



# THE SOCIAL TREND

BY

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"THE CHANGING CHINESE," etc., etc.



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To  
MR. AND MRS. WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE  
FORWARD-LOOKING DEMOCRATS  
OF THE AMERICAN TYPE  
THIS BOOK  
IS DEDICATED

## INTRODUCTION

We moderns are like mariners on a ship sailing an uncharted sea. We cannot lay our course in the light of the experience of our ancestors. None of them ever plowed these waters; that is to say, before us no folk ever practised machine production, let its daughters work away from home, bestowed leisure upon multitudes of its wives, saved its babies, vanquished disease, and slew its foes by mechanism, to the extent that we do. So study of the past can not reassure us as to how these things are going to work out.

Science and Invention have borne us away from the routes followed by any previous society. They have brought us into strange latitudes where we have nothing to go by. And they do not allow us to feel our way deliberately, put out scout-boats, take soundings. They hurry us on. So the best we can do is to set watchers to scan the horizon. The sociologist is just a man in a crow's nest who knows no more of this sea than his fellows. But from his position

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he will catch sight of coming dangers—shoals, sunken rocks, derelicts, cross-currents—before they are seen by those on deck.

This book is an attempt of an observer at the masthead to judge the probable course of the ship, to call out what lies ahead and how the ship must bear to starboard or to port in order to avoid trouble.

EDWARD ALSWORTH ROSS.

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## I

### THE MENACE OF MIGRATING PEOPLES

#### § 1

**I**N 1868 Anson Burlingame negotiated a treaty in which the United States of America and the emperor of China cordially recognized "the inherent and inalienable right of man to change his home and his allegiance." Fourteen years later our Chinese Exclusion Act made a jest of this fine flourish of American political idealism. It has now become apparent that there are other sociological lessons our people will have to learn under the harsh tutelage of facts.

#### § 2

In the past the chief guaranty of stability in the relations of races and peoples has been hu-

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man inertia. Most men lived and died within a few leagues of their birthplace. Under the empire of habit they bore their lot, be it never so hard, without reflecting that a brighter life might be awaiting them overseas. Only the exceptional were gifted with the imagination and courage to pluck up and wander forth in the hope of bettering their condition.

But this molluscan stage is not likely to last much longer. Since the birth of men now living, the conditions of the mass movement of peoples have been utterly revolutionized. Not only has steam on land and sea made travel swift and safe and cheap, but the long-distance carriage of human beings has been organized as never before. To-day a peasant living within sight of the rock of Prometheus or the cedars of Lebanon may buy a through ticket to a frontier point in the Canadian Northwest. For the sake of the profit to be extracted from them, penniless laborers are gathered, despatched, and cared for during their long journey to a destination on the other side of the globe as if they were commercial wares.

In the villages of southwestern Asia passenger-tickets to some remote zone of oppor-

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tunity are hawked about as newspapers and apples are cried on our streets. The seller will not only incite the peasant to migrate, but will take a mortgage on his home for the passage-money or accept the bond of some relative that the migrant will within a year remit the sum advanced. Parties of "greenhorns," through-billed from their native village by a professional money-lender, are met at the right points by his confederates, coached on the answers to make to the immigration authorities, and delivered finally to some "boarding boss" in this country who is recruiting labor on commission for a construction gang.

Besides such means of detaching the limpet from his rock, local adhesions are everywhere being loosened by the spread of the capacity to read and by the prodding of the minds of the masses by the newspapers.

So, for better or worse, we have entered on the era of facile migration. No longer is population rooted like a tree in its natal soil. Mankind deliquesces and flows in broad streams toward any place on earth which holds out the prospect of a better living. The readiness of petty folk to up and away on slight inducement

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is a new thing, but there is no reason to suppose it a passing phenomenon. On the contrary, so far as we can look ahead, the means and desire of removing from one's native land to another will grow. The collecting and forwarding of human beings will become a business and, like any other business, it will be pushed.

### § 3

To-day every people desires to be a *nation*, that is, a *spiritual unit*. In the Roman Empire this ideal played no part, and there resulted an amazing hodgepodge of population. We moderns are afraid of such collections of human odds and ends as came to people Roman Africa or Syria or the valley of the Nile, because we realize that always such muddled mixing begets absolutist government. Dreading a government not subject to the collective will of the governed, we wish a people to be like-minded enough to develop a common opinion upon political questions. When private conduct and public authority are obedient to public opinion, a nation is able almost to dispense with coercion. Furthermore, spiritual oneness prevents the rise of caste barriers to association and intermarriage.



## MENACE OF MIGRATING PEOPLES

Now, cheap travel and full steerages make mock of this ideal of nationality. Any prosperous country which leaves its doors ajar will presently find itself not the home of a nation, but a "polyglot boarding-house." The thriving areas of the world will come to be populated by a confused party-colored mass, of divers languages and religions and of the most discordant moral and economic standards. Coolies at the breech-clout stage of attire, such as you find in the back districts of the Far East, will jostle the descendants of the Puritans. The enlightened will perforce brush shoulders with idolators, wearers of amulets, and believers in the evil eye. In the same labor market will compete those who sit at meat and those who squat on their heels about a bowl of food, those who insist on a carpet underfoot and those content with a dirt floor, those who honor their wives and those who make them chattels, those who school their children and those who exploit them.

Invariably, when elements with such incompatible traditions intermingle, castes form; so that the nation which persists in welcoming all inoffensive comers will presently find its people