SOCIAL PROGRESS

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University of Melbourne
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AN INAUGURAL LECTURE

BY

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INTRODUCTORY.

Mr. Chancellor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The task of a professor in undertaking a public inaugural lecture is not quite a simple one, but complex. This arises from the fact that several things are expected of him at one and the same time, by various persons or groups of persons who may honour him by their presence in the audience.

There may be some of his learned colleagues present representing other subjects than his own. They will desire to know how he relates his subject to theirs, or to discover its bearing on science or philosophy or history.

Then there may be present students who are simply anxious to hear a lecture which bears in any way upon their subject and from which they may possibly glean some wisps of facts or ideas which they may insert later in the harvest season among the sheaves gathered in by the examinations. Other students there may be who, outside the University, have by their own reading and researches learned much of the subject. Some, too, may have supplemented this by attendance at University Extension Lectures or University Tutorial Classes.

In addition to these, there may be a fair number of the audience who are not professional students, but who desire to extend their acquaintance with subjects of modern interest.

For this reason many men, on the occasion of an inaugural lecture, take as the subject their own branch of knowledge and explain what it is. We have heard lectures given under such titles as "What is Philosophy?" "What is Biology?" Other men, however, considering this too elementary for the occasion and for the nature of their audience, have dealt, not with the general matter of their subject as a whole, but with some vital and highly technical aspect of it, upon which they were particularly interested or upon which they were themselves carrying out research work. This type of inaugural lecture is far removed from the classification "elementary," for it is an

address to experts. Excellent in kind, it must suffer from its technical terminology and presupposed acquaintance with the subject extending over many years. Hence such a lecture, however impressive and valuable, makes little or no appeal to the general public.

Is there then only the possibility of these alternatives? Must one choose inevitably between addressing the laymen and wearying the experts, or addressing the experts and boring the general enquirer? I certainly think not, and consider it possible to select for an occasion such as this a topic which will cover the main ground of Sociology, and thus be of general interest, while at the same time it will enunciate the particular problem dealt with in a manner not without profit to the student of that subject and not wholly devoid of interest for those who may profess other subjects. For this reason, when I was invited to deliver this inaugural lecture, I selected the subject of *SOCIAL PROGRESS*, because it arises from the study of Sociology, of which subject I have charge in the University, because I suffer from dual personality by having another position to fulfil, namely, that of Chairman of the University Extension Board and Director of Tutorial Classes. My subject has as much relation to this function as to the other, for, as I hope to show, the study of Sociology itself is not unrelated to the work of furthering facilities for adult education in a modern democracy. Sociologists themselves are asserting that democracy cannot advance without education.

I.

The *idea* of progress is comparatively new in human development. The notion of progress is one of the most characteristic features which distinguishes our modern social grouping or civilisation from those of former times. It would have seemed to the Greeks foolishness. Progress was not a conception which occupied the mediæval mind. With the rise of the modern nation states and political energy, with the rise of industrialism and biological researches, the idea of progress developed. The eighteenth century was marked by a growing belief in Progress, particularly in France. This belief was encouraged by the thinkers we call "Encyclopædists," and it rose to enthusiasm at the French Revolution, coupled with the cry of "Liberte, Egalite, Fraternite."

The confident belief in Progress was excellently stated by Condorcet, one of the French thinkers of the eighteenth century. He was originally a supporter of the Revolution, but was ultimately imprisoned and driven to suicide. While in danger of the guillotine he wrote his *Sketch of an Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind.* This work, although very defective, became a powerful stimulus to thought concerning progress, and it had an important and direct influence upon Saint-Simon, the pioneer socialist, and upon Auguste Comte, the founder of Sociology. Condorcet, it is important to note, while urging the idea of progress, claimed that it was sure. He believed, like his predecessor Saint-Pierre, in an infallible progress in knowledge and social welfare.

A pathetic optimism marked the early socialists like Saint-Simon, and the founder of Sociology shared his. These men believed in reason and in a supposed law of progress. They believed in an advance in the prosperity and power of the masses, in the assertion by women of their rights as personalities, and prophesied an early abandonment of social conflicts and of militarism. A utopian age of peace was coming. That was indicated by the infallible law of progress. They refrained, however, from indicating what that law was.

They believed that progress was inevitable, and that it was to be like an advance in a straight line. Auguste Comte had doubts about this straightforwardness, and modified his belief to a conviction that there was an advance *about,* but not *in* a straight line. There were, he felt, real set-backs and waverings. Humanity was not to march surely and determinedly to its goal. Later thinkers, while emphasising progress and its relation to civilisation, ceased to talk of a law of progress, and abandoned a belief in a determined or fixed progress.

The idea of progress has been promoted by two influences. Firstly, our civilisation has a greater historical perspective than those which went before it. Secondly, our civilisation has witnessed the relatively rapid changes produced by industrialism, and these have influenced our minds.

We have before us the panorama of human development stretching back into very remote times, long before 5000 B.C., which is about our earliest historical date. The geologist and anthropologist will bear out the antiquity of man upon this planet, and will unite their views with the sociologist in affirm-

ing that civilisation, or the whole period since 5000 B.C., is a very small and recent portion of mankind's existence. We have the historical and evolutionary perspective, and it gives us a point of view different from previous ages.

Briefly let us glance at that perspective, that panorama of human society. It has been widened considerably since the middle of the last century when Maine wrote of the patriarchal state as the most primitive. We now know this to have been preceded by an age-long society or societies, where the dominance of the male was not such a feature, and where descent was reckoned through the mother. For vast ages man was trained in the school of *Totem* and *Taboo*. These two terms sum up the important features of early society. Man's ignorance of natural forces, his unawareness of what we call "scientific causation," was responsible for many practices of a strange, superstitious and barbarous character. Magic and crude religion grew up in this stage. We are apt to think of the life of primitive societies as very free. Such a view is almost wholly false. It is true that many of the customs and practices appear strange to us, but they were none the less customs. Primitive Society was bound in with conventions of a strict type. Initiative was at a discount, and was not tolerated. Such a state offers no room for progress, and only a few peoples were able to pass beyond this stage. Most of our contemporary "primitives" are still in this stage in Africa, in India, the Pacific Islands and Australia. In most cases they have been corrupted by the supply of fire-arms, fire-water and new diseases. The decline in the population of many of these territories is a marked and striking fact.

This early stage gave place to patriarchal society, with the overweening predominance of the male and the inevitable lowering of the position of woman. Food and wealth (literal capital, i.e., heads of cattle), accumulated, and these were of more immediate importance, evidently, than the recognition and development of the personality of woman.

The patriarchal nomadic stage gave place in certain situations to a settled life. The early settled civilisations took their rise. We cannot be clear as to dates. There were certainly great civilisations stretching back into time before Babylon or Egypt, i.e., before 5000 B.C., perhaps eight or ten thousand years before Christ. Gradually settlements grew up in suitable climates,

often in a river valley, not in tropical regions nor in ordinary temperate climes, but in rather warm non-tropical regions. Large human societies grew up and flourished for centuries, nay, for thousands of years, in the country between the Tigris and Euphrates, in the Nile Valley (that land which is recently receiving attention from archæologists), and in Crete, where the great city and palace of Cnossos was revealed in 1900 by Sir Arthur Evans. Archæology is widening our knowledge of human history. The cities of Elam and Ur of the Chaldees are now being forced to give up their secrets. The pyramids of Yucatan are to be investigated, and the Pre-Inca civilisation of Peru, with its gorgeous temples devoid of mortar. In North India, in China, in Mexico and Peru, civilisations grew up, the last to fall (as every schoolboy knows) at the hands of the ruthless Spaniards.

These early civilisations were immense and despotic empires, based upon slave labour. Some of them did, and others did not, succeed in handing down laws, records and advice by a system of writing. Only by the evolution of writing can a *progressive* civilisation grow up and develop, for only by writing can a large heritage of knowledge, experience and precept be handed down to the successive generations. This is the basis of culture and of progress. Without language and without *written* language, man would be only a clever animal. The Chinese, the Babylonians and the Egyptians devised systems of writing, and thus took an immense step forward in social progress.

These great empires perished mainly because of the pressure of nomadic people of a virile sort. In some cases the strength of the civilised people was undermined by the luxurious life they led, by the introduction of large numbers of slaves, more particularly women, by the growth of venereal disease, or the spread of malaria and alterations in the climate. Babylon, China, Egypt, Assyria, Greece, Persia, Rome and Byzantium fell ultimately to virile invaders.

Greece has left us its marvellous heritage of philosophy, art and literature. We can look back upon the life of the city-state with its ideal of the good life. Greek ideals of citizenship were great, and were nobly summed up by Pericles in his oration over those who died in what for the Athenians was the Great War. "We aim," said Pericles, "at a life beautiful without

extravagance, a life contemplative without unmanliness. Wealth is in our eyes a thing not for ostentation, but for reasonable use. It is not the acknowledgment of poverty we think disgraceful, but the want of endeavour to avoid it."

Judæa, a small grouping of civilisation, has left its mark on our own life, a mark out of all proportion to the size of the little Jewish community which was broken successively by Babylon, Assyria and Rome. Its intense national consciousness, its monotheism and, above all, its prophets, with their scathing criticisms of the social life of their times, have given us lessons even for to-day. The plea for social justice raised by Amos has a very modern flavour, and the dangers he indicates in the religious and moral life of his generation are with us now. Morality and religion always tend to become conventional, hidebound and hollow unless they are inspired by a growing moral consciousness.

Rome, in its vigorous days, faced many problems not unlike our own—the land settlement problem, the population problem, the exploitation of other peoples, the degrading life of the city, the problem of unemployment and free doles of oil and corn. Despite great difficulties, Rome gave us an organisation of law and order.

Into the Roman Empire came Christianity, that strange paradox among religions, both static and dynamic in character, being at once the most consoling of them all and the most revolutionary, too.

The Goths and Vandals descended upon the Roman Empire, but as the wave of invasion was at its height and the decline had become at last a fall, we find the courageous and far-seeing mind of Augustine expressing his conviction that not in the secular state, of which Rome was centre, but in the Christian Church, with its conception of *Civitas Dei,* a City of God, could stricken Europe find an abiding life of unity and peace.

Out of the conflicts of the Dark Ages grew that mediæval conception of European unity, both spiritual and temporal, with Pope and Emperor. The Holy Roman Empire, one critic has well said, was so called because it was not holy, nor Roman, nor an Empire. This was the great period of Catholicism and Monasticism, of Feudalism, with its hierarchy from serf to lord, its petty wars, and its futile and often fatal crusades against the aggressive followers of Mohammed.

The spiritual and temporal unity of the mediæval time has attracted many, while others have felt repelled by the dead hand which ecclesiasticism placed upon free human thought. With its guild system in industry, it appeared an "organic epoch," as Comte styled it. The unity of religion, politics and industry was, however, only superficial. The Renaissance, the Reformation and the rise of the modern nation states were an indication that much was repressed in the mediæval order. Its Kingdom of God was not on earth. Other-worldliness solved many of its problems. Men were equal in the sight of God, but not in the sight of their fellowmen.

That mediæval order gave way to our own modern grouping, or so-called civilisation. The sovereign state grew up a law unto itself. Discovery and exploration opened out new worlds to men, and the advance of printing laid open the treasures of books. Trade, banking and commerce grew, and produced wars. As time went on, industrialism brought its peculiar complications and its heritage of good and evil.

We now, at this point of our survey, come to the second reason why progress is a modern idea.

Former societies changed slowly. The course of life went on much the same from generation to generation. Inventions such as there were changed little. But since the Industrial Revolution, which issued in the modern era (and which we can date as beginning as early as 1733, when Kay, of Bury in Lancashire, invented his flying shuttle), we have had a rapid series of mechanical inventions—looms, factories, steam power, electric power, the steam engine, the liner, the battleship, the motor car, the tank, the aeroplane, the typewriter, the linotype, the cinema, the adding machine.

II.

Was this PROGRESS, or simply a mechanical process? Did it involve any real betterment? The *immediate* effects on the life of the people were fundamentally vicious, and it was particularly unfortunate that the mechanical inventions came at a time when the prevailing social philosophy was that of *laissez faire*. Consequently, we have been most of the nineteenth century and all the twentieth, experimenting with this new toy that mankind has got, and trying to make it go—and it does go, and if we are not perpetually careful and watchful it will make

us go, too—if we do not control it, then it will control us. We need constant reminding that the industrial order exists for man, not man for the industrial order.

The coming, the sudden coming, into human life of such an element as this naturally and inevitably tends to increase the materialistic outlook upon life, and if we are to keep industrialism in its proper place, which is *only* a place, in human life, then we must assert more keenly the necessity of maintaining spiritual values, the appreciation of beauty in art and literature, music and drama, the appreciation of goodness in the moral and religious life, the appreciation for truth in the study of the universe as science, as history, or as philosophy. Our industrialism must never be allowed to crush out those elements which are vital. Industrialism must be subordinate, and if this is so, then our economic reforms appear in their true light. They are essential, many of them, but they are a means to an end; they do not constitute an end in themselves. They arise from righteous efforts to subordinate the materialistic and industrial activities to other pursuits. Indeed, our increasing shortening of hours of labour can only be rightly viewed if men and women are at the same time increasing their interest in and their attention upon some expression of their mental or spiritual life. This, it is to be feared, is in general not the case, for the monotony and ugliness of much of our industrial work tends to drive the worker to crave sensational pleasures in his leisure time, rather than to lead him on to a taste for higher things. No wonder was it that Samuel Butler, in his remarkable and curious sketch of an ideal community, *Erewhon,* depicted a people who had *had* machines, and had abolished them because industrialism was such a menace to the good life. We may not, we cannot do that, but we may heed the moral of Butler's story.

Inevitably industrialism creates the problems of city and town life, and the concentration in cities is one of the evils of this form of so-called civilisation. It too often promotes and fosters a type of existence which is sordid, ugly, squalid and vicious, while the life of the human being in such surroundings, uninspired by any ideals or powers of self-expression, self-development and self-realisation, tends to be poor, nasty, brutish and short. Could there be any more pathetic and tragic sentence written of our industrial civilisation than that brief and preg-

nant sentence which concludes Anatole France's book, *Penguin Island?*:

"Fifteen millions of men laboured in the giant town."

Industrialism has altered our ways; it has changed the way we move, the way we think, the way we work, the way we eat, and the way we fight. It has given a prominence to economic factors which is natural and right, but it has led many to believe that economic factors are the sole determinants of change in the life of mankind—a belief which contains a large amount of truth, but when put forward as acounting for the *whole* of historical change, is incorrect. Man is not yet a mere "economic man" or industrial machine and he still has the power to be moved, collectively and individually, by motives other than economic ones. Ideas of morality, religion, feelings of patriotism and love still hold their sway with human nature.

Industrialism and the economic factors which follow therefrom, have seriously complicated our social life. Left uncontrolled, they might well have broken our civilisation by a line of class cleavage such as Marx prophesied. The conflict has not been as simple as he supposed, and other factors, some economic, with which he did not reckon, have operated. But one must admit that the rivalry of sections of the community and of communities themselves has been intensified by industrial and economic factors. Industrial strife and international strife (which may be more closely interconnected than we usually suppose) have become more complex and bewildering, bringing vividly before us the terrible solidarity of evil with which mankind in its journey is surrounded and threatened.

In view of all this, it is natural to find very serious questions being put with regard to human history. For example, "Was the change from the Greek city life to that of mediæval or modern times a definite retrogression?"

Another, "Was Christianity, after all, as Nietzsche suggested, a step towards social degeneration, and not advance?"

"Was the change from polygamy to so-called monogamy merely a formal change under the guise of hypocrisy, leaving the same problem under the cloak of widespread prostitution?"

Again, "Was the change from the slavery of ancient times merely a change in form, not in reality, i.e., a mere change to wage slavery?"

These are questions which can be asked, and which are being asked by students of social life to-day.

It may be pointed out that the Greeks, in spite of a vague Amphictyonic Council, failed in co-operation, failed indeed to achieve nationhood or to arrive at national unity. The life of the city state was indeed intense and in many respects admirable, but it was not the supremely good life because it was confined to the narrow limits and limitations of a municipality.

Again, it may be said that while Christianity has undoubtedly supplied to us an ethic which gives unique value to human personality, and consequently points in the direction of human solidarity and brotherhood, yet by its humanitarian sentiments it has caused modern society to be burdened with the lives of many who are physically and mentally unfit for life, and who would, under other conditions, be eliminated from the race, or at least be rendered incapable of reproducing their degenerate and imbecile kind.

With regard to the problem of women, it must be remarked that ethical monogamy (which is to be distinguished from merely economic monogamy) is bound up with the recognition of the personality of woman. This recognition is inconsistent with the practice of polygamy, and ought to be incompatible with prostitution, which is but a degenerate, sordid and unofficial form of polygamy.

Prostitution is an institution largely created and maintained by the passions of men. Vanity and economic motives do both play their part on the woman's side in some cases, but the substantial accusation against men remains. By lack of self-control and slavery to animal passion, men create a class of slave-women to satisfy their own lusts.

Progress, we should remember, must involve closer co-operation for the welfare of the human race as a whole, and must also include self-control by the members of that race.

III.

We cannot put our trust in the mechanism of institutions. These will not save us. Indeed, we should make a healthy distinction in particular between the Community and the State. If we are worthy citizens, we shall not wait for the State to do everything. This is one of the objections to Bolshevism, Communism or Socialism of a State type, and Government

bureaucracy of any kind. Our idea of the State itself may change. Already we see tendencies at work in this direction. Cole would, in a two-fold State, distinguish the economic from the political interests, while Steiner would separate educational, interests as well in an autonomy, thus creating a three-fold State.

The early civilisations which rose and perished had a basis on sand—slavery. By democratic government we are endeavouring to extend the responsibility of the citizen. By widening our views on social justice we are moving slowly in the direction of increased liberty, equality, fraternity. We are slowly emerging from the dark valley of fatalism. Querying the social order and criticising it, man is coming to greater consciousness of power in making his social forms.

Who has not felt the moment of divine discontent when he said, or wanted to say:—

> "Ah, Love! could thou and I with fate conspire
> To grasp this sorry scheme of things entire,
> Would we not shatter it to bits—and then
> Remould it nearer to the heart's desire."

One might ask, "Breathes there a man with soul so dead that he hath *never* felt thus?" If so, he is not worthy of the name of intelligent citizen. Pessimists and cynics may be objectionable people, and they are usually wrong, but they are not so dangerous to society or themselves as the convinced and fatalistic optimist who sees this best of all possible civilisations through rosy spectacles which he cannot lay aside.

Revolutionaries are usually right in their complaints against existing society but they invariably make the mistake of neglecting the complexity of that society. It is not simple, and consequently, many of their proposals err by virtue of their very simplicity. No one panacea exists for the evils that surround us and many of these depend not entirely on the existing economic and social order (although this may seriously aggravate them) but upon human nature itself. That nature has remained fairly constant in quality and manner of reaction through many ages in spite of the separate, and often antagonistic, efforts of Buddhism, Confucianism, Judaism, Christianity, Mohammedanism, and the numerous and more petty ethical and religious cults of our day.

The satire of Anatole France is not without a real point in this connection. "I take little interest" (says one of his characters, the Abbe Coignard), "in what is done in the King's Cabinet, for I notice that the course of life is in no way changed and after reforms men are as before, selfish, avaricious, cowardly, cruel, stupid and furious by turns, and there is always a nearly even number of births, marriages, cuckolds and gallows-birds, in which is made manifest the beautiful ordering of our society. This condition is stable, Sir, and nothing could shake it, for it is founded on human misery and imbecility, and those are foundations which will never be wanting."

A fellow countryman of Anatole France, the Syndicalist writer, Georges Sorel, after examining our modern society, says that it is no whit better than that of former civilisations—only a little more filled with hypocrisy. Sorel is not far wrong, for even if we escape individual Pharisaism, we seem socially and collectively prone to it, and perpetually thank God that we are not as other civilisations were. Pride goeth before a fall and it is a sign in itself of weakness and degeneracy. We must beware of self-praise and self-contentment. A humanity which had lost the thirst for reform or the hope of revolutions would be a dying and degenerate humanity. It is not likely that society will reform itself quickly or undergo violent revolution, but it is not impossible. Violence and hurry are indeed dangerous allies to enlist in the cause of progress, but no less dangerous are excess of confidence in existing forms and a worship of the *status quo*. Eagerness for change and an intelligent desire to discuss changes are signs of vitality in a society.

The truly progressive citizen may have to appear at times conservative in face of the revolutionist. There are declines down which the rôle of the traction-engine consists solely in holding back; there are steep hills down which the motor engine itself acts as a brake.

We must not allow ourselves, as intelligent students of human nature and human history, to be persuaded into false doctrines about the justification of the past, or erroneous beliefs about the justice of the coming changes which may to us at times appear inevitable. At all costs we must never allow our souls to degenerate into a servile worship of the thing that is. The real atheism, the really unpardonable sin, and the enemy of progress, is precisely this.

It must be remembered always that development is complex. Progress implies a distinction of values, for man can only journey on to other things if he unburden himself of *some* of his baggage, some of his impedimenta. Our discoveries, our material inventions, do not themselves constitute progress. They show no advance in human nature itself, and in the absence of other improvements, these things are doubtful gains and dangerous, as they are liable to be turned by us to self-destruction.

War, with the economic and population problems from which it usually arises, stands in its ruthless brutality casting its shadow on our supposed civilisation. Will the League of Nations or the solidarity of labour or the powers of religion ever unite to control and restrain this? The answer to that solemn query may be the answer to our continued existence. That answer it is impossible for any of us to give, for the future does not exist entirely ready-made. Human history is not merely the unrolling in Time of a plan eternally pre-determined. The answer to this grave question of war, like that of many other social problems, is one which humanity must work out for itself by its own self-determining efforts.

Many of our social problems cannot be solved by pure reason but only by action. This is not merely because reasoning hardly ever convinces anybody, but because questions of an economic and social character present the peculiar difficulty that we have no laboratory for experiment beyond ourselves and our existing society. Such is the complexity of modern life that we are unable to test some theories until they are actually in action over a large field.

Various developments may be conflicting. Advance in one direction may mean degeneration in another. Equality may be good in some ways but unnatural and evil in others. Increase in population in a State may be applauded as a progress from certain standpoints, such as the military desire for a large army, or the economic desire for a large supply of cheap labour, but from other points of view large increases in the population of a country (at any rate of an "old" country) may be productive of social evils. The progress to "peace" in a civilisation often involves loss in vitality and initiative. Colonial expansion shows the same duality. The foundation of colonies can be looked upon from one point of view as a highly progressive step, and

colonies often show an immediate advance in some respects over older countries by their neglect of traditional conventions and abandonment of antiquated restrictions. Yet for some time they are condemned to a crude, hard and materialistic type of existence which it is difficult to transcend and which involves a regression from the more cultured civilisation from which they sprang. It depends on their inspiration, their vision and sense of their place in world-history and world-civilisation whether their material wealth will lead them to stagnate in self-satisfaction and paltry amusements or to foster a high interest in the nobler adventures of the human spirit.

IV.

Meanwhile we find that mankind approaches to self-consciousness as a group by a closer study of itself. In early days man looked out enquiringly on the world and asked the nature of the Universe. What was the φυσις? The answer was astronomy, physics, chemistry, geology, biology. Later he came to study his own complex nature, to ask what he was, an important query to which Socrates turned attention by his curt maxim, γνωθε σεαυτον, Know thyself. This later developed into the introspective studies of psychology, and in recent times into the newer investigations of powers of the human mind along the line of instincts, hypnotism, dreams and suggestion.

There remains the further step of mankind studying its own groupings and the nature of its social life. This study is Sociology, which, founded by Auguste Comte in the earlier part of the last century, may be defined as the positive study of social groups of mankind with reference to the psychological, physical and biological factors involved in the process of evolution.

The importance of social science should not need stressing in a State such as Victoria, nor in a University like that of Melbourne, which includes Sociology among its subjects. Much remains, however, to be done in Australia with a view to strengthening and co-ordinating the teaching of the social sciences. This is a point which has already been brought to the notice of the Australasian Branch of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. A School of Social Science might well present itself as worthy of the University of Melbourne, and necessary to the community

it serves. Already the teaching of Sociology within the University is to be extended to cover two years for Honours students. It remains, however, a pass subject by itself, and for Honours one of a group in the History or the Philosophy School. Much more remains to be done if the subject is to be dealt with in a worthy and adequate manner. We need a definite department of Social and Political Science, granting its own Honour degree in Arts. Nor, it should be remembered, ought our interest to be confined merely to theoretical aspects of social life and to the giving of lectures and holding of tutorial groups for discussions.

We need in this, as in other subjects, opportunities for *research* of a practical kind. In the world of to-day a subject can only advance if it be supplemented by careful and thorough research. How are we to conduct research in our subject?

We need a special instrument here in Melbourne, namely, a University Settlement. Such an hostel would constitute a camp and laboratory for research work. Important investigations into social conditions might then be carried out from such a centre. Problems of housing, of poverty, of unemployment, of child welfare, of mental deficiency, of imprisonment, of recreation, of immigration, of penal treatment, might be studied at first hand, in touch with the realities of life and in co-operation with societies and departments which interest themselves in these problems. A University Settlement is an essential instrument if the University is to take seriously, as it must very soon do, its study of Sociology, or Social Science. The same Settlement could serve usefully as a centre for Tutorial Classes or Extension Lectures in the city.

There are some things, be it noted, which, if we were to believe in them, would *ipso facto* become more powerful. Some beliefs tend to be creative. They bring their object into existence. Ideas and ideals are capable of becoming in an intelligent community creative and moulding forces. The idea of a Settlement for Social Research ought to materialise into concrete form in the near future, and Government assistance and public subscription should both be utilised in its establishment. It would save our University from the stigma of continuing to be regarded merely as a technical training college, preparing for professions, lucrative and otherwise. It would promote intelligent and informed citizenship and social service among the rising genera-

tion, a much desired end, and would in addition, relate both the University and the community in a manner beneficial to both.

Again, however necessary it is to prepare young persons for their special vocations in life, we should always remember that a merely technical training, while it may give us more efficient accountants, draughtsmen, engineers, chemists and lawyers, will never by itself promote the life of combined culture and citizenship which a modern democracy requires, and which a University should always provide.

V.

Man has in virtue of his nature, a demand upon society for expression of his life and for freely fulfilling some function in the communal life. But we often do little to make that capacity real, or to enable it to realise itself. We are content with the rather negative statement that no man shall be used by another as a means against his will, but we leave it too often to chance whether he really will be qualified to fulfil any positive function in society, whether he can contribute to the common good. We do not sufficiently insist on the active promotion of the good life as the Greeks styled it. But surely we desire men not merely to live, but to live well, to transcend mere existence. The only reason why a man should not be used as a means by others is that he should use himself as a means to an end which is his and theirs at once. We need a more active conception of citizenship and personality, both in relation to men and women.

Indeed, the growing recognition of the personality of woman is a further development characteristic of recent times. We hope to have on many of the problems which press urgently on society some valuable contributions from the intuitive mind of woman.

The population problem, which is bound up with the catastrophe of war, demands close attention. Not only the quantity, but the *quality*, of the population is a vital matter. The propagation of the unfit, the havoc of venereal diseases, the evil of prostitution, the misery of sickness and unemployment—these are problems which a progressive society must face. The community must express itself on these questions, and not shirk them, or leave statesmen alone to think of them in the rare intervals between party conflicts.

There are certain dangers to be noted. There is a type of Social Science and a type of Socialism which are both alike detrimental to the value and expression of personalities. A com-

munist republic, for example, asserting the watchword of "Each for All" without setting up also the cry of "All for Each," would overlook in its bureaucracy and tyranny the essential demands of human personality. Equally pernicious and mischievous is the attitude of some social scientists, who look at society merely as "an organism," or a body of material viewed *en masse.*

We must not advocate individualism. There are no individuals, but only persons who are capable of living the good life, and achieving the good only in a social community. But we need reminding that the good cannot be realised *en masse,* it is essentially personal. As there is no true wealth apart from life, so ultimately there is no test of society other than the life of self-expressive personalities. If they are to gain the expression essential to their healthy and normal natures, then fear of all kinds must be eliminated from their lives (as, for example, the fear of poverty, of unemployment, and of ill-health). The true test of lives that are expressing themselves is joy (not pleasure, be it noted). Yet many lives, through lack of adequate material support on the one hand, or on the other through a collected surfeit of it which shields them from all the risk and adventure of real living, go through the even tenor of a joyless existence.

Again, we must not be mesmerised by mere change. Be not deceived, to live is not merely to change, but to triumph over change, to set up some values as of absolute worth, and to aim at realising and furthering these. We must ask ourselves what things in life we believe are worth while. On this scheme of values a man must base his religion or his philosophy of life. It is indeed the function of a genuine, living religion and of a practical social philosophy to provide society with this most necessary of all things—a sense of values relative and absolute. With these we can construct our ideal. Whether it be called by us and others an ideal City or Commonwealth, a *Civitas Dei,* or a Kingdom of God, it is all the same.

Progress is not simply a sensible amelioration of life, a growth of comfort; it is also the achievement of a better intellectual formulation of life. To progress is to attain a more complete consciousness of oneself and of the world. This is true of the individual or person. Social progress must involve a coming to consciousness of mankind as a whole, a strengthening of human solidarity, a collective co-operation for the fullest expression of personalities in their search after goodness, truth, beauty and fellowship.

This growth of corporate self-consciousness among mankind implies the spread of intelligence and the extension of education, adult education, in the democracy. It is not enough to educate the young growing child until he is merely a "hobbledehoy," our training should continue in some manner to the very threshold of recognised citizenship and civic responsibility, and, if we are wise, it will not end there. The intelligent citizen will, as an adult, seek further knowledge of the world—above all, of the social world in which he finds himself. Progress will depend on how we deal with this vital matter. It is not less education we need, but more. Indeed a little, a superficial knowledge as culled from the press or from casual conversations, is often a dangerous thing. The advance of democracy and growth of communities of self-conscious personalities implies an extension of knowledge to those personalities. We do not want men and women who vote as sheep by mere imitation and suggestions of a herd type. We lack sadly in genuine political education, in citizenship and social affairs. Political propaganda is not political education.

We want an intelligent body of citizens who are more than mere mechanical voters, or mere toilers with their hands; we want men who can think and, if need be, criticise. If we fail in this, our civilisation will be based like all those others we condemn, on slavery, a slavery not merely political or economic, but what is even worse, *mental slavery*. Automatism, mechanical effort, decay of initiative, growth of habit, convention, physical and mental apathy, these are the many-headed dragons which beset the road of progress. They are the dead weights of burden on the back of struggling humanity in its pilgrim march through the valley of Time.

VI.

Thus have men come out of brutishness from the days of the Neanderthal man to the contemporary man. We must beware of self-satisfaction. Civilisation may be after all, as one cynic suggested, only a sweet lily blossoming on the dung heap or a house built over a volcano's crater. Whether we can maintain it for long depends largely upon ourselves and what use we make of our opportunities. We may discuss Darwinism and its watchwords of "heredity," "natural selection," "variation," and "adaptation to environment," but we must remember that biologists themselves are puzzled by variation, that controversy still rages around the work of Weismann and the

vexed and vital problem of the inheritance of acquired characteristics, that natural selection is not so explanatory a term as some would think it, and we must note that man has very largely the power of creating his own environment. Man has something to put off, and something to become.

We need stern warning. There are signs in many quarters that humanity, setting its heart on materialistic and egoistic conceptions, may go down in ruin, quarrelling and fighting about these things. There is no power, or so-called "natural law," keeping humanity infallibly right and in the line of progress. All is change, but not all changes are an advance. Change is only a sign of life; it may be moving to fuller life, or may be going to decline. We must not be fatalists or optimists. There is an equal possibility of progress or deterioration. Progress can only come because and when humanity recognises itself as collectively responsible for its own history, and when each individual feels his own responsibility regarding that action. We must *will* progress, and consciously set ourselves to realise it. Social progress is idle talk, apart from social purpose, and that purpose must be, until humanity fades from the earth with the decline of all life on our planet, the promotion of the good life realised by intelligent, self-conscious and self-controlled beings in a community of "ends" or persons.

We are as it were, on a giant ship from which a wave has torn the rudder and a blast of wind carried away the mainmast. It is lost on the ocean, as our earth is lost in space. It floats thus at random, driven by the tempest like a huge derelict, but with men upon it, and yet the vessel reaches port. Perhaps we, this struggling crew of human beings, will also reach that unknown end which we shall have created for ourselves. No hand firmly and unerringly directs us; the rudder has long been broken—or rather it has never existed. We must make it. This is a great task, and it is our task, now and always.

NOTE.

Students or readers who desire to follow up an examination of this subject may welcome some references to literature bearing on this aspect of Sociology. For their convenience and assistance, the following brief bibliography has been appended to the lecture in its published form. Only works which are likely to be accessible to British readers have been included in the list.

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