SOME RECENT ADVANCES IN SOCIOLOGY

I. General Sociology

The elimination of old problems

NOT quite a decade ago, Professor Lester F. Ward, writing on "Contemporary Sociology,"[1] affirmed that the science was still in its analytic period; that there was a disposition to condemn all attempts at synthesis and that ideas put forth by leading sociologists seemed to have no affinity for one another. In summarizing the situation at that time he felt, therefore, that "the most he could do was rapidly to enumerate the principal systems or general conceptions of sociology." These were considered under the captions: sociology as philanthropy, anthropology, biology, political economy, the philosophy of history, the special social sciences, the description of social facts, association, the division of labor, imitation, unconscious social constraint, the struggle of races. These twelve "of the leading sociological conceptions or unitary principles that have been put forward with large claims, in the case of each, to being in and of itself the science of sociology," were compared by Professor Ward to "so many streams all flowing in a given direction and converging so as ultimately to unite in one great river that will represent the whole science of sociology."

Without questioning the implied conception of the science or the adequacy of the classification, it may be possible to discover some of the recent changes, if not advances, in sociology by inquiring how many of these topics now deserve notice. Certainly the first two are to be eliminated. Even the public has begun to differentiate between sociology and philanthropy. A new phrase, "social economy," has arisen to prevent further confusion. Anthropologists do indeed discuss general laws of social development, but in so doing they clearly consider themselves outside the immediate field of the special and concrete science of anthropology. On the other hand, sociologists enter the field of anthropology, like that of any other special science, for material. As to the so-called "anthropo-sociologists" mentioned by Professor Ward, the very name is becoming obsolete. The third topic, "sociology as biology," would hardly be treated now as an equivalent

[1] *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. vii, p. 476.

phrase for "the organic theory of society"; nor would the statement be reaffirmed that among scientific sociologists the biological school, in this sense, is now the "most earnest, vigorous and aggressive." It is almost unnecessary to remark that the expression, "biological sociology," carries with it today ideas totally different from Professor Ward's conception. The fourth heading, "sociology as political economy," merely recalls an old controversy.

The passing of these problems, once the center of debate, does not mean necessarily that they have been completely solved. In many minds, as Professor John Dewey has pointed out:

> The conviction persists—though history shows it to be a hallucination—that all the questions that the human mind has asked are questions that can be answered in alternatives that the questions themselves present. But in fact, intellectual progress usually occurs through sheer abandonment of such questions, together with both of the alternatives they assume—an abandonment that results from decreasing vitality in their point of view.[1]

Thus it has been with the organic theory and the strife over the relation of sociology to economics. Philanthropy and anthropology, on the other hand, have withdrawn their claims to the title sociology.

The synthetic tendency

The eight remaining topics of Professor Ward's scheme appear to be as vital as ever. But the point of view has changed. Sociologists no longer attempt to erect any of these eight or any other single principles into complete systems. Although division of labor suggests Durkheim's name; imitation, Tarde's; unconscious social control, Le Bon's; the struggle of races, Gumplowicz's; nevertheless the suggestion is now of men who have placed special emphasis upon particular problems, not of men who have succeeded, even in their own estimation, in presenting complete explanations of social relations. As Professor Small remarked at the Providence meeting of the American Sociological Society: "Sociologists are agreed that it is no longer profitable to discuss the question whether this, that or the other is sociology." Sociologists are today at work upon specific problems. All are at work on some phase of the philosophy of history; all draw from the special social sciences; all find the description of social facts necessary; all study association; and all admit the explanatory value of division of labor, imitation, unconscious social constraint, the struggle of races and many other ideas

[1] "Darwin's Influence upon Philosophy"; *Popular Science Monthly*, July, 1909, vol. lxxvi, p. 98.

which enable the investigator to evaluate the relative importance of the various antecedent conditions of any social effect. For these reasons it is perhaps safe to say that sociology has at least advanced out of the extremely intolerant analytic stage, and that only the appearance of a Marshall is now needed for the emergence of a fairly workable synthesis.

Not the least important of the influences tending to produce this hopeful condition has been the recent rapid increase in the number of sociological journals and societies. Within the past seven years sociological associations of national scope have arisen in the United States, England, Germany, Austria and Italy. New periodicals devoted to general or to special phases of the subject have appeared with surprising rapidity. The *Sociological Review*, the *Monatsschrift für Soziologie*, *Biometrika*, the *Archiv für Rassen- und Gesellschafts-Biologie*, the *Eugenics Review* are but the more prominent. Meanwhile, the older journals and associations of France, Belgium and Germany have not lessened their output. It would be impossible now to explain extreme variant types of sociological theory on the principle of isolation.

Evidences of the synthetic tendency in recent theory are not difficult to find. For example, the monumental three volumes of Guillaume De Greef, on *La Structure générale des sociétés*,[1] are a development of the proposition that "a social aggregate is the mass produced by the union of different elements, territory and population, united from the moment of their formation."[2] Any social aggregate is held to include a certain extent and quantity of inorganic and organic nature and a certain number of human units. De Greef thus insists that sociology must take account of all the factors—physical, biological and psychic—which play upon or are effective in any social aggregate. He does not hesitate to say that man alone is not sufficient to constitute a society. Society must include a correlative part of the physical environment. On this ground he criticises Mr. Herbert Spencer's theory that all social structure is determined by the nature of the constituent units. He remarks that this view is incomplete, inasmuch as it neglects the organic and inorganic factors that enter into the texture of societies. Spencer's theory, he thinks, creates an antinomy which really does not exist between one of the constituent elements of society and society itself. "Ten, one hundred or more human units," he says, "are by themselves alone incapable of forming a society without forming among themselves a combination into which there also necessarily enter in-

[1] Felix Alcan, Paris, 1908.

[2] *Op. cit.*, pp. 60, 62.

organic, organic and psychic elements." Doubtless this somewhat arbitrary way of regarding a social aggregate as composed partly of the physical environment is open to objection as an undue extension of the term social. Other sociologists would probably prefer to speak of the physical environment as "an influence upon social relations" rather than as an integral part of a social group. From certain passages in De Greef's work, however, it is to be inferred that he takes this position chiefly to emphasize as strongly as possible the danger of taking a one-sided view of society.

Professor A. W. Small's *General Sociology*[1] is another evidence of the synthetic tendency. The aim of this treatise is, in the author's words, "not to exploit another competing system of sociology but to bring into view the field of knowledge which all sociologists have instinctively attempted to survey." As indicated by the sub-title, the book presents "an exposition of the main development in sociological theory from Spencer to Ratzenhofer." Though this correctly describes the chief part of the work, Professor Small nevertheless goes back of Spencer to begin his review. After explaining the gradual growth in past centuries of a body of knowledge of society, now properly classed as sociological, he criticises in turn the extreme interpretations that have appeared, *viz.*, the great man theory, the anthropo-geographical explanation, the ethnological view of history, the culture-history conception, the political, ideological and economic interpretations. Attacking the problem of method, he points out the positions of Comte, De Greef, Ward, Mackenzie and Gumplowicz, laying emphasis upon the elements common to each. He then proceeds to a more detailed account of Herbert Spencer, Schäffle and Ratzenhofer. This is followed by an analysis and comparison of sociological concepts found in the various writers, with the distinct purpose of showing that the differences among their ideas resolve themselves into (*a*) verbal variations, (*b*) differences in selection of points of attention, (*c*) different ranges of generalization included in the schemes. The author's own view is then advanced, that "our knowledge of sociology, *i. e.* our systematized knowledge of the human process, will be measured by the extent of our ability to interpret all human society in terms of its effective interests." Every desire which men betray can be analyzed, says Professor Small, into the following "interests," *viz.*, health, wealth, sociability, knowledge, beauty, rightness. Finally, after the relation of these interests to social forces and social structure has been explained, the book closes

[1] University of Chicago Press, 1905; xiii, 739 pp.

with a review of the social process considered as a system of psychical and ethical problems.

It cannot be said that all the syntheses attempted by Professor Small are convincing. In particular it is difficult to discover wherein his own emphasis upon "interests" as the important starting point in sociological theory aids his effort to reconcile the theories of the writers whom he reviews. It is unfortunate, moreover, that in the relatively large amount of space accorded to the system of Mr. Spencer practically no attention should be paid to the important sociological generalizations that appear in volumes of the *Synthetic Philosophy* other than those entitled *Principles of Sociology*. Nevertheless, both in its purpose and in much that it actually accomplishes, the volume is a notable contribution to the synthetic movement.

Among other books that could be cited to prove the reality of this tendency to consider all the factors that determine social activity are M. M. Davis's *Psychological Interpretations of Society*,[1] E. A. Ross's *Foundations of Sociology*,[2] T. N. Carver's *Sociology and Social Progress*,[3] and W. I. Thomas's *Source Book for Social Origins*.[4] Professor Carver's volume gives an extremely useful selection of readings on the topics: (1) the nature, scope and method of sociology, (2) social progress and (3) the factors of social progress—physical, biological, psychic, social, economic, political and legal. Professor Thomas's choice of topics and authors is likewise discriminating. The readings are grouped under the general subjects: the relation of society to geographic and economic environment; mental life and education; invention and technology; sex and marriage, art, ornament and decoration; magic, religion, myth; social organization, morals, the state. A reasonably full bibliography of these topics is included.

Further proof that sociology is becoming synthetic might easily be given. It could be shown that sociologists are far more familiar now with the ideas of other writers in their own field than they were ten years ago; that they accord greater recognition than formerly to ideas other than their own; that when a sociologist now investigates a particular field or principle he takes pains to remark that he is not attempt-

[1] Columbia University Studies in History, Economics and Public Law, vol. xxxiii, no. 2; 260 pp.

[2] New York, The Macmillan Company, 1905; xiv, 410 pp.

[3] Boston, Ginn and Company, 1905; vi, 810 pp.

[4] University of Chicago Press, 1909; xvi, 932 pp.

ing to write a complete explanation of society; that, finally, sociology has so well demonstrated its essential unity as to have received tangible recognition by leaders in other sciences. It will be more profitable, however, to review the progress made in particular fields; for advance in sociology has not been confined to the elimination of old problems, the foundation of societies and journals, the development of a synthetic tendency in theory and the attainment of greater recognition among the sciences. Sociologists, as was said before, are at work upon specific problems. Even De Greef's book, however much it may emphasize synthesis, illustrates this fact; for, as its title indicates, it is intended as a discussion of a special subject, the general structure of societies.

II. Special Problems in Sociology

Progress in particular subdivisions of sociology is not being made at a uniform rate. Under this head, therefore, little attention can be paid to the relative importance, in a general theory of society, of the topics discussed. Moreover, as no branch of the subject can rightfully claim precedence over another, the order of treatment can have no significance. For convenience, consideration of De Greef's book, regarded now as an analysis of the particular problem, social structure, will first be completed. Immediately thereafter will follow a review of recent advances made in other particular fields; especially (1) in the analysis of the relation of the physical environment to man and society, (2) the effect of biological laws in human society, and (3) the psychic factors in social action. This classification omits numerous subjects deserving notice; but the aim of this review is to summarize briefly what appear to be the most important advances.

Social structure

De Greef's work, *La Structure générale des sociétés*, is divided into two parts: (1) *La Loi de limitation;* (2) *Théorie des frontières et des classes*. Defining a social aggregate as a mass produced by the union of various territorial and population elements, united at the moment of its formation in a combination which is not exclusively material or biological or psychic but something more complex and special, De Greef notes that this aggregate has both an internal and an external equilibrium. The form and structure of both living and social bodies is a resultant of the equilibration of their internal forces with those of the exterior environment. Variations in form, however, are limited. Variation in the characteristics of the human race, for example, both physical and mental, are included within maxima and minima. Similar

limitation appears in the distribution of all climatic, geographical, geological, botanical, biological and social groupings. The boundary line between two reciprocally limiting groups is not, however, a distinct line but is rather a zone of separation—a frontier. This is true of political groups and of social groups of every other type. Structural limits of groups are neither absolutely fixed nor, on the other hand, are they wholly unstable. The intermediate zone is not always a barrier. On the contrary, it is often the region of greatest inter-group activity. It is the task of the investigator of social structure to discover, inductively, the conditions fixing the limits of variability in time and space of such relatively stable groupings as may be discovered. No absolute results can be reached. Nevertheless social oscillations are always conditioned. The discovery of these conditions may lead to modification of social organization in such a way as to prevent excessive variations.

Under the guidance of these leading ideas, De Greef reviews the limitations placed upon man by the facts of each and every science in the Comtean hierarchy. Not content with this, he examines the social boundaries of primitive folk, of the ancient classical world, of European peoples, both mediæval and modern, and even those of the western world. The formation and limitation of classes and of social groups, treated according to the well-known seven categories of the same writer's *Introduction à la sociologie*, is discussed at length. A history and criticism of theories relating to the subject is also included, and a prodigious amount of historical material is drawn upon for illustration and partial verification of the positions taken.

Of the many important ideas advanced by De Greef several merit special notice. Contrary to the usual theory of political boundaries, for instance, De Greef affirms that there is no such thing as a natural frontier, physical or ethnic. Frontiers, even those delimited by the sword, however much they may follow geographic and ethnic lines, are purely social. So-called natural boundaries are merely the most convenient and striking landmarks for tracing political boundaries. Many political boundaries are mere lines of latitude and longitude. All are subject to change in accord with the direction of total equilibration of internal and external forces. Historically, war has been the principle method of bringing political equilibration to a climax, but resulting peace has not implied cessation of conflict.

Another leading idea is that, with increasing multiplication of social differentiations and relations, conflicts will increase in number but will tend to become more and more special and will thus render possible

the intervention of superior collective force to prevent violence. As in the past the frontiers of tribes, clans, cities, kingdoms and empires have resolved themselves into limits of administrative districts, so will it be with present national frontiers. A world state is to be formed. The independence of nations will not be affected by the formation of such a state, for the present independent and sovereign character of nations is apparent only. All states are interdependent, and this interdependence conditions internal organization just as it is itself conditioned by the latter. Communication is the chief means relied upon by De Greef to produce the world state. From the earliest times, he points out, the great routes of communication have been extending social boundaries beyond political. This movement is to continue until there can be established a representative, legislative and executive parliament of the world. To this body are to be gradually delegated greater and greater collective functions.

This very brief outline gives little idea of the care with which the author has presented his theories in a work of nearly a thousand pages. The book, he tells us, embodies the results of numerous inductive studies and some 1800 lectures "*toujours nouvelles*" given between 1889 and 1906. His conclusions, he says, rest upon the widest observations possible for him to make personally as well as upon materials furnished by specialists whose works he has followed attentively. Nevertheless, Professor De Greef has not succeeded, apparently, in escaping the bias of his early intellectual environment. His wonderful prophecy of a world state seems but a reflection of the Marxian proclivities of his youth. The prediction appears to rest upon an assumption that a past tendency toward centralization will necessarily continue rather than upon proof that conditions throughout the world today are of such a nature that "contractualism" will prevail. For similar reasons the propositions for an international bank and currency and for the creation of an international directorate of neutral zones are hardly more than interesting suggestions. The practical steps toward realization of such ideas are not indicated. Nor has the author avoided the subtle influence of Belgium's peculiar problems. The prominence given to the principle "contractualism" suggests that the author's desire that European powers shall by agreement continue Belgium's independent position may have influenced his general theory. Indeed, the emphasis upon contractualism seems at variance with De Greef's fundamental position. Having shown that the modes of contact and interpenetration are determined by internal and external equilibration of forces largely beyond man's control, he seems to have magically

transformed the word contact into contract, and he proposes that a world structure be erected on a rational psychological basis. The analysis is better than the superstructure.

In a sense, however, these faults are virtues. For De Greef's work is based upon vital personal contact with men and events. As Tarde's sociology reflects his experience as a judge; Gumplowicz's, the struggle of population groups in Austria-Hungary; Spencer's, his Nonconformist antecedents; so De Greef has incorporated in these volumes his own personality. What is lost in scientific detachment is gained in virility. The theory of frontiers and of classes may not admit of the conclusions drawn by De Greef; it is the outcome, nevertheless, of forces that he has witnessed actually at work in society.

For progress, then, in the special field of social structure, as well as for his insistence upon a synthetic method, sociology is deeply indebted to De Greef.

The influence of the physical environment on man and on society

The one most striking advance in this division of the study of society has been, doubtless, that of proving the wonderfully dynamic action of physical environment upon early civilizations. No more fascinating story has ever been written than that of the prehistoric civilizations of Anau—their origin, their growth, and the influence upon them of their environment—as narrated in the two-volume report of the Pumpelly expedition of 1904.[1] Passing the winter of 1864–65 in Irkutsk, the leader of the future expedition had learned of the slow shrinking of countless lakes on the plains north of the Aral Sea; and it then occurred to him that, if the vision were reversed, one looking back through time would see the lakes gradually enlarging and coalescing till in some remote century they might appear as a large inland sea.

> There seemed to me to exist [he says] a relation between the buried cities of the Tarim basin, the diminished pasturage and population of Mongolia, the vanished Han-hai (dried sea) of the Gobi, the shrinking of the lakes of the Aralo-Caspian undrained area and the overwhelming movements of barbarian hordes toward China and Europe. . . . Agassiz's beautiful theory of a polar ice-cap in the glacial period had already been established, and it seemed possible that climatic influences that could produce such continental accumulations of ice might also have caused the Caspian and the Aral to coalesce and expand to form a large inland sea, and that, with the passing away of the climate of the glacial period, there would neces-

[1] Explorations in Turkestan; Carnegie Institution Publications, 1908; xii, 324 pp.

sarily begin the shrinkage of the sea and the progressive dessication of Central Asia. In such progress might be seen a resulting struggle for life lasting fifteen centuries, from the third century B. C., during which the peoples from an area as large as Europe, driven by nature from their home lands, drenched the soil of Asia and Europe with blood, gave dynasties to China and overthrew the Greek and Roman empires, recasting the whole racial and social complexion of the world.

In 1891, upon the discovery of certain shells of the glacial period in a position pointing to the existence of an inland sea in that age, this vision, which Pumpelly characterizes as hardly more than a dream, suddenly assumed the form of a legitimate hypothesis. In 1904 it was verified in many of its main features. The expedition, however, accomplished even more than this verification, for it brought to light a very large number of other hitherto unsuspected influences upon the evolution of the human race. For example, it was shown that Central Asia was, from one of the epochs of the glacial period onward, isolated from Africa and Europe, and that all its cultural requirements, except those which belong to the very lowest stage of human life, were necessarily evolved and differentiated within this region of isolation. Tracing the evolution of civilization backward to a time preceding the earliest dates at which Babylonian or Egyptian culture is demonstrable, when at Anau men already lived in cities, cultivated wheat and barley, began the domestication and breeding of the useful animals which are our inheritance and possessed the fundamental industrial arts, including a certain amount of metallurgical knowledge, the expedition succeeded in establishing the fact that the agricultural stage preceded the nomadic stage in Asia, and that before domestication of animals was accomplished mankind in Asia was divided sharply into two classes, settled agriculturists, on the one hand, and hunters who wandered within a limited range, on the other. The significant discovery was made, moreover, that the inhabitants of Anau had none of the usual weapons of stone for offense and defense. The most important feature of the expedition's work, however, from the sociological point of view, is the careful analysis made of the relation of the physical environment to these and other social facts. This chief result of the expedition can best be put in Pumpelly's own words:

What I wish particularly to emphasize is the conception that, in the intervention of the glacial period and its reaction on the inner-continental conditions, we must see the initial, the motiving factors in the evolution of the intellectual and social life of man. Shut off from the periphery of Asia and

from other continents, while still in a low stage of savagery, we see him gradually broken up into smaller groups which are forced into isolation on habitable oases, which are the growth of differentiated but fundamentally related cultures. Lastly and most important of all to us, we see here man under the spur of necessity building, in village communities, in agriculture and in the essential industries, the foundations of civilizations, to the relation of which upon each other and upon cultures evolved later on the Nile and in Mesopotamia and on the Mediterranean we owe the understructure of modern civilization.

It is to a member of this expedition, Mr. Ellsworth Huntington, that sociology is indebted for a still more generalized treatment of the effect of the physical environment on man and society. Under the felicitous title of *The Pulse of Asia*,[1] Mr. Huntington has both recorded his experiences in the center of the great continent and has attempted, as he says, to "combine various hypotheses, hitherto unrelated, into a single consistent geographic theory of history." In a hundred different concrete examples he traces the direct and indirect effect of temperature, wind, altitude, dessication, soil, isolation and other physical conditions upon the present and the past inhabitants of the vast region covered in his journey. Particularly interesting is his suggestion that many social traits of Asiatic peoples may be traced eventually to the necessary interdependence of men who, in the earliest period of civilization, lived for centuries on small oases that could sustain their inhabitants only by irrigation systems. Present conditions among peoples in a similar environment, he thinks, reproduce many features of the more primitive periods. To-day the Chanto peasant, for instance, when once his grain has been sown and watered, has little anxiety, for he knows that however bad the season the increasing flood will at least support the fields upon which he mainly depends. Unless also a shepherd, he has no reason to travel. There is nothing to tempt him beyond his small oasis; nothing to awaken him or arouse him to determined effort. And so, year after year and generation after generation, the Chanto goes his care-free monotonous way and grows gentle and mild and weak of will. It is in this vivid fashion that Huntington reinforces his three chief conclusions: first, that not only the habits but to a large extent the character of the people of Central Asia appear to have been moulded by physiographic environment; second, that during historic times climate, the most important factor in the environment, has been subject to notable changes; and, finally, that the changes of climate have caused corresponding changes not only in the distribution of man but in his occupations, habits and even character.

[1] Boston and New York, Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1907, xxi, 415 pp.

In a final chapter on the geographic basis of history, he suggests that the changes of climate that have produced such important social effects in Asia have probably not been confined to that continent. Even modern European history is yet to be interpreted in terms of a dynamic physical environment. In view of these generalizations it is not surprising to find Mr. Huntington attacking many hitherto firmly established ideas. He holds, for instance, that civilization has advanced from south to north rather than from east to west. Again, contrary to the general belief that the civilized man of to-day finds the conditions of progress in a fairly moist and cool climate, whereas the pioneers of civilization found them in a dry, warm climate, Huntington boldly maintains that mankind, since the race first gained the rudiments of civilization, has always made the most rapid progress under essentially the same climatic conditions. These conditions are that summers must have warmth and rainfall enough to insure harvests but not to produce enervation; that winters must be cool enough to be bracing but not deadening, and that the environment must necessitate forethought. Clear, dry air and high barometric pressure are held to be subsidiary favorable conditions. The evidences of climatic changes found in the old world, Mr. Huntington says, appear to render it probable that these conditions have prevailed in each of the great countries of history at the time when it has risen to the highest degree of civilization and power. However much races may differ in ideals and type of civilization, their degree of will-power and energy and their capacity for making progress and for dominating other races is largely an effect of the physical environment in which they dwell.

Such are some of the far-reaching sociological generalizations advanced by an observer whose study of climatic changes, in the words of Professor Ward of Harvard, "is one of the most thorough ever made, for the evidences of archæology, of tradition, of history and of physiography have been carefully matched and found to accord in a very striking manner." Of the facts there can be no question. How many of the generalizations will prove valid, however, and how far they will be sustained, only a vast amount of future scientific work can determine. A note of caution is perhaps intended in Professor Ward's admirable text-book on climate,[1] in a passage in which he admits that changes of climate in the geological past are known with absolute certainty to have taken place, but nevertheless states that, "without denying the possibility or even probability of the establishment of the fact of secular changes [in climate], there is as yet no sufficient warrant for believing in considerable permanent changes over large areas."

[1] R. De C. Ward, Climate, New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1908, 372 pp.

As to the effects of climatic changes more may be known if further investigation is made on the plan pursued by Dr. E. G. Dexter some years ago in his monograph upon *Conduct and the Weather*.[1] The method therein adopted of studying the influence of various meteorological conditions upon the conduct of school-children, upon the occurrence of crime and suicide and upon the number of errors made by bank clerks, if applied to a sufficient number of cases in different places, might well lead to valuable and perhaps surprising results. Even in his short essay Mr. Dexter has shown clearly that, although, as is popularly believed, in damp and muggy weather man supposes himself ready to do all sorts of evil things, in reality he does not do them. There is no surplus energy to spend in doing anything either good or bad. Dry weather, on the contrary, stimulates the vital processes and creates surplus energy, for good or ill as the case may be. In Denver, for instance, Mr. Dexter shows that when dryness becomes extreme or is accompanied by wind, the amount of crime increases enormously.

When, by similar methods, the effects of temperature, moisture, wind, barometric pressure and electricity upon the mental processes of the individual are more thoroughly studied, perhaps generalizations upon the social effects of climate may become more certain. The results already attained by the Pumpelly expedition, by Huntington and by Dexter are but the first fruits of an almost limitless future harvest in this branch of sociology. Nevertheless the shade of Montesquieu may well rejoice over the advances already made.

The effect of biological laws in human society

It is a striking tribute to the influence of Mr. Herbert Spencer that, in a period when the work of Charles Darwin was revolutionizing every department of thought, when Bagehot was publishing *Physics and Politics or Thoughts on the Application of the Principle of Natural Selection and Inheritance to Society*, when Kidd's *Social Evolution* was stirring the religious world, when Haeckel was issuing *The Riddle of the Universe* and when Galton was demonstrating the importance of heredity and selection in the human race, the term biological sociology should have been restricted by many sociologists to that peculiarly unfruitful body of work which resulted from the elaboration of Mr. Spencer's organic theory. This usurpation of its proper title, however, has retarded but little that department of science which in-

[1] Columbia University Contributions to Philosophy, Psychology and Education, vol. 5, no. 1; 105 pp.

vestigates the extent to which biological factors, such as heredity, natural and sexual selection, the struggle for existence, the competition of types, are effecting important changes in human society. Advancing from a conception of the struggle for existence as a conflict among individuals for the means of subsistence to the more adequate view that competition of any sort and for any object which changes death or birth rates of different hereditary types is a means of natural selection, sociologists of the true biological school have been examining with increasing care the innumerable social influences which tend to change the non-acquired characteristics of social groups. The pioneers in this field, as is well known, were Galton in England, Schallmeyer in Germany and Steinmetz in Holland. More recent contributions to the subject have been published in the *Archiv für Rassen- und Gesellschafts-Biologie*, in *Biometrika*, in the London Sociological Society's papers, in the *Sociological Review* and in the *Eugenics Review*. To a considerable extent the movement is practical rather than scientific. The address of Mr. Francis Galton at the first meeting of the London Sociological Society—an address to the stimulus of which much of the recent activity in this field is to be attributed—was frankly an appeal for systematic inculcation of "eugenic" doctrines, that is, doctrines which are intended "to cause the useful classes in the community to contribute more than their proportion of descendants to the next generation." By dissemination of a knowledge of the laws of heredity, by historical inquiry into the rates at which the various classes in society (classified according to civic usefulness) have contributed to the population at various times in ancient and modern nations, by systematic collection of facts showing the circumstances under which large and thriving families have most frequently originated, by study of influences affecting marriage and by persistence in setting forth the national importance of eugenics, Mr. Galton hopes that definite influences for human advance will be set in motion. To further the movement, Mr. Galton has himself founded a fellowship for research in eugenics. Working under the guidance of Professor Karl Pearson, Mr. Edgar Shuster, the holder of this fellowship, has already issued, under the title *Noteworthy Families*,[1] an interesting study largely confirmatory of similar work presented in Galton's *Hereditary Genius*. To Mr. Shuster, furthermore, and to Mr. Heron and Professor Pearson are to be credited statistical studies showing, by the latter's method of correlation, the degree of inheritance of deafmutism, insanity and susceptibility to pulmonary tuberculosis. These are but the most recent of a long series of mathematical contributions to the theory of evolution

[1] London, J. Wurray, 1906, xlii, 96 pp.

which Professor Pearson and his associates have been publishing at intervals, since the *Grammar of Science* appeared, in the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* and in *Biometrika*. In Germany the movement has found its chief organ in the *Archiv für Rassen- und Gesellschafts-Biologie*.

The psychic factors in social action

The preceding review has shown advance in the explanation of certain social facts in terms of antecedent physical and biological circumstances. It is no less true that important achievements have been made in the analysis of the psychic conditions which regularly precede, accompany or follow social action. At least four problems of particular interest in this field have lately received special attention. These are: (*a*) the subjective causes of association; (*b*) the mental characteristics of man that are of primary importance for his life in society; (*c*) the psychological interpretation of various forms of association; (*d*) the constraining effect of society upon the individual.

(*a*) *The subjective causes of association*

For the formulation of results in this field one naturally looks to works entitled "social psychology." Of the two books recently issued under this caption, however, neither adequately discusses the advances in this subject. Indeed, that written by Professor Ross[1] does not aim to do so, for its chief purpose is to analyze the processes by which intermental influence is exerted rather than to inquire into origins. That by Mr. William McDougall,[2] of Cambridge University, follows the traditional method of explaining society by positing various "instincts" of fear, anger, self-assertion, reproduction, gregariousness *etc.* To ascribe social action to "instincts" of various sorts is, however, but a confession of ignorance. The origin and conditions of excitation of functionings such as McDougall classes as instinctive must be accurately and quantitatively determined before the reference of a social effect to an instinct becomes of much scientific value. This is not to decry as useless for sociology a careful study of what are sometimes loosely termed instincts. To doubt that the individual is by nature endowed with complex instincts of flight, curiosity, repulsion, gregariousness, acquisition and construction—to employ some of Mc-

[1] E. A. Ross, Social Psychology. New York, The Macmillan Company, 1908; xvi, 372 pp.

[2] William McDougall, An Introduction to Social Psychology. London, Methuen and Company, 1908; xv, 355 pp.

Dougall's terms—is not to deny that through repeated response to similar stimuli an organism develops complex types of reactions that become almost automatic. It is of considerable importance for sociology that quantitative determination be made of the relative contribution made by stimuli and by the hereditary characteristics of the responding organism in such complex reactions as those discussed by McDougall. Whatever confusion there may be from the point of view of psychology, however, in the use of the terms "instincts" by McDougall, "desires" by Tarde and "interests" by Ratzenhofer and Small to denote various regular types of response in the presence of certain stimuli, sociology requires only to know the relative importance of each type of response under the various conditions of stimulation present in society. This implies that instead of "explaining" conflict by "an instinct of pugnacity," society by "an instinct of gregariousness" or referring all human activities to the operation of certain "interests," sociology must develop a quantitative analysis of all general and recurring types of stimulation and response in human society. For the practical resemblances and differences among individuals, out of which association, conflict and agreement arise, are themselves the result of repeated response to stimulation. The wealth and weakness of a neighboring group may be a much better sociological explanation of conflict than an "instinct of pugnacity" in the aggressor. Continued flourishing of the big stick, on the other hand, may reduce that instinct to a negligible quantity.

That the hope of attaining fairly accurate measurements of general types of stimulation and response is not vain, however, appears from certain very recent developments; for example, from Professor Benini's recent demonstration that in certain cases it is possible to obtain a numerical value for the efficiency of consciousness of kind. The brilliant results attained by Galton, Pearson and others in the solution of complex biological, psychological and anthropological problems through the use of the curve of error, the various methods of correlation and other statistical devices are not likely to remain unrivalled in the field of sociology.

(*b*) *The mental characteristics of man that are of primary importance for his life in society*

For assistance in both qualitative and quantitative analysis of the individual's instincts and desires in the presence of given stimuli, sociology turns to psychology; and that science has not been found wanting, for within the past decade genetic psychologists in particular have

raised a question which, if settled in the negative, is likely to aid materially in the solution of certain vexed problems of sociology. This question is: Do the higher animals imitate? Ten years ago Professor Thorndike stated the problem in his little monograph on *Animal Intelligence*. To-day such men as Cole, Berry, Kinnman, Mills, Hamilton, Carr, Watson, Davis, Clark, Yerkes and others are attempting to decide it by the laboratory method. Experimenting on cats, dogs, chickens and subsequently on monkeys, Professor Thorndike seems to have established that however carefully members of these species are led to observe the useful acts of others of their own kind, all, with possibly the partial exception of the monkeys, fail to repeat such acts for their own benefit. It is not necessary here to review the evidence nor the progress of the debate. The extreme importance to sociology, however, of verifying the hypothesis that the higher animals do not imitate is evident upon the least reflection. For imitation is certainly one of man's characteristics. If his progenitors, not far back in the phyletic series, did not imitate, it follows that at some period in his evolution man alone of all the social animals acquired this faculty. If this be so, is there need of further explanation of the undoubted gap that exists between man and the higher animals?

Furthermore, if Professor Thorndike's contention be true, an adequate reason is assigned for the oft-repeated but heretofore somewhat dogmatic assertion that as soon as man's intelligence developed his progress became far less dependent on biological than on psychic conditions. When man's intelligence included ability to imitate, any advantage in the struggle for existence gained for an individual by his discovery of a new means of controlling nature immediately raised the value of the discovery as an aid in the struggle for existence at least as many times as there were members of the imitating group. With the presence of ability to imitate, any important invention, such as the discovery that cultivation increased the productivity of plants, must have multiplied enormously the ability of the primitive group to maintain itself as a group. Granted an occasional new invention of importance, it was evidently possible, after the ability to imitate appeared, for considerable biological deterioration to occur without lowering the group's power to maintain its existence. To what extent such deterioration could occur without lessening ability to invent is another matter. It is clear, however, that the sum total of surplus energy of modern civilized nations, over and above that necessary for self-maintenance, has been increased so tremendously by invention and imitation that the slow processes of biological deterioration, if present,

can have relatively little effect in reducing the survival potentiality of great groups of mankind. If the great increases of population during the past century have not developed marked biological deterioration, there is little cause for supposing that even several centuries of breeding from stock below the normal would greatly impair man's progress; for progress in the higher values of life may occur in spite of considerable deterioration on the biological side. Indeed, if Professor Thorndike's hypothesis is verified, we might even admit that there may have been continual biological deterioration ever since the ability to imitate appeared, without thereby denying the fact of progress.

Such considerations as these suggest that, during the ages since the imitative ability arose, human society has accumulated too great a "margin of safety" for a few centuries of that progressive biological degeneration so feared by certain members of the eugenic school to have any very serious effects on progress.

(*c*) *The psychological interpretation of various forms of association*

Professor C. H. Cooley's *Social Organization: A Study of the Larger Mind*,[1] is the latest contribution in this division of social psychology. In a former book, *Human Nature and the Social Order*, Professor Cooley tried "to see society as it exists in the nature of man and to display that in its main outlines." In this book his attention is focused "on the enlargement and diversification of intercourse which is called social organization—the individual though visible remaining slightly in the background." Distinguishing three aspects of consciousness: self-consciousness, or what I think of myself; social consciousness (in its individual aspect), or what I think of other people; and public consciousness, or a collective view of the foregoing as organized in a communicating group—all three being phases of a single whole—Professor Cooley, in this work, analyzes the way in which public consciousness arises and develops and how it reacts upon the mental life of the individual. In the "primary groups" of family, playground and neighborhood he discovers the "nursery of human nature." Social ideals, later to be developed in more complex social groups, are here originated. Effective team-play, the purpose of all social organization, is learned in the primary groups. Here, too, are evolved ideals of loyalty, lawfulness, freedom, honor, trust, kindness and justice. On a large scale these ideals are embodied in those of Christianity and democracy. At this point Professor Cooley raises the query: Why is it that these ideals

[1] New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908; xvii, 426 pp.

are not realized in the larger social groups? The answer is that social organization on a large scale is difficult. Increasing facility of communication is indeed rendering possible an organization of society based more and more largely on the higher faculties of man, on intelligence and sympathy rather than on authority, caste and routine; public opinion is becoming an efficient engine for organized attainment of social purposes; democracy is advancing; but, in spite of all this, classes and castes exist and are hindering the realization of the ideals of the primary group in society at large. Both the principle of inheritance and that of competition engender classes or castes, and castes mean restriction of opportunity. Nevertheless society can dispense with neither principle. Voluntary social organization, to keep these principles in check, will preserve freedom. In particular the ill-paid classes in society require this means of defense. Hostility among classes engendered by such organization is to be modified by freer discussion of grievances. Nevertheless, organization must not be allowed to crystallize into formalism and institutionalism in its worst sense. Otherwise social disorganization and loss of freedom will result. Organization, even that of the family and church, must be plastic. Political democracy plus social and economic oppression is fairly sure to equal state socialism, because men will look to political control as a refuge. But if general conditions are free and open, men will be the more sensible, by contrast, of the unfree aspects of activity directed and controlled by the state. Freedom is to be sought in a more effective public will, based not upon greater governmental activity but on "the growing efficiency of the intellectual and moral processes as a whole."

In this concrete fashion does Professor Cooley deal with the psychic factors that are moulding the forms of association in the modern world. The practical value of such a work, abounding in definite suggestions for efficient methods of realizing ideals through better social organization, is apparent. Its pertinent criticisms of organizations now existing go far to justify the claim that sociology is in reality beginning to attain its prime end, the rational criticism of public policy.

Diametrically opposed, in method, to the work of Professor Cooley is that of Professor Georg Simmel[1] of Berlin, who attacks essentially the same problem, social organization, in a highly abstract manner. Conceiving of society as a psychic interrelationship among a plural number of individuals, Professor Simmel has set himself the task of

[1] *Soziologie*, Leipzig, Duncker & Humblot, 1908; 783 pp. Translations of a number of the essays embodied in this work have been published from time to time in the *American Journal of Sociology*.

investigating the various types or "forms" which interrelationship or socialization (*Vergesellschaftung*) may assume. These forms are innumerable. Upper and lower classes, competition, imitation, division of labor, formation of parties, representation, simultaneity of inclusion and exclusion are types of association that occur irrespective of the purpose for which any given group exists. They occur in political, religious, convivial, industrial, technical and countless other associations. The problem is to show what relationships among men necessarily result when association assumes a given form or type. For example, competition is a form found in politics, industry, religion, art and many other fields. Out of the concrete facts presented in these fields are to be gathered the meaning of competition, under what conditions it arises, how it develops, what modifications it undergoes through diversity of objects, through what similar formal or material limits of a society it advances or retreats, how competition of individuals differs from that among groups. The task is, in short, to discover, through a study of its similarities in various fields, what competition is as a form of relationship and what are its laws. In like manner are all other forms of association to be treated: development of parties; origin of classes, circles, secondary sections of larger groups; the growth of hierarchies; groups not thoroughly organized; the poor as organic members of society; the numerical fixity of group elements; the effects of the "crossing of many circles" in a single personality; the rôle of secrecy in the development of groups; the modification of groups in accordance with the inclusion or exclusion of antagonistic elements.

Briefly to summarize Simmel's conclusions with respect to the various "forms" which he discusses is impossible: they are too detailed. Indeed, it is perhaps questionable whether he has reached any general conclusions. His analyses of particular cases are keen, but it is difficult to determine how far these analyses yield any generalizations. As he himself says:

> One cannot take single examples of sequences and hold them valid for all social forms, as one can hold a geometrical proposition universally valid. . . . The idea of what is form and what is content is often haphazard. . . . Whether the phenomenon "the poor" is a sociological form—that is, a result of formal conditions within a group conditioned by the general streaming and jostling in which man necessarily develops socially—or whether poverty is to be regarded as merely a material limitation on certain individuals—on these points opposite opinions are possible.

Professor Simmel maintains that the study of the forms of socialization should be based on inductive treatment of historical material. No such substantiation of his conclusions, however, is visible in the present work. Moreover, as Professor Eleutheropulos[1] has pointed out, what little use of historical matter there is can hardly be termed accurate in every instance. The concrete method of Professor Cooley has greater pragmatic value.

(*d*) *The constraining effect of society upon the individual*

If asked why they act in a certain way in certain cases, primitive people, says Professor Sumner in his *Folkways*,[2] always answer that it is because they and their ancestors always have done so. The operation by which "folkways" are produced consists in frequent repetition of petty acts, often by great numbers acting in concert, or at least acting in the same way when face to face with the same need. The folkways are unconscious, spontaneous, uncoördinated. It is never known who led in devising them. As time goes on they become more and more arbitrary, positive and imperative. By habit and custom, they exert a stress on every individual within their range. The folkways are thus a means by which society exerts a constraining effect upon the individual. Taking this as his central theme, Professor Sumner has carried the analysis of usages, manners, customs, mores and morals back to particular acts that, through suggestion and imitation, develop into "societal" forces. Reinforced by deference to the experienced members of society and a stubborn adherence to tradition, these forces become sufficiently coercive to direct society along fixed lines and strangle liberty. Though often founded on false inferences, the folkways are always "right" and "true." They ultimately develop into doctrines of welfare, philosophical and ethical. Through them a vast number of actions become "taboo." On the other hand, through them a vast number of "ideals" have arisen in every age. It is as if men had blown bubbles into the air and then, entranced by their beautiful colors, had leaped to catch them. The logic of one age differs from that of another, and all the errors of the mental processes enter into the mores of each age to become authentic through tradition. Men have turned their backs on welfare and reality, in order to pursue beauty, glory, poetry and dithyrambic rhetoric, pleasure, fame, adven-

[1] *Monatschrift für Soziologie*, June, 1909, pp. 438 *et seq.*

[2] W. G. Sumner, Folkways: A Study of the Sociological Importance of Usages, Manners, Customs, Mores and Morals. Boston, Ginn and Company, 1907; vi, 692 pp.

ture and phantasms. Each age, nevertheless, by rude methods of correction and purification, modifies the mores in a more or less rational way. Thus have developed ethical principles (truthfulness, love, honor, altruism) which no civilized man would now repudiate. The mores finally become consistent with each other. They then develop a particular social apparatus or set of functionaries for self-perpetuation and become institutions. Rules are adopted. Finally "enacted institutions" are produced by rational invention and intention; society seeks to control itself by laws; "right" is opposed to might. This argument Professor Sumner reinforces at every step by citation of an amazing mass of concrete instances drawn both from primitive and modern societies. The folkways and mores of slavery, infanticide, cannibalism, marriage rites, celibacy, asceticism, amusements and education are thus discussed, until the query suggests itself whether the individual is, in fact, anything more than an automatic instrument obeying dead ideas. This depressing effect of the book is relieved, however, by the suggestion that under the leadership of the more enlightened classes in society the mores which control the masses may be modified in the direction of social welfare.

Much more hopeful in tone is Professor Ross's treatment of social control, in his book bearing that title, and in his more recent *Social Psychology*.[1] Professor Ross recognizes quite as fully as does Professor Sumner that suggestibility, imitation, fashion, conventionality and custom dominate a large part of the individual's activities. He points out, however, that adherence to customs found useful in the past is, in many instances, a rational process; that discussion changes opinion, at times, and is fruitful. In his *Social Psychology*, after analyzing with acumen the constraining effect of emotions that arise in a crowd, he devotes a chapter to "prophylactics against mob mind." Moreover the earlier volume, *Social Control*, is devoted almost entirely to a discussion of that social domination which aims to attain beneficent results and which fulfils a recognized need. Upon the utilization of suggestibility, it is therein held, rests the whole modern policy of founding a social order on education. An older policy had utilized the same means in religion and in the conscious manipulation of beliefs and customs. Professor Ross has even ventured to divide the instruments of control into two classes: (1) *ethical*, those arising in sentiment rather than utility, such as public opinion, suggestion, personal ideal, social

[1] E. A. Ross, Social Control. New York, The Macmillan Company, 1901; 463 pp. Social Psychology. New York, The Macmillan Company, 1908; xvi, 372 pp.

religion, art; (2) *political*, those that are deliberately chosen, such as law, belief, ceremony and education. The prominence of the one or the other group in the regulative scheme, he holds, will depend on the constitution of society. The political instruments, operating through prejudice or fear, will be preferred: (1) in proportion as the population elements to be held together are antipathetic and jarring; (2) in proportion to the subordination of the individual will and welfare to the scheme of control; (3) in proportion as the social constitution stereotypes differences of status; (4) in proportion as the differences in economic condition and opportunity it consecrates are great and cumulative; (5) in proportion as the parasitic relation is maintained between races, classes or sexes. On the other hand, the ethical instruments, being more mild, enlightening and suasive, will be preferred: (1) in proportion as the population is homogeneous in race; (2) in proportion as its culture is uniform and diffused; (3) in proportion as the social contacts among the elements of the population are many and amicable; (4) in proportion as the total burden of requirement laid upon the individual is light; (5) in proportion as the social constitution does not consecrate distinctions of status or the parasitic relation, but conforms to common elementary notions of justice. In general Professor Ross holds that statecraft is taking the place of folkcraft.

If the data presented in the foregoing review are in any sense representative, it is perhaps possible to draw from them as a whole at least one important generalization. They appear to show that sociologists are now investigating the problems of their science, rather than discussing its fundamental concepts or its scope and its methods. If this be so, the outlook for the future is bright: sociology will be justified by its works.

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REVIEWS

The Southern South. By ALBERT BUSHNELL HART. New York and London, D. Appleton and Company, 1910.—445 pp.

For Northerners who wish a clear, complete, compendious and unbiased account of the facts and opinions that dominate Southern life today, this is the best book known to the reviewer. *A priori* Professor Hart would hardly have occurred to one as the American scholar most likely to produce such a work. A pre-natal abolitionist, born in the Western Reserve and associated for most of his life with the intellectual ideals of Cambridge, Massachusetts, he would have been presumed to lack at least that sympathy and tolerance that are so indispensable to a fair and fruitful analysis of Southern social conditions. His work manifests, however, precisely these essential elements. The cool emotionless collection and handling of facts by the trained historian is tempered by the large-minded patriot's consciousness of and respect for the feelings that lie behind the facts. Nothing but praise can be awarded to the spirit in which Professor Hart has achieved his task.

The substance of his achievement consists in a description of the social classes and conditions and of the salient factors in the economic development of the typical—the "Southern"—South. The data are taken from familiar statistical sources, familiar literature and a considerable amount of direct personal observation. There is no pretense of any startling discovery. The distinction of the study is in its estimate and interpretation of the well-known. Wealth, industry and education are examined, and the facts and opinions relative to these matters are subjected to temperate and discriminating analysis and criticism. Professor Hart's consideration of these various aspects of Southern life leads straight every time, however, to the one great and overshadowing feature—the race problem. This constitutes the backbone of his study. That such is the case is the strongest testimony to the scientific validity of the volume. There still persists in some Northern circles, among the survivals of ante-bellum abolitionism, the idea that there is no real race problem, that what passes for such a problem is merely the exhibition of total depravity by some Southern whites who sin against the light. If the people who minimize the importance of the race problem ever read Professor Hart's book, longer