

faults, is a most honest and vigorous production which should be widely read.

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*Psychologie du Socialisme.* G. LE BON. Rev. Philos. December, 1896.

The author proposes to apply the principles developed in his previous works to the phenomena of 'socialism,' comprising under this term "the aspirations, wants, beliefs, ideas and reforms which are to-day the profound passion of many minds." To appreciate the power of socialism we must consider it not from the political or economic standpoint, but as a *belief*, and the student of the psychology of beliefs will understand why argument is quite in vain against the collective belief of a multitude.

In its fundamental principles socialism is but a repetition of tendencies which emerged in Hebrew, Greek and Roman life, and reached an actual triumph in early Christianity, only to be abandoned when Christianity became itself a conservative institution at present, although the actual condition of the poorer classes is much superior to that of former times, yet their wants and desires have increased so rapidly that the ratio is more on the side prompting to discontent than ever before. Add to this the prevalent egoism, demoralizing devotion to wealth and indifference of the ruling classes, the pessimism of thinkers, the half-heartedness of the defenders of the present social order, comparable to the weakness of the defenders of dying paganism, and, above all, the decay of the great dominant beliefs of the past which leaves men ready and eager for some new and inspiring belief, and the marvel is not that a new religion like socialism progresses so fast but that it does progress faster. To understand this we must recur to the psychological laws of the evolution of beliefs.

Man is guided in life by two classes of conceptions, *ancestral conceptions*, or *sentiments* on the one hand, and *acquired* or *intellectual conceptions* on the other. The former are the great motives in conduct. They are the atavistic influence to which is due the real conservatism of crowds, often masked as this may be by temporary agitations. The acquired or intellectual conceptions remain almost without influence upon actual conduct until, by repeated hereditary accumulation, they have penetrated the depths of the unconscious and become sentiments. Buddhism, Christianity, Islam were no new faiths. Christianity triumphed not because it was new, but because it embodied the sentiments of Greek and Egyptian and Persian as well

as of Jew. At the very beginning a belief may have roots in the intelligence, but when it becomes the actual motor it becomes rather the regulator of the intelligence, the touch-stone of judgment. The mind can receive only what conforms to the new belief. Philosophy, literature and the arts all receive its impress, as in the middle ages, or among the Arabs. All new conceptions and perceptions must be unconsciously shaped by these ancestral conceptions before they can gain entrance to the mind. This is strikingly illustrated in the changing meanings attached to words from age to age, or as used by different races and sexes, a suggestive subject for psychological investigation. On technical subjects there may be intellectual discussion and agreement. But in morals, politics and religion agreement, or even mutual understanding is possible only for those of a common origin. In conference on these themes "it is not the living but the dead who discuss." Ordinary psychology assumes that all men experience identical sentiments under the influence of like stimulation, but nothing is more erroneous. A common well-rooted belief becomes thus the source of common ideas and the greatest factor in the creation of a national soul and will, and so of a characteristic orientation for all ideas.

The psychology of the apostles of the new faith is instructive. Although alienists usually regard the advanced socialists as belonging to the 'criminal-born' type, this is quite a mistake. They are rather actuated, not as the true criminal, by selfishness, but by motives the reverse of selfish, leading to acts quite opposed to their own interests. Like the apostles of past faiths, the men of the Inquisition, the followers of Mahomet, the men of the Convention, their zeal prompts them to destroy first institutions, then all who resist. Their philanthropy is as sincere and as intolerant of opposition as that of former apostles. They may be regarded as hypnotized by two or three formulas constantly brooded over.

*Sociology and Philosophy.* B. BOSANQUET. *Mind.* January, 1897.

Sociology is coming to be regarded more and more from the point of view of social psychology, the point of view of Plato's *Republic*. This enables us to see its relation to social philosophy. Like individual psychology it is now interested in asserting its claim to be a natural science, and as such to treat all phenomena in its field impartially. The 'laws of association' are the object of investigation, without regard to the logical, ethical or social *value* of the product.