the huge and ferocious beasts, the same fighting temper was required that was necessary in fighting against human enemies,—those rival tribes which were invading our hunting grounds or seeking to exterminate us in order that they might have more room for themselves. An enemy in that primitive kind of warfare was something to be killed. The more they were thinned out the better it was for us. The killing of such enemies required a violent exercise of the fighting muscles and these had to be driven by a fighting temper. Those who lacked either fighting muscles or a fighting temper had a very poor chance of survival and in the long run were exterminated. In Europe and the greater part of America the survivors were those who were psychologically as well as physically fitted for fighting.² The processes of natural selection, therefore, tended in those primitive times to breed a race with a fighting temper as well as with fighting muscles. A fighting temper, no less than fighting muscles, had survival value.

It sometimes happens, however, that a quality which has great survival value under one set of conditions proves to be a serious handicap under changed conditions. This may be true

¹ Sumner and Keller, *The Science of Society* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1927), vol. I, p. 96.

² The Eskimos of the Far North, and other tribes that were content with a habitat too poor to tempt invaders, escaped this form of struggle and therefore escaped the necessity of evolving a fighting temper.

of emotional as well as of purely physical qualities. The fighting temper, for example, however necessary it may have been for survival, may prove a handicap in the stage which we hope¹ we are now entering, in which fighting — at least of the old type — is unnecessary. It is difficult to see how a berserker rage can help us very much in our war against disease germs, or in our efforts to overcome the law of diminishing returns from land. And yet it doubtless had its value in the kind of warfare that required a violent exercise of the fighting muscles. It is like a narcotic drug which paralyzes the higher centers of control, destroys caution, and enables men to show what looks like reckless courage, which has its place on the battlefield where soldiers are asked to make a desperate charge or lead a forlorn hope. The same drug, however, would be entirely out of place in a machine age when caution rather than recklessness should be promoted. If a drug could be found that would cause automobile drivers and others in responsible positions to show unusual caution, there would be something to be said for promoting its use.

This fighting temper sometimes drives us to fight when there is no wisdom in fighting. When we become extremely irritated toward anything we want to fight it. The child beats or breaks its mechanical toy when he cannot make it work. The grown man kicks the chair over which he has stumbled, an act which may not do the chair any harm, and which certainly does not do his shins any good. Grown men have been known to break their golf sticks not because their wisdom told them that it would improve their game, but merely because it was a natural expression of the fighting temper. Muleteers have been known to swear at their mules even though wisdom would counsel gentler measures. In short, the fighting temper is a useful quality so long as we are dealing with things that need to be exterminated. It is entirely useless when we are dealing with things that need to be cultivated, improved, or increased in

¹ The hope exists, even though it may prove to be an iridescent dream. If it proves to be such a dream, the inheritance of a fighting temper may be one of the reasons.

quantity. It is particularly troublesome when we are dealing with those irritating friends who are on the whole useful though sometimes stubborn and intractable.

In our larger social relations the fighting temper gives a great deal of trouble. When producers give way to their fighting temper in dealing with consumers they are doing themselves harm rather than good. The only satisfaction they could possibly derive would be that they might do consumers more harm than they did themselves. If producers are seeking a positive gain for themselves, they will want to see consumers increased in numbers and purchasing power. When laborers give way to their fighting temper in dealing with employers they make the same mistake. The last thing that laborers want is to see employers exterminated or even thinned out. What they want,—if they are wise,—is to see employers increased in number and in purchasing power.

Most of the "enemies" so-called that are developed in class wars are the kind that we need to increase rather than to diminish. If we are laborers, our so-called "enemies," the employers, need to be increased. When employers increase in number it is worse for each of them because there is more competition among them. It is better for the rest of us because there are more employers competing for our labor. It is obvious that here we are dealing with a kind of "enemy" with which our inherited fighting temper unfits us to deal. The fighting temper fits us to deal with enemies whom we want to exterminate or thin out. It leaves us bewildered and helpless in our dealings with the so-called "enemy" whose power is weakened as he increases in numbers and strengthened as he decreases in numbers.

If we are employers and are engaged in a modern class war, we weaken our so-called "enemy," the laborers, by increasing their number, by stimulating immigration or encouraging a high birth-rate among them. We strengthen our so-called "enemy" by thinning them out, either by restricting immigration or by encouraging birth-control among them.

Of course one may contend that these so-called "enemies" in

a modern class war are not really enemies. However, it takes intelligence and a process of reasoning to arrive at any such conclusion. Economic behaviorism,—the ordinary automatic response to a general situation,—regards them as enemies. In other words, our economic behaviorism is partly a product of the fighting temper which was bred into us through millions of years of social selection. Anything that irritates us' even though it be a niggardly customer who refuses to pay a satisfactory price for what we have to sell, is likely to arouse our fighting temper. We hate it and desire to do it an injury. "Hates any man the thing he would not kill?"

In international and other inter-group relations the same mixture of conflict and harmony exists. It is easy to show that both groups are interested in an exchange of specialties or in the territorial division of labor. But that does not obscure the fact that there are also questions on which their interests conflict. Boundary questions, trade balances, international debts and their terms of settlement, all require forbearance and courtesy and extremely careful diplomacy to prevent actual hostilities. No amount of subtlety or sophistry can argue these conflicts of interest out of existence. The question of inter-group peace or war depends upon which element in these inter-group relations the people of both groups permit themselves to think most about.

Whether the groups under consideration are territorial or class groups, we find questions on which their interests harmonize and others on which they conflict. Laborers need employers and employers need laborers. They complement one another as truly as do husband and wife, teacher and pupil, producer and consumer, manufacturer and farmer. Nevertheless, there are other questions on which their interests conflict. If laborers would work willingly and cheerfully for low wages, employers would gain. If employers would willingly and cheerfully pay high wages, laborers would gain. To bring about a harmonious compromise sometimes requires the utmost tact and diplomacy. Employers frequently find it to their interest to import cheap foreign labor; laborers find it to their interest to exclude it.

In brief, throughout the entire range of human relations, we find elements of conflict as well as elements of harmony. This fact, namely, that both conflict and harmony exist side by side in all our social relations, has forced itself upon the attention of students of social affairs. Prophets, theologians, philosophers and sociologists have clearly realized its significance and have sought to find some explanation of it. As Professor Hobhouse says:

In living together, consciously and unconsciously we exert pressure and constraint upon one another, and consciously and unconsciously we co-operate and draw out from each other capacities which would otherwise be dormant. . . In every actual society harmony is shot through with disharmony and in the social relations there is more or less constraint, distortion, or mere indifference.¹

The fact of harmony may be more fundamental than the fact of conflict, but it does not force itself so dramatically upon the attention of the student. As a storm is more impressive than calm, so conflict is more impressive than peace. It is not strange, therefore, that human conflict was one of the first topics to puzzle serious minds and to receive the attention of students. Why do storms occur? was more likely to be discussed by moderately rational creatures than, Why don't they occur? Why is there human conflict? was also a more ready theme for debate than, Why is there peace? The earliest sociological theories were theories of conflict. These were embodied in legends, allegories and myths before they were set forth in thesis form. This observed phenomenon of conflict between races, between cultures, between groups and between individuals within groups so strongly impressed itself upon their minds that they considered it in itself to be an ultimate reality. A deeper insight, however, discloses the fact that conflict in itself is not primary but is the result of a more fundamental factor which is strictly of an objective nature rather than subjective or purely psychological. This, then, leads to a study of the objective source of

¹ L. T. Hobhouse, *Social Development* (Henry Holt & Co., New York, 1924), p. 70.

conflict and the various explanations given as to its nature and function.

While the fighting temper unquestionably intensifies conflict, and, once developed, may even be a secondary cause of conflict, it can not in any evolutionary sense be called a primary cause of conflict. It seems to have been itself a result of conflict, that is, a product of a situation in which fighting was necessary, and in which the possession of a fighting temper had survival value. This, however, does not explain what there was to fight about, or why it was necessary to fight. Without some such necessity there could have been no survival value in a fighting temper. We must look deeper for the ultimate source of conflict.

So glaring has been the fact of conflict as to lead many writers to identify it with the problem of evil. As such it was the first problem in sociology to receive the serious attention of students, seers, philosophers, and theologians.¹ They were puzzled to know the source of the difficulty and they sought for an answer in a way that gave some unity to their thinking. Some found the answer in the doctrine of "original sin" and the remedy in religion. Others, like Plato,² found the answer in the institution of property, leading men to think in terms of *meum* and *tuum*, and the remedy in justice. Others found the answer in scarcity and the conflict of interests which result from it.³ While this problem of conflict is a distinctly sociological problem, the early writers who discussed it did not call themselves sociologists.

3. *Scarcity*. Much has been written in a moral vein on the subject of man's ever expanding economic and social wants.

¹ The author is here referring to that body of literature and tradition which has come down to us of the western world and which constitutes our own literary heritage. Men of every type and state of civilization have thought seriously about all the things which occupy the minds of modern sociologists. Wherever men wrote at all, they have written about these things. Research in other literatures—Egyptian, Babylonian, Indic, Chinese, Arabic—will yield excellent fruits. The present discussion relates only to modern European and American writings.

² See the dialogue as set forth in Plato's *Republic*, Book V.

³ See the author's *Essay in Social Justice* (Harvard University Press, 1914), ch. II, on "The Ultimate Basis of Social Conflict," where it is shown that the central problem of justice grows out of the necessity of distributing things that are scarce, that is, insufficient to satisfy men's desires.

The usual statement is that people want too much, but the meaning of this statement has never been sufficiently analyzed. It obviously means that there is some lack of coördination between man's desires and nature's means of satisfying them. When this lack of coördination is looked at from one point of view, it is called scarcity. When viewed from another point of view, it is called self-interest or selfishness. Considered as a whole, however, it reveals itself as what Dean Pound calls "the central tragedy of human existence."

That scarcity in one form or another is the ultimate basis of human conflict is the thesis which will be discussed in this section. The other side of the shield, called selfishness, will be discussed in a later section. Around these two facts of scarcity and self-interest are grouped practically all our moral ideas and all our laws and institutions for the control or mitigation of human conflict. They underlie all theories of economic value and to some extent also social value.

This idea is remarkably well expressed by Roscoe Pound¹ in the following language: "From an earthly standpoint, the central tragedy of existence is that there are not enough of the material goods of existence, as it were, to go around; that while individual claims and wants and desires are infinite, the material means of satisfying them are finite; that while, in common phrase, we all want the earth, there are many of us but there is only one earth. Thus we may think of the task of the legal order as one of precluding friction and eliminating waste; as one of conserving the goods of existence in order to make them go as far as possible, and of precluding friction and eliminating waste in the human use and enjoyment of them, so that where each may not have all that he claims, he may at least have all that is possible. Put in this way, we are seeking to secure as much of human claims and desires — that is, as much of the whole scheme of interests as possible,— with the least sacrifice of such interests."

The word *scarcity* has a relative rather than an absolute mean-

¹ *The Spirit of the Common Law* (Marshall Jones Co., Boston, 1921).

ing. A thing may be very abundant, speaking absolutely, and yet if there is not as much of it as people want, it is scarce relatively to human wants. Again, there may be very little of it, but if that little is more than people want, it is not ordinarily said to be scarce; certainly not in the economic sense. Finally, scarcity is always a question of time and place. No matter how much there may be of a thing, if it is not found when and where it is wanted, it is then and there scarce. The fact of scarcity, however, can never be completely intelligible and its meaning apparent until its relation to the size of population is made clear. Between the two factors there is the closest interaction. Scarcity is both limited and modified by the factor of population, and in turn limits and modifies the size of every population.

Sex and hunger ¹ are brought into conflict by two other great facts: first, the fact that a "natural" birth-rate is higher than a "natural" death-rate; second, the fact that increasing applications of labor to the cultivation of a given area of land do not give proportionally increasing returns. By a "natural" birth-rate is meant such a birth-rate as results wherever the powerful sex impulse is not repressed or, at least, kept under rational control. By a "natural" death-rate is meant such a rate as would result if every individual lived out a normal lifetime, say his allotted three-score years and ten, or four-score years, and died a "natural" as distinguished from a tragic or an untimely death.

The average pair, for example, can have a total of only two deaths, but if they live out a normal span of life and do not control the sex impulse, they will have more than two children. Their children, likewise, will continue reproducing more than their own numbers. Wherever population is stationary, the birth-rate and the death-rate must balance. This balance means either that the death-rate is abnormally and tragically high, to balance a "natural" birth-rate, or that the birth-rate has been reduced to balance the death-rate. Among all the lower crea-

¹ As Schiller pointed out, the animate world is carried on "durch Hunger und durch Liebe," but there is a conflict between them.

tures and the lower orders of men, there is neither the intelligence nor the morale which would make it possible for them to reduce their birth-rate. It goes on at a "natural" rate, that is, reproduction is a physiological or an animal process, and in no sense a rational or a moral process. But, sooner or later, the death-rate must rise to balance this enormous birth-rate, otherwise the species would soon lack standing room.¹

Of course there never was a highly developed human society that did not, in one way or another, limit its birth-rate. Marriage is the most nearly universal method of keeping the birth-rate under some degree of control. By suppressing promiscuous breeding and exercising some degree of ceremonial control over marriage, a measure of control over the birth-rate is automatically established. Where, along with ceremonial control of marriage, there is also an enforced responsibility on the part of parents for the support of their own children, a somewhat more effective control of the birth-rate is established.

Among all creatures which are incapable of exercising intelligent foresight,—and this includes human beings of the lower grades of intelligence,—reproduction is a purely physiological process. It begins at puberty and continues until the sterility of advancing age intervenes. But in every human society where ceremonial marriage prevails, and where the *mores* enforce parental responsibility, reproduction does not begin at puberty and does not proceed at the rate which is physiologically possible.

As already pointed out, sex and hunger are thrown into conflict by the fact that the quantity of food that can be grown on an acre of land is limited. So long as this fact exists, the number of wants which can be satisfied by the produce of that acre will also be limited. When, therefore, the gratification of sex leads to an increase of numbers in a given area, the people must either manage to draw their food from wider areas or they must work harder and harder to grow enough produce in the original area.

¹ Cf. E. A. Ross, *Standing Room Only* (The Century Co., New York, 1927). Also T. N. Carver and Hugh Lester, *This Economic World* (McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York, 1928), chap. I.

Not only is the quantity of food that can be grown on a given area limited, but long before that limit is reached, the soil begins to yield diminishing returns to intensive cultivation. That is, you cannot go on doubling your crop on a given area by simply doubling the labor used in cultivating it, or quadrupling the crop by quadrupling the labor, and so on indefinitely until the limit is reached.

Putting these two great facts together, namely, the fact that a "natural" birth-rate is higher than a "natural" death-rate, and that land yields diminishing returns to labor, we have an explanation, adequate for the moment, of the universal fact of scarcity. Of course, one might carry the inquiry further by asking why we are so constituted as to make a natural birth-rate higher than a natural death-rate. An approximate answer would be that during the long period of our development on this planet, the conditions of living were so hard, our enemies so numerous and so deadly, as to produce a high death-rate among us. A high birth-rate was necessary if we were to avoid extinction. A powerful sex impulse was necessary to insure a high birth-rate. By some process of adaptation which the evolutionist does not understand any better than any one else, this powerful sex impulse was developed or inherited from pre-human ancestors, who also needed a high birth-rate to prevent extinction. Beyond this, it seems futile to push the inquiry.

We might also, and with equal futility, inquire why land is so scarce, or why it is so constituted as to yield diminishing returns. We must, apparently, accept these facts as among the primary data of sociology. At least we may, in this discussion, regard them as starting points for the study of human conflict.

This ever present and persistent fact of scarcity has a great deal to do in directing our conscious and planned behavior. Much of our behavior is, of course, purely automatic. Much that is not automatic is spontaneous and not consciously planned, being of the nature of play or self-expression. Much of it, however, is planned and consciously directed toward desired ends. The greater part of this is directed toward the getting or utilizing of something that is scarce,—of which we do not have as

much as we want. For the great mass of mankind, this constitutes the serious business of life. Getting and using; getting in order to have a more ample supply; using economically, in order that our supply may go as far and satisfy our desires as fully as possible; these occupy the greater part of the waking time and direct the working energies of the masses of mankind. Very few ever escape from this imperious necessity, and they who do seldom amount to much.

That there are possibilities of evil in this situation has been felt by moralists of many times and places. The desire to get more than one has of a substance which is scarce is pretty likely to conflict with the desire of some one else. Acquisitive efforts bring people into conflict, thus producing moral, social, legal, and political as well as economic problems. An interesting illustration of the effect of scarcity on "morals" is furnished by Worth E. Shoults in his account of the Adelie penguins of Antarctica.¹

An Adelie's nest consists of a loose pile of small stones, quite unadorned or softened with lining; but unfortunately for the peace of the avian community, there is not in the near vicinity a sufficient supply of such building material to go around. Thus does temptation enter into the life of a penguin. . . . He longs to supply his wife with more and better stones for the construction of their little love nest, but there are none to be had, with honor.

Soon he covets those within his neighbor's stone pile, and, having thus broken one commandment, he skids further along the downward path and before long is engaged in taking what he can while his neighbor isn't looking.

Constant vigilance is the price that must be paid for keeping a stone bungalow under one's feathers in a city of penguins.

Various ways out of the difficulty have been suggested either as preachments or as practical measures. One is the repression of desires; another is the increase of goods that are scarce. In so far as desires can be repressed, or prevented from expanding, in so far will scarcity be alleviated and the conflict of desires softened. In so far as goods can be multiplied, the same results

¹ *National Geographic Magazine*, February, 1932, p. 260.

occur. Both seem to fall short of the complete elimination of conflict.

We cannot afford to pass over without protest the idea, too frequently held by certain popular moralists, that the development of character is the aim and purpose of life. If that were accepted, we might be led rather easily to the conclusion that the rigors of a harsh climate, and of meager subsistence, with the necessity for industry, frugality, and forethought which those rigors impose upon us, were designed to produce these virtues, or a type of man possessing them. It seems more in harmony with the theory of evolution to regard character merely as a means to an end, a means of survival in an environment where self-discipline is necessary.

Instead of regarding the virtue of industry as an end, and a niggardly environment as a means of developing that virtue, it seems more reasonable to regard survival as an end, a niggardly environment as an actual condition, and the virtue of industry as a means of attaining the end under the condition. Instead of regarding the virtues of thrift as an end and long winters as a means of developing that virtue, it seems more reasonable to regard survival as an end, long winters as an actual condition, and the virtue of thrift as a means of attaining the end under the condition, or merely as a necessary means of surviving long winters. All the virtues that go to make up what we commonly call character, and even character itself in its totality, must apparently be regarded as means of survival under harsh conditions, as means of adapting ourselves to a physical environment to which we are not naturally adapted. The painfully acquired ability to work and to control our appetites is a kind of adaptation analogous, in the animal world, to the blubber of the whale, the fur of the seal, or, in the human world, the ability to eat and digest large quantities of fat food as a means of keeping warm.

3. *Man and Nature at War.* Any leaning which we may have toward a deep-lying harmony between man and nature is easy enough so long as we contemplate only the civilized races that dwell in temperate climates. We, in this climate, with our

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well constructed shelters, heating appliances, and clothes, have evidently through work achieved a higher degree of physical comfort than have most dwellers in the tropics where shelter, clothes, and fires are unnecessary. But our belief is likely to receive a shock when we consider the hyperboreans. These dwellers in the Far North are certainly under the chastening hand of a rigorous Nature. If the discipline of natural forces is what men need to develop character, they certainly are under that discipline. If necessity is the mother of invention, they should be very inventive. If plain living always stimulates high thinking, the intellectual lives of these people should be on an exceedingly high plane. Yet, according to our standards at least, their intellectual life is at a low level, their inventiveness, while thoroughly respectable, can hardly be said to be greater than ours or even comparable with it. Their civilization, according to any standard which may be taken as a rational criterion, has never reached an advanced stage.

Though we are accustomed to thinking of our own climate as somewhat harsh and the physical conditions under which we live as somewhat rigorous, they can hardly be shown to be more harsh and rigorous than the conditions of the tropics. The harshness and the rigors of our climate are of a different sort than those of warmer climates. It is by no means certain that the climate of the tropics is any milder than ours. The cold is less intense but the heat is fiercer. Certain tropical countries are, of course, prolific in their supplies of food. But this same terrific fecundity produces innumerable enemies as well as friends of the human race. These enemies include not only ferocious animals and reptiles but many invisible ones as well. The hookworm, the mosquito, and unnumbered kinds of harmful bacteria imperil the lives of the dwellers in the tropics quite as much as the east winds do the lives of New Englanders. Besides, it is probably easier to guard against the east wind than against the invisible and intangible enemies that flourish in the tropics. The amount of intelligence that is necessary to enable us to fight against cold is probably much less than that required to fight against the anopheles, the hookworm, the germs of the

sleeping sickness and other tropical enemies.¹ In any tropical country, man is certainly as much out of harmony with his environment as in any part of the United States or Europe.

On the whole, it would be quite as easy to maintain the thesis that the civilized races of the temperate zones are less out of harmony with their natural environment than are the less civilized races of the Far North or of the tropics,— in other words, that the most civilized races occupy those parts of the globe where the necessity of work is least,— as it would be to maintain the opposite thesis, namely, that civilization is stimulated by harsh conditions, and the necessity for actively controlling and modifying these conditions. This would go a long way toward destroying the thesis that it is good for the human race to be compelled to work hard to modify its environment. It would probably be nearer the truth to say that it is good for the human race to live in an environment where the amount of work necessary to bring the environment into harmony with human requirements is at the minimum, where nature encourages men to work, first by providing him with abundant raw materials, second, by responding vigorously to his efforts to grow food. A favorable environment, in other words, is one that responds promptly and beneficently to a relatively small amount of work; where a minimum of clearing of the ground and of tillage is necessary to produce an abundant crop, where a minimum of labor in forests and mills, quarries or brickyards, is necessary to provide building materials that are adequate for shelter; where fuel is abundant and easily secured; where, in

¹ The following description of life in a tropical jungle is likely to increase our satisfaction with our own climate, harsh as it may seem at times. The tropical jungle abounds with life, it is true, but much of it is predatory to man rather than useful to man.

“ . . . Then there was every kind of noxious insect — mosquitoes without end, gigantic leeches dangling from every leaf which made a specialty of attacking the eyeballs, ticks, stinking caterpillars, immense blue-bottles which swarmed in clouds over any food left uncovered, crickets which ate a man's clothes up in a night, and a plague of minute bees which settled in myriads on the heated face of the traveller. Above all, there was the rain. The whole country was water-logged by the flooding rivers and incessant deluge. In the dry season the average rainfall was about two and a half inches a day!” John Buchan, *The Last Secrets* (T. Nelson & Sons, Ltd., London), 1923, p. 252.

short, it takes the smallest possible amount of intelligence to see the advantages of active adaptation,—that is, of controlling the environment and making it over to fit the requirements of the human organism.

That ancient civilizations arose in regions where labor applied to land was highly productive is a commonplace in history. The fertile river valleys of Egypt, Mesopotamia, India, and China supported civilizations when our European ancestors were still savages. Here food was so abundant that men had time to do other things besides satisfying their immediate daily needs; or, rather, a part of the population could produce food enough to support the rest while the latter gave their time to other things. Art, architecture, philosophy, religion, and government could therefore flourish. The civilizations which have since grown up in latitudes farther north may not have exceeded those earlier civilizations in physical magnificence, but they have exceeded them in all that makes for the comfort and well-being of the average man.

On the other hand, the overpowering influence of the terrific productiveness of nature in certain tropical regions is sufficient to discourage man's enterprise. Kipling's story "Letting in the Jungle"¹ gives a vivid picture of the way in which the jungle struggles to re-assert itself,—to flow back, as it were, upon a cleared area and overwhelm it as with a flood of rank vegetation. Concerning India, Buckle writes:

Besides the dangers incidental to tropical climates, there are those noble mountains which seem to touch the sky, and from whose sides are discharged mighty rivers which no art can divert from their course and which no bridge has ever been able to span. There, too, are impassable forests, whole countries lined with interminable jungle, and beyond them, again, dreary and boundless deserts,—all teaching man his own feebleness and his inability to cope with natural forces. Without, and on either side, there are great seas, ravaged by tempests far more destructive than any known in Europe, and of such violence that it is impossible to guard against their effects. And as if in those regions everything combined to cramp the activity of man, the whole line of coast from the mouth of the Ganges to the extreme south of the peninsular does not contain a single safe and

¹ In *The Second Jungle Book*.

capacious harbor, not one port that affords a refuge which is perhaps more necessary there than in any other part of the world.¹

In contrast to India, Buckle points to Greece as a country where everything invites man to dominate. There is nothing to terrify or overwhelm him. Everything tends to exalt the dignity of man, while in India everything tends to depress it.

Whatever opinions we may hold on the deeper question of an underlying harmony between man and the environment in which he lives, there is no doubt whatever that individual human beings frequently have a feeling of discomfort; that is to say, they are sometimes cold, hungry or sick, and these discomforts would be much greater than they are now if men did not work and go to great pains to prevent them. But work, if carried beyond a certain limit, is also disagreeable, causing fatigue and interfering with various forms of enjoyment. In this dilemma, where the choice is between other forms of discomfort and the disagreeableness of hard work, the finite mind will have difficulty in appreciating the doctrine of a complete harmony between man and his environment. With its limited vision, the apparent maladaptation seems quite real.

When we approach the problem from this point of view, the whole economic struggle becomes a vast, united effort to attain to a harmony which does not naturally exist. If men are hungry because their environment does not spontaneously yield food enough, they try to improve on the natural food supply by causing it to grow in greater abundance. If they are cold, they try to make a warm climate next to their bodies. They accomplish this by holding heat in the body by means of clothes and shelters, and by producing artificial heat in their dwellings by burning fuel. However, the way of complete escape from discomfort by means of work is limited by the intervention of fatigue. The choice has to be made between two forms of discomfort,—that which arises from a lack of goods, and that which arises from an excess of labor. So long as the lack of goods causes more discomfort than the excess of labor, we keep

¹ *History of Civilization in England* (D. Appleton & Co., New York, 1908).

on working. When the excess of labor begins to cause more discomfort than the lack of goods, we stop working.¹

However, the superabundance of some things may be as great a cause of discomfort, or as distinct a phase of mal-adaptation between man and nature, as the scarcity of other things. Things that are positively harmful to man are always superabundant, from his point of view, no matter how small the quantity. However, there are relatively few of such things. Poisons, noxious insects, disease germs, and a few others might be named. But highly useful things may become nuisances where they exist in too great abundance. Water in a rain-drenched, swampy country may be as great a source of discomfort as its lack in an arid country. Men will work as hard to reduce its supply in the one case as to increase its supply in the other case. Superabundance is in one case as clear a form of maladaptation as scarcity is in another. Moreover, conflicts of interest among human beings are as certain to arise in the effort to get rid of that which is superabundant as in the effort to get more of that which is scarce. However, the number of cases in which superabundance is a cause of strife are small as compared with the number in which scarcity is the cause.

The term "environment" is somewhat indefinite, as any comprehensive term is likely to be. So far as the individual is conscious of his environment, it is only at certain points where he is in contact with it. These points of contact he is likely to visualize as physical objects. His attitude toward his environment is concentrated on certain of these physical objects. Toward them his attitude is one of repugnance, of indifference, or of desire. The following outline includes them all.

Objects of repugnance (nuisance or "illth")	{ 1. Harmful
	{ 2. Useful but too abundant
Objects of indifference	{ 1. Useless but not harmful
	{ 2. Useful but sufficient (free goods)
Objects of desire (wealth)	Useful and scarce

¹ The economist, of course, works out the equilibrium of marginal disutilities with great nicety.

Economists have generally concentrated their attention upon that class of objects which, in the above outline, are called objects of desire,— which are both useful and scarce,— or wealth, and upon man's efforts to acquire them. The second group listed under "Objects of indifference," namely, objects which are useful but amply sufficient, and not too abundant, he calls free goods, and then dismisses them from further consideration. Objects of repugnance are scarcely discussed at all, though efforts to get rid of them are clearly economic efforts. Killing of weeds or of beasts of prey may well be regarded as parts of the industry of growing crops and herds, or of alleviating the scarcity of useful things. Killing disease germs which attack the human body is somewhat more difficult to bring under the production of wealth, though it clearly improves the relation between man and his environment. Destructive nuisances, predatory plants and animals constitute, from one point of view, a problem of superabundance. From another point of view, they interfere with the production of useful things and may be regarded as factors in the problem of scarcity. The problem of value, in any positive sense, is a problem of scarcity, since nothing has a positive value unless it is scarce. There is, however, such a thing as negative value, sometimes called nuisance value. This phase of value, however, has attracted comparatively little attention either from economists or sociologists.

5. *The Law of Personal Preference.* As already pointed out, even the scarcity of desirable things could not produce conflict among human beings who had no personal preferences. If we could imagine a race of men who cared equally for all persons, for others as much as for self, for distant as much as for near relatives and neighbors, for members of other social groups as much as for their own fellow citizens or members of their own social groups, we could scarcely imagine them in a state of conflict with one another. The personal preferences which ordinary men show are generally summarized under the term self-interest. This is not an accurate term because it does not leave sufficient room for genuine interest in others, ranging all the way from passionate affection to casual friendship; but more of this later.

For the present it is sufficient to note that at least two factors are necessary to produce a conflict of interests: first, scarcity; and second, a preference for some persons as compared with other persons. Self is generally in the preferred list.

It is not uncommon to attribute conflict to self-interest alone, but this is incorrect. As pointed out already, scarcity, as truly as self-interest, is a factor. When either factor is missing, the result — conflict — does not ensue. In this sense, both are equally important. Again, an intense interest in a person other than self may lead one to fight as hard for that other person as for self. It is the fact of personal preference, rather than of self-interest, that counts. It is undoubtedly true that most of our personal preferences center around ourselves. This fact gives whatever justification there is for such terms as selfishness or self-interest.

The term self-interest does not seem to be very well understood, probably for the reason that it has never been sufficiently analyzed. It is not necessary to spend much time on a hair-splitting discussion of the old philosophical riddle as to whether altruism is or is not a form of selfishness. It is argued, according to this highly sophisticated method, that the altruistic individual is presumably altruistic because he prefers to be so, and that since he gratifies his preference he is to be accounted, to that degree, selfish. Such an unnatural conclusion could result only from an overemphasis upon motive rather than upon conduct, or perhaps more accurately, from a failure to see that a motive derives whatever value it has from the conduct which results from it. It may be true from a purely subjective standpoint and without any regard whatever to the problem of living together in large numbers, that the man who gets more delight from the taste of food upon the palates of his children than upon his own is as truly selfish as the man who gets no pleasure at all from the taste of food on any palate but his own. But when we look at it from the standpoint of his relation to other individuals and consider the way in which he fits into a social environment, there is no doubt as to which kind of a father would be better for children. That, after all, is the only thing

that matters. There is no doubt that the man who takes some pleasure in the happiness or well-being of his neighbors fits somewhat better into a neighborhood than the man who takes no pleasure in anything except his own sensual gratification. The qualities which enable one to function properly as a neighbor and a member of society are the ones which a society should value highly and try to cultivate in its members. One way to cultivate such qualities is for society to show its approval of them and its disapproval of their opposites. Juggling the names of these qualities does not get us anywhere toward the solution of the problem of living together in large numbers.

Discarding all subjective quibblings, we may state, at least tentatively, that benevolence is a quality in the individual which enables him to take pleasure in the pleasures of others and to suffer pain or at least mental discomfort when others suffer pain. He who possesses this quality will normally, without compulsion, behave in ways which will give pleasure to others and avoid giving them pain. Selfishness, on the other hand, is a quality which prevents one from taking pleasure in the pleasures of others or suffering pain from the pains of others. He who is of such a quality is not likely to do much to increase the pleasure or decrease the pains of other people.¹

It must be borne in mind, however, that both benevolence and selfishness are relative terms, depending upon the degree of self-preference,—the degree to which one prefers self to others. If, by complete benevolence is meant the quality which gives absolutely no preference to self as compared with other creatures, however far removed, then it is safe to say that such a thing as complete benevolence does not and never did exist except, perhaps, in myth and fable. The oriental saint who gave his body to feed the tiger merely because the tiger was hungry would perhaps be an example of absolute benevolence in this sense. On the other hand, such a thing as complete

¹ Benevolence is, of course, closely related to sympathy, which Adam Smith made the basis of social behavior.

A brief and good exposition of the Scottish school of ethicists including Adam Smith's Concept of Sympathy is given by Ethel Muir in *The Ethical System of Adam Smith* (J. Bowes, Halifax, N. S., 1898).

selfishness does not exist if that term means a quality which shows absolutely no regard for the interest of any other person than self.

What are called benevolence and selfishness as actual facts in the world are really found somewhere between the two extremes, one of which allows no preference whatever for self, and the other of which allows no interest whatever in any other being. Any one, however benevolent, will show some preference for self when his interests conflict with those of disease germs, noxious insects, the lower animals, and even of the higher animals, all of which are God's creatures but against which even benevolent persons have been known to wage war.

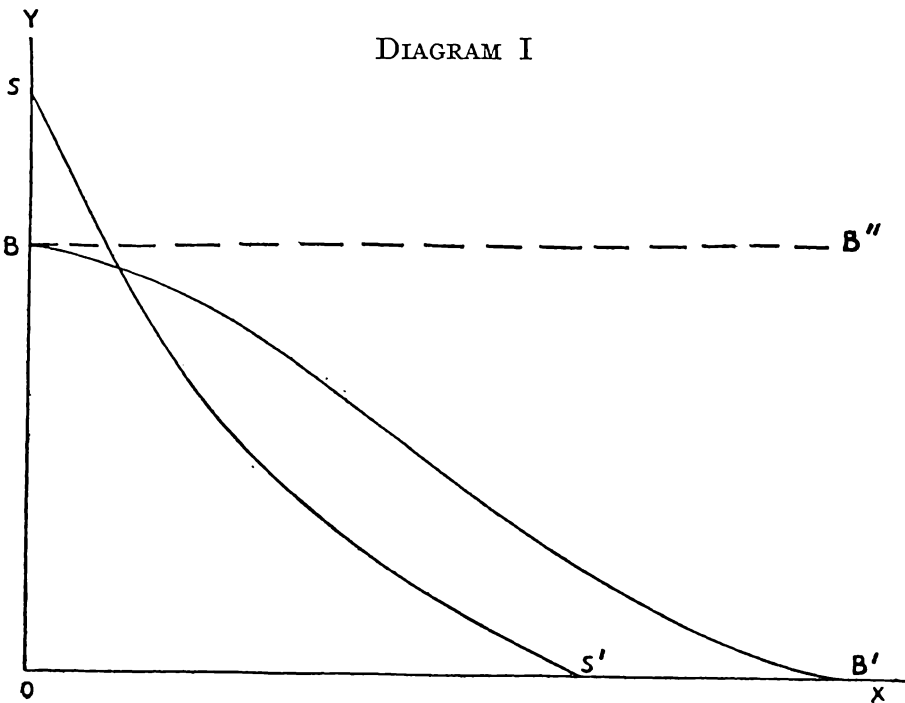
We can probably go further and say that every one, however benevolent, will show some preference for self or those near him where his or their interests conflict with those of other human beings rather distantly removed in space or kinship or like-mindedness. The same individual who would not sacrifice his own interests in favor of a dweller at the antipodes or a stranger who lives a long way off, might be willing to do so for those who are peculiarly near and dear to himself. In other words, every one, however selfish, will show some regard for some other person, perhaps very closely related to himself. He would not be a benevolent man,—he would scarcely be human, but rather an angel of love,—who would be willing to go hungry in order that he might relieve the mild hunger of another man of a different race or color whom he never saw. He would not be a selfish man or anything human, but a devil of hate, who would not be willing to deny himself some trifling satisfaction in order to save from starvation or extreme suffering some near relative or neighbor. Neither angels of love nor devils of hate actually exist in human form, though there may be pretty close approximations to both.

From this it will appear that the real difference between the benevolent and the selfish man is a difference of degree ¹ rather than of kind. The benevolent man may be said to have a mild

¹ See the author's *Essays in Social Justice* (Harvard University Press, 1914), p. 62 *et seq.*

or moderate preference for self or for those peculiarly close to self, and the selfish man to have a strong or immoderate preference for self. To put it in another way, the benevolent man may be said to have a wide circle of beings in whom he is interested, or to be so much interested in them that he will deny himself things of considerable importance in order to meet their slightly greater needs. The selfish man, on the other hand, may be said to have a narrow circle of beings in whom he is interested, or to be so little interested in them that he will deny himself only trifles or things of little importance in order to meet their much greater needs. The individual's benevolence, then, may be said to increase directly with the radius of the circle which includes those in whom he is interested, and with the intensity of his interest in all those who are found within that circle. Likewise, one's selfishness may be said to increase with the narrowness of the circle and with the feebleness of his interest in those who are found within the circle.

The following diagram illustrates this principle:



Along the line OX of the above diagram, measure the radius of the circle of one's interests, with one's self at the centre O, with other persons ranged along the line in the order in which one is interested in them. Along the line OY measure the intensity of one's interest in each person within that circle. Assume, further, that the line OS measures the intensity of S, the selfish man's interest in himself, while the line OB measures B, the benevolent man's interest in himself. They in whom S and B are interested are ranged along the line OX, those nearest these two persons being the ones in whom each is most intensely interested, and those farthest away being the ones in whom each is least interested. The radius of the circle of S's interests would then, we shall assume, be measured by the line OS' and that of B's by the line OB', and the curve SS' would represent the intensity of S's interest in other beings, while the Curve BB' would represent that of B in others. S becomes satanic in proportion as the curve SS' approaches the line SO, while B becomes divine in proportion as the line BB' approaches the dotted line BB'. Being human, their curves are found somewhere between these two extremes.

Let us now see exactly what is meant by the radius of the circle of one's interests, or by the terms "nearness to" and "distance from" self. In some way it will occur at once that the radius of the circle has something to do with the number of people who are included in it. If the circle of the benevolent man's interests is greater than that of the selfish man, it means that the one is interested in a larger number of people than the other. In either case, those within the circle of one's interests will be found to be in some sense nearer to self than are those who are outside that circle; and those within the circle in whom we are most interested will be found to be, in some sense, nearer to self than those in whom we are least interested. But in what sense can we use such a geometrical term as "nearer to" to express a moral or social fact? In the first place, it can be used in a strictly geometrical sense, meaning physical or geometrical propinquity. They who are nearer to one in space usually, though not always, command more of one's attention

and interest than they who are farther away. We normally care more for members of our own household than for members of other households, more for our near neighbors than for our distant neighbors, using the words *near* and *distant* with respect to space.

Again, we may use the words *near* and *far* with respect to time, and say that those who are near to us in point of time command more of our attention and interest than those who are far from us. We are more interested, for example, in our contemporaries, other things equal, than in those who have lived or are to live in remote times, in our immediate parents than in our remote ancestors, in our immediate children than in our remote descendants.

But there is another, and very important sense in which these terms are used which is not so easily expressed as are the concepts of space and time. They may be used with respect to similarity and dissimilarity. Other things equal, we care more for those who are like ourselves than for those who are unlike ourselves. That is to say, we normally care more for our own flesh and blood than for others, for our near relatives than for our distant relatives, for our own fellow citizens than for foreigners, for those who profess our own religion than for pagans, for human beings than for animals, for the higher than for the lower animals, etc. etc.

This may all be summed up by saying that we are more interested in those who are near to ourselves in point of space, in point of time, and in point of similarity and dissimilarity than in those who are distant from us in these three senses. It will, of course, inevitably happen that these three concepts of nearness will often be in conflict. Those who live near us in point of space may happen to be distant from us in point of dissimilarity. In this case the ties of kinship may prove stronger than the ties of neighborhood, or vice versa; that is, in case of conflict, we may side with those who are near of kin, though distant in space, rather than with those who are near in space but remotely of kin, or vice versa. We are frequently, for example, more moved by the sufferings of an animal which is

near in point of space than by the equal sufferings of a human being who is distant, though if both were equally near in point of space we should be more deeply moved by the sufferings of the human being, since he is nearer in point of similarity. Because of these distinct factors in the determination of our interests, all of which may be working in harmony or in conflict, the problem of determining the actual circle of one's interests becomes a perplexing problem in permutations and combinations.

In order to test himself on this question of preference, let the reader answer the following questions:

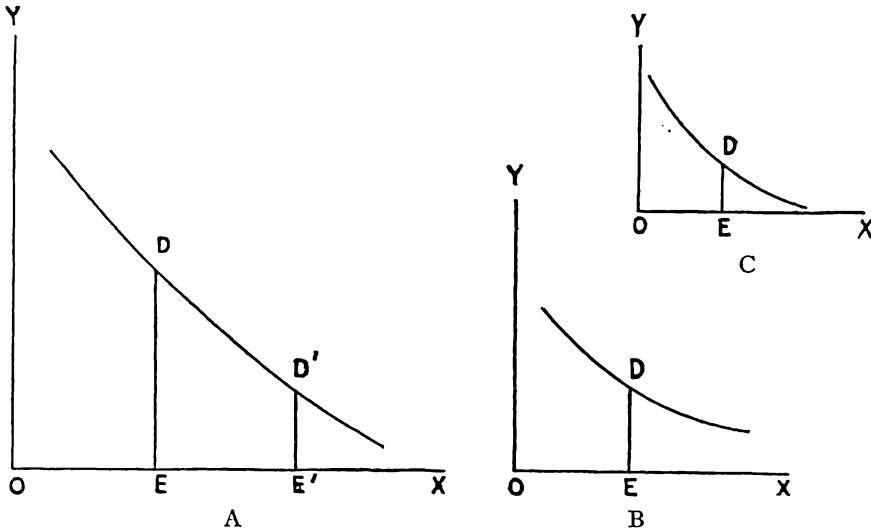
1. Do you care equally for every individual in the world, or do you care more for some than for others?
2. Will you do as much for those for whom you care little as for those for whom you care much?
3. If there is a conflict of interests between some of those for whom you care little and some of those for whom you care much, will you be indifferent or will you take one side or the other? Which side?

A little self-examination will show that one's interest in others may lead one into conflict quite as freely as one's interest in self. But, one's interest in others is likely to be greater in those who are "near" to self than in those who are distant from self. In that sense, our interests are self-centered.

Let us now see exactly what is meant by a preference for self, or by self-centered interest in others. In order to be as concrete as possible, let us begin by considering the interest which one has in the utilization of his income, remembering, however, that there are other interests in life besides income. It will be generally agreed that as a man's income increases, other things equal, his appreciation of each dollar will diminish. That is to say, if he has only three hundred dollars a year, he will guard each dollar pretty carefully because the loss of a single dollar would deprive him of something necessary for his subsistence. Moreover, he will not spend a dollar for things for which he does not have a strong desire. But if, with the same disposition, his income were three thousand dollars, each dollar would mean somewhat less to him than when he had

only three hundred dollars. Again, if his income should be still further increased to thirty thousand a year, each dollar would be still less highly appreciated. This principle may be illustrated by Diagram II.

DIAGRAM II



Let his income be measured along the line OX beginning at O , in Figure A, while his appreciation of a dollar is measured along the line OY . As his income increases his appreciation will fall, and this fall will be represented by some sort of a descending curve, say the curve $YDD'X$. That is to say, where his income is measured by the line OE , his appreciation of a dollar is represented by the line DE ; but when his income is enlarged to OE' , then his appreciation of a dollar is represented by the line $D'E'$.

In a similar way, Figure B may represent *his* appreciation of his *neighbor's* need of an income, or the need of some one peculiarly near to himself in some of the senses noted above. If the other man's income were as large as his own, that is, if each had an income of OE , he would not be inclined to divide with the other man. His appreciation of the *other man's* need of a dollar would be represented by the line DE in Figure B, while his appreciation of his own need of a dollar would be

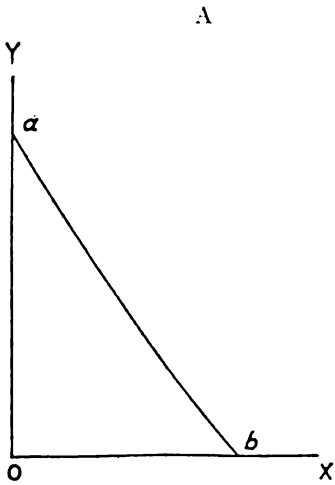
represented by DE in Figure A. However, if his income were much larger than the other man's; say that his is OE' in Figure A, while the other man's is OE in Figure B, in which case his appreciation of his own need of a dollar is represented by the line D'E' in Figure A, and of his neighbor's need of his marginal dollar by the line DE in Figure B, he then appreciates the other man's need of his marginal dollar somewhat more highly than his own and, acting accordingly, gives him a portion of his own income. In this case, he would ordinarily pass as a benevolent man, but he would still be somewhat self-interested or self-centered.

Again, if some one whom he does not ordinarily recognize as his neighbor, or as near to himself in any sense, say some person living a long way off, and belonging to a different branch of the human race, is brought to his attention, he may appreciate that person's need according to Figure C. If their incomes are equal, he will ordinarily pay no attention whatever to the distant person's need. But if he has a larger income, say OE', and it is brought to his attention that the distant person has no income at all and is starving, he may surrender one of his many thousand dollars in order that the distant person may have one dollar's worth of goods to keep him alive. In the diagrams, his appreciation of his own need of a dollar is represented by the line D'E' in Figure A, while his appreciation of the distant person's need of a dollar is represented by the line OY in Figure C. Even in this case he would ordinarily pass as a benevolent man, doubtless more benevolent than the average man in any community past or present, yet he would be decidedly self-centered.

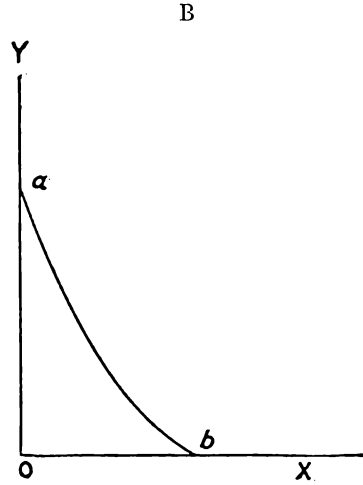
The following series of figures may serve to illustrate and summarize the whole theory of self-centered appreciation. To understand their meaning it is necessary to read the formulae across as well as up and down. Reading across formulae I, II, III, and IV, and referring each part of each formula to the figure above it, we get the law of self-centered appreciation in all its essential variations. I, for example, relates to the individual's appreciation of his own present and future needs. II relates to his appreciation of his own needs as compared with

those of his contemporaries and others removed in point of time. III relates to his appreciation of his own needs as compared with those of his neighbors and others removed in point of space, while IV relates to his appreciation of his own needs as compared with those of others near to him in point of similarity as well as those removed from him in point of dissimilarity.

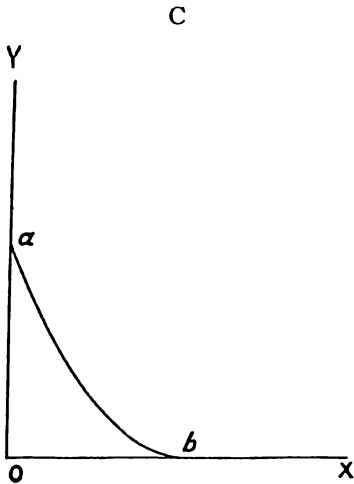
DIAGRAM III



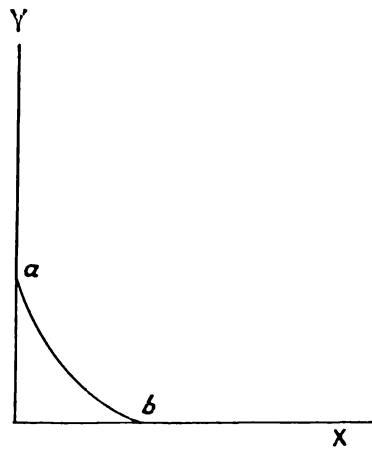
- A. Present self
- A. Self
- A. Self
- A. Self



- B. Future self
- B. Contemporaries
- B. Near neighbors
- B. Near of kin



- C. Distant future self
- C. Other generations
- C. Distant neighbors
- C. Distant of Kin



- D. Far distant future self
- D. Remote generations
- D. Far distant neighbors
- D. Far distant of kin

In each of the figures, I, II, III, and IV, let the line OX measure the quantity of means of satisfying a desire of any kind, and the line OY the intensity of one's appreciation of the importance of each unit of that quantity. Then the curve *ab* in each figure will represent the diminishing appreciation of each unit of the supply, as the supply itself increases. But in figure I the curve *ab* represents the diminishing appreciation of each unit of the supply when applied to the satisfaction of the desires of the self or of the person doing the appreciating, while in each of the other figures the curve *ab* represents the diminishing appreciation of each unit of the quantity of the means of satisfying the desire when applied to the satisfaction of other persons than the one whose appreciation is measured. I, for example, may be doing the appreciating, in which case the curve *ab* in figure I will represent my appreciation of the importance of different units of my income when applied to my own gratification. But in each of the other figures, the curve represents *my* appreciation of the importance of satisfying other people's desires, or, as in the first case, of the desires of my future as compared with my present self.

With this understanding, then, it can be made perfectly clear just what my benevolence would consist in if my supply of the means of satisfying a given desire were measured as in figure I by the line Ob. The last unit of that quantity would have a negligible utility for me, that is, I could surrender it with no sacrifice whatever. At the same time, if my near neighbor possessed absolutely none of it, I should have interest enough in him to appreciate his need, at least to such an extent as would be measured by the line Oa in figure II. Since by depriving myself of one unit at the point *b* in figure I without any loss whatever, I can satisfy myself to the extent of the line Oa, figure II, by contributing to B's supply, I would very easily choose to allow B to have at least one unit of my supply, rather than keep it myself. I do this, of course, because I personally get more gratification from the consumption of that unit by B than I would by its consumption by myself. From one point of view I could be said to be acting selfishly, and from another point of view I

could be said to be acting generously. As will be seen clearly by the foregoing argument and the above diagram, there is an element both of benevolence and selfishness in every such act. The difference between the benevolent and the selfish man would be shown by the difference between the curves *ab* in the different figures I, II, III, and IV. The greater the difference between the height of the curve in figure I and in the other figures, the greater the selfishness.¹

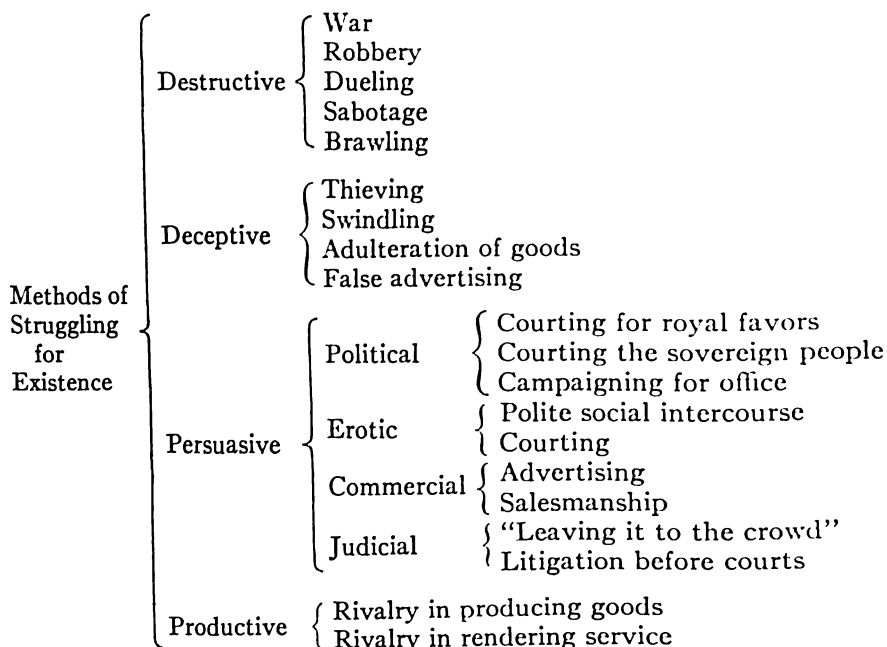
In sections 2 and 3 of this chapter the sources of conflict have been shown to be: first, scarcity of desirable things; second, self-preference, self-centered appreciation, or differential generosity. There being fewer of certain things than people desire — people uniformly preferring their own satisfaction, or that of those near to them to the satisfaction of other people — the conflict of interests is unavoidable. This self-preference or differential generosity is only a manifestation of the limitations of the finite mind. Being finite, it is impossible for it to visualize things distant as vividly as things present, things unfamiliar as things familiar. For the same reason, namely, its finiteness, it can not feel as keenly the joys and sufferings of distant people as of near people. People may be near or distant in space, in time, in kinship, in similarity, and in likemindedness.

6. *Manifestations of Conflict.* It is impossible to avoid seeing that this conflict of interests among human beings is a phase of that universal struggle for existence on which the Darwinian theory of evolution is based. So universal and relentless is that struggle as to have convinced the thinking world of the futility of all attempts to eliminate it. In some minds this seems to have produced a kind of despair, in others a disposition to close the eyes to its existence. The world itself is wiser than either of these groups of thinkers. The fact that there is a conflict of interests is not blinked. That this conflict of interests must necessarily result in some form of rivalry, competition, or struggle is not questioned. Practical statesmanship has turned its attention to the problem of mitigating the struggle, eliminating its

¹ Differential generosity is a better and more accurate term than selfishness.

more destructive features, and turning it into productive fields.

That there are productive fields within which the struggle for existence, for advantage, or for gain, can be carried on can be shown by the following outline, which merits careful study.¹



The methods of conflict named in the above outline may be explained and illustrated as follows: By destructive methods are meant all those whereby one succeeds by virtue of one's power to kill, to hurt, or to inspire fear of physical injury or pain. "War," "robbery," "dueling," "sabotage," and "brawling" are names for methods of destruction as carried on by human beings; but it must be remembered that animals also kill, rob, inflict injury, and inspire terror. By the deceptive methods are meant all those by which one succeeds by virtue of one's power to deceive, to swindle, or to cheat. Animals practise deceit, though we do not call their forms of deceit by such names as "swindling," "counterfeiting," "adulteration of goods," etc.

¹ This diagram is taken from the author's previous work, *Principles of National Economy* (Ginn and Co., Boston, 1921), p. 49.

By the persuasive methods are meant all those methods whereby one succeeds by virtue of one's power to persuade or to convince. One may beat one's rival by being a more persuasive talker, whether one is striving for favors from the sovereign person or from the sovereign people, whether one is striving for the hand of a lady, the decision of a jury, or the trade of a possible customer. This form of conflict would remain even if we could eliminate all other forms. Even under the most complete form of communism there would remain abundant room for the persuasive forms of conflict. By the productive methods are meant all those methods whereby one may beat one's rivals, or gain advantages, by virtue of one's power to produce, to serve, or to confer benefit.

The same persons may resort to more than one of these methods in order to gain an advantage. When two farmers compete in growing crops they are struggling for existence or for economic advantage, by a productive method. When they quarrel over a line fence and take their quarrel before court for adjudication, they are struggling by a persuasive method. When they secretly alter or remove landmarks in order to gain an advantage in their litigation, or when they bribe jurors, they are struggling by a deceptive method. When they fall to fighting either with fists or with weapons, they are struggling by a destructive method. When they change their methods in the order just described, they are sinking lower and lower in the scale; that is, they are resorting to worse and worse methods of struggling for existence or advantage. When they rival one another in growing corn, there is more corn grown as the result of that rivalry; the country is better fed and every one is better off except possibly the one who is beaten, and even he may very likely be better off than he would have been if he had not competed at all. When two farmers quarrel over a line fence and take the case into court, no one gains any benefit except the lawyers, and what the lawyers gain the litigants lose. No new land is created by that conflict. No new wealth is produced. The community is no better fed, and the litigants have wasted their time. To change from persuasion to deception or from deception to physi-

cal force is so clearly to sink to a lower level that it is unnecessary to pursue the topic further.

Among the lower creatures there are no rules of the game, no organized efforts to mitigate, regulate, or soften the struggle for existence. It will be apparent to any one who will study the diagram that among animals the destructive and deceptive methods are the characteristic forms of struggle. They kill, maim, injure, rob, and deceive one another with no moral or legal restraints. They may sometimes rise to the level of persuasion, as in the courting process, but never to the level of production; that is, no animal ever tries to beat its rival by producing a larger and better product or rendering a greater or better service. Among human beings who have no moral sense and who are unrestrained by law and justice, the destructive and deceptive methods of struggle are precisely the things that morals and laws are designed to prevent.¹ In any civilization worthy of the name and under any government worthy to stand overnight, men are actually restrained by their own moral feelings, by the respect for the good opinions of their fellows, and by the fear of legal penalties, from attempting to promote their own interests by destruction or deception.

In the interest of its own success, the group must suppress

¹ The non-moral struggle in all its grimness and lack of standards was probably never more vividly expressed than by Robert Louis Stevenson in *The Woodman*:

Thick 'round me in the teeming mud
 Briar and fern strove to the blood.
 The hooked liana in his gin
 Noosed his reluctant neighbors in:
 There the green murderer throve and spread,
 Upon his smothering victims fed,
 And wantoned on his climbing coil.
 Contending roots fought for the soil
 Like frightened demons: with despair
 Competing branches pushed for air.
 Green conquerors from overhead
 Bestrode the bodies of their dead:

.

So hushed the woodland warfare goes
 Unceasing; and the silent foes
 Grapple and smother, strain and clasp
 Without a cry, without a gasp.

all destructive and deceptive methods by which any of its own members might gain advantage for himself to the detriment of of the group, and encourage, so far as possible, the productive methods. Its success as a group, its growth, and even its survival in the struggle with other groups, will depend, in no small degree, upon its success in suppressing destructive and deceptive methods and in turning the energies of its people into productive channels. In terms of the above diagram, the principal function of organized society is to cancel the brackets labelled destructive and deceptive. This will limit its individual members to those brackets labelled persuasive and productive.

Much ink has been wasted in moral treatises on the evil of selfishness. There is no more merit in such a treatise than there would be in a treatise on the evil of gravitation, of electricity, of the expansive power of steam or incandescent gases. No engineer would be guttily of such a treatise, though he realizes that these forces may do harm. He sees also that, under control, they may serve men's purposes. His problem is to control them and make them work, not to condemn or to pass moral judgment upon them. The law of personal preference, which some call selfishness is a motivating force, and it operates according to certain observed tendencies which can be roughly calculated. The problem of the statesman, who, at his best, is merely a social engineer, is to recognize this motivating force and harness it to useful work. If the social engineer can show every individual that he can help those for whom he has a preference more effectively by earning an income than by robbing, swindling or any non-productive method, then every individual will try to earn, that is, to create as much wealth as he gets. The more intense his interest in himself and those for whom he cares, the more he will try to produce in order that he may get. The social engineer who achieves such a result as this will make a larger contribution to the success of his social group than any mechanical inventor ever made.

7. *Inter-group Conflict and Group Survival.* It may sound paradoxical to say that one compelling reason for the suppression of destructive and deceptive methods of conflict among the

individuals of a group is the desire to enable the group itself to wage successful conflict against other groups. Really there is nothing paradoxical about it. An army, for example, whose soldiers fought among themselves in time of battle, or tried to deceive one another, would not be very successful. If, on the other hand, they vie with one another in deeds of prowess or bravery against the common enemy, that kind of individual rivalry would contribute to the success of the army. Such rivalry is as truly a form of conflict as fighting among themselves, but it is a kind which strengthens the group. It is, in that sense, analogous to the productive forms of rivalry in an industrial society.

There is inter-group rivalry in time of peace as well as in time of war. There is international competition for markets. The number of people who can live in one country or under one flag, will depend to some extent on the success of that kind of competition. There have been in times past (and they are not unknown at present) international conflicts over land for colonization purposes. The number of people of a given race, language, or civilization, who can live in the world depends pretty definitely on the land areas they can control or colonize. Even when a nation lives a pent-up life, seeking expansion neither in the direction of wider markets nor wider territorial sovereignty, its growth will be affected by its success in suppressing wasteful conflicts among its own citizens. The more its citizens rival one another in productive competition and the less in destructive or deceptive competition, the more people it can support and the more abundantly it can provide for them.

The motive of self-interest may be made to promote the general interest of the whole under a government which takes a rational point of view and pursues rational policies. In so far as the individual can be made to see that his best or his only chance of promoting his own interest is to do something useful for the group and seek a fair reward for it, in so far will he be moved by his own self-interest to do useful things. The more the men within a country are motivated to do useful

things, the more people the country can support or the more amply they can be supported.

It is only under a rational and well enforced system of criminal law that men are led "as by an invisible hand," (to use Adam Smith's celebrated phrase) to promote the general interest while trying to promote their own. It cannot be too much emphasized that there is no natural harmony of interests. There is a very real conflict, but a semblance of harmony can be created by law. When the individual whose interest would otherwise lead him to use destructive or deceptive methods can be made to see that this would lead to severe punishment, it will then be to his interest to refrain. He may then, in the pursuit of self-interest, turn to useful conduct.

The sociologist can not escape the need of understanding human nature. In studying social life, he is certain to find guidance in the work of psychologists. Yet he must not be allowed to forget that psychology does not pretend to solve purely sociological problems. His ultimate concern with man's social nature is in its survival value. Men would never have evolved a social nature if sociability and group life had not proved to have survival value in the struggle for earthly existence. How could human beings ever have acquired the capacity to work together, if coördinated effort had not proved more efficient than isolated effort in their fight for food and their struggle against enemies? Antipathy *might* have played a more important rôle than sympathy in survival. The consciousness of kind *might* have produced a feeling of repulsion rather than attraction. Tigers have survived with not too social a nature.

The German biologist, W. Bölsche,¹ assumes that human origins must have been in a kind of "paradise" environment where the struggle for existence was not severe. Otherwise, he holds, so "extravagant" a thing as a large brain could never have got a decent start in evolution. For "brawn" would never have been sacrificed for brain in a too brutal world. Assume that sociability might have developed under "paradise"

¹ *Das Liebesleben in Natur* (E. Diederichs, Jena, 1922).

conditions of life; it would still be true that sociability would have to prove its survival value in the struggle for existence, once men wandered out of paradise. And men are known to have wandered far on the earth.

Bölsche's theory, however, is not universally accepted. The late Henry Adams,¹ among others, attributes the growth of mind to a degradation of energy. In other words, intelligence is a kind of degeneration which he attributes to the "Progressive degradation of energy by dissipation and the leveling of intensities." This is an application to the study of human biology of Thompson's thesis published under the title of *A Universal Tendency in Nature to the Dissipation of Energy*.²

According to Mr. Adams and the authorities whom he quotes, the earth is already rather far gone on its way toward death. As a place favorable to life it reached its zenith in the Miocene period. Vegetation reached its climax in the carboniferous age. During the Miocene period there was sufficient lush vegetation to support those huge beasts whose vital energy and will to live vastly exceeded anything that is left on this decrepit planet. Then degradation began, and most of the splendid creatures that had once flourished either became extinct or degenerated to mere runts. One took to extracting a precarious living from an impoverished world by the exercise of cunning, flatteringly called intelligence. That degenerate creature took to calling himself *Homo Sapiens*. This is a form of degeneracy because intellect is a lower form of energy than will, lower even than instinct.

We need not waste time discussing such words as *lower* and *higher*. If the world is cooling off so that life becomes harder, the new conditions must be met in some way by any creature that hopes to survive. If one survives by growing smaller, through the process of selection, there is no good reason for saying that he has degenerated. If another survives by developing sharper wits or a shrewder cunning, or by building shelters

¹ *The Degradation of Democratic Dogma* (The Macmillan Co., New York, 1919), p. 152 *et seq.*

² London, 1852.

and kindling fires, there would seem to be no good reason for calling this a form of degeneration. It has simply met the conditions of a changing environment, and met them successfully, as shown by the fact of survival.

The thing to remember, however, is that the ever intensifying struggle to survive in a dying world, where the conditions of life grow ever harder, may have required ever increasing intelligence of a creature which once started in that direction. The rate at which *Homo Sapiens* is using up the mineral, forest, and soil resources of the earth suggests, at least, that the intelligence which enabled him for a time to meet the conditions of a decaying world is merely accelerating the rate of decay. If that be true, he must either perish or develop ever increasing intelligence to meet the ever increasing difficulties of living on an exhausted planet. This calls for greater and greater economies of human energy, or the progressive elimination of waste. One of the great wasters of human energy is conflict, working at cross purposes. How to eliminate conflict and save what energies we have for the work of extracting a living from our meager environment becomes one of the greatest of human problems. The elimination of conflict is a problem of team work, of group control, and of group survival.

The problem of social evolution, of social progress, is as much concerned with survival values as is the problem of biological evolution. The two problems, in fact, are synthesized by their common concern in the question of group survival. Social evolution has taken place, in the course of history, through the survival of groups best adapted to their environment. Groups have secured adaptation through the organizing of their group life, through effective team work. They have survived according to the success of their group organization, their customs, mores, and institutions. But organization, in turn, has proved effective as a means of group survival only in the measure that men have been organizable. In order to survive in groups, men had to evolve a kind of social nature. They had to evolve, if you will, social instincts; or, if not instincts, they had to exhibit a conditioned social behavior, or simply an intelligent

acceptance of group life. Organization and organizability were both necessary for group survival. The study of social survival is capable of giving to sociology the all-inclusive aim that was the dream of its founders.

The problem of the survival of social groups seems to be largely a problem of economizing human energy. Group life itself is merely a means of economizing energy, storing it, insuring its effective use.¹ Moreover, every phase of group life has been subjected, in the course of social evolution, to the "economy" test of survival. It has had to justify itself by economizing human energy. Institutions, customs, laws, moral ideals, which did not economize the energies of a group, became a handicap and threatened the group's extinction in the political struggle of groups. The survival value of economizing group energies is a theme that will assume great importance in any treatise on sociology which aims at thoroughness and comprehensiveness. The importance of the theme, it is hoped, will convince the reader that sociology rests on economic foundations. Even morals, in so far as they are rational and not merely conventional, must be looked upon as ways of economizing human energy.

It is not possible to go very deeply into the study of the problem of economizing human energy without discovering that human beings waste an amazing amount of energy in quarreling over conflicts in their individual desires and interests.

8. *Conflict and the Problem of Evil.* That there is some connection between the problem of conflict and the problem of evil

¹ R. W. MacIver speaks of the changes in the *social forms* under which human interests are pursued as revealing a "principle of communal economy."

"If we use the term 'economy' in the widest sense," he says, "to signify the conservation of values not only material but spiritual, the conservation of life itself, the conservation of the means of life, and the conservation of personality or the intrinsic values of life, we may call the principle which these changes reveal the principle of communal economy. There is throughout the development of community a constant transformation of social relationships which can be understood only as fulfilling this principle. . . . Economy is relation to purpose and intelligence. . . ." *Community* (The Macmillan Co., London, 1928), pp. 334-335. See further ch. vi, "Second Law of Communal Development: The Correlation of Socialisation and Communal Economy."

is perhaps apparent by this time. From the evolutionary point of view, evil will seem to be almost another name for maladaptation. In essence, maladaptation means the failure of successful completion of the activities essential to the preservation and promotion of the life of an individual or group. A sentient creature out of harmony with its surroundings is certain to suffer some form of unpleasantness commonly called pain. In a state of complete harmony there will certainly be no sense of positive unpleasantness; and this state would be regarded by optimists as positive pleasure, by pessimists of the Schopenhauer type, as negative pain. In either case the state of harmony would seem more desirable or less undesirable to a sentient creature than a state of disharmony or maladaptation. A creature with intelligence as well as feeling and will would certainly be striving for adaptation rather than maladaptation, for harmony rather than disharmony. This is rather obviously the motivating force of all industry.

A little less obvious, perhaps, but none the less true, as pointed out several times in this chapter, is the fact that scarcity is a reason for the emergence of conflict of interests among individuals as well as among groups of individuals. To the biologist this great fact appears as the struggle for existence; to the economist, as the basis at least for competition and the all-sufficient reason for regulating the struggle for existence in such ways as to eliminate the destructive and preserve the productive forms of competition. To the sociologist, who approaches his subject from the biological and economic points of view, we have here the factors which compel organization and teamwork on pain of extinction, and which to a considerable extent determine the forms of organization and teamwork.

From this point of view the two great factors in the problem of evil,—at least in its social and moral implications,—are self-preference and scarcity. Given these two factors, conflict becomes inevitable between individuals and groups; and with this kind of conflict comes every moral or social problem with which any one is acquainted.

After running the whole gamut of explanations,—theological,

metaphysical, and naturalistic,—the student may as well settle down to the conclusion, specifically stated by several authors, that evil is essentially maladaptation, which, in turn is only incomplete evolution. Man is an unfinished being, trying to adjust himself to an unfinished universe. There is an evolutionary lag: the process of evolution does not keep up with the changing environment, especially the rapidly changing social environment.

As a result of this evolutionary lag, there are still many maladaptions or disharmonies:

A. Between man and his environment. These have in themselves no moral or social quality, but may give rise to other disharmonies, *e.g.*

B. Between man and man. These are moral and social in their nature. They grow out of scarcity and show themselves in the form of conflicting interests, and result in all sorts of trouble, wars, litigations, rivalries, defeats, heart-burnings, jealousies.

C. Between the conflicting desires, emotions, and interests of the same individual. These give rise to the necessity for economy, self-control and self-discipline, that is, for choosing which interests shall be satisfied,—the essence of economy,—for suppressing or sacrificing the smaller interests in favor of the larger,—which is the essence of self-control and self-discipline.

CHAPTER IV

PROGRESS IN THE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

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A. THE CONCEPT OF PROGRESS

WE have seen that early commentators on social phenomena were not only convinced of the necessity of living together in societies, but also perplexed by its difficulties. Many of them could not reconcile two apparently contradictory facts, namely, the necessity of social life, and the inevitableness of conflict. The dream was cherished that there was a possible state, either in a long forgotten past or some golden future, where men did or could live together without conflict, and in a state of peace and harmony. They who located that state in the past frequently despaired of ever restoring it, though some conceived with Milton of regaining a paradise once lost. They who located the state of social harmony in the future were probably the first progressives.

The world has generally been divided on the question as to whether the human race is progressing or degenerating. It was not until the middle of the nineteenth century that the Western

World turned definitely and almost unanimously to the idea of progress. When this idea dominated the thinking of students it was natural that they should attempt to explain away conflict, either as non-existent, as due to the shortsightedness of men, or as doomed to disappear in the process of time. This does not imply that there were not individuals who had, long before, proclaimed their belief in human progress, but it had not impressed the popular mind so deeply as had the fact of conflict.

In the eighteenth century the Age of Reason was proclaimed, and men began,—a few at least,—to build great hopes on its possibilities. As Dean Inge points out, "In the seventeenth century a doctrine of progress was already in the air. . . . But it was only in the eighteenth century that Western Europe began to dream of an approaching millennium without miracle to be gradually ushered in under the auspices of a faculty which was called reason."¹ But, by the middle of the nineteenth century the "popular divinity" of Western Civilization was beginning to be called Progress.² This new divinity dominated every field with the possible exception of theology. Not only science, but philosophy, literature, and even industry bowed before her throne. Progress had dethroned Reason — the goddess of the revolutionists of the eighteenth century — or, as others put it, the Age of Reason had been but the harbinger of the Age of Progress.

The reasons for the rise of the idea of progress to its place of dominance in the nineteenth century are not difficult to understand. To begin with, there was undoubted and verifiable advancement of knowledge in the fields of physical science and the mechanic arts. There was no disputing the fact that men were finding out things in physical science which had not been known before, and were doing things in the field of mechanic arts which had never been done before. In the second place, there was a growing sense of mastery which the new knowledge gave.

¹ W. R. Inge, *The Idea of Progress* (The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1920), p. 7.

² See Carl Kelsey, *The Physical Basis of Society* (D. Appleton & Co., New York, 1928), p. 449.

The sources of both these new elements in human life may, of course, be traced far back in history, but their results were becoming apparent to every one by the middle of the nineteenth century. The discovery and colonization of the New World had, three centuries before, opened up new sources of food and made living conditions easier.¹ New supplies of the precious metals had stimulated commerce.² Later, the steam-engine and power-driven machinery had still further increased the feeling that men were gaining a mastery over their own destiny and were no longer the victims of circumstances over which they could exercise no control. The Western World at least felt emancipated from fatalism and became buoyantly optimistic. Feeling able to control their own destiny, to direct their own future, people naturally became interested in problems of future development.

Then came the Darwinian theory of evolution. The idea of evolution, in the sense of historical continuity and unbroken development, was, of course, very old. Darwin accomplished two things. First, he described a natural and understandable method by which evolution *could* take place,—the method of variation and selection. Second, he convinced the world that evolution actually did take place. The thinking of the world was fundamentally changed by the publication of the *Origin of Species*. Since that time the idea of evolution has been taken as a matter of course.

1. *The Elevationists*. For a long time it was assumed that evolution was necessarily "upward." Evolutionists became almost automatically elevationists. The evolutionary process was assumed to carry life to higher and higher levels. The evolution of life itself from a previously existing physical and

¹ The relief of overpopulation in Europe has never been sufficiently appreciated,

² The great price revolution which followed the importation of gold and silver into Europe through Spain, is only beginning to be appreciated, largely through the exhaustive studies of Dr. E. J. Hamilton. Cf. "American Treasure and Andalusian Prices, 1503-1660," *Journal of Economic and Business History*, November, 1928; "La Monnaie en Castille, 1501-1650," *Annales d'Histoire Economique et Sociale*, March and May, 1932; "Imports of American Gold and Silver into Spain, 1503-1660," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, May, 1929.

chemical but non-biological *milieu* was assumed to have been a step "upward," and the evolution of man from some "lower" form of life was a later step in the same "upward" direction. As F. S. Marvin remarks: "To Darwin, to anyone who had studied the facts of life from the new perspective (evolution), progress was no less real, it was a palpable and concrete thing, but its reality could and should be measured by the adaptation of the living being to its environment, including in its environment those fellow creatures with whom it lives."¹ To substantiate his contention Marvin quotes Darwin's statement: "the ultimate result is that each creature tends to become more and more improved in relation to its conditions."² This improvement inevitably leads to the gradual advancement of the organization of the greater number of living beings throughout the world."

Herbert Spencer, however, substituted another formula,—that of increasing complexity,—which avoided all question-begging implications. Nevertheless, in the popular mind at least, evolution was generally identified with progress. Too often it assumed that progress was not only a fact but an inevitable fact,—that there was something in the evolutionary process which could neither be helped nor hindered by anything we could do. As Herbert Spencer puts it: "Progress is not an accident, not a thing within human control, but a beneficent necessity."³ Only a few grasped the possibility of self-directed evolution by one creature, namely, man, that had evolved upward to an intellectual plane.

Others have questioned, and are questioning in increasing numbers, not only the identity of evolution and progress, but the fact of progress itself, at least during the last few millennia. In his recent book *Culture and Progress*⁴ Professor W. D. Wallis remarks:

¹ F. S. Marvin, *The Century of Hope* (The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1927) pp. 159-160.

² Perhaps he should have qualified by saying that it is either improved in relation to its conditions or becomes extinct.

³ *Progress, its Law and Cause, Essays, Scientific, Political, and Speculative* (D. Appleton & Co., New York, 1892).

⁴ McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York, 1930, pp. 210-214.

We usually assume that western civilization makes progress, for progress is fundamental to our culture; but is this assumption correct, or are we on a treadmill of futile repetition? Our scientific achievements, already unparalleled, increase with an acceleration born of genius and application. In all fields knowledge grows. Industry, as represented by both capital and labor, attains organization and power not realized before. Facts of this order touch the imagination and appeal to us as a demonstration of progress. But do these really constitute progress, or have we failed to grasp the significance of these culture changes?

In comparing the achievements of the present with those of the past, the question is, In what fields do men of today excel or even equal those of the past? The only clear and definite answer is the one already given, namely, in the fields of physical science and the mechanic arts. In these two fields there can be no intelligent dispute. Men of today know things that were not known before, not because men of today are superior mentally or have higher intelligence quotients, but because there is more accumulated scientific knowledge. This knowledge has been discovered by reason of the fact that modern men have had superior mechanical instruments, such as the telescope, the microscope, the spectroscope, and a multitude of others. This knowledge has been preserved, accumulated, and made widely available by means of another mechanical instrument, namely, the printing press.

Through a fortunate combination of circumstances, physical science and the mechanic arts have supplemented each other. An astronomer of today may know vastly more about the heavenly bodies than Sir Isaac Newton ever knew or could have found out, to say nothing of Copernicus, or any of the ancients. But this superior knowledge is the result of superior mechanical instruments and not of superior intelligence. These superior mechanical instruments are supplied by the mechanic arts. A chemist of today may, for the same reasons, know vastly more about chemistry than Michael Farraday ever knew. A historian of today may write more comprehensive and more accurate histories than Herodotus could have written. The reason is that he has better libraries — products of the mechanic

art of printing from movable type — than Herodotus had at his disposal.

Select any field of intellectual achievement in which mechanisms do not help, and we cannot find modern examples of work which are better than the ancients did. If a modern philosopher taught more comprehensive and penetrating philosophy than Plato or Aristotle, it would be because he was a greater philosopher than they, not because he had better mechanical instruments. If a poet of today composed greater poetry than Homer and Vergil, it would be because he was a greater poet than they; but there are no greater poets than those of antiquity. If a painter of today could excel the old masters, it would be because of his own greatness, not because of superior instruments. If his pictures last longer it will be because modern chemistry has provided him with better pigments. Aside from this, modern paintings do not show any superiority. In short, there is no achievement of modern men which excels that of men who labored hundreds of years ago, except, as already indicated, in the fields of physical science and the mechanic arts, or fields served by them. If music is the only fine art that has made progress, it is probably because modern musicians have better instruments than the ancients had.

As Joseph McCabe says: "Our age is in this respect (scientific achievement) incalculably beyond any age that preceded it. In philosophy we cannot equal Greece. . . ."¹ "In art one may doubt if the world will ever again reach the highest Greek and mediaeval standards, much less surpass them. That is not a sign of loss of power, and it is foolish to flatter ourselves that we are rising higher by opening new and eccentric (Futurism, Cubism, etc.) . . ."² "Socially and morally the comparison is more difficult. We are bound, if we have even a sound elementary knowledge of the matter, to abandon the old idea that we Europeans of today are superior to the men and women of Egypt, Babylonia, Greece, and Rome."³ Not only do we not

¹ *The Evolution of Civilization* (G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1922), p. 121.

² *Ibid.*, p. 129.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

excel or compare with the Greek thinkers or the mediaeval artists, but are, according to authorities in these fields, actually declining. "Indeed," says A. Clutton Brook, "one might say that there has been a continual slow decline in all the arts of Europe, except music; since the year 1500." Even modern music owes more than is commonly admitted to clever mechanical devices such as the piano and the organ. In spite of these, music itself has been slowly declining since the death of Beethoven.¹

It is easy to overlook the contributions of physical science and the mechanic arts to other fields. Take the field of morals, for example. The modern world is inclined to pride itself on its superior generosity or willingness to share its prosperity with people who are the victims of some disaster, such as an earthquake, a flood, or a famine. But it is because of the advance in physical science and the mechanic arts that we have such abundance as to make it easy for us to share it with our fellow men and such means of communication and transportation as to make it easy to send them our aid. If we were ourselves as near the hunger line as men were before the age of invention, it is uncertain how much we would be willing to share. "We have other proofs," says Joseph McCabe, "that from four to five thousand years ago the standard of character was much as it is today." He quotes from the *Book of the Dead* the following: "I have not oppressed the members of my family; I have not wrought evil in the place of right and truth. . . . I have not made it the first consideration of each day that excessive labor should be performed for me. I have not ill-treated servants. I have not caused pain. I have made no man suffer hunger. I have made no one weep. I have not inflicted pain upon mankind."²

Again, the peace movement has been cited as evidence of moral progress. But, to begin with, it has not been very successful either in diminishing the frequency or the bitterness of

¹ F. S. Marvin, arranged and edited, *Progress and History Essays* (Oxford University Press, Humphrey Milford, 1916), p. 22.

² Joseph McCabe, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

war. In the next place, we do not have anything worth fighting about, owing to the abundance resulting from modern inventions. Every animal, including the human animal, is reasonably good-natured when it is well fed. It is a mistake to identify a comfortable feeling of distention with morality. Suppose that we were hungry a good deal of the time, and the rest of the time didn't know how many meals we had ahead, we might not be so generous or good-natured. Self-preservation is still the first law of nature.

On this point we misjudge the so-called savage. Suppose we were living under an economic system in which the food supplies were somewhat meager. Suppose also, that owing to freedom from pestilence, our numbers were increasing rapidly and that game was becoming scarce. Moved by the cries of our children for food, we might be tempted to invade the hunting grounds of another tribe. But the other tribe would realize that this would mean hunger for its own people. It would probably fight to protect its hunting grounds. It would have some reason for fighting. What comparable reason for fighting has any nation with a high mechanical development? In other words, much of our so-called morality is merely the by-product of applied science and mechanical efficiency.

It is difficult to think in terms of progress without introducing one's own prejudices, sometimes called value judgments. It is equally difficult to insulate one's own value judgments from those of the social group of which one is a part unless one is highly individualized. This year's fashions will seem to us, as individuals, preferable to those of past years, not because they are superior but because we cannot help thinking as the group thinks about such things. There are fashions in art, literature, philosophy, and morals quite as definitely as there are in millinery and haberdashery. The way fashions are changing always seems progressive to the average mind simply because the average mind lacks the power to think otherwise. As Robert H. Lowie points out:

Human beings generally act and think as they do for no other reason than that they have picked up such behavior and thoughts from some

social group of theirs. The superstitious notion that evolution constitutes spontaneous progress has bewitched not only the average mind, but also enslaved certain scientists and philosophers preferring a world of phantasy and wish to actual analysis. Only when some special and, on the whole, improbable cause enters the scene, does anything new happen — and then as likely the organism is destroyed as made fitter. The principle holds for culture. A change for the better — in any conceivable sense of that vague term — never occurs without due cause, and a change for the worse is quite as probable.¹

Similarly, the general direction of any social change must seem progressive to the average mind.

As a tentative plan for avoiding this crowd hypnotism and for arriving at an objective test, progress has been defined as human adaptation — a gradual change as a result of which men are better fitted to live in the environment in which they find themselves, or the environment is better fitted to them. This is, of course, the process of social evolution.

However, as has been pointed out, "The essential process, according to the evolutionary hypothesis, is adaptation to conditions, and the conditions may be such as will lead to change for the worse just as easily as to change for the better."² It is, however, possible within limits to change the conditions, if not for the better, at least to suit our whims. Again, even though the changed conditions may necessitate a change for the worse in human life, that does not tell the whole story. Adaptation to the new conditions may leave human beings in a less desirable state than they were before the outward conditions changed, but, after the outward conditions have changed, those human beings who adapt themselves to the new conditions will be more comfortable than those who fail thus to adapt themselves. Thus adaptation, even to worse conditions,— provided they are unavoidable,— may be considered desirable, and, in that sense, or to that extent, progressive. Survival itself may require adaptation to changed conditions, even though the con-

¹ *Are We Civilized?* (Harcourt, Brace & Co., New York, 1929), pp. 291-292.

² C. M. Case, *Social Process and Human Progress* (Harcourt, Brace & Co., New York, 1931), p. 3.

ditions have grown worse, as it is assumed that they will when the earth shall have grown colder in future geologic ages.¹

Let us suppose, for example, that a return of the ice age should force living forms in the north temperate zone to undergo a process of readaptation. This readaptation might take the form of a reduction of size, or some other form which we should now, with our present standards, evaluate as degenerate. Even after the readaptation had taken place, the conditions of life might be worse than they were before the ice sheet moved southward. Nevertheless, the living forms which went through the process of readaptation would certainly find themselves more comfortable than would have been the case if they had not been readapted. Even social adaptation might force us to live as the Eskimos. A change to that way of living would, from one point of view, be called retrogressive, yet, from another point of view, it would be called progressive. That is, we might live more comfortably in a frigid climate by imitating the Eskimos than we could if we failed to imitate them. Progressiveness, in that sense, would mean changing our ways to suit new conditions, even though the new conditions were growing worse. Even morals might have to change or to be reformed. "New occasions teach new duties." A new ice age would certainly be a new occasion. It might require a new code of morals, with new duties, new rights, and a new set of moral values.

While no two writers seemed to agree in their definitions of progress, yet each of a considerable group was able to formulate a theory of progress and to write consistently about it. The first writers to use the term *sociology*, or to call themselves *sociologists*, were those who wrote on social progress or social evolution. In its first beginnings as a subject for formal study, and in the minds of its creators, sociology was mainly a theory of progress.

2. *The Degradationists.* Even at the beginning of the twentieth century, when the belief in progress seemed almost universal, there were voices crying in the wilderness, proclaiming

¹ *Supra*, Chapter III, p. 43.

that civilization was a disease, that our so-called morality was self-destructive because it was filling the world with fools and weaklings, "too poor to tax, too numerous to feed," and that the world itself was in the last stages of decrepitude. There were religious leaders who held that the human race was sinking deeper and deeper in the mire of wickedness, as a race it was beyond redemption, and that the sole purpose of religion was to salvage as many individuals as possible from the wreck. There were scientists also who held that civilization was dysgenic, sterilizing its own architects, who alone could be classed as builders of civilization, and bidding its weaklings to be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth — with weaklings. There were philosophers who preached a doctrine of uncompromising pessimism and excoriated the silly optimism which closed its eyes to the stupendous evil of the world.

Schopenhauer¹ stands out as the most unflinching of the pessimists. "I know of no greater absurdity," wrote he, "than that propounded by most systems of philosophy in declaring evil to be negative in its character. Evil is just what is positive; it makes its own existence felt."

Even more specific is the following:

There is nothing more certain than the general truth that it is the grievous *sin of the world* which has produced the grievous *suffering of the world* . . . Accordingly, the sole thing that reconciles me to the Old Testament is the story of the Fall. In my eyes, it is the only metaphysical truth in that book, even though it appears in the form of an allegory.

He says further that the fundamental difference among religions is not monotheism, pantheism, etc., but optimism and pessimism, that is, whether they praise and value the existence of the world, or recognize that it is the consequence of our guilt and properly ought not to be. The power by which Christianity overcame Judaism and the heathenism of Greece and Rome was Christian pessimism. Paganism was optimistic.

Other degradationists substitute an unfavorable physical or

¹ *Studies in Pessimism*, T. B. Saunders translation (Swan Sonnenschein & Co., London, 1891), pp. 1, 24.

social environment both for an internal taint in human nature and for a malignant spiritual power as an explanation of human degeneration. One of the most profound of these is the late Henry Adams who, in his stimulating book on *The Degradation of the Democratic Dogma*,¹ attributes it to the "progressive degradation of energy by dissipation and leveling of intensities." Adams quotes profusely from physicists, astronomers, and geologists in support of the "Law of Degradation." Perhaps the most striking of these quotations is from Flammarion's *Astronomie Populaire*.²

Life and human activity will insensibly be shut up within the tropical zones. Saint Petersburg, Berlin, London, Paris, Vienna, Constantinople, Rome, will successively sink to sleep under their eternal cerements. During many centuries, equatorial humanity will undertake vain arctic expeditions to rediscover under the ice the sites of Paris, of Bordeaux, of Lyons, of Marseilles. The sea-shores will have changed and the map of the earth will be transformed. No longer will man live, no longer will he breathe, except in the equatorial zone, down to the day when the last tribe, already expiring in cold and hunger, shall camp on the shores of the last sea in the rays of a pale sun which will henceforward illumine an earth that is only a wandering tomb, turning around a useless light and a barren heat. Surprised by the cold, the last human family has been touched by the finger of death, and soon their bones will be buried under the shroud of eternal ice. The historian of nature would then be able to write, "Here lies the entire humanity of a world which has lived! Here lie all dreams of ambition, all the conquests of military glory, all the resounding affairs of finance, all the systems of an imperfect science, and also all the oaths of mortals' love! Here lie all the beauties of earth!"—But no mortuary stone will mark the spot where the poor planet shall have rendered its last sigh!

Concerning our boasted intelligence Adams proceeds:

. . . By the majority of physiologists, Thought seems to be regarded — at present — as a more or less degraded Act,—an enfeebled function of Will.³

"Thought comes as the result of helplessness," says Lalande in his volume on "Dissolution" (Paris, 1899, p. 166); "Thought, as Bain says, is the refraining from speech or action. The truth is, therefore, that action comes first; the idea is an act which tends to accomplish itself, and which, when

¹ The Macmillan Co., New York, 1919, p. 152 *et seq.*

² Paris, 1905. (See Adams, *op. cit.*, p. 182.)

³ *Ibid.*, p. 203. Even the intellect, according to Adams, is a degenerate form of energy.

stopped by some obstacle before its realization, finds a new form of reality in that stoppage. Jean Jacques Rousseau said: "The man who thinks is a depraved animal"; and in this he expressed an exact view of psychology. As far as he is animal, the thinker is a bad animal; eating badly; digesting badly; often dying without posterity. In him the degradation of vital energy is flagrant. (*La Dépravation de la nature physique est visible chez lui.*)¹

. . . The historian is required either expressly to assert, or surreptitiously to assume, before his students, that the whole function of nature has been the ultimate production of this one-sided Consciousness,—this amputated Intelligence,—this degraded Act,—this truncated Will.²

Sociological writers, at least since Comte, have as a rule spent little time in trying to solve the riddle of existence, or even in speculating on the ultimate results to human society of the second law of thermodynamics. They have rather inclined with the men of ordinary common sense to say, "We don't know why we are here; but here we are. We don't know how this universe began or how it will end; but we are in it and can't get out except by suicide. We don't know whether the universe is kind or not, but we have discovered that we can be more comfortable or less comfortable according to the way we behave." Whether the universe is kind or unkind, it seems to be more kind or less unkind to those who adapt themselves to it than to those who fail to adapt themselves. At least, those who adapt themselves suffer less discomfort than those who do not.

Among those degradationists who attribute man's low estate to the degenerating influences of civilization, Max Nordau³ deserves first rank because of his outspoken and unflinching pessimism, tempered, it is true, by a wholesome belief in the purgative powers of natural selection. The influences of city life, with its constant nerve strain, its multifarious poisons in

¹ An equally poor opinion of intellect seems to be implied in the account of the trouble that resulted from eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge. Pandora's curiosity also caused a lot of trouble, according to another story.

² *Ibid.*, p. 205.

³ See especially his *Degeneration* (D. Appleton and Co., New York, 1895). In his later works a more optimistic view was expressed. See his *Morals in the Evolution of Man*, tr. M. A. Lewenz (Cassell & Co., London and New York, 1922), in which he takes his place among the elevationists.

the form of alcohol, nicotine, opium, poisonous foods, and bad air, produce a degeneration of morals and manners simply because the majority become degenerate. They give tone and set standards, they lead the fashions not only in millinery, but in politics, dramatics, literature, art, and philosophy. The sober, steady-going, sound, healthy, and sensible minority are laughed out of countenance by the degenerate mob. For a time it looks as though civilization is about to decay. The social world looks as sickly as the physical world in its last stages looks to Flammarion. But there are curative powers at work. The degenerates are weeded out by the inexorable laws of natural selection. "God is not mocked." "The soul that sinneth it shall die." The sound and sensible, the domestically inclined, eventually take control of the situation, give tone and set standards, lead the fashions in politics, dramatics, art, literature and philosophy, and the processes of recovery and elevation begin. If, however, there should not be a sufficiently large remnant of sound and healthy people to be the progenitors of a new and better population, civilization is doomed.

. . . In the civilized world there obviously prevails a twilight mood which finds expression, amongst other ways, in all sorts of odd aesthetic fashions. All these new tendencies, realism or naturalism, "decadentism," neo-mysticism and their subvarieties, are manifestations of degeneration and hysteria, and identical with the mental stigmata which the observations of clinicists have unquestionably established as belonging to these. But both degeneration and hysteria are the consequences of the excessive organic wear and tear suffered by the nations through the immense demands on their activity, and through the rank growth of large towns. . . .¹

Thus even vice itself becomes an agent of moral adaptation by acting as a fool killer to weed out those who can not withstand the degenerative forces of our complex civilization. They who can be in the world but not of it, who can keep themselves unspotted from the world, who, in the midst of the demoralizing influences of modern civilization with its great cities can re-

¹ Max Nordau, *Degeneration*, *op. cit.*, (D. Appleton & Co., New York, 1895), bk. I, chap. IV.

main immune to their contagion, are to survive, reproduce their kind, and build the civilizations of the future.

It is [says Philip Gibbs] some unconscious or semi-conscious knowledge — some intuition or foreboding — of this exhaustion of the very sources of energy leading to a desperate struggle for existence in which Empires, States, and people may perish, which is accountable for the waves of melancholy spreading over the western world since the last great war. . . . It has found expression in pictorial art which denies beauty; in drama which goes to brutality, cruelty, and vice for its pictures of life; in music which revolts against the charm and melody and rhythm of former ages, and expresses modern life in strange and violent cacophonies; and it is stated starkly by novelists, essayists and philosophers.¹

Bowden² lists some of the pessimistic pictures of America, of which the following are brief summaries:

1. "The American soul is pitifully small and undeveloped in comparison with American shrewdness and energy . . . smothered by our extreme mechanization and standardization of all our functions, individual and collective. A creeping paralysis is spreading over every Spiritual impulse."

2. Ralph Adams Cram voices the belief that "Great leaders are no more; democracy has reduced all to a dead level."

3. Lothrop Stoddard concludes that high civilization produces racial impoverishment, and one vast night of barbarism is impending: "Our civilization has grown so complex that it is a burden too great to be borne, we shall be crushed beneath it."

4. Spengler expounds: "A cycle theory of history — which dooms us to the sad fate of Nineveh and Tyre, attributing our decline to the machine instead of dysgenic breeding."

5. According to Count Keyserling: "The individual is ceasing to exist as a result of standardization of manners and morals. The old cultures are disappearing."

6. Religion has become vague and sterile — an uplift movement.

¹ *The Day After Tomorrow* (Doubleday, Doran Co., New York, 1928), p. 119.

² Robert Douglas Bowden, *In Defense of Tomorrow* (The Macmillan Co., New York, 1931), pp. 9-11.

Sociologists, however, at least in the early stages of the development of their subject, allied themselves on the side of the elevationists. The belief in the possibility of progress, coupled with a desire to discover its laws, stimulated the first students who called their subject sociology. Even later writers, though they have grown chary in the use on the word *progress*, find difficulty in ridding themselves of the concept. All are conscious of a process of social change, development, growth, or evolution, even though they refuse to call it a progressive change in any sense which would imply a change for the better. A study of the factors which produce change,—physical, biological, and social,—especially when this study is carried on by one who has a clear understanding of adaption and all that it implies, may yet give us a positive theory of progress free from all value judgements.

B. SOCIOLOGY AS A THEORY OF PROGRESS

1. *Auguste Comte and Social Harmony.* There are two philosophers who stand out in the early history of social science because they were among the first to give it a name and a place in the world of thought,—to give it some substantial unity and aim. Auguste Comte and Herbert Spencer deserve first place in this chapter; for it was their idea of social progress which gave consistency to the first really scientific attempts to study society.

Comte left no plan for an encyclopedic assembling of all possible data relating to social life; he branded social science as the study of facts that might throw light on the one essential problem of social progress.¹ He defined progress as the gradual approach to harmony in human relations, and studied how it might be promoted. He turned the attention of social philosophers and moralists from the problem of conflict (evil), the topic of Chapter III of this book, to the problem of producing harmony out of conflict.

¹ "All that can be rationally proposed in our day," he said, "is to recognize the character of positivity in social as in all other science and to ascertain the chief bases on which it is founded. . . ." *Positive Philosophy*, tr. Martineau (C. Blanchard, New York, 1855).

As a contribution to the methodology of his subject, rather than to its content, Comte outlined his famous three stages of intellectual development. In the approach to sociological as well as to physical problems, men began by attributing changes to supernatural agencies. This Comte called the theological stage. Next they attributed these changes to some principle of action which they posited or assumed to exist. This he called the metaphysical stage. Finally, they began observing and testing to find out what actually happened and how it could be made to happen again or prevented from happening. This he called the scientific or positive stage. In this stage, men are not much concerned with final causes, or ultimate ends. They are bent rather on finding out how to bring to pass what they want to bring to pass.

In the study of sociology, the theological stage is represented by the doctrine of an over-ruling providence leading men on by ways which they know not to goals which they can not foresee.¹ The metaphysical stage is represented by the various philosophies of history. The scientific or positive stage, which Comte believed he was ushering in, was to be a stage wherein students observed the order of sequence in human events, to the end that they might know what was necessary to bring about such conditions as they desired. He was, of course, normative as well as positive in his approach, as every writer who ever wrote a worthwhile treatise has had to be. He was interested in the relation of means to ends, but he could not avoid studying the relation of cause to effect in the most scientifically positive manner.

Social progress, as he boiled it down to its most concentrated form, meant a development of order in the structure of society, of harmony in the social relations of human beings. In a very important sense he began where the theory of conflict left off. Instead of trying to explain conflict he tried to trace the processes by which harmony developed out of conflict. In his more

¹ Providence and Nemesis seem to have root meanings somewhat alike: namely, management.

scientific moments, he argued that he looked forward to no ultimate perfection of this order and harmony. Progress, he admitted, must always be a purely relative idea. He saw, as well as later writers, that historical development depends upon the working of the environment on individuals, and the reactions and responses of individuals to the impact of their surroundings. The environment, however, is a changing thing. So long as it is changing, how can there be perfect harmony between men and their environment? Human beings would have to continue their efforts to bring themselves into harmony with an ever changing universe.

2. *Herbert Spencer and Social Differentiation.* Herbert Spencer, like Comte, developed his system of sociology around a theory of progress. Like Comte, also, he played the part of architect far more than stone mason in the building of sociology. He was more a systematizer of knowledge than a scientist, pure and unalloyed. He organized the data of social life about one gigantic hypothesis, a universal law of evolution, a formula of progress.

Although Spencer made frequent use of the word "progress," he preferred the word "evolution" for describing the development of the whole universe, inorganic, organic, and super-organic. Here was needed, he thought, a word free from the anthropocentric meaning which was attached to "progress."¹ It actually seems, however, that he made the two words practically synonymous. At least, if he considered evolution as something more than progress, he considered progress as a result of evolution.

That progress, to Spencer, was synonymous with change into more and more complexity, is indicated by the following passage:

Heterogeneity is still increasing. It will be seen that as in each event of today, so from the beginning, the decomposition of every expended force into several forces has been perpetually producing a higher complication; that the increase of heterogeneity so brought about is still going on; and

¹ See footnote in Duncan, *Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer* (D. Appleton & Co., New York, 1908), vol. II, p. 329.

that progress is not an accident, not a thing within human control, but a beneficent necessity.¹

His concept of social progress is that of change in social structure and function itself regardless of any teleological consequences. He says:

The current conception (of social progress) is a teleological one. The phenomena are contemplated solely as bearing on human happiness. Only those changes are held to constitute progress which directly or indirectly tend to heighten human happiness. . . . But rightly to understand progress, we must learn the nature of these, considered apart from our interests.²

This is probably a wise — possibly an inescapable — point of view. Even modern philosophers who deny “progress,” and speak of “adaptation” instead, think of adaptation as the result of an evolutionary process. Spencer was, above all, combating, in his evolutionary formula, a theological view of morality as unchanging. His more formal definition of evolution was “. . . an integration of matter and concomitant dissipation of motion during which the matter passes from an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a definite, coherent heterogeneity; and during which the retained motion undergoes a parallel transformation.”³

The brilliancy of this concept and the comprehensive knowledge which Spencer brought to its defense, made a profound impression upon the intellectual world. It modified not only the thinking of scientists, but of theologians and literary men as well. The frequently quoted verse ⁴ by W. H. Carruth

¹ Herbert Spencer, *Essays, Scientific, Political, and Speculative* (D. Appleton & Co., New York, 1892), p. 60.

² *Ibid.*, p. 9.

³ *First Principles* (D. Appleton & Co., New York, 1885), p. 396.

⁴ A fire-mist and a planet

A crystal and a cell,
A jelly-fish and a saurian,
And caves where the cavemen dwell;
Then a sense of law and beauty,
And a face turned from the clod—
Some call it Evolution,
And others call it God.

could scarcely have been written except in a world already tintured with Spencer's philosophy.

This progress formula is full of holes of a philosophical nature. It is couched in terms of very general application. Early in his life, Spencer became convinced that everything in the universe is related to everything else. He tells in his "Filiation of Ideas," how, standing by the side of a pool one day where a gentle breeze was blowing, he began to watch the undulations of the water. This led him to think of other undulations, other rhythms; and he thought, Is not the rhythm of motion universal? Yes, he answered to himself, and went on thinking about motion.¹

In the next few days he found himself gathering together a number of ideas that had been lying about in his mind. The conservation of force, the instability of the homogeneous, the multiplication of effect,—these truths he discovered were all aspects of one universal truth, the tendency of the simple to become complex, of the homogeneous to become heterogeneous. The idea of evolution as one universal transformation process came to him almost in a flash. From that time on, his life was devoted to the stupendous task of treating astronomy, geology, biology, psychology, and sociology in successive order from one point of view.² The same fundamental law, he believed, could be used to explain the development of astronomical systems from a primitive fire-mist or star-dust; of the earth and the planets from primitive nebulae; of biological forms from a primitive protoplasm; of intelligence from primitive reactions of matter sensitized to stimuli; and of a complex social life from the primitive, simple, undifferentiated life of the horde. It is not at all or exclusively a sociological truism. It would, in fact, be difficult to expound it much or discuss it critically without running into the danger of obscuring the one point it was put in here to emphasize. This formula of progress, this

¹ The philosophy of Spencer has been voluminously discussed, but rarely adequately. Perhaps the best estimate of its defects — as well as its merits — is to be found in Josiah Royce's *Herbert Spencer, an Estimate and Review* (Fox, Duffield & Co., New York, 1904).

² See Duncan, *Life and Letters, op. cit.*, pp. 327 ff.

evolution idea, was the correlating thread on which were strung all the facts that Spencer brought together in his three stout volumes on the *Principles of Sociology*.

Like many another student of human affairs, Spencer looked forward to an ultimate state of social harmony, but he expected it to come, not through supernatural but strictly natural processes, and through the process of evolution and not through legislation. As a result of the evolutionary process, men would become so thoroughly socialized as to be perfectly fitted for social life. The lag in the evolution of human nature would be overcome, human evolution would catch up with the conditions under which human nature was evolving, adaptation would be complete.

. . . there must be produced [he said] a kind of man so constituted that while fulfilling his own desires he fulfils also the social needs. . . . The ultimate man will be one whose private requirements coincide with public ones. He will be that manner of man who, in spontaneously fulfilling his own nature incidentally performs the functions of a social unit; and yet is only enabled so to fulfil his own nature by all others doing the like.¹

This, apparently, was Spencer's conception of perfected human nature living in a perfected society, of progress as ultimate — that men might some day be so richly gifted with knowledge of social welfare, and a will for it, that they could be allowed perfect freedom to act for themselves. Social harmony would automatically result. Since Spencer believed in the inheritance of acquired characters he could hold that the practice of "social goodness" would have an effect in physically transmitting it. And, since the effect would be cumulative, he could argue that men might become socially perfect.² Spencer's critics are unable to see a necessary connection between his formula of progress and his hope for an ant-like social perfectibility of men. The first seems capable of giving direction to the scientific study of society; the second is suspected of being only a dream of something that the universe has never given an observable sign of

¹ From the closing paragraph of the *Principles of Sociology*.

² See Chapter VI on Adaptation, *infra*.

producing except perhaps in the case of certain social insects.

Comte and Spencer set an intellectual fashion. It had been startling at first to think of studying scientifically a thing like morality; yet the latter nineteenth century finally caught up the idea and magnified it. Literally scores of writers began to make plans for a science of society. Most of them, in one way or another, elaborated on Comte and Spencer. They could not get much beyond fabricating some theory of evolution as a test of progress without finding themselves hopelessly lost. Four American writers in particular ought to be mentioned: John Fiske, Lester F. Ward, Simon N. Patten, and Walter F. Willcox.¹

3. *John Fiske and the Growth of the Psychic from the Organic.* Fiske, like Comte and Spencer, had a theory of progress. Like them, also, he constructed a system of philosophy which included the development of human societies as a part of one universal process of cosmic evolution. Like them, he saw social institutions growing according to cosmic law.² Like them, too, he was accused of tucking in ideas of his own about human perfection as the goal of evolution. Yet, beyond his general theories and fond hopes, he left an idea which was full of pointers for the social scientist. Whether true or not, it was worth proving or disproving.

He labelled progress a growth of the psychic from the organic. He saw, as Spencer insisted, that, as animal organisms grew more and more complex in their physical makeup, their reactions to their environment became, of necessity, more and more complex. Far back in universal history, these reactions had been simple, inborn, instinctive, biological; but by the time man appeared they had become so many, so complicated, that they

¹ This is not to disparage or even to overlook the scholarly and fruitful work of another group of pioneers in sociology, such as William G. Sumner, Franklin H. Giddings, Edward A. Ross, Albion W. Small, Frank W. Blackmar, and many others in the United States, or of Vilfredo Pareto and L. T. Hobhouse in other countries. The author is here grouping those writers who developed their sociological systems around a theory of progress. It is the belief that sociology owes its first beginnings as a separate discipline to writers on social progress or evolution.

² See especially his *Outlines of Cosmic Philosophy* (Houghton Mifflin & Co., Boston, 1874. 2 vols.).

had to be learned after birth, by experience. A complex intelligence became all important. With man, evolution became essentially psychic, and less and less organic.

Allusion has already been made in Chapter III to the important place which Fiske gave to the prolongation of infancy in the enlargement and stabilization of the family, and to Professor William Morton Wheeler's additional suggestion that the prolongation of parenthood was also a factor. Fiske's first use of the prolongation of infancy was, however, in connection with his theory of progress as a growth of the psychic from the organic. The complexity of the reactions of men to the stimuli which came to them from the outside made it necessary for men to learn these reactions after birth. They could not be inborn. The learning of these reactions required a long learning period. Hence the prolongation of infancy. He says:

. . . while the nervous connections accompanying a simple intelligence are already organized at birth, the nerve connections accompanying a complex intelligence are chiefly organized after birth.

Thus there arise the phenomena of infancy which are non-existent among those arrivals whose psychical actions are purely reflex and instinctive. Infancy, psychologically considered, is the period during which the nerve connections and correlative ideal associations necessary for self-maintenance are becoming permanently established. Now this period, which only beigns to exist when the intelligence is considerably complex, becomes longer and longer as the intelligence increases in complexity. In the human race it is much longer than in any other race of mammals, and it is much longer in civilized man than in the savage.¹

4. *Lester F. Ward and the Increase of Happiness.* After Herbert Spencer, the greatest name among those who made progress the central theme of sociology is Lester F. Ward.²

¹ *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 342. There is an extensive quotation from Fiske's *Cosmic Philosophy*, concerning the prolongation of infancy, in Carver's *Sociology and Social Progress* (Ginn & Co., Boston, 1905).

² 1841-1913. The important sociological writings of Ward are: *Dynamic Sociology* (New York, 1883. 2 vols.). *Psychic Factors of Civilization* (Boston, 1893). *Outlines of Sociology* (New York and London, 1898). *Pure Sociology* (New York and London, 1903). *Applied Sociology* (Boston and New York, 1906). *Glimpses of the Cosmos* (New York and London, 1913-18).

The *Outlines* is the best book for beginning a study of Ward.

A trained geologist and botanist, understanding physics and chemistry well, he used, too often perhaps, highly technical terms that simply served the purpose of analogy. Yet approaching sociology as a practising scientist in several branches of knowledge, he showed a philosophic grasp of its place in the world of the sciences; and left ideas for attacking the study of social life that are still important — indeed dominant and compelling.

He framed sociology in a theory of progress at once so simple and so definite and yet so difficult to expound that he caused much thinking to be done in his day. "Human progress," he said, "may . . . be properly defined as that which secures the *increase of human happiness*."¹

This sounds, at first, like some wild hope — the kind of thing that put no small confusion into the work of Spencer and Comte. How could any one study the factors in social life which increase human happiness, and reduce them to law? A person would have to have at least an idea of what happiness is. Ward did the only thing he could do, and hold the sociologist to his proper business. He made happiness a measurable thing.

All happiness consists [he said] in the gratification of desire. . . . There are two ways, therefore, by which the happiness of a being can be increased: first, by affording the opportunity for exercising existing faculties; and second, by the creation of new and additional faculties, and extending these opportunities to the exercise of these also.²

In making the increase of human happiness the criterion of progress, Ward was adapting to sociological purposes what Bentham had laid down as the foundation of law and morals. Ward was not, however, a psychological hedonist. That is, he did not, as Bentham is accused of doing,³ insist that men are

¹ *Dynamic Sociology*, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 174. See also Bentham, *Principles of Morals and Legislation* (The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1907), ch. I.

² *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 176.

³ The accusation is unjust, and is based on an unfair interpretation of Bentham's words: "Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, *pain* and *pleasure*. It is for them alone to point out what we ought to do, as well as to *determine what we shall do*. *Op. cit.*, p. 1.

actually governed in their choices by a calculus of pleasures and pains. He was, however, as are most modern moralists, an ethical hedonist. That is, he believed definitely that the final test of right and wrong as well as of progress, was utility, or the excess of pleasures over pains, of happiness over unhappiness.

Ward did not clarify, as fully as is desirable, his concept of happiness as consisting in the gratification of desire. He recognized the difference between the desire for action and the desire for objects whose consumption or possession gives pleasure. Being essentially of the West, he did not take any too seriously the oriental concept of happiness as consisting in the eradication of desire, or in emancipation from craving. To the western mind, the possibility of killing desires by satiation seems much more pleasant than that of killing them by eradication. Ward placed the desire for action, or the exercise of our faculties, on a higher plane than the desire for consumers' goods. The possibilities of the increase of happiness seemed to him to lie mainly in the direction of a fuller exercise of our faculties and the development of new faculties.¹

But not all exercise is pleasurable. It is still necessary, in order that certain desires may be satisfied, that many kinds of action shall be carried beyond the point where the pleasure of action gives way to the unpleasantness of fatigue, confinement, or monotony. Action is then called work. These forms of unpleasantness help to cancel some of the pleasures derived from the things produced. After this cancellation is made, the balance of pleasantness and unpleasantness may be illustrated by the following diagram.

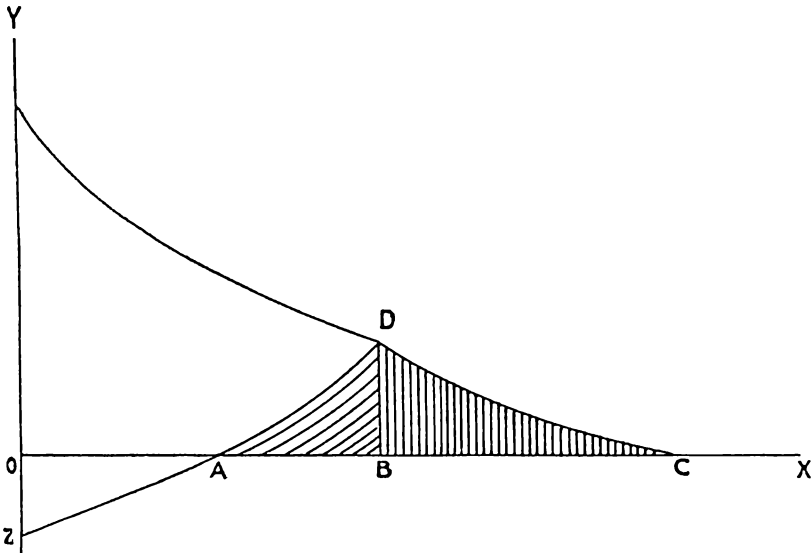
Let us measure the quantity of desirable things which may be won by labor along the line OX, and let the quantity of such things which a given individual is able to earn be represented by the distance OB. Then let the pleasure to be got from them be measured along the line OY. Under the principle of diminish-

¹ Later in this chapter we shall consider the relation of this concept to that of culture,—culture being defined as the exuberant exercise of the *higher* faculties.

ing utility, the total pleasure to be derived from the quantity OB may be represented by the surface YDBO.

To this quantity of pleasure must be added the pleasure of the work of earning the goods, in so far as the work is pleasurable. From it must be subtracted the unpleasantness of the work, in so far as the work is unpleasant.

DIAGRAM IV



Let the curve ZAD represent the diminishing pleasantness and the increasing unpleasantness of the work. The work of producing goods up to the point A (distance OA) is pleasant, but decreasingly so, and beyond the point A (Distance AB) it is unpleasant, increasingly so. Accordingly, the surface OAZ is to be added to the pleasure of the individual but the surface DBA must be subtracted.

Still another subtraction must be made. The individual still has many desires which he can not satisfy. The quantity of things necessary to satisfy these desires, but beyond his reach, is represented by the distance BC. The intensity of his desire for each unit of this quantity is represented by the series of perpendicular lines extending from the line BC to the curve DC.

In other words, the shaded surface DCB represents the sum of unpleasantness which results from unsatisfied desires.

This individual's surplus of happiness, in so far as it is dependent on what he can get by his own effort, is represented by the excess of the surface YDAZO over the surface DCB. (The small surface DBA represents neither surplus nor deficit).

This may introduce an important qualification to the too easy assumption that there is a correlation between the increase of wants or desires, on the one hand, and the increase of happiness on the other. An increase of desires, without some increase in the means of satisfying them, merely adds to the area DCB, and subtracts from the excess of pleasantness over unpleasantness. Emerson's famous essay on *Compensation* introduces other forebodings, including the regret at the thought of leaving so pleasant a world, to reduce the excess of pleasantness over unpleasantness. Schopenhauer, of course, goes even further in his doctrine that the satisfaction of a desire is only negative pleasure, consisting in the cessation of the pain of an unsatisfied desire.

The attempt to use the increase of happiness as a measure of the rate of progress does not commit one to any theory as to the final good. Happiness may or may not be an end in itself. It may conceivably have a purely instrumental value. It can be regarded as a lure to induce us to do whatever is necessary in order to keep the germ plasm alive, as unhappiness is a warning to induce us to avoid whatever threatens the life of the germ plasm. Thus, happiness is *for* something, just as pain is. Neither is an end in itself. But even though happiness may have an instrumental, or a derived value, it may still be the most convenient quantum for measuring progress. We use weight, or physical dimensions, as convenient bases for measuring quantity without committing ourselves to the proposition that the property or dimension chosen is the only essential property or dimension of the thing we are trying to measure. If we are convinced that there is a fairly close correlation between the rate at which happiness increases and the rate of progress, and if we think that we can measure the rate of the

increase of happiness, we may logically use happiness as a basis of measurement. But both "ifs" in that proposition are important.

What, now, finally stands out as really clear and simple in Ward's sociology? To study the conditions of increasing human happiness; to measure the opportunities of satisfying more desires; to note how much the increase of happiness is dependent on the growth of the intellect in the control of social life; to do all this, before dealing in human futures, is a task big enough, he said, for social science. He made the scientific study of society something definite; he gave it an aim, a theory of progress for others to find true or false. He was extremely cautious about putting rash hopes into his work that were not scientifically verifiable. He was more of a scientist than either Comte or Spencer or Fiske.

To Comte, perhaps, or Spencer — it is uncertain which — sociology owes its birth in the fructifying idea of progress. But it owes its somewhat naïvely scientific youth to the truths it was given by Fiske, Ward, and other men who were moved by the spirit of the time to think of human progress.

5. *Simon N. Patten and the Transition from a Pain to a Pleasure Economy.* One of the most stimulating of modern writers, both in economics and sociology, is the late Simon N. Patten. A man of remarkable originality, he challenged the thinking world in several fields. His best known contribution to sociology is his theory of social progress, which he defines as the transition from a pain economy to a pleasure economy. This generalization, while resembling somewhat Herbert Spencer's famous contrast between the militant and the industrial types of society, is somewhat more dynamic in its treatment. "Beings in a pain economy," says Patten, "have vigorous motor powers but a low development of the sensory powers."¹ When survival depends primarily on escape from enemies and the avoidance of pain, the forms of thought and the ideals created are such as will aid the people to combat these evils. There grows up

¹ *A Theory of Social Forces*, ch. v (American Academy of Political and Social Science, Philadelphia, 1896).

a pain morality which inhibits such behavior as may weaken men in their defense. There grows up a pain religion also, either to invoke the aid of higher powers, or to enforce discipline necessary for defense. Patten does not imply that men in the pain of economy are constantly thinking of fear and pain, but even their pleasures are such as not to interfere with the discipline necessary for defense or escape.

The purpose of the state, in the pain economy, is to protect the people from enemies. Everything within the state must be subordinated to the supreme need of defense. Religion and morals must combat all forms of pleasure which may expose people to attack from enemies, or weaken them in their fight against harsh circumstances. Morality in that stage is essentially ascetic.

Since the human race developed under a pain economy, and has lived for millions of years under the rigid necessity of self-protection, most of the institutions, religions, and mores are such as have survival value in the presence of enemies, both human and subhuman. The pious Christian has not only prayed for a time when none should "molest us or make us afraid," he has deliberately tried to inure himself to such conditions so long as they are unavoidable. Only recently has a small part of the human race emerged into conditions where it is safe or even possible to forget the presence of enemies or other sources of imminent danger. The Western World is now in a transition state. It is emerging into a condition in which men are motivated more by pleasurable than by painful anticipations,—by hope rather than by fear. Conscious fear is in a process of being banished, and the only effective motive to action is the hope of some form of satisfaction. The titillation of the appetite has displaced the satisfaction of hunger as the food motive. Self-adornment rather than protection from cold or insects is becoming the purpose of clothing. Self-expression rather than self-discipline is the goal of life.

When harsh winters or long dry spells brought starvation to the unthrifty, thrift had survival value. Since only the thrifty who had intelligence enough to store food for times of scarcity

could survive, their virtues survived with them. Thriftlessness perished with the thriftless type of individual. In these days of superabundance, the old type of thrift seems to the average person unnecessary. While another type of thrift, namely, investment in new instruments of production, is increasingly necessary, there is a tendency to turn that function over to a few far-sighted individuals while the common run of men live a carefree, grasshopper sort of existence, and complain because of the unequal ownership of means of production.

During this period of transition we are already puzzled and confused. No one seems able to predict the end. We already lead carefree lives to a considerable extent. Neither invading armies, bears, wolves nor Indians, are left to molest us and make us afraid. Others save and invest for us, so that we do not need to think of the morrow. When harmful bacteria are all traced to their lairs and exterminated, as the larger beasts of prey have been, we may learn to forget about hygiene as we have already forgotten about morals and decency, and each one may feel free to do that which pleases him in defiance even of the laws of health. Already we are clamoring for old-age and unemployment insurance in order that we may be saved the trouble of thinking about rainy days to come.

However, every state or condition requires some sort of morality, that is, some sort of modification of individual behavior. Even the pleasure economy will require the difficult choice between the less and the greater pleasure, the ephemeral and the durable, the lower and the higher. The choice between two goods is quite as difficult as the choice between two evils.

That the pleasure economy has its difficulties is apparent when we consider that no nation has ever survived it for a long time. As Patten remarks, "Nation after nation has gone down when utilities instead of pains have become the supreme object of interest. Individuals as well as nations show the deteriorating influence of pleasure as soon as they are freed from the restraints of pain economy."¹

¹ *Op. cit.*

One is here reminded of Carlyle's suggestion that for every one who can stand prosperity there are twenty who can stand adversity. When interpreted in terms of human ecology, this does not mean that prosperity is inherently more difficult to endure than adversity. It only means that the human race has had more experience with adversity than with prosperity. For millions of years, adversity has been exterminating those who could not stand it and preserving those who could. We are now a race which has become, through this long process of selection, at least partially immune to the demoralizing influences of adversity. It may take a million years of prosperity to build up a race, by the process of variation and selection, which is equally immune to the demoralizing influences of the pleasure economy. One of two things is certain. Either prosperity will destroy our race as it has destroyed others, or we shall develop the power to resist its destructive influences.

While admitting that the transition from a pain to a pleasure economy is a form of progress, Patten does not cater to our optimism by holding out the hope that progress may be permanent. In some respects his resembles a cyclical theory of civilization. Like a plant, civilization produces its flower and fruit, but in the process destroys itself. It differs from a cyclical theory, however, in that it does not hold that progress is inevitable. Tribes and peoples have apparently lived in a low state of civilization for millions of years. Their progress, if they ever made any, has either stopped long ago or has been by slow and imperceptible stages. But once let a group start definitely upward in its progress from a pain to a pleasure economy, it seems to run its course and destroy itself in the process.

Among other degenerative tendencies may be mentioned the exercise of the inventive faculties on the problem of separating sex from childbirth, to the end that the pleasures of sex may be enjoyed without the penalties of childbirth, or the cares, responsibilities, and expenses of parenthood. This rationalizing tendency naturally shows itself first among those most capable of reasoning, namely, the most intelligent classes. This results

in a differential birth-rate. The function of reproduction is largely turned over to the least fit until intelligence is bred out and stupidity bred into the race, and one episode in the rise and fall of civilizations has come to an end.

C. THE MEASURE OF PROGRESS

1. *The Neo-Darwinians*,—*La Pousse, Kidd, Gumpowicz, Ratzenhofer, Durkheim*. Sociology would have advanced slowly to the position of a systematised discipline among other sciences, in spite of the good introduction it had been given by such eminent philosophers as Comte, Spencer, Fiske, Ward and Patten, had it not been for a formula that now goes by the name of Darwinism.¹ The idea of evolution in general is usually associated with Darwinism and is commonly taken to be synonymous with it; but this is scarcely accurate. The reason for this is well explained by Professor Hogben. He says:

Forced into the forum as a propagandist the biologist gave less attention to the logical structure of the new theory than to its apparent implications for social philosophy. The ethical concept of progress became entangled in the evolutionary idea. In the writings of Herbert Spencer and the evolutionist philosophers Darwinism has left a lasting impress upon contemporary thought.²

The essential idea of social evolution, as expounded by writers like Comte and Spencer in making clear their ideas of progress, is as old as philosophy. Darwin, who was primarily a biologist, did not invent the idea of social evolution. What he did was to make evolution more than a philosophic hypothesis. He developed it into a scientific formula that accounted for the origin and growth of the human body and mind as well as of plant and animal species.³

¹ The philosophers themselves, many of them, were influenced by ideas that are now labelled "Darwinian." They arrived at these many times independently of Darwin. This was not strange, since the general idea of evolution was so much in the air. It was Spencer, for instance, who coined the phrase "survival of the fittest."

² Lancelot Hogben, *The Nature of Living Matter* (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co., Ltd., London, 1930), p. 127.

³ Although he wrote nothing under the title of sociology, he made a notable contribution to sociological thought in his *Descent of Man*. This was a treatise

He had, back of him, not only the work of scientists, especially in the field of geology, who had taught that the present form of the earth's crust was the result of a long process of orderly development, but the work of practical animal breeders like Bakewell, the Collings, Tompkins, and Coke. The significance of the work of these men is sometimes overlooked. Before Darwin these men had proceeded on what are now called "Darwinian" lines. Aware of the universal fact of variation among animals of the same species, they had simply used the method of selection, or selective breeding. By this method they had, in half a century, produced strikingly new breeds of farm animals. It occurred to Darwin, after reading Malthus, that there was selection in nature as well as in the farmer's breeding pen. He called the one natural selection to distinguish it from the artificial selection of the animal breeder.

This formula of Darwin's has become so much of a truism in biology that it is difficult to realize what an important part it played, during an age still ruled by theological dogma, in turning the idea of evolution into a scientific tool. Biologists have already gone far beyond Darwin. They are asking now, What causes variation? What makes individuals different? They believe if they can only learn how to control variation, they can, knowing the requirements of a given environment, make adaptation, and so survival, more or less automatic — for whom you will. They simply ask to be given a free hand with the germ plasm.¹ They took their hint, none the less, from Darwin.

It would have been strange if a convincing demonstration of the method of biological evolution had not been full of leading strings for the sociologist. Remember — the idea of social evolution, in Darwin's time, while existing, was hardly more than a philosophic hope. Social progress was an idea hardly more substantial than a dream. The writers who took up the Darwin

on the evolution of human traits and institutions that was simply overshadowed in importance, by the *Origin of Species*. He saw no unbridgeable chasm separating human institutions from animal habits, nor civilized institutions from savage. He attempted to explain them all in terms of an evolutionary process.

¹ See *infra*, Chapter V, on Adaptation.

formula and applied it to the study of society were able at least to demonstrate an exact method by which social evolution could proceed as Darwin had shown how biological evolution could take place. As Karl Pearson remarks: "The insight which the investigations of Darwin, seconded by the suggestive but far less permanent work of Spencer, have given us into the development of both individual and social life, has compelled us to remodel our historical ideas and is slowly widening and consolidating our moral standards."¹

We thus find, for instance, that Vacher de Lapouge organized the facts of social life rather neatly around Darwin's theory.² He simply transferred and applied the Darwinian concept of evolution to human societies considered as living entities. In racial evolution, he argued, there is variation and selection just as there is in all the world of life. Races are varieties of men that struggle for survival. They cannot all live and expand for lack of space and food. If there is such a thing as human progress, it is because the race that is better adapted than others to its environment lives longer as a race and prospers, while the others fade away into historical oblivion. Men, he reasoned, have no more of an innate tendency to progress than have plants and animals. If progress comes, it comes because the unfit fail to propagate their kind.

This sounds like pure biology. But Lapouge explains that human evolution is social and not biological, because the human environment is social and not merely physical. Life in general has to adapt itself to a purely physical world; nature is the only judge of what varieties of life shall survive. Human beings, as individuals, have to adapt themselves to social institutions — to war, politics, economic competition, the church, morals, legal control, jails and gibbets. It is conformity to social standards which determines what individuals shall prosper. Only indirectly

¹ *The Grammar of Science* (Adam & Charles Black, London, 1911), p. 1.

² The three important books of Lapouge are: *Les Selections Sociales* (Paris, 1896); *L'Aryen, son rôle sociale* (Paris, 1899); *Race et milieu sociale* (Paris, 1909). The first is enough to give even the more than average student of sociology a sufficient idea of Lapouge's general theories.

and ultimately is physical nature the arbiter of individual survival.

But what determines which groups shall survive? This is a question which is not likely to occur to any but a trained sociologist. He realizes that the process of selection is the weeding out of social groups as well as of individuals. While the individual's survival depends, to a considerable degree, upon the conformity *to* the mores of the group, the survival of the group depends, to an equal degree upon the conformity *of* its mores to the conditions which surround it. When surrounded, for example, by hostile groups who have easy access to its hunting grounds, the group's survival will depend to a considerable extent upon its fighting power, and this, in turn, upon a multitude of factors — mores, institutions, organizations — which contribute to that fighting power. When surrounded by barriers which shut out invaders, or when occupying a territory so poor as not to tempt invaders, its survival will not depend so much on fighting power as on productive power. Productive power, in turn, depends upon factors different from those which contribute to fighting power.

There are variations among groups as among individuals. There is also selection of the favorable variations and extinction of the unfavorable variations among groups as well as among individuals. The actual process, that of variation and selection, by which the evolution of social groups proceeds is identical with that by which individual evolution proceeds. The difference is in the factors which determine group survival on the one hand and individual survival on the other hand.

Lapouge seems to have outlined a rather clear-cut course for the sociologist to follow. It seems quite logical to argue that the race best adapted to its social surroundings is the one that is victorious in war and politics and economic competition. The race that is made less prosperous or less fertile by the morality or religion to which it conforms is handicapped in the struggle for existence. Analyze, therefore, the factors that make the military success of a race,— its material prosperity, its fer-

tility, its morale,—and you have the key to social adaptation and social progress. The job is something definite.

Yet there is much in Lapouge's work that is of very questionable value. There is not much doubt that he made a fundamental error in picking out the survival of race rather than the survival of the social group as the key to social evolution. There may be such a thing as race.¹ If social institutions affect the survival of one race or another, racial evolution may be called social. But social evolution is much more than the survival of races best adapted to social institutions; it is also the survival of social institutions themselves, of political systems, religions, moralities, and other organized means of social control. Social institutions are themselves socially evolved through the struggle of political rather than racial groups for political ascendancy. Political groups are socially more fundamental than racial groups.²

Benjamin Kidd caught at this idea. He wrote, it is true, about all kinds of struggles for existence — among individuals, classes, races, nations.³ This much, at any rate, he emphasized to the profit of sociology: the struggle of social groups for survival results in the success of the socially efficient groups. Social progress is possible, but only through the sacrifice of individuals and of groups that are least adapted to social life.

Leaning always on Darwinism, Kidd developed his theory that religion has played a leading rôle in social progress. While men were still animals, he argued, and struggling with other animals for survival, the human brain evolved; and reason, evolving, was victorious in the struggle. But men, with their greater intelligence, while they were slowly becoming social creatures, were not at all exempt from a struggle for survival; there was struggle among individuals within a group and between groups. In the struggle for group survival, individuals

¹ In biological evolution race has clearly been important.

² Almost never has a political group been a race in itself.

³ See the excellent account of Kidd by Bristol in *Social Adaptation, op. cit.*, pp. 85 ff. Bristol discusses, among other things, Kidd's law of "projected efficiency" which it does not seem necessary to consider here.

have to be sacrificed. Now how, asks Kidd, could intelligent individuals accept the sacrifice that the struggle involved? Is it not true that intelligence is egotistical? Would there be any rational motive for hermit-minded, egotistical individuals to sacrifice themselves for the group in order that sociable groups might survive? Kidd saw that social progress necessarily involved the sacrifice. Religion explained for him what seemed quite incomprehensible. Religion he saw as the irritational faith that could lead men to accept social life, at any cost; religion made men socially efficient.

No form of belief [he said] is capable of functioning as a religion in the evolution of society which does not provide an ultra-rational sanction for social conduct in the individual. . . . A religion is a form of belief, providing an ultra-rational sanction for that large class of conduct in the individual where his interests and the interests of the social organism are antagonistic, and by which the former are rendered subordinate to the latter in the general interests of the evolution which the race is undergoing.¹

Kidd did not altogether substantiate his theory that religion is the leading factor in social progress. He showed, perhaps, that a group held together by strong religious institutions might survive a group weak in sociability, because it lacked churches. He did not show convincingly that other institutions might not take the place of churches, that a group might be held together, not by an ultrarational faith, but by a perfectly rational conviction of the usefulness of coöperative labor. He did not see, for example, that men might be led to give active assent to an abstract principle of distributive justice,—such a principle as this: that each should share in the joint product of industry in proportion to his contribution to that joint product. Knowing that one man can contribute more than another, the majority may accept smaller individual shares than go to the minority, and not insist on killing the goose that lays the golden eggs by trying to grasp larger shares for themselves and destroying the motive for efficiency on the part of more gifted individuals. Perhaps Kidd might have insisted that assent to such a principle of distributive justice is a kind of religion.

¹ *Social Evolution* (Macmillan & Co., New York & London, 1894), pp. 101, 203.

A more questionable assumption of Kidd was that the great mass of individuals must necessarily be sacrificed under economic competition. The possibility that competition might be so controlled and directed as to enable the great mass to succeed and only the defective minority to fail, seems to have escaped him. He never grasped the fundamental difference between economic competition and the struggle for existence as it is carried on in the sub-human world. His insufficiencies, however, ought not to be allowed to overshadow the importance of the problem which he was, in all his work, trying to solve,— the problem of social efficiency and its survival value in the struggle of social groups.

Another example of an attempt to explain social processes in terms of the Darwinian principle of conflict is Ludwig Gumplowicz. In his book *Pure Sociology* Ward makes the following comment:

Gumplowicz and Ratzenhofer have abundantly and admirably proved that the genesis of society as we see it and know it has been through the struggle of races. I do not hope to add anything to their masterly presentation of this truth, which is without question the most important contribution thus far made to the science of sociology. We have at last a true key to the solution of the question of the origin of society. . . . It is the only scientific explanation that has been offered of the facts and phenomena of human history. It proceeds from a true natural principle which is applicable to man everywhere, and which is in harmony with all the facts of Ethnology and Anthropology. Finally, this principle proves to be a universal one, and is the one on which are also explained all other natural phenomena.¹

No less stern a critic of Gumplowicz than H. E. Barnes makes the following comment: "His thorough analysis of the social process, viewed as the interaction of conflicting groups, is one of the most fundamental notions which has yet been brought forward by sociology and constitutes a contribution of the greatest permanent value."²

¹ Lester F. Ward, *Pure Sociology* (The Macmillan Co., New York, 1903), pp. 203-204.

² H. E. Barnes, "The Struggle of Races and Social Groups"; article in *Journal of Race Development* (Clark University, Worcester, Mass., 1918-19), vol. ix, pp. 400-401.

The chief criticism that may be raised against Gumpłowicz's theory is that it overestimates the working of "blind natural laws" in the formation of the social process as well as in the making of social institutions, to the exclusion of planned progress, or of what Ward calls "Collective Telesis." In human society the effort to escape from envioning conditions is rather in the nature of a positive attempt to control and better the condition than that of mere blind acceptance and passivity. Gumpłowicz is also accused of underestimating the fundamental fact of mutual aid as a factor in social development. He could reply, however, that mutual aid is mainly confined to members of a group and is therefore a factor in its success in its struggle with other groups. There is mutual aid, *par excellence*, in a well organized and disciplined army, but it is a means of fighting successfully against other armies. Mutual aid is a form of teamwork. It is highly developed in a colony of ants or bees, but it does not extend to members of rival colonies. His utter denial of social progress as a whole reminds one of the most gloomy dictum of Ralph Waldo Emerson in his essay on *Self-Reliance*. Says Emerson:

Society never advances. It recedes as fast on one side as it gains on the other. Its progress is only apparent like the workers of a treadmill. It undergoes continual change; it is barbarous, it is civilized, it is Christianized, it is rich, it is scientific; but the change is not amelioration. For everything that is given, something is taken.

Some over zealous environmentalists object to Darwinism because it stresses heredity. Granting all that may be said as to the passivity of the individual's reaction to the stimuli which come to him from his social environment, we can not get away from the basic, biological fact of variation among individuals. Without this variation there is no evolution. With this variation, there is a difference in the reactions of different individuals to the same environment. A social environment which stimulated a Newton or a Faraday to a certain type of mental activity, failed absolutely to stimulate millions of others to any such mental activity. In short, no two individuals react in precisely

the same way to a given environment. A great deal, therefore, depends upon the kinds of individuals we are breeding. That will be an important factor in determining how the next generation will react to the social environment we are building for them.

The problem of group survival leads to the vitals of sociology. It would be difficult to overstress the importance of the neo-Darwinians who first gave half-valid hints concerning factors that might have survival value for a human group in its struggle with other groups for political ascendancy.¹ The neo-Darwinians threw out a profitable leading string for the sociologist. They illustrated a method by means of which social progress could take place. They gave some consistency to the study of social life.

Sociologists — most of them — have come to accept the idea of social evolution as a truism. They see how social progress, if there has been such a thing at all, has taken place. Now they want to hasten progress. Leaning on Darwinism, they are ready to go far with it. They are centering their attention on the slow changing of social institutions — the mechanism of social variation, just as biologists are studying the changing of the germ plasm — the mechanism of physical variation. Social institutions are the means by which political groups adapt themselves to their environment. Sociologists want to control institutional change.² If they learn to do this, as far as they can predict the demands of a given environment, they feel that they ought to be able to make social adaptation certain and social progress as swift as their wisdom. They know that legislatures have it in their power to change social institutions. They believe that political legislation should be backed by social science. Their job is to analyze the factors that have caused groups to survive in most of the tight pinches of human history, to make a scientific study of social variation. The job

¹ They are too numerous to discuss further in this chapter. The work of L. Gumpowicz and J. Novicow is as important as Kidd's and Lapouge's. A book such as P. Sorokin's *Contemporary Sociological Theories* (Harper & Brothers, New York, 1928), contains a great deal of reference material on the subject. See especially chs. v and vi.

² Remember Lester F. Ward's "Social Telesis."

done, they are in a position to advise politicians about making changes in social institutions with a view to hastening social progress.

2. *Walter F. Willcox and the Statistical Measure.* The Darwinian formula convinced the world, rightly or wrongly, of the possibility of progress. It showed how evolution could take place and presented convincing evidence that it did take place. Evolution came to be identified with progress. It is one thing, however, to accept the possibility of progress and quite a different thing to recognize it when one sees it. The discussion has tended, recently, therefore, to center around the question of the criteria of progress. What are its earmarks and how may we determine, at any given period, whether we are progressing, retrograding, or merely moving in circles?

The earlier writers had not ignored this question. Comte identified progress with the growth of harmony in human relations. He did not, however, leave us a very satisfactory method of measuring the degree of harmony or disharmony. Spencer identified progress with the growth of complexity. This lends itself to mechanical measurement somewhat better than Comte's idea of harmony. However, it seems too mechanical to suit most utilitarians who are more interested in human happiness than in mechanical complexity. Ward's concept of happiness as the test of progress satisfies those who realize their own automatic responses to painful and pleasurable sensations, but happiness is singularly difficult to measure.

A more fundamental objection to happiness as a measure of progress is based upon the ecological fact that happiness or pleasure, like pain, has an instrumental value. Pain is a warning which leads us to avoid whatever may be destructive and endanger our survival. Pleasure is a lure which leads us to do whatever is necessary to insure our survival or that of our germ plasm. Thus neither pleasure nor pain are ends in themselves, but are means to an end, which end is survival. Survival may or may not be the final end, but it is at least the end of which pleasure and pain are the means. In that important sense,

survival is one step nearer than happiness to the *summum bonum*. Ecologically speaking, it is the *summum bonum*.

Survival also has the advantage of being a physical fact, and much less elusive than happiness. It is, of course, pertinent to ask, what is survival for? It is equally pertinent to ask, what is happiness for? To the latter question the ecologist has a ready answer. It is for survival. It lures men on to do those things on which survival depends, just as pain warns and deters men from doing those things which threaten extinction. No equally prompt and definite answer can be given to the question, what is survival for? One can not say that survival is for the sake of happiness without begging an important question, namely, is life worth living, or does survival bring more happiness than unhappiness? Optimists assume that to be true, pessimists deny it categorically. So long as the argument is a strictly logical one, it results in a stalemate.

There is, however, a universal urge in all living creatures to keep on living and reproducing their kind. All living creatures seem to behave as they would behave if they were thoroughly convinced that life was worth while and survival a thing supremely to be desired. The ecologist sees pleasure and pain as agencies to aid and guide sentient creatures, luring them or prodding them, to do those things which make for survival and to avoid those things which hinder survival. To a living creature, life seems the chief thing in terms of which everything else is evaluated. Moreover, as pointed out in an earlier chapter, the feeling that life is worth while has, itself, survival value because those who have this feeling are more likely to survive than those who lack it. The jury is being packed by natural selection.

A view which is in complete harmony with this theory was expounded by Professor Walter F. Willcox in a brilliant article entitled "A Statistician's Idea of Progress."¹ This article, it is safe to say, contains one of the most definite, clear-cut, and constructive contributions ever made in the field of sociology.

¹ *International Journal of Ethics*, vol. XXIII.

While not committing himself on any such abstract question as the *summum bonum*, Professor Willcox definitely insists that progress must be tested by something that can be measured and counted. The number of people can be counted by census enumerators, and the kinds and quantities of desirable things which they enjoy can also be inventoried. A civilization which is increasing the means of subsistence, permitting more and more people to live and to have more and more of the things which they desire is, according to this test, a progressive civilization. Even though their desires are not approved, they at least have a wider choice than people who, because of poverty, must needs be satisfied with very little.

This fits in with the theory of survival values in that the first requisite of survival is subsistence. A group of people who are so motivated and organized as to increase the means of subsistence has at least that advantage over a group so motivated and organized as not to be able to increase the means of subsistence. This test of progressiveness applies to their social system and not to their individual capacities. In comparing the American Indian with the European colonist, for example, it is not necessary to assume anything as to the physical or mental superiority of an Indian over a European, or of a European over an Indian. The question is, which had the better social, economic, and political organization,—the “higher” civilization? Different philosophers might give different answers. To a practical philosopher who is also an economist and a statistician, the answer is clear. The European colonists were equipped by their civilization to produce more subsistence, to support more people and to give each person more desirable things than the Indian’s civilization equipped him to do.

Since this argument does not even hint that a man and an amoeba are of equal value, it is hardly a valid answer to say that there are more amoebae than men in the world. As to the relative values of men and other creatures, men may be pardoned for showing a certain prejudice in favor of their own kind, as other creatures do. Since men write treatises on this subject for other men to read, this prejudice may be assumed.

Let us forget this prejudice, however, when we are discussing purely human affairs, and assume that, man for man, an Indian is exactly as valuable as a white man. The fact that the white man's civilization enables a hundred white men to live and make a living where the Indian's civilization permitted only one Indian to live or make a living, would seem to argue for the superiority of the white man's civilization. To deny this would imply that one Indian is worth as much as a hundred white men, an opinion not free from prejudice. Here is a measurable quality of the two civilizations. They who, on the other hand, assert the superiority of the Indian's civilization, have no similar basis of measurement. They must fall back on their own prejudices or preferences.

Let us apply this comparison to the present and the future of the same civilization. Granting that the average individual living at one time is worth exactly as much as the average individual living at another time, if the civilization is so changing as to equip men for the production of more subsistence, so that more can live at a later than at an earlier time, and live as well or better, it would be a progressive civilization; otherwise not.

Walter Bagehot goes even further and applies the biological test of survival as a measure of progress.¹ Sophists might discuss the causes and cures of the disease called civilization, but there is no doubt that civilized men can take land away from uncivilized men whenever they want it. When Europeans came in contact with Tasmanians, the latter disappeared. When Europeans came in contact with American Indians or native Australians, the latter lost their lands, and would have starved to death except for the doles allowed them by those who took their lands. In Darwinian terms, the Europeans are more "fit," that is, more able to survive than the Tasmanians, Australians or Indians. These races live, if at all, because of the forbearance of the civilized races. Yet it is not so much a matter of individual as of social fitness. The Europeans have a superior

¹ *Physics and Politics* (D. Appleton & Co., New York, 1912), pp. 205-224.

social, economic, and political system. It is a matter of group survival, and group survival depends upon the organization of the groups rather than upon the individual prowess of its members.

Very naturally, there is an extreme reluctance to accept either the statistician's or the biologist's idea of progress. Every one has his own notions as to what is good and desirable. Even though all his notions are inherited, they are none the less dear to him. He can not conceive of progress except in terms of his own standards. Consequently the average person will conceive of progress as a change in the direction of some standard of his own. If he is the devotee of a certain religion or a certain type of culture, progress to him will consist in the spread of that religion or that type of culture. If he is a pacifist, progress will consist in the cessation of war. If he is a militarist, it will consist in the building up of a fighting machine and the building of a great empire through the spread of military power. If he is a scientist, it will consist in the improvement of the mechanic arts, etc. etc.

Any one, however, who insists that progress consists in the development of higher standards is under obligation to explain what a "high" standard is, and why it deserves to be called "high." It is conceivable that a high standard is one which makes it possible for a great many people to live and to satisfy a great many interests of each individual. A high standard of goodness in individual character, for example, may be one which conforms to a statistician's definition of progress. In other words, a "good" person is one who does things which make it possible for many people to live and to satisfy many interests. A bad person is one who does things which have the opposite effect. A "good" habit is one which, in proportion as it spreads, makes it possible for many to live and satisfy many interests. A bad habit is the opposite. Under this concept of goodness, its spread could be tested by the statistician.

A religious revival, for example, if worth while, should leave its results in forms which a statistician could measure. It should result in a diminished death-rate, and an increased

birth-rate among those who possess the kind of talent that is needed as evidenced by the demand for and the price of it. It should result in better farming and better workmanship, both of which could be measured by the statistics of production. It should result in harder study of useful subjects, which could be measured by the statistics of attendance upon schools, of election of courses designed to make students more useful, and of grades in courses.

On the other hand, a religious revival would be vicious and not beneficent if it resulted in nothing more than an ebullition of religious feeling, in a renewed interest in the discussion of questions having no possible connection with problems of human adaptation to the earthly environment, if it encouraged schools and courses of study which taught young people to fiddle while the world was on fire, to seek an esoteric culture when there are multitudes of unemployed who need highly intelligent and highly trained employers who alone can solve their problems of unemployment for them. In short, a change of standards, either through a religious revival or the slow process of education, can not be said to be progressive unless it produces desirable results which can be measured by the statistician.

The general reluctance of experts in education to subject their educational frills to a statistical test is evidence of their lack of scientific interest. Do undergraduates who have been subjected to a tutorial system or a house plan do better work in graduate or professional schools, or in after life, than those who have never had those "advantages?" That question has not yet been put to a valid statistical test. Needless to say, a consensus of opinions of tutors and house-masters is not a valid test. The general reluctance of religious organizations to apply the statistical test to themselves evidences a similar lack of scientific attitude. Do Christians, for example, make better farmers, workmen, or business men than non-Christians? Do Catholics contribute less proportionately to the criminal and prostitute class than Protestants? Even to suggest such reasonable statistical tests is to provoke a storm of protest and to be accused of religious bigotry. The Mormons, the Jews, and the

Christian Scientists at least seem to be willing to meet such a test.¹ Other religious bodies might well follow their example. The devotees of this or that esoteric form of culture might well be checked up by a statistician. Whatever may be said for or against their cult, unless it, to some measurable degree, assists in the great problem of human adaptation, it can present no convincing reason to the intellect for its acceptance as a factor in progress. Its appeal must be wholly emotional. Needless to say, the success of its demogical appeals to the emotions is no valid test. It is what happens after conversion to a religion that counts, and a statistician is the one to make the count.

Professor Willcox has at least pointed the way to a final test of progress. He may not have said the last word, but certainly no one hereafter is entitled to be heard on the subject of progress until he has considered the possibility of measuring it by some objective test. Between some sort of objective or statistical test, and the mere assertion of personal approval of a given change, there is no middle ground.

A qualitative change in social organization may be suggested which, when checked by a statistician, would produce measurable results. A transition from the destructive and deceptive forms of competition to the productive forms, might reasonably be said to be a progressive change. A nation which succeeds in bringing about such a transition could be said to be a progressive nation.

Destructive forms of competition² are those under which the individual succeeds in getting what he wants by the exercise of his superior powers of destruction, by his ability to kill, to hurt or to inspire fear. Deceptive forms are those under which the individual succeeds in getting what he wants by reason of his superior powers of deception, by his ability to deceive, defraud, or outwit. Productive forms of competition are those under which the individual succeeds in getting what he wants

¹ See *The Fruits of Mormonism*, by Franklin Stewart Harris and Newbern Isaac Buth (The Macmillan Co., New York), 1925.

² *Supra*, Ch. III, Sec. 6.

by reason of his superior powers of production or service, by his ability to supply what others want.

The nation which succeeds in reducing to the lowest minimum the percentage of individuals who use their energies in destructive and deceptive forms of competition, and in increasing to the maximum the percentage of those who use their energies in productive or useful forms of competition, will, in the long run, outstrip all others in the numbers that can be supported and in the abundance of things enjoyed by each individual. It is all involved in the simple formula: he that would be successful or great, let him earn his success or his greatness by being useful, not by deception or by terrorism. Here is a standard which produces measurable results and does not depend for its validity upon a mere personal prejudice.

Even Ward's social telesis, or planned evolution, must wait until we have valid measurements. Some feeble and rather vapid suggestions of social telesis are found in recent proposals for a planned economy. A rationally planned economy must obviously begin with a planned population, but this is the last thing which the economic planner wants to see planned.

CHAPTER V

THE SOCIAL NATURE OF MAN

1. The Concept of Sociability, p. 135
2. The Sense of Justice, p. 139
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1. *The Concept of Sociability.* Do men hang together because of social feeling or because they see that if they do not they will, as Franklin suggested, hang separately? Do men live in groups because they are by nature social, and yet quarrel among themselves because they are intelligent enough to see that, wherever there is a scarcity of any desirable thing, their interests conflict; or do they live in groups because they are intelligent enough to see the advantage of it, and yet quarrel among themselves because of an inborn anti-social feeling?

In Chapter III we have tried to show that there is an inherent antagonism of economic interests which is sufficient to give rise to conflict among members of the same society unless these members are superhumanly altruistic, that is, altruistic beyond the capacity of any finite mind. The opinion was expressed that men were social in the sense that they preferred society to solitude, that they preferred their own kind to other creatures, and that they were anatomically and psychologically constructed for communication, which is a form of association; but that they were not sufficiently social to overcome or control, in all cases, the explosive tendencies growing out of the antagonism of economic interests wherever scarcity existed. In this chapter

we shall consider, in somewhat greater detail, this social nature of man.

In the study of social progress, it is impossible to go very far without running into various problems concerning "human nature."¹ If there was survival value in social life, it would have been strange if the process of evolution had not bred sociable human beings, that is, beings with some capacity for social life. Sociability has had survival value, for it has given to large social groups cohesion and organic unity. There must be some cement to hold the parts of a group together, some common interest to furnish a motive for common action. In the struggle among rival groups for survival, success must have come to those groups which were best cemented, best organized for efficient group action, either in war or in industry. One problem of the sociologist is to find what are the elements in efficient organization which have survival value. Talkativeness may be one such element; a sound system of jurisprudence may be another; a sound code of morals, an efficient industrial system, a social disposition on the part of a group of individuals, may be other elements. The last-named seems the most fundamental of all and will here be discussed first.

"Man — the political animal — according to the definition of Aristotle, lives and must live in society. A human being outside the pale of society is an inconceivable thing."² This does not mean at all that a man would cease to be human if he were isolated after his mental habits were formed, or that Robinson Crusoe was any more human after he met Friday than before. It means simply that men are the product of social living; that they have become, through social living, very different creatures from what they would have been had they developed, biologically, in isolation. An individual of a race thus developed in and adapted to social life, but removed from social life from

¹ Cf. especially C. H. Cooley, *Human Nature and the Social Order* (Charles Scribners Sons, New York, 1902).

² From the *Political Doctrine of Fascism*, by A. Rocco (translated and published by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, New York, 1926), p. 16.



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