

# The Destiny of Man

By J. G. Peters, in "Forward" (Glasgow).

SCHOLARS have very little doubt about the final arrest of the human creature. In certain directions man himself has interfered with the work of Evolution. He could not wait until that marvellous instrument, the human eye, attained the vision of the eagle. His inquisitiveness, his thirst for knowledge, his love of mystery, attracted him to the sparkling orbs of the evening sky, the fair moon and her starry sisters. He invented optical instruments to improve the power of his natural vision. We have not the splendid sight of the bird of prey, nor is it necessary, since we have the powerful lens of the field glass. Ceaseless toil under wretched conditions has caused a deterioration in the eyesight of the race. One-third of the people surely walk about with spectacles perched upon their noses, and the remaining two-thirds really need them.

The power to smell is one of the lost arts of mankind; the lower animals have still retained it. In matters of speed, we are hopelessly outstripped. If our food depended upon our fleetness of foot, we should go hungry. Speed is unnecessary now that the rifle bullet can intercept the nimblest game. Early man was glad to gnaw the hard tough roots of the wilderness, until the primitive husbandman discovered that it was possible, under cultivation, to transform the original roots of the wilds into large and juicy vegetables. We have not the hard sticky roots of our progenitors to chew, nor have we the same sound teeth. Much of our food is factory made and digested for us. Modern civilization has brought about a degeneration in our teeth; they are such a nuisance at times that we are glad to employ the dentist to get rid of them for us.

All things seem to indicate that the human frame has reached perfection. Nature has at last produced a man to her liking. She seems to say: For millions and millions of years have I toiled and toiled, rejecting, mending, improving, oh so slowly and painstakingly, but I have achieved the right thing at last. Man is here, and with him I shall do wondrous things.

By the exercise of his ingenious hands, which long ago were only employed in the sharpening of a fallen branch to enable him to cope with his enemies, or facilitate the despatch of his game, man has achieved one wonder after another until today we find there is no ocean in the wide world his ships cannot cross. After years of experimentation, he has perfected a machine to carry him through the air. Another startling vessel bears him on a voyage through the depths of the sea. Trains hurl him at terrific speed all over the globe, and where once he had but a small corner of the forest for his dwelling-place he is now able to claim the whole world as his home. And yet, with all his inventive enterprise, man has so far failed to find the correct way to live.

It would appear that the ethical development of man has not kept pace with the perfection of his physical nature. This thought long baffled thinking men. Before the coming of Darwin, whose splendid discoveries, fortified by years of heroic and patient study, scattered the dry bones of science, educated men spied no solution to the problem of life. What of Life! Why are we here? To those inquiries there was no satisfactory answer. Life in their eyes was but a prison-house; its boundaries were unalterable; there was no escape. They did not know to what end the great god Nature was shaping; they did not understand Nature. They separated variations of species, gave them Latin names, stuffed specimens in glass cases, pinned insects on a card, and called that Nature. But the great Darwin came along with a well-founded theory of Creation, a new philosophy, a new vision for mankind, comforting to the soul, and opening the eyes of man to undreamed of possibilities. Years before the coming of the great English scholar, Galileo, the Italian seer, had made a startling discovery.

He declared that the world moves. There could be no doubt. He found that the world moves from west to east. Darwin also discovered that the world moves, but he declared that it moved from low to high; from lowly beginnings it struggled towards the great; the grandest truth ever won by science.

Life does not stand still; the work of Nature must go on; there shall be no pause. Having perfected the outside man, she must bestir herself and create a nobler being. Though it may require ages upon ages of time to develop that super-man. Nature shall pursue her work of higher progress. Though the ascendancy of man may be retarded by his own foolishness, his ignorant interference, Nature must finally triumph over the base. Though revolution after revolution shake society, and war follow war in endless succession, the glorious task of Nature must go on. Millions of individual lives may go down in the great struggle for progress, but Nature will finally win through. She cannot be thwarted in her task of seeking world perfection.

Animals which herded together for mutual protection have contrived to carry their species down the ages. Co-operation, and not competition, is the determining factor in the preservation of life. Man must therefore perfect his system of life before he is able to assist Nature in the working out of her great ideal. This is why we must have co-operation, a system offering each individual absolute freedom to develop the nobility of his nature to the full. Socialism is nothing but the bare corridor through which we enter the Higher Kingdom of which poets prate and prophets tell. Yesterday was the Age of Darkness. Today we have reached the Scientific Age; To-morrow shall dawn the Age of Freedom. Capitalism is tampering with the soul of man, and corrupting it. It is barring the road that leads to peace and happiness to every individual under the sun. If human nature is bad, wicked, and depraved, Capitalism has had a big share in the spoilation of the human heart.

Mankind would sweep it away if he knew how, but he has not yet learned the way to simplify the business of life. Systems built upon force breed but wars. We can no longer submit to the haphazard methods of Capitalism. The business of life must be conducted along scientific lines. I may be wrong in my outlook upon humanity as it is seen today, but in the ceaseless strikes, agitations of every order, demands for higher wages, and the like, I see the human soul struggling to extricate itself from the burdens imposed upon it by a false interpretation of life. It is the groping of a blind mob for light, and yet more light. It is the travail of a people trying to find an ideal. No rest shall these misled, misguided, people know until the system under which they live is utterly changed. Socialism must come, at whatever cost.

## Systems of Wealth Production

Production has taken place under three distinct systems, namely chattel slave, serf and wage systems.

Lewis H. Morgan in his researches among the American Indians and later among the European nations discovered that mankind existed for a long period in the tribal form of society and that all races have developed, some earlier some later in their struggle for existence along the lines of the tools of production.

During this period man hunted his food and the tribe partook of it in common. Any captive taken at their tribal feuds was killed or adopted into the tribe. Later, as hunting grew scarce, the domesticating and breeding of animals occurred. Herding began, furnishing food with less effort for larger

groups. As herds increased grazing became scarce, rude agricultural implements came into existence.

With these two advances in food production a distinct change comes over society. The captive is now set to work on the soil or herding cattle and made to produce, not only his own sustenance, but a surplus for his captor. From this beginning arose the chattel slave system. The earlier civilizations arose on this method of production, but when the great wealth produced accumulated in the hands of a few, the masses of people becoming slaves, this system disintegrated and broke up with the downfall of Rome, being unable to provide for the necessities of a growing society.

A period of non-production and anarchy followed until the people were forced back to the soil when the land became again the means of production and the serf system arose under the feudal form of government. The worker was tied to soil. Rude handicrafts arose again and developed. Barter began, a new trading class formed, which with the discovery of steam and various sciences converted them into a manufacturing class. Capital reigned.

With the development of big machinery the serf was freed from the land and his tools, becoming a machine worker, selling his labor power to the owner of the means of production at its value. The buyer using that labor power to produce more surplus which he appropriates, as under the former system, the worker getting a living wage. The means of production accumulating again in the hands of a few the many are starving. Society has once more outgrown its method of production. History has made another cycle. KATHERINE SMITH

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