

6 THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL THOUGHT

He has sought unity in change and monism in multiplicity. He has proclaimed that blind change itself is lord of all, or he has found solace in a creative evolution. He has put man at the apex of all creation or he has asserted that all is vanity and an interpretation of which he is capable.

(3) From the far-flung horizons of religious and philosophic systems of thought, man has directed his concentrated and prolonged attention in an opposite direction. He has turned his thought upon itself. He has maneuvered his thought processes introspectively. He has puzzled long and diligently upon the structure and functions of thinking and behaving. These series of studies have led on the one hand to treatises such as Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, and on the other hand to the current expressions of behavioristic or gestaltistic psychology.

(4) Man has sought to fathom the material secrets of the earth. Since the Industrial Revolution in England, inquiring minds have focused tremendous energies upon attempts to understand and harness the physical elements. Rocks and strata of rocks have been caused to yield a wealth of ores, and subterranean caverns have been made to pour forth reservoirs of gas and oil. Modern transportation has been made possible by man's knowledge about steam, gasoline, and electricity. Mechanical inventions have followed one another in anticipated fashion, paying awe-inspiring tribute to the thought power of man. Abstract thinking has given man a marvelous degree of control over the material side of life. In other words, science has become the god of mankind in many fields. Scientific thought has added immeasurably to the conveniences and comforts of life.

(5) Recently, the problem of man's adjustment to his fellow men has received worthy attention at the bar of scientific accuracy during the present century. For millenniums man has pondered hard over his relation and obligation to his world, as well as to his universe, over the nature of his thought processes and of his mind, over ways and means of acquiring individual success through a manipulation of the material forces of the earth. Incomprehensible as it may seem, it

THE NATURE OF SOCIAL THOUGHT 7

is true, however, that man has neglected almost wholly until recent decades the very heart of all truly successful living, namely, his relation and obligation to his fellow men and to society. Social thinking, or the analytical thinking about the nature of social life, its trends, and its problems, has been largely ignored. Social thinking, the center of all complete thinking, has been so little perfected that the world today is suffering beneath a staggering load of ills that few seem able to diagnose accurately. In the present age, however, the need is great for scientific social thinking about the whole gamut of social ills.

Today religious thought is seeking revitalization through socialized thinking. In their modern endeavors to re-define their purposes two religions in particular, Christianity and Judaism, are appropriating to good advantage current knowledge about social processes. A remarkable step has been taken in the United States within the last ten years toward co-operative thinking, at least about social and economic problems, by Catholics, Jews, and Protestants.

After many vain searches among false theories and imper-social elements, philosophy is seeking to find itself in a social universe. Psychology, likewise, is no longer individual, structural, and formal. It is now trying to interpret the world in terms of human behavior and of gestaltistic patterns. Group processes are being searched for the origins of stimuli that will explain personal behavior.

Science, maintaining objective methods, is plunging into the measurement of the influence of material and social factors alike upon behavior. Science, with all the aid that it has given to creating better and better instrumentalities of life, is raising questions about the relation of these instrumentalities to the values of life. Science, however, turns over this problem to the non-quantitative disciplines and to evaluative studies.

The phase of social thought known as economic thought is particularly important in its influence. It is seeking to measure and re-evaluate industrial and business enterprise in terms of their societal significance. The ownership of the material resources of the earth, the management of technological enterprise, the distribution of economic gain and surplus