

HISTORY

History, as it is commonly understood, is a chronicle of more or less unrelated events; of wars, battles, and murders, of the deeds and misdeeds of kings and heroes; a chronicle wherein the more spectacular occurrences are given an exaggerated prominence, while little if any attention is accorded to either their underlying causes or to their ultimate effects.

To the Socialist, however, History is but a chapter of Biology. It is the life story of the human race. Studied from this viewpoint, its features rapidly fall into their proper perspective. The importance of wars and battles diminishes. The glory of kings and heroes fades when these appear in their true light as but the pawns of circumstances tricked out in a little tinsel. Events, so far from being unrelated, are seen in their order and sequence, interlinked into a vast chain of causation, and the great panorama unfolds showing us the human race in its progress from the mists of the past towards the receding veil of the future. Then, too, is perceived that feature of history which most historians ignore—the evolution of human society. For society is seen, not to be now as it ever was, but to be in a process of growth, in obedience to the universal law of evolution, from the simple to the complex.

And the beginning of our present society may be traced to a preceding phase and thence through previous forms back to the earliest tribal communities. It is this development of society which it is proposed here to sketch.

The Ante-Slavery Period.

So far removed in the dim past is the period of human development previous to the appearance of slavery that it has left little historic trace beyond the scattered remains of primitive handiwork that have been unearthed from time to time, and any conception of that period