

A Utopian Vision: The Doctrine of Saint-Simon

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(1829)

A new science, a science as *positive* as any that deserves the title, has been created by SAINT-SIMON: this science is that of the *human race*; its method is the same employed by astronomy and physics; the facts within it are grouped within a series of homogeneous classes, linked to each other within an order of *generalization* and *particularization*, in such a way as to bring out the special *proclivity* of each, that is to say, to demonstrate the law of *increase* and *decrease* to which all must submit.

A primary application of this science proves the tendency of the human race toward *universal association*, or, in other words, the constant diminution of *antagonism*, explained in succession by these words: *families, castes, cities, nations, HUMANITY*; whence results that societies, originally organized for war, tend to blend into a *peaceful* UNIVERSAL ASSOCIATION.

A general picture of the development of the human race, including Jewish monotheism, Greek and Roman polytheism, and Christianity up to the present, demonstrates with proof this law of PROGRESS.

Up to now, man has exploited man. Masters and slaves; patrician, plebeian; lords, serfs; owners, farmers; idlers and workers--behold the progressive history of humanity up to our day. Behold our future with UNIVERSAL ASSOCIATION: *to each according to his capacity, to each capacity according to its productivity*, behold the new law which replaces that of *conquest* and of BIRTH: man no longer exploits man; but man, linked to man, exploits the natural world delivered to his power.

Ah! What do our lawyers, political journalists, economists come to tell us today? Does not their science prove to us that wealth and misery shall always be *hereditary*; that wealth is a necessary *attribute* of idleness? Does it not also prove that the sons of the poor are as free as those of the rich? Free! When one needs bread! That they are all *equal before the law*? Equal before the law? When one has the right to live without working, and the other--if he doesn't work, has only the right to die.

They repeat to us without end that property is the foundation of the social order; we too proclaim this eternal truth. But who shall be the property owner? Shall it be the *lazy, ignorant, IMMORAL* son of a deceased man, or shall it be rather the man capable of fulfilling his social function with dignity? They claim that all privileges of birth have been destroyed. Ah! What is the transmission of a fortune from father to son, with no other reason than the link of blood, if it is not the most *immoral* of all privileges--*that of living in society without working*, and there to be rewarded above and beyond one's labor?

A sad science, which would have maintained slavery, which would have stopped JESUS from preaching human *brotherhood*, fearful that His words might have resounded in the ears of a slave; a sad science that in an age even more distant would have proclaimed the validity of cannibalism!

Yes, all our political theorists have their eyes on the past, even those who claim themselves to be worthy of the future; and when we have announced to them the arrival of the reign of WORK, and that the reign of idleness is over, they have treated us as dreamers; they tell us that sons have always inherited from their fathers, like a pagan saying that a free man has always owned slaves. But humanity has proclaimed through JESUS, NO MORE SLAVERY! Through SAINT-SIMON it now cries: *to each according to his capacity, to each capacity according to its productivity*, NO MORE INHERITANCE!

All the members of the body social are men, but all too are *artists, scholars, or businessmen*; in other words, all *feel, think, or act*. This triple aspect of human life provides the occasion for a triple division in general and specialized education. This is the conception which serves as a foundation for education in the future, for which we have sketched the principal developments in summary fashion.

Printed from Houghton Mifflin Company's History Companion