

Canadian Democracy And Socialism.

Society's aims, purposes and plans of procedure change with the succeeding generations which make society continuous. The first half of the nineteenth century was essentially individualistic in its theories. But the latter half of the century has witnessed the growth of new ideas, based upon the conviction that a government—which is society as a unit—can do a great deal for the elevation of the individual. This conviction has been steadily gaining ground. The result in its mildest form is democracy; in its extreme form it is socialism. What is Socialism? Prof. Richard T. Ely says: "Socialism, strictly speaking, denotes simply the social system. It is the opposite of individualism. A socialist is one who looks to the society organized in the State for aid in bringing about a more perfect distribution of economic goods and elevation of humanity." Prof. Francis A. Walker says: "It is properly applied to an unconscious tendency, or a conscious purpose, to extend the powers of the State beyond a certain necessary minimum line of duties, for a supposed public good, under popular impulse." If this is socialism, should it frighten any person? Should it be the object of unsympathetic denial or biased criticism? As a system, it is based on certain assumed arguments, which it is preferable to controvert than ignore.

Canada has not remained untouched by the doctrines and principles of socialism. Our public schools are distinctly socialistic. The child of the poorest citizen may secure a good education without cost, except for books. In the larger cities of Ontario, this system has been extended so that even books and other school requisites are supplied free. The next step will undoubtedly be, that the children of the poorest classes shall be properly clothed and fed at the public expense during their school age. Protectionism is another essentially socialistic movement. It is the effort of a young and small division to bring itself up to the point of strength already attained by an older and stronger division. The plan itself may be condemned or applauded, but the motive remains unchanged. But this protective principle is manifested in other ways than in protective tariffs on imported goods. It is followed when a town bonuses a manufacturing industry. A most cogent example of a socialistic undertaking is the formation of Good Roads Associations which is now going on in this country. The custom of charging tolls on roads that have been built by private enterprise is passing away. The great public advantage of roads built and maintained at public expense has become apparent to all, and is being rapidly secured. The supplying of gas and electric lights by a municipal corporation at the expense of the municipality is another socialistic undertaking. The control of street railways and telephone lines is in the same category. This naturally leads to the consideration of a broader and more important socialistic movement—the control of post offices, telegraph lines and railways by the federal government. In Canada, the post office is controlled by the government for the general benefit of the country, but the day is not distant when all telegraph and railway lines on the North American Continent shall be in the hands of the governments. The agitation for this is not new, but it is stronger today than it ever was, and victory will soon be its laurel wreath. The subsidizing of ocean steamboat lines is another socialistic movement now making its appearance in Canada. This is a governmental undertaking for the general public benefit; it is socialism in a mild form.

Taking all the foregoing facts into consideration, it can be safely asserted that socialism in a mild form—the form called democracy—has taken deep root in Canada. Extreme socialism is likely to follow moderate socialism or democracy, and in extreme socialism lie many dangers. Should private enterprise personal choices and aims and individual action be lost in the general workings of society or government, certain changes will be necessary which at first sight are appalling to the conservative classes of the present. It is only by easing the poverty of the masses that fanaticism will be prevented. No radical changes are immediately needed, but many measures which will tend to elevate the masses press for immediate consideration. The growth of great soulless corporations must be prevented; the masses of much wealth in the possession of single families must be avoided; disputes between capital and labor must be settled by arbitration, so that the harmony between capital and labor will be preserved; the education of the masses must be pressed with renewed vigor, so that anarchism cannot be begotten amid ignorance and superstition; the crowding of the poor into unhealthy portions of great cities must be avoided, because a pure mind exists only in a pure body. These are a few of the socialistic schemes which can be undertaken to discount the troubles of the future. With these undertaken and successfully carried out, extreme socialism would cease to be a menace and anarchism cease to be a nightmare.—John A. Cooper, in the Canadian Magazine.

A quite general resumption of Pennsylvania on and steel mills is reported.

Japan Today.

As all the eyes are turned to the East watching the development of the struggle between China and Japan, a slight sketch of the chief points in a bright article on "New Japan" which appeared in the Fortnightly Review not long ago, may now be of special interest. The writer touches on many questions, social and political, questions often of change of vital importance to the nation, but at which the western critic is too apt to smile as an amusing if rather childish imitation of European ways, a view of matters exceedingly irritating to the Japanese. One has to bear in mind that never before has a people, with a high civilization of its own, sought to change it, or rather, perhaps, to graft portions of another upon it, with the same rapidity that this nation is doing. Changes here are not the slow growth of years, the children accepting what their fathers found impossible, but straight from one condition of things to another men find themselves plunged; small wonder if at times confusion more than aught else seems the result. In contrast to the better-known artistic and poetic side of Japanese life, we are introduced to the not less important "broadcloth life," meaning there by a certain class of government clerks and others, whose work, well-done or ill-done, is of some moment to the nation. The partial adoption of the western dress by these men is no merely imitative fad, but arises from the necessities of the case; the national dress being quite unsuited to the routine of office work, and the purchase of a very inferior European suit straining to the utmost some of the more limited incomes, having no margin for the garb so much better adapted for home comfort. The defects of the government service are very glaring, and yet the foreigners who have entered it declare its merits to be equally conspicuous, the transition state being responsible for many apparent contradictions. In illustration of this: As a nation, none are more courteous than the Japanese; nevertheless, the young native official who is the usual medium of communication between the minister and the foreigner is the rudest of mortals, a phase of human nature not very difficult to understand, perhaps. Two exceptions to this are noted: those officials who have been trained in Europe, and the young nobles of the household department; the kindness and courtesy to foreigners of both these classes are gratefully recorded. Then, again, the national spirit of Japan, admirable in itself, and one of the strongest hopes for the future, is yet often responsible with the young and hot-headed for much that is far from admirable. With a newly-instituted parliament, and the more important political offices mainly filled by young men, not merely inexperienced, but without the traditions, one might almost say the hereditary instincts, of generations of statesmen to guide them, it could not fail that this same national spirit—this *yamato damashi*—should lead at times to strange conclusions and ill-advised actions. A curious example of this is the translation of the constitution, which was intrusted by Count Ito to a secretary who believed his knowledge of English quite equal to the task, with the result that some of the language is such "as the White King's advisers in Looking-glass Kingdom might be proud of." To any criticism the answer is, "Our constitution is for ourselves, not for foreigners." Japan is for the Japanese." The educational problem, too, is a difficult one. Many of the old professions are ceasing to furnish a livelihood to young men, for whom there is not yet room in the ranks of the new ones, or who may not be sufficiently well-educated to enter them, though they have reached the point of despising the ways of their ancestors; are in fact discontented and out of touch with both past and present. From this uncomfortable class springs the shoshi or redresser of wrong; wrongs of every kind, national or international, political and social, of Japanese and foreigners alike. All sorts of people are interviewed by shoshi; members of foreign legations; Japanese ministers; members of parliament; in all departments of public life this curious individual takes an unbidden share, the whole band being at the same time under the perfect control of a very efficient police system. Within certain limits they may be as active as they please, but if at any time their agitations are likely to endanger public tranquility, a law known as the "Peace Preservation Regulations" is at once enforced. Without warning, all shoshi are commanded to leave Tokyo and remain at a certain distance for a given time. Within a few hours the disturbing element is completely banished from the city. Neither socialist, democrat nor nihilist, the shoshi is a sort of compound of the three; and rumors say that some of the leaders of the many political parties of Japan do not hesitate to make quiet use of him. Reference is made to some of the older Japanese statesmen; to their capacity, their energy and their patriotism, judged even by English standards; though in so momentous a task as constitution-making, it could not be otherwise than that their work would show some weak points. In law matters, New Japan seems to have availed herself widely of the codes of Europe and America, and her students in

both countries have won high commendation from their examiners. Of the judges the writer, himself a lawyer, says that he found them distinguished for "uprightness and integrity, together with legal knowledge and acumen;" no slight praise surely. In the art world as everywhere is to be found the struggle between the old and the new; the one clinging tenaciously, if not very successfully, to the traditions which the demands of western commerce have done so much to weaken; the other comprising eager spirits, who, casting aside all old methods, have studied art in various European centres to the production of pictures "in oil," "framed and glazed," surprisingly good, we are told, all things considered: but for which there is no room in the small houses, and no money to spare from the small incomes and therefore as yet no demand. Between these two extremes is a little band of modern artists, whose work, with an added fullness of detail gained from the study of western models, has retained the living grace and charm of the birds and flowers of old Japan and is beautiful indeed. Their love of novelty is suggested as a possible advantage to the Japanese in scientific matters, especially the more practical ones, as they eagerly seek for the latest improvements, while more conservative nations are waiting to see how they will work before adopting them. In the translated literature of this curious people we find not only that Huxley, Darwin and kindred writers are in favor, but that Robinson Crusoe and Gulliver are well-known, one probable cause of the popularity of the latter being their length of detail, as that is also a characteristic of native fiction, the least attractive, it would seem to the foreigner, of things Japanese. Still, with railways has appeared the Oriental "yellow back" suited to the travelling taste, together with oddly translated European novels; curious reading sometimes, one would fancy for their authors. Theatrical entertainments of all kinds flourish side by side, from the primitive dance down to the modern sensational drama given in the most realistic fashion. We are told that with the one exception mentioned, the politeness of Old Japan has not yet been forgotten by the new: significant yet—does it mean that the chances are, among such sweeping changes, that the more thoughtful Japanese will have to regret the loss of things it were well to keep, losses which will make gaps, as it were, in the coveted civilization which time alone can fill. But withal they are brave experimenters that are being tried among this unique people, and with the history of one island race graven deep in our hearts, what may we not hope from the future of this other nation, islanders too, in the far east.—M. J. Kirby, in The Week.

Fredericton Deaf and Dumb Institution.

Mr. Geo. E. Powers, assistant in the above institution, is making the annual call upon the friends and subscribers residing in Carleton, Victoria and Madawaska counties. Thirty-seven pupils were in attendance during the past session but there is still accommodation for twenty more. Applications for admission may be addressed to the principal, Mr. A. F. Woodbridge.

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