

## EUDEMICS, THE SCIENCE OF NATIONAL OR GENERAL WELFARE

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In the preamble of the national Constitution, among the purposes for which the Constitution was established by the people, is mentioned the promotion of the general welfare. This phrase has quite the same meaning as the familiar Latin phrase *pro boise publico*, or the term Commonweal or Commonwealth as the translation of *res publica*, all emphasizing not so much the welfare of the corporate state as the welfare of the masses, the people who compose the nation as a whole.

The general welfare of the nation has been promoted in the past by our governments, both federal and local, but perhaps without a clearly defined policy for the attainment of the national welfare. But at this crisis in national history and in this period of world reconstruction, may it not be worth while to focalize, as it were, into a single word, the many principles and processes that underlie national improvement? In so doing, One may hope that, by emphasizing the existence of such a field of study, the attention of students may be directed to it, and that these in due time will by their united contributions make scientific the study of the welfare of nations.

In employing the word eudemics to convey this thought, I do so with some trepidation, realizing that even now our dictionaries are sadly overworked. But, on the other hand, we already have alliterative and complementary terms in the words eugenics and euthenics,<sup>1</sup> and these sciences, combined, work together admirably into a study of national welfare, since the one emphasizes improvement in heredity and the other in environment.

Furthermore, the meaning assigned to the word eudemics can be justified from the philological standpoint, since the Greek word *δημος* may be defined (1) as a political area, or (2) as the masses of a nation, or (3) as the body of citizens in their political capacity. The combination of these meanings, together with the prefix, should readily suggest national or general welfare, so that the word eudemics may properly be used to cover that field of study. If such a study can be developed into a science, a knowledge of its teachings will become essential to the systematic promotion of the welfare of the whole nation, under the guidance, let us hope, of those philosopher-statesmen from whom Plato in his *Republic* expected so much.

National or general welfare is so broad a term, that clearly the subject-matter cannot be approached from a single point of view, but should be sociological or synthetic in kind, so as to give a comprehensive survey of the many factors that enter into a

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<sup>1</sup> See article by Lester F. Ward, entitled, "Eugenics, Euthenics, Eudemics," in the *American Journal of Sociology*, May, 1913.

problem of human progress. The word eudemics, therefore, should imply a constructive attitude toward national welfare and the formulation of a national policy, not political only, but broadly social and based on as exact information as can be had. It should not be utopian nor given to panaceas, and in reaching conclusions should make haste slowly and should look long before it leaps far. Unquestionably, as the leading nations become capable of scientific policies for themselves, applications of national principles will experimentally be made on an international scale, and in later centuries eudemics may broaden into a synthesizing world-science, harmonizing and unifying the several policies of the States existing at the time, so as to bring about the ultimate "federation of the world."

*Eudemics a subdivision of social progress.*—Eudemics should be thought of as a subdivision of the study of social progress, to which much attention has been given in the last fifty years. As a subdivision it should be made definitely concrete and should be related to the study of social progress as the special social sciences are to sociology. It should have also a purposive or directive aspect and, therefore, should be associated in thought with Comte's theory of *prevision* and Ward's theory of *telesis*. Both of these imply that before action be taken conditions must be understood, that the forces at work be under control, and that there be a fairly clear notion of the social end or goal desired. Relying upon this information, the human intellect, serving as a pilot, should then direct social activity so as to expedite, to some slight degree at least, the progress of mankind toward higher standards of social justice and happiness. Since human society is still in its infancy, not in its old age, it should not be expected that an exact program for human endeavor can yet be definitely made, but empirically at least some notion can be ascertained of the general direction of human progress. Society at present may be compared to a ship in a fog, which is guided onward rather than allowed to drift, since the pilot hopes that through precaution and careful judgment he may avoid hidden dangers and steer the vessel safely toward its destination.

One cannot deny, however, that there are limitations to the possibilities of improvement. The cosmic situation is entirely beyond our control, barring what slight modifications can be made in the planet on which we live. On the other hand our control of nature through such sciences as physics and chemistry is already so powerful that science itself through its destructive ingenuity threatens to become a peril to the progress of civilization. Social programs should be speeded up, so that the energy of nature through eudemic policy may be directed toward constructive ends, building up and strengthening the achievements reared with so great difficulty by past generations. As for our social environment, admittedly it is man-made, and what man has made he can unmake and remake. What social evils there are can be eliminated in due time, and what good there is should be made better through a wise social control over human energy. Action, therefore, is the keynote of eudemics, since progress must be made, not by merely dreaming of past achievement, but by constructive additions to what already exists. In our studies, to be sure, we should seek to comprehend the past as well as to strive to foresee the future, combining the two as were the Titan brothers of ancient mythology. Yet one should never forget

that in the legend Prometheus (or Forethought), and not Epimetheus (or Afterthought), was the real benefactor of man.

*Order and progress.*—Comte, in his teachings, emphasized the notion that order should accompany progress, and this has its counterpart in Spencer's teaching that integration should accompany differentiation. In other words, in a eudemic study progress should not be expected from violent revolutions that shatter the structure or polity of the nation, in the vain hope that a perfect system will arise spontaneously from the ruins. In revolutions every attempt rather should be made to maintain in its fundamentals the national organization, but this should be kept flexible and adjustable, so that it may adapt itself to the changing demands of a public opinion striving to become intelligent. Undue national rigidity means rebellion or decay, but a national order capable of adaptation has within itself the promise of progress through telic evolution. This stress on the maintenance of an orderly existence, this belief in progress and reliance on public opinion are, we trust, axiomatic in the United States. But, unfortunately, in late years our officials have shown a distrust of public discussion and, fearing the entrance of new ideas, have become reactionary in their suppression of free speech. Yet after all there can be no intelligent public opinion nor any real national freedom unless there is open discussion of new issues, whether wise or foolish. As a nation we are not intelligent in proportion to our opportunities, and we can never aspire to world-leadership unless our statesmen acquire the art of mental growth and develop the open mind of the scientific investigator.

*Adaptation and readjustment.*—Herbert Spencer and his followers taught that the behavior of society depends on the mutual interaction between its population and the conditions under which the population exists. Interaction implies that a nation must adapt itself to its environment and also react on this environment so as to bring about modifications supposedly more favorable to existence. This means that a nation must understand its physical environment in order that it may best adjust itself to nature's demands. This, to be sure, is adaptation but not necessarily progress, for it may be adaptation to a retrograding environment.

But when man really comprehends his environment, he sees the possibility of modifying it in the direction of what he considers environment ought to be. This capacity, first, to comprehend nature's laws and then to utilize its material and its energies for well-defined purposes, has resulted in the achievements of material civilization and hence in material progress.

Too often in the past the nation in its ignorance has, like the prodigal son, wasted its substance in riotous living. It should rather study its resources and methodically conserve and utilize the gifts so abundantly bestowed by nature. Within the soils are potential foods and hidden sources of wealth like the oil shales of the West; these national resources must be conserved and developed, the soil must be made increasingly productive, so as to produce food for our rapidly growing population, land should not be kept from use for the purpose of speculation, and the wealth under the soil should be made national and used to promote general prosperity. All our means of

transportation, whether rail, water, or road, should be unified into a national system, and new sources of power should be discovered and aerial navigation mastered. It is even more important that in school and factory should be taught the applications of science and the principles of invention, as to stimulate interest in newer achievements. All this implies that eudemics in one of its aspects should pay especial attention to the intelligent utilization of natural resources, as the foundation for national economic prosperity.

If there is any truth at all in the materialistic or the economic interpretation of history, it is that in a situation like the present, when the world-war has so radically upset previous economic conditions, there must come vigorous readjustments in the great social institutions of the nation. Under the stimulus of the war it seemed for a time as though superhuman energy entered into national life, so that the mass of our citizens in civic and social directions worked hard and long, living above the pettiness of daily existence in an atmosphere of national sacrifice and high attainment. But with the coming of the armistice and the revelations of profiteering-contracts, red tape, and woeful waste, followed by friction over national policy, there came a revulsion of feeling that has seriously weakened the morale of the nation. There is a cynical attitude toward domestic reform and international situations, and there is a slackening of public confidence, so that few feel within themselves any incentives to do their best. This has brought about discord, friction, and a physical and mental lassitude, all highly dangerous if long continued. A proper eudemic policy would surely aim to restore public confidence, so as to take up again the proper task of national readjustment.

European and Asiatic states are already in the throes of reorganization and the United States cannot escape its turn. Willing or unwilling, it must make radical readjustments, especially in the fields of economics and politics. Already in process one may see the many attempts of labor and capital to readjust their relations on a fairer basis. There is the rise of a merchant marine, the broadening out of our commercial and banking systems, and the perplexities arising from a decidedly fluctuating foreign exchange. International consortiums, unofficial mandatories in the Caribbean region, and new alignments in foreign relations are national issues, forming part of our problem in international readjustment. Henceforth, our national state is in the world and can no longer consider itself as isolated on a segment of the western continent.

Every nation, to be sure, has its own destiny to work out, and should seek to develop right policies for the upbuilding of its population and its national resources. This is fundamental and should remain so for generations. On the other hand, just as a young man may feel the thrill of exaltation when he finds himself to be a man among men, so a nation may rejoice when its leaders cut loose from provincialism and plan to place it as a nation among nations, doing its part in the world's work and adding its voice in the common council of the international world, in behalf of weaker nations and of policies that make for peace rather than for war.

In the same manner other institutions, such as religion, education, and morals, must adapt themselves to newer situations as they arise. The extreme individualism of denominationalism, for example, is passing away and religious confederations, ententes, and joint agreements are in process of formation, so as to meet with united front the apathy and the agnosticism of the century. Can we not hope that a similar movement may show itself in the field of Sociology? Already in this country the humanistic groups have federated themselves into the American Council of Learned Societies. Is not the time ripe for the formation of a great federation of those organizations concerned with social conduct and social progress? Such a federation, formulating joint policies, and co-operating with governmental agencies, might voice the intelligent social leadership of the nation, teach its conclusions through school, college, and the press, and within a generation might develop a public opinion that would direct national and local policies into effective, constructive action.

This stress on the modification of public opinion is an important aspect of eudemics. For, a nation must deliberately modify at times its social inheritance of beliefs and opinions, that have been built up by accretions through the ages, solidified through tradition and custom, and yet are constantly changing through innovation and discussion. There is probably no other country on earth where even now the press has so potent and so general an influence in the accomplishment of changes in public opinion as in the United States. As an agency for social control, the press should be kept in close touch with the best social teachings of the time, so as to free itself from the present system of furnishing standardized news, guaranteed not to shock the susceptibilities of the most orthodox conservative.

Our national history furnishes many illustrations of changing opinion. When, for example, the whole continent lay open to our population, and free land and material resources seemed without limit, it was natural enough to favor large families, to breed slave labor systematically, and to encourage ever-increasing waves of immigrants from every nation under heaven. But now land is no longer free, the nation's resources are in need of conservation, and the massing of millions of immigrants into urban centers, and the growing intensity of the struggle for a living wage, all demand mental readjustments, as indicated by the discussion respecting birth control and the demand for the restriction of immigration. In the nineteenth century we lived politically isolated and apart from the world and gloried in our provincialism; now we are plunged into world-politics, send armies to France, join fleets with Great Britain, take a profound interest in the Far East, and make membership in the League of Nations an issue in a presidential campaign.

A similar demand for mental readjustment arises from the incoming of women's suffrage. This is in a sense revolutionary and means the beginning of the end of male supremacy. Women hereafter will crowd into business and into the professions, they will hold numerous political offices hitherto kept for males, they will demand a large share in the control of education and religion, and will assert their right to fix the standards of sex ethics. Men will not resist the new order of things, but will more or less cheerfully surrender in part their cherished prerogatives to those, whom

henceforth in all seriousness we must allude to as “our better halves.” Presumably, by the end of the century they will be the dominant sex in national councils, and then there may come organized associations for the protection of men’s rights against the encroachments of women, and male sentinels with banners may parade the sidewalks of the White House, seeking to influence the policy of the haughty madam president of the United States.

*The factor of population.*—In any study of eudemics the factor of population is an important element. Every nation is in duty bound to maintain its racial stock at a high standard. To a nation the virility and mentality of its population are important factors in its personality and these are largely determined by its social inheritance, its type of civilization, the standards of which cannot be lowered without danger. No nation errs, therefore, in seeking to eliminate its racial poisons, such as venereal diseases and the many forms of intemperance; or in fighting against unnecessary accidents, sicknesses, and deaths; or in refusing endorsement to “sweating” industries that can exist only by exploitation and depressed standards of living; or in refusing admission to immigrants whose incorporation into national life would weaken rather than strengthen national standards.

One result of the world-war should be the stoppage henceforth of racial migrations. The time has come when every nation must, hereafter, undertake to care for its own population, and should no more expect to foist its surplus inhabitants on other nations than improvident parents should expect the community to support all the children they may happen to bring into existence. This should not imply that a nation objecting to promiscuous immigration necessarily considers itself as inherently superior in type to those of other nations. It seems probable that all the great races, compounded as they are through racial admixture, are fairly equal in capacity, and that each in its time has had or may have its world-empire, one following the other like the storms of the tropics. What seems like racial superiority among these must be mainly due to the advantages of a favorable natural environment, to inherited social conditions, and to intelligent leadership developed through leisure and freedom from economic strain.

Yet it cannot be denied that there are inherent differences among nations as among individuals, and that each race on the whole is best in its own habitat, to which it has become adjusted, and in the enjoyment of its own kind of civilization. A nation’s type of civilization may change and does change, but changes should be accomplished systematically, under controlled conditions, through an inner development and through mental Contact with other nations. But this implies that a nation should grow through contact with the best from its neighbors, not through the amalgamation with and the assimilation of their depressed classes. In the long run every immigrant blends with the native population, and, therefore, adds to or subtracts from its quality, according to his racial and his cultural inheritance.

In the eighteenth century there was, it will be remembered, a vigorous and persistent belief in the equality of man. The human mind at birth was thought to be a *tabula*

*rasa*, and environment to be all powerful in the determination of human character. These beliefs so influenced the mind of the age that philosopher, poet, reformer, and statesman united in the declaration that “all men are created equal.” If a nation desires to make progress, it was taught, it must abolish special privileges, banish inequality, and ameliorate conditions; then, it was asserted, human organisms will rapidly respond to so favorable an environment and will hand on their newly acquired characters to their descendants. It was a splendid gospel for democracies; and religion, education, and reformers of all descriptions took up the cry, and proclaimed liberty and equality, in the hope that men by free opportunity might attain the self-realization of the inner man.

But from 1859 a newer biological teaching came to the front. Darwinism taught of variation, struggle, elimination, and survival; Weissmann asserted the immortality of the germ plasm; Mendel argued for the immutability of inherited characters, and De Vries’ mutation theory showed that nature can leap as well as crawl. All of these teachings stressed the notion of aristocracy—many are called, but few are chosen; nature predestines the salvation of the few and the damnation of the many; there is inborn genius, inborn mediocrity and inborn imbecility; heredity determines some to be supermen and others to be “hewers of wood and drawers of water.”

Neither the eighteenth- nor the nineteenth-century point of view conveyed the whole truth and this century is synthesizing the two teachings. Men are born with inherent differences and every normal man is a complex of innumerable possibilities, both good and bad; but a right environment will stimulate the good and leave dormant the worse. Thus, a nation has before it two tasks—first, it should supply a stimulating environment to normal human beings so as to call forth the better part of them; and, secondly, it has before it the problem of aiding nature to eliminate the clearly abnormal part of humanity, but by the kindly process of segregation rather than through a “nature, red in tooth and claw.”

The problem of race suicide on the part of the higher social classes apparently complicates the problem, but that is a social, not a biological question. Race suicide is not a matter of fertility but a measure of precaution. The world’s population as a whole is multiplying too rapidly and this is socially dangerous. When groups multiply like rabbits human life has no sanctity, but when births cease to be perennial, each particular life has its value and the worth of the individual is enhanced. Although one may regret that the socially better classes commit race suicide, he may console himself with the thought that “there are as good fish in the seas as ever were caught.” From the more intelligent part of a nation’s population can be developed social leadership in abundance. When the unhealthy strain of our tense civilization relaxes somewhat, and the standards of living rise, and sex morals are on a higher plane, the large families of the improvident and the race suicide of the socially higher classes should both pass away and a fair average family be found in all grades of society.

*Inherent potentialities.*—Another eudemic problem requires that the inherent possibilities of the nation be taken into consideration. Amid all the waste of a wasteful nation there is no waste quite so wasteful as the neglect of the nation's potential achievement. There are potential human energies, lying latent in the nation, ready to respond in achievement under right environmental conditions. The human body is capable of far greater health and vigor through scientific dietetics and physical training; the newer psychology should in due time greatly enhance the value of the educational processes and the consequent output of national intelligence; and a federated national policy could multiply social achievement.

Every unskilled laborer of normal heredity had at his birth the inherent possibility of becoming highly skilled, whether in the trades, in business, or in the professions; but he lacked opportunity and his depressing environment caused him to drift into the ranks of unskilled vocations, which are the modern substitute for slavery. There is probably not a normal person in the United States, who, under a more favorable environment, might not have doubled or trebled his value to the community and added largely to his own happiness. If ever eugenic and euthenic applications to our population are vigorously made under the stimulus of eudemics, so that dormant energy is released and directed into socially advantageous directions, Utopian dreams will seem like a mere shadow of the real progress that will open up before the nation.

One should readily admit that in the case of individuals, groups and nations, some rise to leadership and others are headed toward elimination. Granting that all persons, groups, or nations should be given equal opportunity, there is the assurance that some, by inherent character, will seize the opportunity and advance through it; and others from defective heredity will look with lack-lustre eyes on the opportunity and let it pass by. The newer democracy should not assume that men are inherently equal, but should assume that the touchstone of opportunity must be applied to every member of the nation, so as to determine who shall lead and who should follow. The use of psychological tests and vocational advisement for the personnel of the army and navy, and the growing use of these in school, college, and industrial establishment, may be the beginnings of a movement that will aim to place every citizen into an occupation best suited to his capacities, and to impart to him, through systematic education, an opportunity to be free from the failures and misery of life.

*Group struggle.*—In a discussion of eudemics it is natural to think of a nation as a single harmonious group, with a membership united rather closely through common interests. At the same time it would be equally true to think of the nation as a confederation of groups somewhat antagonistic one to the other. The class-struggle theory of Karl Marx, for example, assumes an irreconcilable conflict between the capitalist and the worker, a conflict to end only when the capitalist class is exterminated. This theory of class, or group conflict, along with the race-struggle theory of Gumplowicz, was interwoven with the Darwinian theory of the struggle for survival and has become almost classic in many forms of sociological discussion. Admitting, as one must, the value of this theory in the interpretation of history, it by no means follows that eudemics must assume that group struggle is to be perpetual in



society. Properly the groups within a nation should be adapted one to another, so that all may work together harmoniously. In natural development antagonism and struggle are uppermost and each group exploits its rival whenever possible; but in telic development, as men become wiser, they see the advantage of co-operation, so that differentiated groups tend to become integrated through compromise and joint agreement. Irrational antagonism is due to stupidity, co-operation comes only through wisdom and forethought. Harmony in social relations is not loss of energy, but rather is the intensification of energy through the elimination of waste. The Marxian-Darwinian teaching was all right in its day as an offset to the easy optimism of the eighteenth century, but why should men, in these days, still harp on the inevitability of class war and proletarian victories, headed presumably by a series of Lenines? Class struggles are not inherent in the nature of things, but are the effects of social maladjustment.

Why not preferably lay stress on the wiser teaching of mutual aid and class co-operation, so well illustrated the world over in co-operative groupings of farmers, and thus substitute fraternal motives for selfish motives based on competition? If men think trouble, talk trouble and plan trouble, there will be trouble, for all have the instinct of combat. On the other hand, if men talk of common interests and common policies, and emphasize their agreements, they will find that conflict is largely a matter of the psychology of suggestion, and that it is rather easy to compromise and co-operate, if only each is willing to think himself in the other's place. The blood feud once had utility, but with advancing civilization a better system took its place. In the same manner group conflicts within the nation should yield to frank discussions and joint policies. We are at the dawn of a new day and differences should be thought out, not fought out.

This notion of the adaptation of group to group has an international aspect also, since the nations may be considered as groups within the world group of all mankind. Each nation must adapt itself to its neighbors, it should seek to cultivate amicable relationships, and should think peace, not war. It is not necessary for a nation always to be looking for a place in the international sunlight; there are times when a place in the shade, or "in the twilight of the gods," is much more advantageous, since it gives opportunity for meditation. International ethical codes unfortunately still too largely follow the teachings propounded by Machiavelli, and international policies are still based on armaments and on the expectation of war. Thus, whenever a nation sees blood and runs amuck among its neighbors, they must be prepared to stop its career by force of arms. A thorough preparation for war, accompanied by equally as strong a determination to keep the peace if possible, is of course the proper attitude of the national mind, awaiting the day when armaments will be limited by joint agreement~

*National happiness.*—As a final aspect of eudemics, attention will briefly be directed to the field of national happiness. The puritanic ancestry of New England, it is said, took even their pleasures sadly and were never so happy as when miserable. A saner point of view would emphasize a civilization with as little deprivation, physical misery, or mental suffering as possible, and the multiplication in every way of the

happiness of life. Society, as Professor Patten puts it, must pass from a pain economy, through the period of transition, into a pleasure economy, where misery will be exceptional and happiness the rule. The medical profession is doing much to alleviate the evils of physical woes and mental disorders, but the pain of economic misery among the poor, and the sting that comes to those who lack opportunity to develop their capacities, are evils that should slowly be removed through eudemic teachings. A national policy, although based largely on economic considerations, should not be dictated by these only. It is not necessary for a nation to strain every nerve to “get rich quick,” or to lead in the world’s business. There are some things better than wealth and surely a nation should strive for more generous aims than are found in a system in which the mass of wealth is found in the hands of a few. A eudemic program should emphasize the cultural attainment of the whole people, not of a specialized dominant class merely, and hence its energy should be expended in policies for the development of the masses primarily, with the assurance that the classes will somehow manage to take care of themselves. If the mass of a population are given abundant opportunity through education, and find about them a stimulating economic and cultural environment, calling out their enthusiasm in work through a proper return for their efforts in wage and further opportunity, the classes will develop readily through selective processes, and both mass and class can unitedly co-operate in maintaining a sane and wholesome life.

It is not merely the pleasure arising from a well-filled stomach, or the pleasures of family, friends, and economic gain that need emphasis, but rather the joys of the mind as it seizes hold of opportunities for aesthetic and intellectual attainment, and feels that inner satisfaction arising from its adaptation to a broadening environment. After all, the chief aspect of the mind is the emotional, and that nation has welfare, whose citizens are most free from anguish and fear, and are most advanced toward the happiness that comes from the satisfaction of their desires.

In early civilization society stressed social cohesion and group safety as the best of possible policies; in these later days of keener conscience it demands justice—legal, economic, and social—but in the coming days a nation must plan for the cultural happiness of its people. Why not, then, argue the possibility of a science of eudemics, so as to aim to bring about the welfare of the people, through the formulation of national policies, based upon an appreciation of the truer interests of the nation?