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THE SOCIAL CONTROLLER

LIKE the poor, the idealist is always with us. And again like the poor, it is mighty hard to separate him from his social preconceptions. "Oh," he tells us, "you fellows are all theory; you talk of the anarchy and chaos of society and its method of production, but what have you in its stead. What kind of system have you got? Show me how you are going to run your society? Give me some detail of your administration? Let me see your plan of things?" etc. All of which objections are, each and severally, but variants of the "great man" ideal. To argue on such a basis is, perhaps, like charging quixotically at windmills, but, we'll have a tilt at it anyhow.

What is society? A community of people, organized in a certain form, for certain general purposes, common to all. What are the purposes, the manner of organization?

What is the prime object of each individual within the social group? Surely the preservation of existence. And is not this the precise object, the constant endeavor of the collective community? The preservation of its existence as a society? To preserve one's life, therefore, means and implies access, free and at all times, to the necessities requisite to maintain life; and society is organized around those same means of life—organized in the manner that at the given time affords the greatest security of access to those necessities.

But, just as each individual in society is a growth, a complex from pre-existing conditions, and developing in accordance with the laws of his being, so also is society itself a growth, a resultant of prior conditions, expanding as its accompanying social necessities determine. Furthermore, each individual in society not only obeys the law of individual being, but moves and acts in harmony with the society which conditions him; so also is society subject to the law of its being—the economic, flowing automatically from the ground whereon it rests—and conditioned by the time-circumstance of physical evolution.

Out of this mighty drama of evolution has man been brought forth; dowered with the heritage of the past; circumscribed with present need; potent for future triumph. Struggle was his heritage and his necessity. It was the law of the ages. But struggle evolved co-operation with his fellows—thereby were the means of his life more secure. But co-operation involved divisions of effort, and divisions of effort is the fount and source of class society and its inevitable class struggles.

But what is the co-operation and division of effort but a society and its particular form of organization? Primitive? True; but native to its time and potent with the savage splendor of capitalist society. Who among those primitive men conceived the concept of society? Who gave it organization and function? Who sketched its plan of action? All—and none. Out of the needs of the day was it evolved; in harmony with the needs of the

day did it grow; and in accord with its overshadowing necessities and its initial economic did it bring forth new co-operation, new division, new concepts of relationship of man and his tools, of nature and her supplies, and these in turn, motivated with a greater impetus for fresh and further modification.

Evolution signifies change. A change from one form, or state, to another. A growth that, out of its inevitable development, induces, or creates fresh manifestations of matter in motion; conditioned by prior action; modified by and influencing the immediate present; and extending that influence into the inscrutable future; action and reaction, in and of and by the majesty of cosmic law. It is not like a piece of man's machinery, all the parts in existence requiring only to be pieced together. Nor yet like a telescope, containing everything in the beginning, having but to be drawn out to show its full potency. It is growth and development; ancient manifestation giving place to the new, cause producing effect, effect passing into new cause. It is, in brief, change and its law.

Man and society are parts and products of this same evolutionary process—or rather manifestations of the same thing. Man in society is not an individual, "being a law unto himself alone," but a unit, a component, an equal essentiality of the entire social body. He is not dependent upon his own efforts alone for salvation of life and its necessities. In conjunction with social effort does welfare and maintenance accrue to man. His relationships with man and nature are neither conceived by himself nor entered into of his own volition. "Willy-nilly," like the blowing of the desert wind—do these things come upon him—are they thrust upon him. Themselves the fruit of causation, the climax of historical development. Neither does man produce society. On the contrary, society produces man, and the historical condition confronting that society determine the form it assumes. The stimulus of material condition evolves new concepts; a change in the material condition, gives rise to new ideation. The urgency of the need is dynamic to action; the circumstance of the moment giving it direction.

Thus nature acts on man. His life and the necessities of his life, his nature and its character, his mind and its ideals, are fashioned, modified and determined by the irrevocable limitations of environmental conditions. But man also reacts on nature—in harmony with those conditions. (Necessarily, or he must perish.) He acquires experience, i.e., he learns nature's methods by action; he gains knowledge of the manner of operation, applying them—and fabricating the means of application—to his needs; giving them direction, to his advantage, with greater skill as experience is increased. But nature is always dominant, always the power supreme. Man suspends no law, neither makes, mars, breaks nor turns aside. By pitting one force against another he fashions a new security of existence, and this new balance of forces becomes the motive source of new—and unfathomed—modifications, in ever widening cycles of complexity.

Social organization has followed social organization, through historic and prehistoric time—coming into being, maturing and passing away. Not because of man, or myth, but because necessarily they rested on a certain foundation, and the economic conditions produced from that basis, generated conflicts and disorders within the body of society that, growing with its growth, shattered the bonds that prevented the further growth of social necessity.

Historic development has, again, brought us face to face with social change. Who shall determine its form and direction? Let us ask a far simpler question, and answer who can. Who can gauge his own individual life condition one year from now? And why not? Because we do not possess the data to make the calculation. Neither can it be done with society, for the same reason; we know not the infinity of causes bringing the fore-doomed change. Because the evolution of the social organism is a complex of social forces—economic, moral, intellectual—unfathomable.

Thus is the idealist broken on the wheel of his own questioning. Trained in the school of the classicist, he interprets the new in terms of the familiar

old; seeks, with the vanity of egoism, to impose his volition on the invincible order of the cosmos. The society of the future is for the children of the future. We function in the present. It is our business to show the nature of the social process, and the necessity and cause of its change. Not only is that task great enough, but it is the limit of our powers. Let us "prepare the way." Let us educate whosoever will listen; the capitalist system will supply us with an audience.

And we may rest assured that, when the condition of change is fulfilled, when the hour of social deliverance is at hand the social body, under the impulse of impelling need, will take the direction that the historic condition determines, using the methods its circumstances allow, taking form by its imperious requirements, trampling all opposition underfoot with the deliberateness of eternal law. R.

COMMERCIAL ART.

(Continued from page 3)

was readily found. All that was necessary was to cover the practically nude bodies of these (as they were called) "Pebbles on the Beach," with a reasonable number of red-spot patterns. This done, lo and behold! they were again sent out supposedly adequately clothed and it is presumed, in their right minds!

Of such is the nature of Art when dominated by Capitalist conditions. When we see the Socialist movement or its leaders, native or foreign, slandered and caricatured by highly paid artistic hirelings of the Capitalist press, this bathing-girl incident will throw a flood of light on the why and wherefore of their mental productions.

Another point. At odd times the writer has secured orders for pictures, and as like a number of artists and due to both physical and economic conditions, he is a bachelor, these pictures have had to be painted in "rooms," some of which, in winter are none too well heated. And as further, they cannot be painted by artificial light, they must be done on Sundays and holidays, after working nine hours a day and six days a week at his main source of livelihood. Inasmuch as doctors say that amusement, exercise and fresh air are necessary to life, it may be realized what a strain art production is under such conditions.

The average "Bohemian" artist is in no position to paint pictures without payment, however moderate, therefore. But the vastly higher standard of wealth and permanency of residence under Socialism will remove this present day obstacle. Moreover, art will then be genuine art, and not, as today, the bread and butter prostitution of the bathing-girl or anti-Socialist brands!

"EX LITHO. ARTIST."

HERE AND NOW.

WE have done a little better this time than last, but not so well, we hope as next. It is something of an axiom in our chosen Littanay that "Everything is constantly changing." The custody of matters "Here and Now" has, in the past year or so occasioned in us grave doubt. Our faith will come under reaffirmation with a change for the better, expressed monetarily, and that without loss of time.

Following, \$1 each: Fred Harman, Sam Buch, J. MacDonald, J. Ramsay, P. Tripp, F. Cusack, J. Harrington, A. McInnes, W. Grant, D. Holliday, P. A. Askew, A. Lellman, R. Kirkman, P. W. Dunning, J. A. Moore, W. Miller, R. Inglis, Tom Erwin, E. Jahnman, G. Campbell, J. Robertson, H. Grand, G. Bowden, N. Odey, A. Patterson, R. F. MacKenzie, J. Lidgerwood, A. C. Roga, R. Sinclair, D. Oliva, J. Schulthers, H. O. Hansen, S. Arrowsmith, W. R. Lewin, O. Erickson, G. Douglas.

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J. F. Smith \$1.25; Millerton Library \$2.92; Geo. Donaldson \$13.

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