

THE SCIENCE OF SOCIETY.

By STEPHEN PEARL ANDREWS.

APPENDIX.

I.

A REVIEW.

Continued from No. 113.

EQUITABLE COMMERCE. A NEW DEVELOPMENT OF PRINCIPLES, PROPOSED AS ELEMENTS OF NEW SOCIETY. By JOSIAH WARREN. 12 mo. pp. 117. Fowlers & Wells.*

This is a new and enlarged edition of the original work on Social Science which has furnished its present editor, Mr. S. P. Andrews, with the basis for the views which he has set forth with so much force of argument and felicity of illustration in his recent publications, entitled "The True Constitution of Government" and "Cost the Limit of Price." Of the profound importance which he attaches to the alleged discoveries of Mr. Warren no one can doubt after reading the preface to this volume. He announces it as "one of the most remarkable ever printed,—a condensed presentation of the most fundamental principles of Social Science ever yet discovered." He does not "hesitate to affirm that there is more scientific truth, positively new to the world, and immensely important in its bearings upon the destiny of mankind, contained in it than was ever before consigned to the same number of pages." It is the deep conviction of the truth of their system which is cherished both by Mr. Warren and Mr. Andrews, we are willing to own, which has awakened our interest in the subject, rather than any sympathy with its methods or any faith in its pretensions. We have an inborn catholicity of taste for everything which claims to be a scientific improvement, and can never repudiate a theory which challenges our acceptance on rational grounds without first endeavoring to look at it in the point of view in which it is presented. Indeed, we hold it the duty of every free mind to exercise a large hospitality to novel systems, in proportion to the scorn and neglect which they are likely to experience at the hands of a timid and unreasoning conservatism. In the present case we can not better show our appreciation of the ability and genuine devotion to social progress displayed in this little volume than by the perfect frankness with which we shall criticize its claims.

One of the two leading principles to which the work is devoted receives our hearty concurrence. This is the establishment of individual sovereignty as the object of social organization. A variety of forcible considerations, in support of the position, are brought forward by Mr. Warren. But on this point his views cannot pretend to novelty. They have, perhaps, never been more admirably stated than by Mr. Andrews in his treatise on "Government"; but they more or less distinctly pervade the writings of all who have perceived the superiority of man to his accidents. In our opinion the guarantee of individual rights is the paramount object of reform. Our zeal for the masses is based on a sense of the individual injustice which arises from the usurpation of privilege. The most complete development of humanity in all its parts, all its members, all its fragments, is as much the purpose of a true social order as the most perfect action of the productive elements of the earth and atmosphere is the aim of a true system of agriculture. It is the inspiration of this idea which has prompted the efforts of every wise social reformer, and most emphatically of Charles Fourier, the most philosophical, the most profound, and the most comprehensive of all teachers of social science in the nineteenth century. We quarrel with the present order of society because it enslaves the man to institutions, subjects the masses (the aggregate of individuality) to oppressive and crushing influences, keeps the noblest elements of humanity in a state of slumber or paralysis, leaves no scope to the various manifestations of genius, reduces the people to a dead level of custom and fashion, and absolutely deprives myriads of the living, breathing, aspiring beings, who bear the impress of creative Deity on their natures, of the essential conditions of physical health, spiritual culture, interior harmony, and glorious beatitude, which is implied in the Christian verity that man is made in the image of God.

The development and sovereignty of the individual is a chimera without the possession of property. The universal instinct which dreads poverty as the crowning terror of life is a genuine impulse of nature. If in one sense it is true that the rich man cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven, it is equally true in another sense that the Kingdom of Heaven cannot enter within the soul of the poor man. He is shut out from the command of himself, which is the essential foundation of celestial felicity. He cannot do what he will with his own; for he has neither choice nor ownership. He is under bondage to the external world, to society, to his own physical wants. His very selfhood is eaten out of him by the canker of sharp necessity and inexorable care. He has no guarantee that he can find a place to lay his head, for houses and lands are monopolized. He may be in want of food to eat, for the silver and gold are no longer the Lord's, nor the cattle on a thousand hills, but have become the prey of the strong, and the shrewd, and the ungodly. Even the right to gain his bread by the sweat of his brow depends on the convenience of capital, which may be the least in need of his work when he most wants something to eat. Still less has he any chance of attaining the spiritual culture and harmony which are the birthright of man, the golden fruitage of affection and hope, the enchantments of poetry, the charms of divine philosophy, the ample revelations of science, and the serene grandeur of thought and feeling inspired by the consciousness of an ever-present God. Alas! he is the first to lose the sentiment of humanity amid the dismal shades of ignorance and the blind terrors of superstition.

Hence we maintain that man cannot be a man without property. He cannot be his own without an outward ownership. He cannot be master of his soul without first being master of external nature. If he would be an individual, he must also be a proprietor. In fact, this is involved in the very significance of the terms. If the individual is *divided off* (*individualized*), he must possess something peculiar, *proper to himself* (*proprium*, property), or he might as well be lost in the mass.

Socialism, accordingly, which aims to make all society a body of proprietors,—giving each man the ownership of everything essential to his development,—establishes the Sovereignty of the Individual.

The whole course of political progress tends to the same result. He must be stone-blind who does not see that the revolutionary spirit of the age is a struggle for Individual Sovereignty,—for the inauguration of man in the power and glory of universal humanity. This tendency is apparent from the progress of history,

and its successive gradations may be easily traced to their first principles in human nature.

In a state of society where brute force and cunning are the prominent features, monarchy is the natural, perhaps the inevitable order. The sovereignty of one man usurps the sovereignty of the people. The will of the masses, and, of course, the will of the individuals composing the masses, is lost in the will of the despot. The sentiment of humanity is absorbed in the possession of power. A step in advance is gained by the development of aristocracy. The sovereignty is claimed by a privileged few, to whom the masses are subservient instead of to the monarchy. But here is a step toward the diffusion of privilege. The one-man power has yielded to the power of the magnates. Humanity, however, is far from its goal. The will of "the dear God who loveth all" is not yet accomplished. Democracy must be established, proclaiming equality against privilege, the people against the aristocracy, the masses against classes, man against men. But the practical working of democracy effects only the sovereignty of the majority. Taking power from the few, who had seized it from the monarch (the one-man power), it gives it to the many. But with all its pretensions democracy does not emancipate the masses. The Sovereignty of the Individual has not yet arrived, because the majority to a great extent ignores the interests of the minority, and the majority of today may become the minority of tomorrow. Hence democracy does not guarantee the rights of universal humanity; hence it is but a stepping-stone to better things to come; and hence a new and larger development in the cycle of the ages is as certain as that man has been made partaker of an infinite nature. The last step is the emancipation of humanity by inaugurating the Sovereignty of the Individual. This is the object of Socialism, or at least that form of Socialism which is better known as Association. The Socialist or Associative idea of human society is not monarchy, the sovereignty of one man, nor aristocracy, the sovereignty of a privileged class, nor democracy, the sovereignty of a majority for the time being, but humanity, or the integral Sovereignty of the Individual.

This, as we have stated, is a prominent thesis of the present work. But it is not so original as the author seems to suppose. It underlies, more or less definitely expressed, the great humanitarian movement, the instinct of which gave such a fervent inspiration to Rousseau, which found a devoted apostle in Herder, which softened the arid formulas of Kant and Fichte by the promise of a glorious future for the race, which has blended with the highest philosophy and poetry of the present age, which has fired the master-spirits of the world with quenchless fervor, and which, in another form, is now everywhere at work in the hearts of the people, and with "fear of change perplexing monarchs." Among social reformers by profession St. Simon and Fourier regarded the Sovereignty of the Individual as the ultimate end of a true social order. Differing from each other and from the author of this volume as to the methods of its attainment, they agree in the supremacy of man over institutions as the true destiny of the race. The same idea has been elaborated, we need not say, with rare force of logic and eloquence, by our friend Henry James; and, though less directly and consciously, is the dominant thought in the most valuable writings of Dr. Channing and Theodore Parker. We do not call in question the fact that Mr. Warren has drawn his system from his own mind. In that sense his claim to originality will stand good. There is no reason to suppose that he owes it to foreign suggestion. But he exaggerates his own share in its promulgation. He is by no means the exclusive herald of an idea with which the age is fermenting.

*This review, and the reply from Mr. Andrews which follows it, appeared originally in the New York "Tribune." The review is supposed to have been written by George Ripley, a prominent disciple of Fourier and at one time president of the Brook Farm Association.