

INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY

BY
ARTHUR FAIRBANKS

THIRD EDITION
REVISED AND IN PART REWRITTEN
(2nd Impression)

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PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

IN the present state of the science of sociology it is rash to venture beyond the monograph on some special topic, to discuss the subject as a whole. The present volume is not intended as a systematic reconstruction of the principles of sociology, even in outline. Its aim is rather practical. Several classes of students to-day are directing more and more attention to the science of society, with the purpose of finding a more scientific basis for their work. The minister would infuse religion into the social relations of everyday life, and seeks to understand society, which he would make Christian. Touched with a deep sense of human woe, "ethical" reformers find that material aid and education, and even friendship, cannot meet the wants of the individual, but that they must learn to know society, and work through society, in order to help the man. The effort to administer charity wisely; the effort to make criminals into men, and to prevent men from becoming criminals; the effort to develop a sounder municipal life in our cities, and a truer political sentiment in our nations—these are but some of the lines of work in which men to-day are driven to study the science of society, in order that they may not do harm where they would do good. Moreover, students of politics, of economics, of psychology and philosophy, of history, are turning more and more atten-

tion to the sociological basis of their work. It has been my aim to furnish a brief introduction to the subject, which would make plain to the reader something of its scope and importance, and, it may be, aid him in farther study. That the specialist in sociological investigation will find much here to advance the knowledge of the science, is not my expectation.

It has seemed to me unwise to burden the page with many foot-notes. To take the place of these, both in directing the reader to further material and in making general acknowledgment to scholars to whose works I have been indebted, I have added at the end of the book a bibliography, arranged in detail according to the chapters in the body of the work. I have received many suggestions in particular from Professor Giddings' papers; and regret that his *Principles of Sociology* only came into my hands when the present work was already in type. Finally, I desire to express my obligation to three friends and former colleagues—Professors Colby, J. K. Lord, and Wells, of Dartmouth College—for their help and encouragement.

ARTHUR FAIRBANKS.

YALE UNIVERSITY, April 22, 1896.

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

THE present work was published originally with many misgivings, not as to the need of a volume on this subject, but as to the success with which the writer had met the existing need. The reception of the book has been very gratifying, and proves unquestionably the great interest which is being aroused in the study of social problems. The book was not originally intended for use as a text-book; but in preparing a third edition, the fact that it has found a place in many colleges and universities has been constantly in my mind. The second edition was printed with only the slight verbal corrections which seemed most necessary; in the present edition many changes have been made in order to secure greater simplicity and clearness, and one additional chapter has been written to fill out the original plan. The reader will, perhaps, miss a discussion of the sociological theories developed by Professor Giddings and Professor Baldwin, not to mention the work of European writers. To discuss these theories would have been a most welcome task, but it has seemed to me more fitting to hold to the original plan of the book, viz.: to furnish the beginner with an outline of the subject on which he can base his own further studies. Such a plan precluded any extended discussion of the theories which have been put forward to explain social phenomena; I

need hardly add, however, that the reader will find the titles of the more important recent sociological works in the revised bibliography at the end of the volume.

I wish to express my gratitude to Professor I. A. Loos of this university for his suggestions both as to the text and the bibliography; and I may fittingly take this opportunity to thank Mr. Totoki of the University of Tokyo, for the interest in this book which has led him to prepare and publish a translation of it in the Japanese language.

ARTHUR FAIRBANKS.

THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA,
IOWA CITY, January 21, 1900.

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INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY

I

THE SUBJECT-MATTER OF SOCIOLOGY

What is a Society?—The Object to be Studied—Definition—A Society and Social Groups—Society and Social Classes—Importance of the Study of the Social Group—Neglect of the Social Factor in Study of the Individual—Individualistic Study of Society—Study of Society and Study of Man run Parallel—Individuals and Society are not Separate Things—Natural Sciences and the Study of Society.

SOCIOLOGY is the name applied to a somewhat inchoate mass of materials which embodies our knowledge about society. Careful students and sentimental reformers alike profess devotion to the new science. Economics is to be a branch of sociology; theology is to be driven from the pulpit by the new religion of social reform; law and morals may be put on a true foundation, the state at last may learn its true function, and the family its true meaning, because this new science has been discovered toward the close of the nineteenth century. Its forms are as yet varied, and perhaps would suggest a series of pseudo-sciences instead of one genuine science. Spencer uses the term sociology to mean the study of social institutions in their origin and development; Letourneau applies it to the study of social beginnings, and it has been extended to cover a good deal of ethnology and anthropology; Comte, who has the honor of inventing the word *sociologie*, meant by it the goal and summation of all science as applied to the regulation of human society; in America the name

has been applied indifferently to any study of social conditions which aims to regenerate society. Such are some of the claims put forward by the devotees of this new science, and some of the various types which it has assumed. In view of all this confusion and perplexity, it must be the first work of the student to define the scope of this science, if such it be, and to determine its relation to other sciences already recognized as such. Accordingly, I propose first to define the object to be studied, viz., society or the social group, and to indicate the importance of such study; secondly, to discuss the relation of the general science of society to the special sciences dealing with particular classes of social phenomena; and, thirdly, to inquire whether the study of society as thus defined deserves the name of a science.¹

What is a Society?—Sociology claims to be the science of society, and the question immediately arises: What is society, or a society, this object which is to be studied? To-day many writers talk freely of society, and mean by it, on one page, *humanity*; on the next, a *family*, or a *race*; on the next, *social intercourse*. Those writers who regard society as an organism are perhaps the most careless in this matter, and confuse the reader by including in said organism at one time the world as a whole, and again, without notice of change, some small group of men who have united for a definite purpose.

The question is not simply as to the meaning of a word, important as this may be; so long as the object to be studied by a science remains vague, that science cannot be expected to attain clearness and accuracy. Let us make it our first task to ascertain exactly the object that the sociologist proposes to study, and only then shall we be in a position to ask whether the method of sociology can be made scientific, and, on the other hand, whether sociology

¹ These prolegomena to the science of society should perhaps serve as an appendix rather than as an introduction. Certainly Part III. may better be read after the remainder of the volume.