

# AN HOUR WITH THE EDITOR

## SOCIOLOGY

Sociology may be defined as the study of the social conditions of human life. It is a science which seeks to explain the causes and effects of social phenomena. It is a science which seeks to explain the causes and effects of social phenomena. It is a science which seeks to explain the causes and effects of social phenomena.

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OS I ORIA B.C. I vice

A Man of Sympathy, but there is little to the daily dolings of churches to satisfy the longings of humanity for sympathy. Therefore when we hear of an organization which professes to endeavor to learn how He would have regarded the various perplexing questions, which arise constantly in our complex social system, we regard it as a long step in the right direction. In the great work of solving social problems the Church should lead, not by the voice of authority, but by choosing for its motto the words of its Founder: "Come, let us reason together."

## THE ATMOSPHERE

We propose to give a series of short articles in regard to some of the different manifestations of nature, and select for the first the atmosphere. The atmosphere, or the air, is as much a part of the earth as the rocks. If we regard as a whole member of the solar system which we call the earth, we are not upon its surface, but are immersed in a fluid envelope surrounding the solid mass. We are no more upon the surface than are the fishes which live in the fathomless depths of the ocean. The actual surface is, at some point above, our heads, at a distance which is not accurately determined. The atmosphere envelope is not of uniform thickness all over the globe. Being very thick to move the centrifugal force developed by the revolution of the earth on its axis forces it towards the Equator, so that the envelope is much deeper there than at the poles. From observations of luminous meteors it is estimated that the atmosphere extends as high as 200 miles, although above 100 miles it must be exceedingly attenuated. The weight of the atmosphere can be ascertained although its bulk cannot. Atmospheric pressure will sustain a column of water nearly 34 feet high with a base of one square inch, or a column of mercury with the same base and 30 inches high. The weight of these quantities of water and mercury is 14.73 pounds, and therefore it is estimated that the weight of the atmosphere is equal to about 15 pounds to the square inch at the sea level. From this it is easy to get at the weight of the air, which is put at nearly 12 trillions of pounds, or 1,180,000,000,000 of the total weight of the globe. In this connection it may be interesting to mention that the total atmosphere upon a full grown man is about 14 tons.

The greater part of the air, nearly 18 per cent, consists of nitrogen gas, about 20 per cent, is oxygen gas, and there is a very slight amount of carbonic acid gas. These gases are not chemically combined. Oxygen is the life-sustaining element in animal life and the purpose served by nitrogen appears to be simply that of a dilutant. If it were not present the tissues of the body could not resist the effect of the oxygen. What is known as ozone is a modified form of oxygen. To the pressure of oxygen is also due the combination of substances. In fact physical life is only a slow process of combustion, the consumed particles of the body being steadily replenished by our food. In addition to these gases, which are uniformly the ingredients of the atmosphere, is contained vapor to a certain extent under all natural circumstances, as far as can be observed, and minute proportions of a great variety of other matter. Among them may be mentioned a gas to which is discovered, Lord Rayleigh, gave the name of argon, and four others which have been called respectively helium, neon, krypton and xenon. It is suggested that these gases, which are exceedingly volatile, do not properly form a part of the earth's atmosphere, but are diffused everywhere throughout space.

A somewhat curious proposition has been advanced in regard to the air, namely, that the particles of it, which are more than 31 miles above sea level, must be regarded as so many satellites, revolving around the earth, subject to the same law of gravity as keeps the moon in its place. In deed the conditions of air as rarified as it must be at an altitude of 800 miles, are such that some scientific men are disposed to regard it as representing a fourth condition of matter, that is to say, it is neither solid liquid nor gaseous, but something which has been called ultra-gaseous. Air at the sea level is about 800 times less dense than water, the density varying a little with pressure and temperature. Slight though this is, it is sufficient to make the air in motion one of its power varying with the speed of the motion. The atmosphere has been likened to a great solar engine, seeing that its power is generated by the heat of the sun's rays.

## ESTHER

It may possibly be not quite correct to speak of Esther as a character in history, although there are as good reasons for doing so as for including the names of Helen of Troy, Dido and Semiramis in the list. It is true that there is no known reference to her in any other ancient manuscript than the Book of Esther, which forms a part of the Old Testament, but it seems improbable that this book would ever have been held in high esteem by the Jewish race, if it was simply a romance, invented, as some say, to account for the Feast of Purim. The

whole story cannot have been a figment of the imagination, for if it were, it would have been discredited by contemporary writers. At the same time it is not by any means clear when the Book was written. The events narrated are alleged to have taken place nearly 2400 years ago, but the story of them is probably a century or more later in origin. It is not very clear why the church fathers thought it necessary to include the Book of Esther in the Old Testament, for it is in no sense of the word a religious writing. The name of God is not once mentioned in it, and it contains no religious instruction of any kind.

The story of Esther told briefly is that she was a young Jewess, who lived in the court of Xerxes, or Ahasuerus, in the Persian capital. Having been left an orphan at an early age, she was brought up by her cousin, Mordecai. She was exceedingly beautiful, and when the king divorced his wife Vashti for disobedience, Esther was chosen in her stead out of all the fairest maidens of the land, who had been gathered together, and after a long period of preparation had been brought before the king so that he might make a choice. At that time Haman, who claimed descent from Agag, king of Amalek, was grand vizier, and Mordecai incurred his displeasure by refusing to do him homage. He therefore accused all the Jews of disloyalty, and secured authority from the king to pillage and massacre them, on the understanding that he should pay a large part of the proceeds of the venture into the royal treasury. For an interesting account of how this plot was defeated, the reader is referred to the Book of Esther itself. A sidelight is thrown upon the designs of Haman by the fact that his ancestor, Agag, had been frightfully treated by King Saul. The story is told in Samuel XV, and it is only necessary to refer briefly to it here. Saul defeated the Amalekites and took Agag prisoner, permitting him to enjoy a certain amount of liberty. Afterwards, as the writer of Samuel says, "Saul hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord in Gilgal." It is true that nearly six centuries elapsed between this act and Haman's supremacy in Persia, but evidently Haman had a good memory. It may be mentioned that the name of Haman appears nowhere else in history than in the story of Esther. The utmost influence of Esther was exerted to secure from her husband, the king, revocation of his edict, but the laws of the Medes and Persians were unchangeable, and the order having been once gone forth, it could not be revoked. As an alternative the king directed that the Jews should be permitted to defend themselves. Several months notice of the intended massacre had been given, and in the meanwhile Mordecai, who had detested Haman in a plot against the king, was made grand vizier, and the Jews became very powerful all over the land of Persia, which at that time extended from India to Egypt, both inclusive. Therefore when the day for the massacre came, the Jews simply waited for the attack and then proceeded to smite their enemies. This they did to such effect that the roll of the dead numbered over 75,000. After this Haman was hanged, and by a sort of poetical justice, upon the same gallows that he himself had prepared for Mordecai.

Such is the outline of the story, which, as told in the Book of Esther, has all the elements of romance. There are some things about it which lend it more or less of a mythical character. Thus the name of Esther is identical with Istar, who was the Babylonian goddess of love and war. Mordecai is said to be a corruption of Marduk, who was the chief god of Babylon. Haman, Hagan, and Vashti are names derived from the mythology of the Egyptians. Hence it has been claimed that this story represents a mythical account, of a struggle between the gods of Babylon and Elam; but there is no valid reason for accepting this explanation, for it is, as has been said above, exceedingly improbable that a nation so careful of preserving the leading facts in their history as the Jews were, would be deceived by a palpable invention. We think, therefore, that we may regard Esther, whose Hebrew name was Hadassa, as an historical personage, and assign her a place among great women because she was able to preserve a race from what would have been little less than absolute extinction. Of her personal appearance not much is told except that she was "fair and beautiful." Her character seems to have been a mixture of craftiness and nobility. Imagination cannot picture anything finer than what is briefly outlined in the fourth and fifth chapters of the Book. Her people were in danger, and it was necessary to obtain the king's favor, so that he might aid them in some way. Nevertheless, under the strange laws of Persia, it was forbidden that any woman should approach the king unbidden. Yet she resolved to do so, saying, "If I perish, I perish," and so after three days' fasting, she presented herself in

the inner court of the palace, where the king sat upon his throne. For a brief moment her fate hung in the balance, for she had dared what no woman in Persia had ever dared. But when the king saw her standing before him in her radiant beauty, he extended his golden sceptre, and she knew that she had found favor in his sight. History or romance, the story of Esther is replete with the lesson that love and virtue are the greatest forces in the world, when exercised in the cause of justice.

## Ancient Teachers of Religion and Philosophy

By N. de Bertrand Laurin.

### MOHAMMEDANISM

Although, comparatively speaking, Mohammedanism is not an ancient religion, perhaps a short history of this faith, and of the life of its founder, is not out of place, in light of the events taking place in Morocco, in which country the several millions of inhabitants are now engaged in a struggle for a beautiful system of morals. The believer is exhorted to patience, to modesty, to endurance, to love of peace and truth, and above all, to trust in God and to submit to His will.

Extracts From the Koran In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. All that is in the heavens and the earth magnifyeth God and He is the Mighty, the Wise. He is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. He giveth life and giveth death. He is powerful over all things. He is the first and the last, the seen and the unseen, and all things doth He knoweth the secrets of the breast.

On Charity When God created the earth it began to shake and tremble; then God created the mountains and land became fixed and solid; and the angels were astonished at the hardness of the hills, and said "Oh God, is there anything but Thy creation harder than the hills?" And God said: "Yes, water is harder than the hills because it breaketh them." Then the angel said, "Oh Lord, is there anything of Thy creation harder than water?" He said, "Yes, wind overcome water, it doth agitate it and put it in motion." They said, "Oh, our Lord, is there anything of Thy creation harder than wind?" He answered, "Yes, the children of Adam giving alms; those who give with their right hand and conceal from their left, overcome all."

The holder of a monopoly is a sinner and offender. Verily, the best things that ye eat are those which ye earn yourself or which your children earn. No judge must decide between two persons while he is angry. The world and all things in it are valuable, but the most valuable thing in the world is a virtuous woman.

## THE STORY TELLER

"Yes," said Hawkins, who had recently bought some old silver at auction, "this is the old Hawkins family plate." "Indeed?" asked the observant guest, "but surely this is an 'A' engraved upon it?" "It is? O—yes, of course. The original Hawkins were English, you know." The Catholic Standard and Times.

"Those are diaries," said the smith, "that I am going to put locks and keys on. They belong to a rich old maid. She fills two volumes of diaries each year, and along in November the two volumes for the coming year are sent to me. I have made all her diaries lock fast since."

"That cedarwood chest is a cigar box. It holds a thousand cigars. I have put locks on tea caddies, on cosmetic boxes, on whisky flasks, on roulette wheels, and on a great many other things," said the proprietor of the Louisville Courier-Journal.

Peasant (explaining vaccination to a friend): "All this vaccination business is no good at all. The best proof is that my brother was vaccinated this morning, and a fortnight later he was run down and killed by one of them automobiles."—Bon Vivant.

Mabel (aged 8)—Ain't you afraid of my big dog? The Parson (very thin)—No, my dear. He would not make much of a dog of me.

Mabel—Oh, but he likes bones best. —Chicago Daily News.

Muriel—Why don't you marry him? Everybody says he has reformed. Maud—Yes, but he reformed too late. His money was all gone.—New York Mail.

"That politician declared he never said anything he was sorry for." "Yes, but that doesn't mean he never said anything he ought to be sorry for."—Washington Star.

### Royalty in Public School

Wilhelmshohe—where King Edward and the Kaiser met the other day—has been called the "German Versailles," and that is perhaps its best description. But this summer palace of the old Electors of Hesse-Cassel, who excels that of the Grand Monarque, its prototype, in the respect that its "great fountain" is the highest in Europe except that at Chateaufort, and throws up a jet of water 12 inches in diameter 80 feet. It was here that the newly created Kingdom of Westphalia, in 1813; and by a curious fate it was also here where his nephew, Napoleon III., lost the seven months of his captivity in Germany after Sedan.

But Wilhelmshohe has a further interest in respect that it was here that the present Kaiser was lodged when, with his sailor brother, Prince Henry, he attended the gymnasia of high school classes from 1874 to 1877, when he proceeded to Bonn. This was the first time in the history of the Hohenzollerns that one of their number had been sent to a public school, but it was thought by Prince William's parents that the departure was justifiable, and the event proved them to be right.

But for his having sat on the same school benches at Cassel with the sons of the people as the sons of peasants do with sons of peers in the universities of Scotland, William II. would probably never have been able to boast that "I have mastered the aims and impulses of the new spirit which thrills the aspiring century." Yet when at Cassel Prince William gave but little indication of the genius which he was afterwards to display.—London Chronicle.

### The Speed Limit

An Englishman, an Irishman and a Scotchman were one day arguing as to which of the three countries possessed the fastest trains. "Well," said the Englishman, "I've been in one of our trains, and the telegraph poles have been like a hedge." "I've seen them," said the Scotchman, "like tombstones," said the Scot.

"Be jabbers," said Pat, "I was one day in a trolley in my native land, and a field of turnips and a field of carrots, also a field of cabbage and parsley, then went by. Debris were all we were going that quick I thought it was broth."—Washington Herald.

### Rayner and the Teachers

Senator Rayner, of Maryland, is a stout advocate of larger salaries for teachers in all sorts of schools. Recently at a reception he told a story about a teachers' meeting in a district where the salaries were unusually low. "A rich, portly banker opened the meeting with a speech," said the senator. "The banker concluded his remarks with an enthusiastic gesture, and the words, 'Long live the school!' " "What on?" shouted a thin, pale, seedy man, in a black coat smeared with chalk marks.—Washington Herald.

### The Liquor She Floated In

On their arrival in New Zealand, a party of English people drank the health of the vessel which had brought them safely to their destination. One of the gentlemen who was asked to join in this ceremony replied: "No, I am a teetotaler; but I'll willingly drink to the ship in the liquor she floats in." A friend disappeared and returned with a glass of water. After a complimentary apostrophe to the ship, the speaker tossed the water out at once, but immediately spluttered: "Uh—ah—oh—this is—oh—what—what only the ship is the water!" "That?" said his friend. "Why you've drunk success to our noble ship in the liquor she floats in."—London Tit-Bits.

### Epitaph Used by Mark Twain

Mistaken reference is so often made to what is termed the "epitaph" written by Mark Twain for his wife, that it is worth while to set the matter straight. The epitaph referred to was not placed upon the tombstone of Mr. Clemens' wife, but upon that of his daughter, Susie. It was not original with Mark Twain, but was taken by him from a little book written some fifteen years ago by an Australian poet named Robert Buchanan, and the book of poems by Buchanan, which was published in Edinburgh, in 1895, under the title of "The Verse of the Epitaph" is as follows:

Warm summer sun,  
Shine kindly here,  
Warm southern wind,  
Blow softly here,  
Green sod above,  
Lie light, lie light,  
Good night, dear heart,  
Good night, good night.

### A Willing Hand

"They thought more of the Legion of Honor in the time the Emperor Napoleon than they do now," said a well-known Frenchman. "The emperor one day met an old one-armed veteran. 'How did you lose your arm?' he asked."

"At Austerlitz!"

"And were you not decorated?"

"No, sire."

"Then here is my own cross for you; I make you chevalier."

"Your majesty names me chevalier because I have lost one arm! What would your majesty have done had I lost both arms?"

"Oh, in that case I should have made you Officer of the Legion."

"Whereupon the old veteran immediately drew his sword and cut off his other arm."

"There is no particular reason to doubt this story. The only question is, how did he do it?"—From Everybody's.

John Sharp Williams, at the end of his recent debate with Gov. Vardaman at Meridian Miss., talked about pride. "There is a decent and noble pride," said Mr. Williams, "and there is a pride that is mean and unworthy. The distinction of Yassio tells of an old woman whose pride was of the latter sort."

This old woman lived in Yorkshire. There was a funeral one day in the next village. She was the widow of a soldier, but neighbor of hers was there. That night she called on the neighbor and said: "Dear Nancy, I hear you are at a funeral."

"Yes, I wor' Nancy replied."

"What kind of a funeral wor' it?"

"Nancy sniffed."

"Why, it wor' a very mean affair."

She said: "There wor' nobbut a few biscuits an' such."

"The other old woman 'them's the sort of ways I don't hold to. I've lost five, but thank evins, I've buried 'em all with 'em."

Millionaires are sometimes men of humor, or, at any rate, they often figure in very humorous episodes. One of the funniest was told by the late Brown. A rather funny adventure is said to have happened to Mr. Pierpont Morgan who, for some time, when never grants an interview to any pressmen. One day a reporter for the New York Times wrote back to say that an interview would cost the reporter five dollars a minute. To this the pressman replied that he would have five minutes at that price. This interview duly came off, and at the end of the five minutes the reporter got out his check book.

"Dear five minutes, is it not?" asked the millionaire.

"Oh, no," the reporter replied. "I have come off very well. You see, my editor bet me \$250 that I would not interview you."

She had been looking around the drug and toilet goods department of one of the big shops of the city when a clerk approached her.

"Haven't you anything harder than these?" she asked, holding up a rubber teething ring.

"None," responded the clerk; "these are the hardest that come."

"Oh dear," said the woman, "he has chewed up his teething ring."

"Cheered them up?" exclaimed the clerk. "I don't see how a baby—"

"Oh, it isn't a baby," she explained. "I want it for my little dog."—New York Press.

## CURRENT VERSE

### Trust

Still we trust, though earth seem dark and dreary,  
And the heart faint beneath His chastening hand;  
Rough and steep our pathway, worn and weary,  
Still will we trust in God.

Our eyes see dimly till by faith anointed,  
And our blind choosings bring us grief and pain;  
Through Him alone who hath our way appointed,  
We find our peace again.

Choose for us God! nor let our weak praying  
Cheer our poor souls of good Thou hast designed;  
Choose for us, God! Thy wisdom is unerring,  
And we are fools and blind.

So from our sky the night shall furl her shadows,  
And day pour gladness through his golden gates;  
Our rough path leads to flower enamelled meadows,  
Where joy our coming waits.

Let us press on in patient self-denial,  
Accept the hardship, shunning not from loss;  
Our guardian lies beyond the hour of trial,  
Our crown beyond the cross.

—W. H. Burleigh.

### Roadway

The doorway opens on a crumbled inn,  
Whose windy sign is creaking overhead,  
With worms and weather where a name had been,  
Telling the empty title of the dead.

Was he a hard man in his time of gain?  
Or were his cronies costly to his purse?  
Had he a goodwife? Was she wise or vain?  
How many mourners followed at his hearse?

I asked a barefoot girl, who from the road  
Silently watched me, conquering her fears,  
Who had been host of this antique abode,  
"Oh, he's been dead," she said, "for years and years."

I asked the countrywide, and no one knew;  
I asked the wasted signboard overhead,  
And heard the hinges and the wind that blew,  
Crying the empty title of the dead.

His ledger broken, debt and debtor gone,  
His corner dark with rotteness and rust,  
Somewhere, mine host was paying flesh and bone,  
When he went out in his lodging in the dust.

—Walter Bynner, in Broadway Magazine.

### Devon to Me!

Where my fathers stood watching the sea,  
Gale-swept herring boats hugging the lee;  
There my Mother lives—moorland and tree,  
Sight of the blossom! Devon to me!

Where my fathers walked driving the plow,  
Whistling their hearts out who whistles now,  
There my Mother burns fire faggots free,  
Keeps the wood-smoke! Devon to me!

Where my fathers sat passing their bowls,  
They're no older now—God rest their souls,  
There my Mother feeds red cattle three,  
Taste of the cream! Devon to me!

Where my fathers slept turning to dust,  
This old body throw when die I must!  
There my Mother calls—wakeful in the night,  
Sound of the west wind! Devon to me!

Where my fathers lie—when I am gone  
Who need pity me, dead? Never one!  
There my Mother calls—Let me be!  
Feel of the red earth! Devon to me!

—John Galsworthy.

### Isaac Jogues

(Martyred October, 1646.)  
The frail but dauntless blackrobe,  
Jogues, whose zeal  
Had carried him to far Superior's shore  
From old St. Lawrence waters, and  
Who bore  
To the Tobacco Nations God's appeal—  
Go, on a journey for the Mission's weal,  
Was taken captive, and two long years  
Endured such woes in Mohawk-land our  
tears  
Forbidden the reading, and our senses reared,  
Escaped to Europe, Kings and courtiers  
vied  
To do honor, but he turned again  
To western wilds, and, Christlike,  
struggled on.

To win the Mohawks into Faith's domain,  
His "Martyrdom of the Martyrs" well was  
named,  
And he the noblest sacrifice it claimed.  
—Rose Ferguson.

### The Gipsy's Song

Beloved, I may not call you back,  
But all the birds are calling you—  
The plovers from the fresh-plowed  
The lark from yonder vale of blue.

Oh, heart of mine—I see from here  
Through wide fields filled with slender  
wheat,  
The little path you trod last year  
Beside me with such weary feet!

The road is sweet with scented may,  
The pale wild roses are in bloom,  
The long track of the western way  
Shows white across the world's grey  
gloom.

Though all things strive to prison you,  
And hold you to my heart in vain—  
The folds you may not wander through  
The silver lances of the rain;

Yet always in my forth-faring  
I gladden that your lamp is lit,  
And that for you earth's prisoning  
Is past with all the pain of it.  
—Isabel Clarke, in The London Outlook.

### We Shall Not Pass This Way Again

We shall not pass this way again,  
If there be aught of secret pain  
"Tween you and me,  
In the great sea  
Of all men's pain let it be cast  
This night, that only love may last.

We shall not pass this way again,  
Early to-morrow comes in vain,  
If we shall part  
With the birds that are calling you—  
This night, if Ah, then could love forget  
The little griefs we cherish yet?

Let us not pass this way again,  
If the bird don't mind of pain,  
"I want it for my little dog."—New York Press.