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EDITORIAL.

The "SOCIOLOGICAL REVIEW" takes the place of the annual volume of collected "Papers" in which proceedings of the Sociological Society have been published hitherto. By quarterly publication it is possible to secure greater continuity of treatment and more scope for the scientific handling of the subject; and the publishing of a Review is felt to be the best method of putting the work of the Society on a permanent footing and rendering it accessible to the world. The work of the Society, has, among other things, done something towards clearing up misconceptions of the nature and problems of Sociology, and defining the scope of any sociological journal. But it would be ill to pretend that we have arrived at general agreement on this initial question. We cannot yet assume that Sociology means the same thing to all people or that there would be universal agreement as to the appropriate contents of a sociological journal. Not only are there still many who deny the bare existence of Sociology, but, what is more serious, among Sociologists there are still many deep divergences of view as to the nature and province of the enquiries which they professedly pursue in common. This divergence is, however, not a sign of disease but rather of the raw vigour and exuberance of youth. An enemy is doubtless entitled to make the most of the fact that the enthusiasts for a science have not hitherto been able to decide among themselves what their science is about. But if disagreement as to its fundamental definitions is used as a proof that a science does not exist and cannot be brought into existence, it is to be feared that other sciences will follow Sociology to annihilation. Political Economy is generally admitted to be a science, but economists would not seek to prove it by pointing to the general agreement in their definitions of Wealth, of Capital, of Production and other fundamental conceptions. Biology is a science, but how many Biolo-

gists can satisfy themselves—to say nothing of satisfying one another—with any definition of Life. What in the light of recent researches is the limit between Chemistry and Physics? Is it certain that the present demarcation between the sciences of Life and those which deal with inanimate matter is of any permanent validity? Indeed if a science sets out to deal with the properties of matter, must we demand that it should first define satisfactorily what matter is and what it means by a property, and if so, should we find that any physical science can yet be reckoned among the number of human achievements? In reality it is precisely the most elementary conceptions that remain longest in the dark. The physicist can far more readily teach us what matter does than what matter is. The dialectician may prove that this is absurd, but the fact is so. The biologist finds it a great deal easier to tell us about life than to tell us what that life is which he is talking about. We are able to follow him (if we are not dialecticians) because we already have some rough notion of what life means. We are not prepared with a definition but “if you do not ask we understand.” So it is with the biologist himself. He has a rough, broad conception which serves as a starting point for his investigations. He finds it difficult to put this conception into a rigid formula, and if he succeeds in doing so the very progress of his enquiry will probably confute him. As he learns more and more about his subject matter so does his original conception of that matter grow and change and remodel itself under his hands. The more he knows about living things the more adequate his definition of Life. But if this is so it is clear that the definition which is to satisfy everybody must come not at the beginning but at the end of discovery. We must know what we are investigating only in the sense that we must have a rough and provisional outline of the field of work. If this imperfect and broken knowledge be ruled out, it remains that we can only know what we are looking for when we have found it.

What may be fairly demanded of Sociologists then is not that they should have a nicely rounded definition of the object of sociological investigation which should command universal agreement, but rather that they should have sufficient common understanding of the nature and aims of a science of Society to render discussion fruitful and co-operation possible. They must have a rough and provisional conception of “Society” just as in Biology students must have a rough and provisional conception of Life. That is, the term must be at once generic and distinctive. It must

serve to group certain matters together and to distinguish them from others, as possible objects of scientific investigation. Does the phrase science of society serve this purpose? If it allows room for cavil among sociologists it is probably in the use of the term "science" rather than of the term "society." Some would doubtless prefer to speak of Social Philosophy and deny that Society can be an object of a science comparable to Physics or Biology. This objection, however, can only be grounded on the more restricted use of the term science in which it is opposed to philosophy. If by science we mean merely unprejudiced investigation, accurately measured statement and the systematic prosecution of a subject through all the windings of interrelated facts—then philosophy itself aims at being a science. It is only if certain presuppositions as to the subject matter of science be allowed, if for example there is a separation between "nature" and that which is not of nature, or between the sphere of law and that of "freedom," and if science be restricted to one side of the partition, that any question can arise as to the use of the term in connection with society. As long as no such presuppositions are covertly introduced by the use of the term probably all Sociologists will agree that their object is the Science of Society. They hold that is to say that the Social Life constitutes a distinct field for investigation, and that it should be investigated in a scientific spirit—that is to say in the spirit which makes the ascertainment of the truth the immediate object, which aims at accurately measured statement, and at the systematic interconnection of the facts which it ascertains. I do not know whether all who profess and call themselves Sociologists would accept this account of their views, but on the other hand I do not know of any serious work on sociology which does not on its own lines seek to fulfil this purpose.

Within the limits of such a conception, however, very great variety of treatment is of course possible and the reader who wishes to know something of the scope and plan of a new journal may be expected to ask for something more definite. It is not, fortunately, among the recognised duties of an Editorial Committee to produce definitions, but in view of the admitted divergences in the handling of sociological investigations, it is perhaps well for those responsible for a sociological journal to give some indication of the ground which they hope to cover. This ground, I think, can only be marked off at the present stage by reference to the actual work done or in the doing by sociologists, that is, by all

who treat problems of social life in the scientific spirit. As already pointed out this would by no means exclude many of those who would maintain that their own method was not scientific but philosophical. The fundamental questions of social life were for long studied mainly under the aegis of political philosophy and one of the first points which a modern sociologist, seeking to define his subject, has to consider is the relation of his method to this older discipline. He finds to begin with that systematic political thinking developed in close connection with the general movement of metaphysics and moral philosophy. For this there is a double reason. On the one hand political philosophy whether in Hobbes or Locke, in Rousseau or Bentham, in John Mill or T. H. Green, closely resembles general philosophy in its method. Like metaphysics or ethics, it takes as its starting point common current conceptions, conceptions of law and government, of liberty and obligation, of the individual and society, conceptions which we all use and all suppose ourselves to understand until someone asks us what we mean by them. This someone is the philosopher and in the use of such conceptions as have been instanced, it is the political philosopher. That is to say, the political philosopher has sought for light by scrutinising those principles of human association which are so fundamental that everybody else takes them for granted. In other words he is dealing according to his lights with the most general conditions of social life, the intimate nature of the social bond, the problems arising out of the bare fact that distinct personalities form a social whole. On this side then he is in line with contemporary enquirers into those broad sociological principles which are independent of time and place. He has been and is laying down the lines of a general sociology. On the other side political thought has been closely associated with moral philosophy. For political thinkers have not merely sought to determine what society is, but have pretty uniformly conceived their analysis as having at least an important bearing on the question, what it ought to be. On the face of the facts these are two very distinct questions, and if there is any ultimate sense in which they are one that sense is only reached by a long philosophical analysis which not all will follow. But without such analysis many people confuse them or at least pass from the one to the other without sufficiently clear consciousness of the step that they are taking. It may be that some schools of political philosophy have fused, if they have not confused, these two questions. Be that as it may, sociological thinking must start with a clear cut distinction

between the "is" and the "ought," between the facts of social life and the conditions on which society actually rests and the ideal to which society should conform. If indeed it finds that any element of the ideal enters into the facts or the conditions, that is matter of fact, capable of proof or disproof. But it must hold in full clearness from the outset that the question of fact is one thing and the question of right and wrong another. An ideal is not proved to be an actual condition of social life because it is an ideal nor is a factor in the actual life of society to be identified with a moral law merely because it is proved to be a factor. The "laws" of Political Economy are not as the old jest has it laws to be "obeyed," but statements of certain relations of cause and effect to be taken into account by anyone who wishes to achieve certain economic results; and so with any other "laws" of Sociology.

Political Philosophy if this view is correct, has concerned itself with two questions which in thought are quite distinct. The first of these questions concerns the general conditions of social life; the second is the problem of Moral Philosophy. It may be asked whether this latter problem is properly the concern of Sociology at all. Sociology, it may be said, is a science, and science is to be understood in a more limited sense than that given above. A science deals with facts and the interconnection of facts. It discovers laws and makes predictions. Hence it tells us what has been, what is, and what will be, but it has no concern with what ought to be. Not that social science leaves ethics out of account. There is the science of Comparative Ethics which tells what men have thought and think about right and wrong. It may even help us to forecast what they are likely to think about right and wrong, but it does not profess to say what they ought to think about right and wrong. If this is a question which can be determined at all it belongs to Philosophy and not to science. Sociology as a science then, it may be said, has no concern with the right and wrong of human conduct, or with the good and bad of social life, but only with the nature and conditions of the social structure and the observable laws of its growth and decay.

But the very terms of the protest show how impossible it is to keep Sociology—especially the broader investigations of general Sociology—in permanent separation from all ethical considerations. On the one side if right conduct is truly social conduct the results of sociology cannot be indifferent to the moral philosopher. We said above, that to discover one of the conditions of human

association is not all one with discovering an element in the ethical ideal. But there are circumstances in which the two come very nearly to the same thing. For if the condition is a vital and unalterable condition of social life, if science proves that the social life cannot subsist without it, and if moral philosophy regards the maintenance of the social life as a necessary part of its ideal then the scientific truth is at once translatable into a moral command. The deliverance of science and the deliverance of moral philosophy on the subject are still distinct. The one states a fact and the other lays down an injunction. But the fact and the injunction issue from two sides, if the phrase be allowed, of the same human consciousness in relation to the same human data. More generally, those who take seriously the social side of Ethics look forward to the gradual formation of an Applied Ethics which will stand in much closer relation to life than the disputations of the schools, that is in effect to an Art which, resting on Moral Philosophy as its theoretical foundation, would use the results of the social sciences as Medicine uses those of Physiology. The widest conception of Sociology then—and however individual thinkers may differ, it is the widest conception that should shape the policy of a review—takes the subject as embracing not only a Science, but a Philosophy and an Art, as dealing not only with the facts and conditions of social life, but with its ideals, and the means of their realisation.

Indeed, if Sociology as a science of facts and conditions is important to Ethics, it may equally be argued that Ethics cannot be indifferent to a student of Sociology. For what after all is the material of Sociology? It is the kind of common life achieved by human beings, beings that is to say moved by impulses and purposes. The interplay of purpose we may say, is to Sociology what mass and motion are to physics or the metabolism of cellular tissue to Biology. Doubtless there are conditions, physical conditions, biological conditions, for example, which come cramping in, hedging round the play of purpose, sometimes determining its direction, sometimes twisting its result. But the distinctive feature of our subject matter, the feature that makes Sociology a distinct science is the web of purpose wherein men act on one another and react on the conditions that make them. But purpose and the relations of purpose also constitute the subject of the ethical judgment. Ethics and social science have, generically, the same subject matter and though they regard it from different points of view yet as every sociologist is also a man he cannot, so to say,

wholly divest himself of the one kind of consciousness in putting on the other. Nor is it desirable that he should do so. The Ethical judgment is scientifically by far the most important judgment which has to be passed on human purposes. For we cannot ask any more vital questions about purposes than how far they attain their ends, whence our fundamental question about the interaction of distinct purposes and the purposes of separate personalities is how far they tend to frustrate or to further one another, how they conflict or harmonise. But to raise this question is at once to revert to the old ethical problem of the individual and the common good. And any answer that we give to this question, that is as much as to say any deep-reaching definitions, classifications, any conception of growth, development or decay in human society will consciously or unconsciously be framed in terms of our conception of the common good. It is better for the sake of clearness that it be done consciously, and accordingly our most purely "scientific" work in Sociology is likely to be done best, if we have in mind an articulate system of clear cut ethical conceptions.

Even were it otherwise, were the scientific, the philosophic, and the practical sides of sociological work separate in essence rather than distinct in thought, a Review which seeks to offer common ground for sociological workers to meet upon could hardly neglect the speculative or the practical approach to the subject. Its conductors would have to realise that a subject which is treated by some as a science in the more limited sense of that term, is, and has been, approached by others from the speculative and by still more from the human and practical point of view. They would have to take these points of view into account and to bear in mind, among other things, that the "practical" interest in Sociology has often taken, and seems more and more likely to take shape in the form of experiments in verification of hypotheses, experiments which the most precisely limited science cannot ignore. So what a Review has to ask is that the sociological interest, whether practical or theoretical, should be "scientific" in the broad sense here given to that term, that to find expression in these pages it should be prompted by an unprejudiced desire for truth, rendered in measured accuracy of expression, and be such as to assist in the systematic following up of interconnected facts.

So far we have spoken of General Sociology and have seen reasons for giving the term for our purposes a wide interpretation. But the advance of Sociology in recent years has been more marked

in the growth of special sciences than in the fresh development of fundamental ideas. Indeed sociology as a general discipline has been sometimes threatened with destruction at the hands of its own offspring. It tends to be dispersed and disappear into a number of specialisms. In place of sociology we have social sciences and the question of urgency for sociology is whether they are to develop independently each on its own lines or are to be kept in touch with one another and with the fertilising principle of social unity by means of a general study of Sociology.

The division of Sociology into special sciences is in itself only in accordance with the normal conditions of scientific growth. So vastly complex a whole as Social Life cannot be studied for long without a division of labour, and as soon as certain elements can be distinguished, certain fields of work marked out in *prima facie* distinctness from the remainder, economy suggests a concentration of different minds on each of these in turn. The selection is justified and the economy is real on two conditions. (1) There must be real cohesion of certain social phenomena which brings them closer to one another than they are to other sides of social life, and (2) since society is after all one, and no portion of its life can be really divorced from the remainder, the specialist should be ready at every stage to take into account the influence in his own sphere of forces emanating from some other part of the field. It is on this side that the natural limitations of specialism are often the cause of confusion of voices, stagnation in discovery, and positive errors in the practical guidance of affairs—and this not in Sociology alone. It is here that the function of General Sociology becomes all important. Properly considered General Sociology is neither a separate science complete in itself before specialism begins, nor is it a mere synthesis of the social sciences consisting in a mechanical juxtaposition of their results. It is rather a vitalising principle that runs through all social investigation nourishing and nourished by it in turn, stimulating inquiry, correlating results, exhibiting the life of the whole in the parts and returning from the study of the parts to a fuller comprehension of the whole. We cannot indeed attempt any reasoned distribution of social functions among separate sciences without being struck by the unsubstantial nature of our divisions. We may think of Society first as a Structure and consider its constitution, the main groups of which it is composed, the mode of government by which it is held together, the nature of its relation to other societies. We see here foundations for the study of the Family, the Class,

the Tribe, the Nation; for the Science of Government; or for the study of International Law. We may turn to the Directive Conceptions and Institutions which condition the life of society, and distinguish law, ethics, religion; industrial organisation; science and philosophy; literature and art. The systematic treatment of any of these is on one side a sociological investigation, and each in turn may be subdivided into further specialisms. We may enquire into the concrete facts of society, the actual life of a people as affecting and affected by the constitution and the directive institutions of the social structure, and then we obtain demographical investigations of the life conditions of the social classes, and of the distribution of personal qualities among groups. In any or all of these departments a science may be "Descriptive," limited to a straight-forward account of the facts of a given time and place; it may be Analytical, resolving complex effects into elementary principles, causes, or conditions; and it may be Comparative bringing phenomena of different societies into relation with one another and seeking through comparison and classification to discover lines of growth. But we can no sooner make these or any similar divisions of the possible field of sociology than we become aware of forces that pass over all our boundaries. What can we know of the nature, say, of the family and of the various forms which it has assumed without taking some account of general ethics, of religion, law, and even of industrial and governmental organisation? How far could we carry a treatise on government without law, or on law without reference to religion and ethics, and what mountains of specialism we must raise between our eyes and the facts before we could fail to see the interaction of any one of these with the contemporary state of science and philosophy, of literature and art. We may carry specialism further in one field than in another according as the facts are more or less closely knit but whenever we take one side of social life, be it the economic, the religious, or any other, and treat it as though it stood alone we are on the road to fallacy.

It is not the function of a sociological journal to produce a ready made scheme of Sociology. But it is its function to assist in the work which General Sociology has to do, in bringing the work of specialists together and in affording facilities for the discussion of the broad sociological bearing of each specialistic investigation. It should aid in familiarising the Economist with the conclusions of Comparative Jurisprudence or with the philosophic analysis of society; the historian of thought with the

facts of industrial and political development; the investigators of contemporary social conditions with the earlier phases of social life; and all students of society with the best that is known or thought of the bearings of Biology and Psychology on their own investigations. At the same time it will afford them collectively the opportunity of defending the study of society from aggressions which would destroy its character as a distinct science or from usurpations which would merge it in the work of one of its own departments. It must give a fair field and no favour to the practical interest in Sociology. Needless to say it will approach questions of living interest without party bias, but it will be among its prime objects to show that even questions of the day, like questions of 3,000 years ago, can be approached in a scientific spirit with a disinterested desire to find out the truth about them.*

It may be objected that the Review would on these lines become an organ of all the specialisms, an attempt which considerations of print and paper forbid. But this is once again to misapprehend the position of Sociology. It does not lie within our province to cater for the detailed investigations of the recognised specialist. We invite him rather to discuss his principles and broad results with representatives of other specialisms and in the presence of those interested in Sociology at large.

We seek to touch each specialism at the point where it comes in contact with General Sociology. In each department there are matters of little interest except to those far advanced in that branch—matters of controversy on which the specialist alone can decide, investigations of detail of which he alone can see the bearing. The natural home for discussion of such points is the journal of the specialism. But there are also in each branch matters of general interest, results of importance to other investigators, controversies in which a material part of the evidence falls within the competence of another department, and of these the natural home is the journal for sociologists in general. Thus,

* By restricting the term science to its narrower sense of an inquiry into facts as opposed to ideals we may make the result of the discussion clear by a systematic arrangement. Thus :

Economics is logically a branch of Sociology and every economic truth is a sociological truth. But there are economic investigations which would be best suited to the *Economic Journal*, and others—such as touch most nearly the general life of the people—that would find an appropriate place in the *Sociological Review*.

We shall, therefore, welcome contributions alike from the philosopher and the specialist, from the comparative sciences which search the whole human record for their data, and from the detailed study of contemporary tendencies. We shall hope to show that in the study of social evolution the organisation of a mediæval city, or the genesis of an Oriental religion have their place alongside of the analysis of contemporary institutions. We hope to show at the same time that the problems of the day are just as much objects of science as any period of past history or any phase of primitive life. To the sociologist "nothing that is human is foreign." Not that such scattered fragments of Sociology are of real value for the science till they are brought or rather till they grow together. On the contrary it is one of the functions of Sociological criticism to prevent the crude use of fragments of history and of empirical generalisation from isolated cases. But the main problem of Sociology at the present day is to build up the great Comparative Science which alone can put the theory of social evolution on a firm basis. To form by a philosophic analysis a just conception of human progress, and trace this progress in its manifold complexity in the course of history, to test its reality by careful classification and searching comparisons, to ascertain its conditions, and if possible to forecast its future—this is the comprehensive problem towards which all sociological science converges and on the solution of which reasoned sociological effort must finally depend. In the light of this conception everything that concerns human development acquires value and all sociological work achieves unity. The comparative study of law, of government and the social fabric; the history of science and philosophy, of art and literature; the study of the ethical and religious consciousness in their manifold phases; the story of the industrial arts and the gradual conquest of nature, all these have their sociological side. All contribute to the general enquiry into the nature, conditions, and possibilities of human progress and to understand their contributions is the work of sociology.

L. T. HOBHOUSE.