

Nationalism and

Eugenics

Science and Arts Society

I'm attempting to treat the subject of Engineers from the Nationalist standpoint, I would like to guard my meaning against two misapprehensions, which are possibly more of theoretical, than of practical importance; first that although ~~Engineers~~ I hope to show that Engineering is essential to a healthy and progressive Nationalism, it is not to be rejected on that account by the internationalist, for surely he should rather devote himself to applying Engineer principles to other, and from my point of view, vital nations. And secondly that though the nationalist position appears to me to be the highest standpoint from which to approach my subject, ~~the standpoint does not in any way diminish the~~ and although I think that Engineering reaches its highest level as a part of the Nationalist ideal; yet this fact does not in any way tend to diminish the value or importance of Engineering to those who regard other institutions, such as the Church, as of more ultimate importance ^{even} than the Nation itself.

First then I should like to emphasize the vital relation which exists between the three great material factors in a Nation's existence; commerce, population and military or naval strength. Population is the result of wealth; in times of prosperity population rises rapidly, in times of distress it falls. This generalisation may seem to be contradicted by a comparison for instance between France and Japan at the present time; on the one hand one of the wealthiest nations in Europe, whose wealth is more widely distributed among the masses ^{in the world} than in any country, except the United States, ^{has a population almost stationary} ~~and amid all this prosperity the population is stationary~~; whereas in Japan, badly off for wealth as she is, the birthrate is rapidly increasing. The truth is the cases are not comparable, the average Frenchman is reared by very different notions from those which influence the Japanese. We must compare like to like, and it will be seen that in each country regarded by itself the periods of high birthrate correspond to periods of commercial prosperity. Japan's population is increasing because the industrial revolution has opened new and hitherto untouched sources of wealth in that country. But there is no need to labour

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a point in which the determining course was so self evident; had trade means late marriages, and late marriages means a low birth rate. Besides, even married folk are liable to limit their families for prudential considerations. X

But what does the diplomatic strength of a nation depend on? for diplomacy has of late always been a sort of wry-sided game of push-ball, in which no nation can ever be strong, or can fail to gain by being a little stronger. ~~Strength in this sense depends on ~~men and money~~ is measured in men and in money; in England unlike the other nations of Europe we have, in the past, relied only on a fleet to establish our diplomatic position, but even here the need of a national army is beginning to be felt, while it has long been required on the continent.~~

In return, the growing competition of international trade is making it more and more clear that ~~commerce can only~~ the commerce of a nation can only flourish if supported by the diplomatic strength provided by armed force.

I have emphasized at some length this close interdependence of wealth, population, and diplomatic strength, in order to illustrate ~~some more general~~ ~~principles~~ by Karl Pearson on the importance, as an evolutionary factor, of what he calls Socialism, but which I, for obvious reasons, prefer to call Nationalism.

In 'The Grammar of Science' the distinction of the different types of competition is clearly drawn; —

"The struggle for existence involves not only the struggle of individual man against individual man, but also the struggle of individual society against individual society, as well as the struggle of the totality of humanity with its organic and inorganic environment. To include these omitted factors might as first sight appear only to enlarge the battle field, to extend the chaos of opposing interests. But in reality it alters the whole aspect of life. The interest the individual has in developing to the utmost his own powers is a very important factor of change — let us call it Individualism. But the interest individual Societies have in developing their resources, in organizing themselves owing to the

never have been born except under artificial civilized conditions, but who at present are allowed to display the high fertility which is one of their characteristics.

Their economic effects are serious enough; high rates are a nuisance in themselves, but the trouble only begins there; there is no phase of national life where their depressing influence, ramifying in a hundred ways does not make itself felt. Every business would pay better wages and salaries, or better dividends to its shareholders ^{if} the burden were lightened. Money which is now drained away to pay for workhouses, hospitals and asylums, would ^{to be expended} remain on art, literature, and research by the wealthier classes, and on the sediments of comfort and culture by the poorer. The National exchequer would not only be relieved of a large proportion of its expenses, but would receive ~~the~~ income and other taxes on the wealth released, and would be free to ~~pay~~ pay for such armed forces as are considered necessary, as well as for a better physical and mental education, without having to heed the clamour of those whose political success depends on the endowment of the miser do wells.

The economic aspect may be the most important, still there are others to be considered. There is a moral as well as an economic gain in the diminution of the criminal and sub-criminal classes, whose influence is widespread in all our larger towns. There is an intellectual as well as an economic advantage in reducing that class of children, ranging from the nearly stupid to the semi-idiotic, who ~~waste the time at home~~ ~~the papers~~ clog the wheels of educational efficiency in our primary schools. And there is, it appears to me, a immeasurable ^{possible} advantage to the happiness and peace of thousands of families of all classes, if we could diminish or eliminate those unhappy cases, where the Eugeniologically lower type has filtered upwards from its own stratum and crops out in erratic examples of vice, profligacy or mania.

And it must always ~~be~~ So much for the degenerates; I am ^{glad} ~~thankful~~ to turn to a more cheerful side of the question, though it must always be remembered that the worst classes are contributing a larger proportion of children to the next generation than are the better classes; and that not ~~only~~ only will all their ill effects be increasingly aggravated, but

every class of the nation will be occupied by representatives of a worse and worse stock as time goes on; unless the relative birth-rate is readjusted.

The debt to which we as a nation owe everything we have worth having is as distinctive as the last; good laws, good institutions, good morals, good literature each, as far as we possess them, constitutes a personal debt to the great statesmen, producers, teachers and writers of the past. As clear a debt as we owe to the great naval and military commanders who have preserved that inheritance from external aggression. Of course it may be said that these men are the products of their time; I only say that they are the products of their ^{parents} ~~ancestors~~. Mental and moral characters are now known to be strongly inherited. Nor is it only to individual men that the brilliant epochs and successful nations are due. The worth of a national policy which may inevitably affect the happiness of millions for many years, is determined by the wisdom, foresight and integrity of the party that proposes it; just as the growth of the arts and literature depends on the taste and spirit of the classes on whose support artists thrive.

In a democratic country there are two possibilities open; the just complaint of the reformer was "Why should a small hereditary caste possess all the political power and the surplus wealth of the nation, while their natural equals are consigned by an accident of birth to a life of labour and poverty", not "Why should national policy be determined by the most ~~ignorant~~ able, intellectual and far-sighted, while their natural inferiors have to conform to their will".

True democracy and true aristocracy, as an American writer has pointed out, are the same thing; the question is whether wealth and power are to be the heritage of the best, chosen from every class irrespective of birth, showing their superiority under equal conditions, rising by the innate excellence of the ^{highest} best type of man; or whether this power and responsibility is to be equally at the mercy of the ~~poor~~ degenerate, the naturally deformed, and the incompetent members of our race. We need not go far to see the effects of the latter policy; both political parties are constantly engaged in trying to secure the support of the most ignorant section of the electorate, whose fickle vote constitutes the bulk of most election turnovers. We know too the policies which ~~have~~ ^{have} ~~been~~ ^{are} ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ ~~vogue~~ ^{vogue}; the jillions

X Such is the Nationalist case for Eugenics, as I conceive it. Materially it may be regarded as the quickest way of getting 4^d off the income tax. Morally it depends upon a conviction that mankind cannot pursue its moral and intellectual ideals more directly than by ensuring that future generations shall be better endowed with those qualities by which we recognize the best men of the past and present.

in their support; the zealous destruction of positions of high trust and responsibility; appeals to sentimentalism; the fear of hard truths; the whole repertoire of the 'prophets that prophesy smooth things'; the consequent loss of touch with the facts of life; the fool's hope of savings without sacrifice, from which the only possible escape appears to lie in physical disaster.

But let me repeat that, wise as it is to give every encouragement to men's ability to rise in the social scale, such a policy is more than reckless long as the classes to which they rise have a lower birth rate than those from which they spring.

Before formulating a Eugenic policy it may be necessary to consider any possible objections religious or aesthetic to an alteration of our breeding arrangements; legitimate breeding is sanctioned by the institutions of marriage and family life, based partly on habit or possibly the strongest of adult notions, partly on religious sanction and legal enactments; both institutions appear to me admirably adapted for Eugenic purposes. The marriage service, too, emphasises the Eugenic aspect of marriage as strongly as could be desired. The only remaining question is whether we are aesthetically justified in depriving unfit persons, by premature sterilisation, of that complex of sensations and notions which would be their lot as husbands and fathers. True they might never desire these things, but we are not as it were blinding their soul, or the aesthetic sense, by crippling their emotional nature. I don't know even if scientific sterilisation has this effect; but if it has the act would be fully justified by the elimination of the mental and moral cripples from among us.

If the elimination were to be at all rigorous it would be necessary to have a clear standard of civic worth, as well as precise knowledge of heredity. We have both in sufficient measure to justify the sterilisation of feeble minded and other degenerate stocks. Both are imperfect; the former necessarily so, until we can formulate general but ultimate ideals independent of the human limitations of morals and ethics, sociology and political science treat of humanity as their matterable datum; the problem is to ~~find~~ devise institutions moral, intellectual and political to suit the natural conditions, character and culture of the people for whom they are devised. All sorts of experiments have been tried; politically

there may be different degrees of centralisation or decentralisation, of personal freedom or regimentation, of autocracy, aristocracy or various forms of democracy. The systems which have achieved stability have undergone continuous detailed modifications under two conflicting causes, the personal discontent of a people living in a state for which their instincts are imperfectly adapted, and externally the necessity of attaining economic efficiency, and safety from foreign aggression. When the external conditions are satisfied it has invariably occurred in the past that there are a large number of people who are unhappy, discontented and ~~even anxious~~ who wish deliberately to overthrow the economically efficient social state in which they find themselves.

But when once human nature ceases to be an unalterable condition the problem assumes a larger and more hopeful aspect. The external factors may remain unaltered, the internal factors may be modified to suit our ultimate ideal. The greatest happiness of the greatest number is a conveniently vague expression for what we want; but the greatest number are in the very remote future. The Physicists in the latter half of the nineteenth century imagined that the earth would not remain habitable more than a million years or so; but now, passing accidents, the limit is enormously extended. Suppose we demand of the human body what a mill-owner demands of any other industrial machine, strength and endurance, economy of fuel, freedom from breakdowns, cheapness of production; all these conditions except the last are fulfilled by a healthy man; such men are rare; I forget who says that every man of forty is either a fool or a physician; indeed humanity presents a wretched contrast to the abundant and continuous health of other animals in their natural state. Energy, alertness and good spirits, though actually mental states are presumably the products of a strong physical vitality. Beauty, too, perhaps in a less degree, is a by-product of health. There is no reason to doubt that such health can be made a matter of course, by weeding out the morbid and degenerate stocks from our present population.

I suppose there will always be poverty, if ^{say} 10 hours work a day and only one meat meal a week ^{to be called} is poverty. But need there be ignorance or misery? Such a life might be delightful with sufficiently pleasant companions. Economically Robert Burns was no better off. The ordinary agricultural labourer usually possesses an excellent translation of Hebrew literature. Why shouldn't he know the classical and European

literatures from the originals? Even if everything could be done by sufficient education, I doubt if the state could afford to give a university education all round, ~~and at present the material is fast going~~ and it would scarcely ~~have a go~~ and no amount of educators would avail with the majority. But Schliemann received no expensive ^{training} ~~education~~. And after all literature is only a feeble record of the minds of great thinkers and dreamers; among such men themselves there would be no need to worry about books. Shakespeare, for instance, appeared to imagine that his own poetry would soon do as much excellent, as his predecessors had been by him. In short, what can money buy more than pleasant company? With the right population the happiest life imaginable would lose nothing by poverty.

~~If course man has risen from the apes~~

If course I don't imagine that man has risen from the apes for nothing better than to live down the centuries in a "miserable ease". More happiness is not particularly admirable; though I fancy it can never be less than desirable, whatever men become. Nietzsche pleads for a general enlargement of the faculties, "man must become better and more evil". At any rate he must become wiser and more clever. He must enlarge that power of mental prehension, which is characteristic of all the greatest men; he must have eyes to see more things at once, and a mind to recall more detailed and complicated memories; an artist, a farmer, and a geologist may all look at one field and see different things; each groups the same ~~and~~ units in different categories; a town based office boy sees only the units, and may grasp nothing at all. And so the units of the future will be our categories. The scientists, who, building bit by bit, think they have made a splendid edifice of knowledge, will find that they have hewn a stone, ^{finished} perfect and fit material for the sciences of the future.

Perhaps the contrast is greatest in those qualities which man has with difficulty acquired in becoming a social animal; neither courage nor chastity mean anything to a wild individualist; the balance of instinctive anger and instinctive fear is nicely adjusted to avoid foolish risks as much as foolish submission. But our self-control is very imperfect among the most civilized of us. I imagine the world would be a different place if everyone had kept their confirmation vows. To people who are partially incapable of keeping resolutions, of living up to high ideals, of developing intellectual enthusiasms, or of forming lasting friendships, it is difficult to imagine a race to whom these things entirely belong. Yet it all

depends on inborn character; such people have been and will be again. The only convincing Utopia is the Kingdom of Heaven; we are told nothing of its social or political institutions, it all depends on the moral beauty of the population.

It would be safe to leave all other problems to the future, if we ~~would~~ would devote ourselves to producing a man fit to cope with ^{them in much the same way as the} them. ~~By religion is~~ ^{religion} that of those people in Dunsany's story who 'worshipped the years to come', 'making the earth a place for gods to dwell in'.