

that must be, in any case, largely experimental and entail the abandonment of accustomed ways of life and interests by large strata of the population, and the adoption of unfamiliar ones and perhaps some temporary hardships.

I have contended in a previous article, that the order of change is one of gradualism, made inevitable by the inertia of social habit and the technical difficulties and other considerations involved in economic reorganization. As it happens, it is just this taking up of the smaller issues of immediate economic needs as first things first, of which history is so full, which makes it difficult for the reactionaries to unite upon a single issue as important enough to plunge their communities into the waste of civil war while yet the numerical strength on their side might warrant them taking the risk. Providing the drift of social necessity continues against them, their support among the population will continue to become weaker. In such a posture of things it would be folly for the progressives themselves to precipitate civil war to gain their ends. Their policy should be to avoid it and to continue to appeal to the people on the basis of the practicality of their proposals, and to look to it that those proposals constitute attacks on the institutions and privileges of the parasitic exploiting class and aim for the transference of social powers to the community from private control. In accordance with the principle of causation, such small institutional changes become the formative factors in the social environment, strengthening disposition to a co-operative social life and inculcating habits of thought that would become in turn fresh levers for further change. Measures conceived and put into effect along these lines, the spreading of knowledge on the social problem, an advance in the economic organizations of the working class to a more and more clearly defined purpose of using their power and influence on behalf of revolutionary change, the transition may be a comparatively peaceful one, and certainly more constructive because the great masses of the population have been won over rather than coerced over to the side of change.

"The pious wish of a humanitarian." I hear some one say, and I might retort in kind. But when the charges of psychological motives have passed back and forth and the smoke of battle clears away, there still remain the merits of the question of the ways and means of change in this 20th century china shop of a fragile civilization. Like the metaphorical bull, primal instinct battling there would make sad havoc.

As a lead to other phases of the subject I pose the question, Can human nature be changed? Let me answer by quoting from a review of Professor Ogburn's "Social Change," a book published by B. W. Huebsch, New York, which I recommend: "Professors Ogburn and Josey find, in common with the so-called 'culture historians' that man's native endowment is not nearly so elaborate, or so determined as the last twenty years have assumed. For them the world's accumulated culture is the important factor in 'human nature' and social relationships. Man's original endowment is but an undifferentiated framework upon which education, acting through the community life, hangs the culture of the ages. Human nature cannot be changed; at least not greatly. But that is a matter of no consequence. Civilization can drape the same original human nature with amazing varieties of culture. These differences in culture arise out of the variant factors that have surrounded any particular race in its development of its culture. These factors are geographical, climatic, material; accidental contacts with other peoples and the accidental selection of certain results for survival; the slow accumulation of the ages. . . . Man (considered socially) is not a biological being, he is a cultural being. His history is not determined by putative instincts, but by the accumulated realities of his culture. If he were primarily instinctive he would remain essentially stationary. But culture breeds more culture. Humanity grows, progresses. Culture invents new forms of culture. The steam engine invents the steamboat, and the steamboat invents the ocean liner. Arithmetic invents algebra and algebra in-

vents the infinitesimals." So, if we include in human nature his acquired social habits or culture, the human nature is always in process of change while ever native instinctive dispositions are subject to modification according to the character both in kind and amount, of the material and non-material culture.

The faith in violence as a sovereign remedy seems to me to rest on a faith in instinct, as though it were reasoned that self-preservation or group need dictates in all times and conditions the same unvarying responses. But how much of what was once decided by physical combat is now referred to arbitration or the show of hands. Such conduct does not always follow from fear of legal penalties, often its cause is sheer habit inculcated by a common heritage or custom. After long and strenuous agitation, much distress in the manufacturing districts, a potato famine in Ireland and discontent everywhere had brought about in 1846 the abolition of the corn laws in Britain, favoring the landed and agricultural interests, those interests, though a nowise inconsiderable section of the population, either in influence or numbers, submitted nevertheless to a public opinion massed against them. The act was felt at the time as a serious blow both to the agriculturists and the aristocratic landlord class and was generally recognized as a political triumph of the manufacturing interests. It is worth noting that a tory ministry, the party of the landed interest, introduced the bill, though in doing so they lost a considerable portion of their following. The bill was passed by the support of the Liberals. What mixed motives inspired the Tory ministry, fear of growing discontent at home and fanned by revolutionary outbreaks on the continent, the identifying of their well-being with that of the community as a whole or whether their Toryism was moderated by interest in the manufacturing industry and cheaper bread for factory slaves, it would be hard to tell, but they lost office at the next election for their pains. Since those times a close approximation to a universal franchise has been established in most countries and restrictions on the formation of workers' economic organizations largely abolished. At any rate the franchise is extensive enough to gauge the opinion of the masses and for them to obtain control of the political means of the state in constitutional ways formerly not at their class's command. These ways are here as part of the historically developed mechanism of modern social life. But, so far, sufficient numbers of the working masses have not yet tested that mechanism in behalf of revolutionary change—not being ready.

In the meantime, the active elements of the working class movement, like all minorities, have the task of education and agitation to gain a majority support and the working class the benefit of such influence on the policies of the political state as their representatives on public bodies may be able to exercise. Passive resistance, boycotts and strikes are other weapons in hard pressed need against the tyranny of exploiters and the indifference of unheeding majorities.

Before concluding I think I should draw attention to one other cultural feature of the peoples of highly developed modern communities which differentiates them from the peoples of other times and more archaic modes of life. Comparatively, the people of this day and date are an opinionative people beyond precedent. Consider the teeming city life and the consumption daily of printed matter, newspapers, magazines and other kinds of literary output bought outright or circulated by the libraries, much of it having an educational and propaganda intent. Consider the "movies," the theatres, the broadcasting machines, the 'phone, the telegraph, the phonograph, the fashion of dealing with public questions from the pulpit, the bench and the forum, the speechifying at Rotarian banquets, Boards of Commerce meetings and during electioneering campaigns. Consider the schools, colleges and universities. Consider the vast amount of travelling by motor car, train and boat. In olden times there was comparatively little travelling, the small local communities were self-centred, the people illiterate. News and views about events

and personalities and movements in the outside world percolated slowly, in small amount and of little detail into their stagnating life. Now it is flashed in telegraphic despatches from the ends of the earth to every community, enormous quantities of it, significant and insignificant, relating to trade and commerce, politics, science, social affairs and every conceivable subject under the sun. Willynilly we are constantly prodded into opinion. This is a cultural situation in which we are kept mentally on the jump and opinion blows among the population in gusts and great gales. The moral is that unless the revolutionaries have this opinion with them they will find it against them in instant, active, positive forms. When the issues we raise are at stake there are few indifferent neutrals in modern life.

I am no pacifist, neither is my animus against the concept of violence due to any consideration for the feelings of the ruling class. It arises from a desire for the successful forwarding of the social revolution. The boyish talk of violence in connection with social change closes the ears of large masses of the population against the arguments for our cause, creates hostility where it does not create cold indifference, and thus gives both opportunity and excuse for Fascism. Out of that, reaction may triumph as it has triumphed many a time in history to the undoing of civilizations and may do so with this one. The intent of the program of revolutionary socialism is the improvement of the lot of man. Watch then, that we ourselves are not among the agents of its defeat.

This reply to Comrade Tamarkin puts the promised article on a Labor Party out of the question for this issue. C.

MR. DOOLEY ON PROSPERITY.

Yes, Prosperity has come hollerin' an' screamin'. To read th' papers, it seems to be a kind iv a vagrancy law. No man can loaf anny more. Th' end iv vacation has gone f'r manny a happy lad that has spint six months ridin' through th' country, dodgin' wurruk, or loafin' under his own vine or hat three. Prosperity grabs ivry man be th' neck, an' sets him shovellin' slag or coke or runnin' up an' down a ladder with a hod iv mortar. It won't let th' wurruled rest. * * * It goes around like a polisman givin' th' hot fut to happy people that are snoozin' in th' sun. "Get-up," says Prosperity. "Get up, an' hustle over to th' rollin' mills: There's a man over there wants ye to carry a ton iv coal on ye'er back." "But I don't wan to wurruk," says th' lad. "I'm very comfortable th' way I am." "It makes no difference," says Prosperity. "Ye've got to do ye'er lick. Wurruk, f'r th' night is comin'. Get out, an' hustle. Wurruk, or ye can't be unhappy; an', if the wurruled isn't unhappy, they'se no such a thing as Prosperity."

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