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Modern Science

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A REVISION OF THIS ESSAY, ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN THESE PAGES IN THE LATTER PART OF 1943 AND EARLY 1944, HAS FOUND NO MAJOR ALTERATIONS NECESSARY. DR. JONES HAS, HOWEVER, ADDED A NUMBER OF FOOTNOTES AND A POSTSCRIPT.

(XII)

Of the numerous attempts to provide a definition for the word 'science,' two only have attached themselves to my memory. One is Karl Pearson's, that science is "the statement, in the briefest possible terms, of the sequences of our sense impressions." Adhering religiously to this idea, which is, in my opinion a typically encyclopaedist idea, and false, Pearson, quite naturally denied that 'science' could 'tell' you anything that was not, possibly, the answer to a question beginning with the word 'how?' 'Why?' questions must remain entirely outside its province. A leap to the position that all 'why?' questions are unanswerable is, of course, the habitual second false step of the so-called agnostic. Science is a pure abstraction, and can't 'do' anything. The other definition I remember is the passionate invention of an old man with lank, dark hair, crowning a long, quasi-ascetic face, set with frank, oddly-twinkling eyes, made to appear small by iron-rimmed spectacles. He was K. E. von Baer, who published his great work on the development of animals in 1828, and he wrote beneath a well-known portrait of himself: *Die Wissenschaft ist ewig in ihrem Quell, unermesslich in ihrem Umfange, endlos in ihrer Aufgabe, unerreichbar in ihrem Ziele*.—Science is eternal in its source, immeasurable in its range, endless in its task, unattainable in its goal.

Compared with this old German, for whom science was simply something constant to love, Darwin was a pretentious amateur, a collector of tit-bits, a listener-in to whatever brains trusts there be, a messer.

Von Baer seemed to be glad that science was unattainable in its goal, though doubtless for different reasons from those which may well animate anyone who will examine dispassionately and objectively the results obtained by the meddlesome mediocrities for whom *die Wissenschaft* is measurable by their power to control its manifestations and whose goal is quite obviously a matter rather for enquiry than something to be taken for granted.

Von Baer's little lyric is not a definition at all. So much the better. Clearly there is a gulf, unfathomable if not unbridgeable, between the two conceptions, both from "acknowledged authorities," of the nature of 'science.' Pearson spent his life measuring, contradicting, calculating, correcting, piling-up *numbers* which apparently represented to him, if only his vast labour could be completed, and

in so far as it could be completed in any one 'area' of experience, all that nature had to give to the mind of man. These figures were his 'data'—what was *given*. When he began, under the guidance of that singularly inquisitive social accountant, Francis Galton, the 'eugenicist,' he was still an oddity, of vast erudition, at home with ideas, bent upon pressing, in season and out of season, the doctrine that if the standards of accuracy employed in the measurement of crania and femora, *etc., etc., etc.*, could be improved to the point of satisfying a mathematical conscience, the *data* would do the trick. What trick? Aha! Few public figures have been more caustic or contemptuous at the expense of statesmen and moralists than Pearson. Nevertheless, he really seemed to believe and a vast army of machine-made 'scientists' now preach, that 'scientific' society consists in finding out what you can do (with, of course immense persistence and the pre-arranged degree of accuracy) and then doing it. If the 'unscientific' politician stood in the way, persistence in demonstrating what could be done would in the end break down his resistance, and an 'enlightened' democracy would begin to do whatever it was that nature in conjunction with the 'scientists' had shown to be possible. Pearson was a Fabian. The staircase of his laboratory (the Galton Laboratory) between the two entrances to University College in Gower Street used to be (and possibly despite the war it still is) decorated with a remarkable collection of contemporary prints, lampoons, cartoons and documents called forth by the first suggestion of "the Godless College of the Cockneys," whether in defiance or rebuke, the visitor might decide. It was Galton's pet aphorism that nothing was scientific unless it was capable of measurement, what he called *exact* measurement. Leaving out of consideration for a moment the fact (which is by no means unimportant, although it gains scarcely any attention at the present time) that we are not *bound* to be scientific, particularly we are not bound to be scientific of independent, individual or collective volition without in the least knowing what it is we are doing; leaving all that out of account, it seems to have escaped recognition that there are more standards than one of precision in measurement, and further that there are more measuring instruments than the straight edge divided into visible units. That a man may have no other means of measurement but a foot rule does not impose upon the Universe the necessity

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Costs and Continuity

Last December, in view of the gravity of the situation at the time of the Suez Crisis, weekly publication of *The Social Crediter* was resumed. In addition, extra copies were printed for use in extending the influence of the journal.

For this and other reasons an appeal was made for funds which brought an instant and generous response from a small but significant body of supporters.

We have good grounds to believe that the influence of our journal was extended; but not to the extent of an appreciable number of new subscribers.

The present situation is no less grave but our costs are outstripping our income and, until such time as our finances allow us to return to a weekly publication, we regret the necessity to confine the service to fortnightly issues.

The bulk of printing costs are in the setting, and the printing of extra quantities is a relatively small item. An answer to our problem is, therefore, an increased circulation. To this end, whilst we are publishing once a fortnight, subscribers will receive an extra copy that can be used to interest new readers. Perhaps those organisations and friends who buy in bulk quantities could order increased supplies for the same purpose.

Those supporters who have not renewed their subscriptions will realise the urgency to our appeal to send their remittances without delay.

Inflating Consumption

In *The Atlantic Monthly*, September, 1957, there appears an article by Vance Packard, "The Growing Power of Admen." Mr. Packard is author of a book *Hidden Persuaders* which is said to be well up on the recent best-seller list in the U.S.A. The article, it is understood, is a brief summary of what is in the book. A reading of the article shows the 'topsy turviness' of our economic and political system.

"America's advertising industry is moving into a commanding role in our Society. Its executives are becoming masters of our economic destiny, the engineers behind some of our most successful political campaigns, major patrons of our social scientists, dictators of the content of most of the radio and television programmes we hear, with life and death power over most of our mass circulation magazines. Also they have become our most powerful taste makers. In 1957, they made millions of Americans suddenly feel somehow inadequate because they did not own high-tailed automobiles."

"In 1940, they had at their disposal \$2 billion to conduct campaigns of persuasion. Today they have \$10 billion (in U.S.A.) . . . Apparently \$60 is now being spent each year on each man, woman and child in America, solely to coax him or her to use products the admen are promoting."

The article suggests that automation can easily go beyond satisfying our real needs.

"The most obvious explanation for this shift of emphasis (from production to selling problems) is the fabulous production of our automated factories. Since 1940 our gross national product has soared more than 400 per cent.

"To absorb this fantastic outpouring of goods, we shall have to step up our personal consumption of goods by almost 50 per cent. As the chairman of America's leading advertising agency proclaimed recently:—"We have to expand our levels of consumption in the next ten years by an amount nearly equal to the entire growth of the country in the two hundreds years from colonial days to 1940."

"The real needs of most of us were satisfied long ago. About 40 per cent. of the things we buy today are unnecessary in terms of any real need. Even our wants are pretty well satisfied. It has become a question of *creating in our minds new, unrealised wants and needs.*" (Our emphasis.)

The consumer, far from being in control as he should be, is the factor to be manipulated. The author of the article quotes a comment on his book by a man named Max Lerner: "In motivation research . . . the consumer is always passive. He is analysed, dissected, acted up, bought and sold. He is a commodity to be trafficked in. The human being as a commodity, that is the disease of our age."

And if the consumer is not in control in the economic sphere, what about the political sphere?

"The application of the insights of depth-selling to politics. In 1956, many political candidates including the heads of the tickets, were counselled by admen to present an attractive image to the public. The most popular images were father images and courageous young Daniels. At one quite important level the presidential campaign settled into a battle between advertising agencies: Batten Barton Durstine and Osborn for the Republicans and the small agency Norman Craig and Kummel for the democratic."

Compare this with the observations made by Douglas—a specific policy showing taxation required by the political parties and an open recorded support or non-support by voters with responsibility for some share in the economic results obtained by the party in power. Is the wild-eyed mass infatuation gone so far that no return is possible to individual responsible voting, at a level where what is voted on is straight-forward, within the commonsense comprehension of the voter?

The author of the article makes no mention of whether or not, with this great increase of automation, the real disparity between prices and buying power is showing up. If at the same time a survey of credit buying and indebtedness could be made, we believe that it would. The fact that the consumer is far from being in control is an indication that he now has little real power.

—D.S.H.

The Development of World Dominion

During the period of the Socialist Administration in Great Britain, following the end of World War II, *The Social Crediter* analysed the activities of that administration in our progress to disaster; and emphasised over and over that a change of administration would not mean a change of policy. The Constitutional issue, philosophy, politics, economics and strategy were examined in the notes under the heading "From Week to Week." Written or inspired by the late C. H. Douglas, these notes are a permanent and invaluable addition to our understanding of the policies of opposed philosophies, and we propose to re-publish a considerable selection of them, both for their relevance to a situation which has developed but not otherwise altered under a 'new' Administration, and for the benefit of new readers of this journal to whom otherwise they are not readily available.

The date of original publication is given in brackets after each item.

• • •

The Earl of Chatham (William Pitt), speaking in the House of Lords in 1770 (*Parl. History*, Vol. 16, Col. 660), said:—

"The Noble Lord Mansfield assures us, that he knows NOT in what code the law of Parliament is to be found; That the House of Commons, when they act as judges, have no law to direct them but their own wisdom, that their decision is the law; and if they determine wrong, the Subject has no Appeal but to Heaven.

"What then, my Lords, are all the generous efforts of our ancestors: are all these glorious contentions, by which they meant to secure themselves and to transmit to their posterity a known law, a certain Rule of Living reduced to this conclusion, that instead of the Arbitrary Power of a King, we must submit to the Arbitrary Power of the House of Commons?

"If this is true, what benefit do we derive from the exchange? Tyranny, my Lords, is detestable in every shape, but none so formidable as when it is assumed and exercised by a number of tyrants.

"But, my Lords, this is not the fact, this is not the Constitution, we have a Law of Parliament, we have a Code in which any Honest man may find it:

"We have MAGNA CARTA."

It should be realised that Pitt, in speaking of "the Law of Parliament," was referring to the *limitations* on the law making powers of Parliament implied by the conception of the Constitution in his mind.

We have no doubt whatever that a large portion of the so-called Laws which have been passed on to the Statute book since the middle of the nineteenth century are wholly unconstitutional, and it is remarkable that their authors have not been impeached. (October 14, 1950.)

• • •

It is the fashion nowadays to regard the so-called Mosaic (probably Egyptian) Ten Commandments rather patron-

isingly, and as being outmoded by the Higher Gangsterdom and P.E.P., but for those to whom they have a sentimental value, Captain Arthur Rogers made a point recently which we have not encountered before in the excellent form in which he put it.

Remarking that the Government had simply stolen property under the Defence Regulations he suggested that to those to whom the Eighth Commandment had validity, it implied that property was not merely a convention, as our Socialists would have us believe, and an outmoded convention at that, but was an absolute right. You cannot "steal" something which does not "belong" to someone.

This argument brings into relief a question which becomes more urgent daily, and will have to be faced. Has this country abandoned every "principle," in favour of pure short-term expediency?

If it has, we do not know where we are, because we have no terms of reference, but we do know where we are going. And that is straight to hell. (April, 14, 1945.)

MODERN SCIENCE— (continued from page 1.)

of being merely extension in length. Whether the Pythagorean numerologists knew what they were up to, I can't say, although there seems to be quite a lot of evidence lying about that they did, and that, in some respects the relationship between pure number and serial and harmonic properties generally was at one time better understood than it is at present. But our modern numerologists either do not know what they are up to or they are, quite literally, possessed of the Devil.

If a carpenter works to 1/16" he thinks he is a fine fellow. If an engineer makes a mistake greater than 1/1,000" he thinks he is a bad workman. There are physical instruments of precision which work quite easily on an almost incredibly smaller scale. What does it matter if your scale is not the appropriate scale for the purpose you have in mind? Human purposes are human purposes, not mathematical or scientific purposes, and it is humanly useless to act from the position that precision is important without considering whether the precision is not being devoted to the wrong measurement. The establishment of "a just relationship between the mind and things" concerning this matter is the problem of our lifetime: in other words, the problem of our lives is the *political* problem.

If I may interpose a personal opinion, I think that in its present state the human intellect is incapable of formulating *general* equations which are both serviceable in a restricted practical frame of reference, and valid in their implications when transplanted to a general frame of reference. And unless those who have care over the growth of the minds of others *know this*, at least 'through a glass darkly,' and act accordingly, our schools and colleges were better burned to the ground; for they are but compounds, concentration camps, lethal chambers of the human spirit.

But let us see how the abolitionists of 'educational destitution' regarded their opportunity!

(XIII)

Realising that the long suit of the Englishman is instinct, not intelligence, the Grand Orient Freemasons, of whom Baron Stockmar was to all appearance a typical representative, dealt the cards, went no trumps and led intelligence out of the hand of the educationally destitute represented by the English Liberals. It was not yet Stockmar's turn to play.

I do not mean to say that every Liberal was uneducated; although the type which Disraeli complimented upon its capacity for worshipping its Creator and which complimented itself upon being self-made usually ran to Liberalism. Even George Holt, although he was put to school first at Rochdale and later "with Dr. Fawcett, of Edwood Hall, within five or six miles of Halifax, and near to Hebden Bridge, in Yorkshire," was acclaimed as "chiefly self-taught, indeed, but well-taught."* If anyone desires to know the truth of education in England in its later, decadent, phase (*i.e.*, since the Reformation), let him go to the nearest school with a name to it, and, if he pursues his enquiries from the starting-point of that name, he can learn, whether he does or not, the secret of the nineteenth century and the causes of the war as well as many other things besides. The story varies only to the extent that the story of life in present-day, war-time Liverpool differs from the story of life in present-day war-time Manchester or Birmingham. In Liverpool the story comprises the same elements as elsewhere; and the wise man had best study it on his own doorstep, wherever that is.

The little work which is my source of information concerning George Holt states that "it is worthy of remark that none of the undertakings in which he had a principal share, was ever other than successful"; but it has little to say about business, which was the chief concern of his life, beyond a mention of the cotton firm of Hope and Holt, the Bank of Liverpool, which, with others, he established in 1831, the Liverpool Fire and Life Insurance Company, of which he was the first Chairman, and details of disputes about the Dock Estate.

At fourteen years, "with occasional short spells at Mr. Littlewood's school" he was placed by his father, in charge, "sometimes for a considerable time, of a concern my father had established at a place called New Hey Mill, near Bacup, in Rossendale." At seventeen he drove over from Manchester to Liverpool with his sister and her husband in a gig "with a clever little bay mare" to be apprenticed with Mr. Hope. He found the work of a Liverpool cotton broker light compared with the "actual hard bodily labour, from six in the morning to six at night . . . until the muscles and bones ached for rest," although his hours were "nine to nine, with occasional exceptions, sometimes at six in the morning, but rarely later than half-past nine to ten at night." Towards the end of his apprenticeship, he increased his moderate allowance of money "by a small traffic in coarse canvas for mending cotton bags, which I retailed to some of Mr. Hope's importing friends." He was thus able to buy his first horse, "and a good black Irish horse he was," for £30. In the office there were young men of different

notions of politics, religion, education and society, a "strict Churchman and Tory," a Catholic, an "Independent," a Baptist's son, a Methodist. "The various opinions held by these young men on religious and political subjects led to much argument and altercation"; but "reading for the purpose of defending one's own views, or confuting others is necessarily attended with enlightening effects upon candid minds. So George read "at one period." He was chiefly self-taught, but well taught; and though a man of the world rather than of books, of action rather than of speculation, wise, much more than learned . . ." It was a grand slam for Grand Orient.

In George Holt's youth, "the picturesque hill country lying between Lancashire and Yorkshire . . . abounded . . . in clear, bright trout streams, scarcely polluted here and there by rare dye works and small, primitive woollen factories. The moors abounded in game: the hill sides were fringed with coppices; and there were to be found all manner of birds and plants, and what few wild creatures England still affords. In the almost unconstrained enjoyment of that country, whether at home or at school, his boyhood was spent; and from it, doubtless, he imbibed that intense love of nature, and intimate discriminating knowledge of all natural sights and sounds. . . ."

I think 'doubtless' is the right word. And I notice this: that Dr. Fawcett, who died in 1814, and lived uninspected by the Board of Education, and taught in his "large domestic educational establishment" nearly eighty boys at a time—"It is really surprising how much may be done upon small means where the whole heart is set in the right direction!"—could, at that time, accumulate "a fair independence, obtaining a wide local influence" and "on his retirement from his position as a pedagogue to that learned leisure to which he was so well entitled" could "retire to a place near Hebden Bridge, where he had prepared and built a house."

George's father, unexpectedly rewarded for his skill in "the good colours you are now dyeing" with a 'tip' of ten guineas slipped into his hand by his master, "this prosperous state of his rising fortunes induced him to marry, and accordingly he took to wife Anne Bannister, my Mother. Of her family or relations—I believe she had but few—I never learned anything of an authentic nature, and my conclusion is that there are none, or the links so broken as not to be traceable."

But this also I notice:

(Diary) "1851, January 2.—At the Dock Committee. A good deal of talk, and much of it very ignorant, about bringing up the report and plans from the sub-committee on the timber and shipbuilding trades. Unfortunately, a considerable number of the new members of the Committee do not really understand anything of Dock Acts, and the obligations of the Committee in many respects. One cannot but lament that such important and vast affairs should have fallen into such incompetent hands; but this applies also to the Town Council, for the most part, as well as to the Dock Committee."

(To be continued.)

*A Brief Memoir of George Holt, Esquire, of Liverpool. (?Privately printed) 1861.