
WORLD DRIFT

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PREFACE

Of the thirteen papers which make up this volume certainly eight or nine deal with general tendencies and hence justify the title. Even the remaining papers consider crescent problems which have to be faced by a large part of humanity.

Many a student of society is a *monist*, finding in some one tendency the key to what is happening in the disturbed sections of mankind. But as for me I am a *pluralist*; I think I see several such keys. One is the radiation of culture from the advanced to the backward peoples as described in Chapter I. Another is the suspension of the survival of the fittest as set forth in Chapters II and III. The intensification of capitalism is the theme of Chapter V. Chapters VI and VII bring out the culture conflict between East and West. The next two chapters disclose certain problems and experiences of the student of world conditions. "The Military Mind" portrays a type that pesters at least a fourth of our race.

So perhaps the title **WORLD DRIFT** is not a misnomer.

EDWARD ALSWORTH ROSS

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Chapter I

IS THE WORLD GROWING BETTER OR WORSE?

IF life is a good thing, then to have more of it is to be better off. Well, we are certainly getting more life. Early in the sixteenth century the expectation of life of a child born in so enlightened a place as Geneva, in Switzerland, was under twenty years. In England and in Massachusetts in 1855 it was forty years. Now in this country the average life extends to near sixty. In the decade 1910-20 four years were added to the expectation of life in the United States. The American Public Health Association at its 1923 meeting declared that it would be possible, using only measures already well understood, to attain sixty-five years by 1930. In the period 1911-24 the wage-earners insured in the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company gained nine years in expectation of life. Now such extensions cannot be attained by bettering the experience of a small select element. The conditions of life and of work for the many must be improving. If, as some radicals insist, the common workingman or farmer is more than ever being exploited and harassed

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and discouraged, thanks to the capitalistic system, we should not register this prolongation, which is not confined to the United States but extends to all peoples within the circle of modern civilization.

THE BRIGHTENING OUTLOOK FOR BABIES

Were the babies consulted, they would shout with one voice that the world is growing kinder. Before the war a quarter of the babies in Hungary and Russia never lived a year. When I was in Chile in 1913 I found that a third of them failed to live a year, and some cities lost 47 per cent. In 1905 in Moscow half died within twelve months. In Manila 1903-11 55 per cent. of the babies died in the first year; the same in Bombay in 1922. In 1910 at Chungking, far up in the interior of China, an American medical missionary of twenty-six years' experience assured me that from 75 to 85 per cent. of the babies born there failed to live two years. Some years after the Japanese acquired Formosa they took a census of the three million Chinese there, and for infants they called for the age to be stated in months. The number of infants reported as "six months old but not yet seven" was but half of those returned as "under one month old." The inference is that half the babies died before they had lived six months!

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Look now what has happened in the more enlightened and progressive sections of humanity. There are thirteen peoples who carry at least nine tenths of their babies through the first year. We are seventh from the top, but we lose but one in fourteen. There are twenty-five American cities which lose less than one twentieth of their babies the first year. New Zealand loses but one baby in twenty-three, and one of its cities loses but one baby in twenty-seven. This is not only the world's record but the record for all time; for it is safe to say that down through history from a quarter to two thirds of the infants have failed to live out a year. Give the doctors and the microbe quellers their due, but if parents were not more intelligent and responsible and homes not better, how could tender creatures like new-born babies be kept alive with such success?

Savorgnan, an Italian sociologist, has made a study of the offspring of the marriages which occurred in European royal houses 1890-1909. Of the 881 babies born of these marriages up to the end of 1923, only one in thirty-eight was lost in its first year. These babies receive, of course, the best care in the world. Now the spread of the benefits of medical science from the apex down through society is so rapid that within two or three decades, no doubt, the babies born in the families of the skilled workingmen of my town

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will have as good a chance as these princelets had.

In 1913 President G. Stanley Hall found that in this country no less than 111 societies and associations had been formed for the promotion of child welfare in its various aspects. This is pretty decent, considering that babies have no votes, don't organize, or march in parades, or carry banners, or shout slogans, or speak from the soap-box, or hire halls, or buy advertising. In the Old Testament the old prophets raged against the lot of the "fatherless" child. Their favorite touch-stone of character was one's treatment of the orphan. Now the orphan is so well looked after that you hardly dare pity him till you know something about the father he lost!

Consider the relief we Americans have extended to Armenian children, Russian children in the famine zone, post-war German children. Consider the Children's Bureau, the Maternity Law, the creation of ten thousand public supervised playgrounds in twenty-five years, the multiplication of community trained nurses, the growth of free medical inspection in the public schools. Has such general interest *not just in one's own children but in all the children of the community* ever been shown before in the history of our race? I doubt it.

We hear much of child labor; but don't imagine that it is a new phenomenon. There have always been

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parents and employers ready to exploit the labor of the little ones. The only new feature is the wide protest against it. The development of light-running machinery at the same time as the vast multiplication of public schools has revealed in a glaring light the folly of allowing children in great numbers to be diverted from school to factory because their parents are ignorant or greedy. Hence the movement to make attendance compulsory and to bar children from industry until they are at least fourteen years of age.

MORE GENEROUS PUBLIC PROVISION FOR EDUCATION

When I was a boy you might still hear crusty curmudgeons growl, "Why should I be taxed to educate another man's children?" But public sentiment has developed to such a degree that I haven't heard that protest of stinginess for forty years. In 1867 there were less than seventy free public high schools in the United States. Now there are 22,000. Roughly speaking, the number of public high school students doubled 1889-96, 1896-1908, 1908-18, and again since 1918. There are four millions in our secondary schools, and the attendance upon the public high schools has grown so fast that the proportion in private high schools has fallen from 18 per cent. to a mere 7 per cent.; yet the

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2500 private high schools are flourishing. Within thirty years it will generally be taken for granted that every normal child will in some way or other be enabled to go through high school.

In 1874 the regents of the university of one of our Northwestern States asked the legislature for two buildings, adding that if these were provided the needs of the university would be met for all time. Now there are at least fifty buildings on the campus of that institution. In 1868, when Lincoln, Nebraska, was being laid out and land could be had for the asking, the regents of the university were satisfied to reserve four blocks of land near the center of the city. Forty years later, in order to obtain room for their buildings, they had to acquire at great expense five built-up blocks adjacent and tear down the structures upon them.

At Wisconsin we have 9000 students, at Illinois and Michigan and California the numbers run above 10,000. In my institution every building is built with reference to a possible 15,000. Did any one dream of such attendance fifty years ago? And, while hosts of young people attend, I fear, for the sake of the sports, the social life, the "extra-curricular activities," or because it has become "the thing" to go to college, so that many students throng in who have no craving for knowledge, no natural love of ideas, still, believe me, we do not allow any of them to waste *all* their time.

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None of these would-be loafers can remain who does not carry fourteen hours a week; fifteen hours is the ordinary load. I suppose it is something to the good that so many of the young people have been *exposed* for four years to higher education.

EQUALIZATION AND FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION OF MEN AND WOMEN

How wonderful it is that among us practically all the old obnoxious discriminations between the sexes have been wiped out, that girls enjoy as good school opportunities as boys, that women without being thought less of can enter any decent occupation or profession, that women have equal chance with men to participate in public affairs! One result of the opening of so many doors is the great independence of American girls in respect to marriage. The German philosopher Münsterberg, who settled at Harvard, observed that the English girl marries the man she thinks will make her happy, the German girl marries the man who will not make her unhappy, the American girl marries the man *without whom she would be unhappy*.

When before in history have the sexes mingled so freely and with so little looseness? A young South American attended one of our state universities and quite misunderstood the free and fearless manners of

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our "co-eds." He thought they were of easy virtue and, proceeding on this supposition, got himself into a scrape which obliged him to leave town suddenly. All through South America no betrothed couple is left alone for five minutes until they are married; nor is this precaution needless. In India, in China, all through Asia and Mohammedan Africa as well as some parts of southeastern Europe, the only recognized means of preserving the virtue of girls is to hold them under the strictest supervision until marriage. Young people of opposite sex never associate, do not even see or speak to one another, and marriages are arranged by the parents. How different from our practice of courtship, which has been defined as "a man pursuing a woman until she catches him"! After marriage the woman speaks with no man outside her family. When the untraveled among these peoples are told that the sexes mingle freely here without breakdown of morals, a smile of polite incredulity hovers on their faces. They consider us without modesty and liars into the bargain.

Not only have we developed men and women most of whom may be trusted, but it looks as if this freedom is destined to spread over the world eventually. Immured women are becoming restless and demanding the freedom enjoyed by their sisters elsewhere. At the capital of the hard-shelled Turks, Kemal the president