

A state is different from either a nation or a race. The discussion of this will come more appropriately a little later.

11. Interests and Communities.—The word interests has been used several times in the preceding paragraphs. It is important now to consider its meaning. An interest is the relationship between a human being and some object which he believes will satisfy one or more of his desires. A hungry man has interest in food; a man who is cold, an interest in heat; one who owns stock in a factory, an interest in its prosperity, or, as we often say briefly, has an interest in the factory.

When a given object or set of objects is calculated to meet the desires of a number of people, we say that those people have interests in common or common interests: The farmers in a given locality have a common interest in the weather; the members of a given political party, an interest in the outcome of an election; the members of a family, an interest in the house in which they live.

In fact, so important is this matter of interests that we often speak of groups of men by the interests which they have in common, as the farming interests, the copper interests or the tobacco interests. Our lives are largely concerned with interests, and the things which bind men together in groups are the great interests which they hold in common. For this reason we call a group of people bound together by a number of interests a community.

Not all interests, however, are common to the different members of a group. In a great many cases the interests of individuals must naturally be opposed to each other. When men are living in the collection stage, each has an interest in the berries, nuts and fruits provided by the

territory in which he lives. Wherever this supply of food is limited, the interests of the individuals are antagonistic. When the chances are that no one of them can get all the food he wants, the amount that he gets varies inversely with the amount the others get. That is why highly developed communities are impossible at this stage of civilization. Communities can develop only when the interests that men have in common outweigh those which are purely individual. The growth of the higher forms of the community depends absolutely upon the establishment of relationships by which men benefit from association with each other, and the realization that these benefits exist.

12. Social Rights and Obligations.—One of the characteristics of community life is that each individual can pursue his own interests only to a limited extent without interfering with the interests of others. Yet the apparent advantages of following one's own interests, regardless of others, are so great that there always is a strong temptation to do so. But if each individual actually did this, community life would be impossible. Accordingly, in every group of people certain understandings grow up as to the limits to be placed upon the activity of each individual in following his own interests.

The prerogatives of the individual within these limitations are called rights. Every right is backed up by the common sentiment of the group and is nothing more than the representation of this sentiment. Self interest is the first law of human nature, and it is easy to imagine by what long series of trials and experiments men were forced to realize that they could serve their larger self-interest only by holding their minor interests in check. In our civilized society we are so used to accepting rights

as a matter of course that we scarcely realize the bitter struggles by which the conception of rights was established. In fact, so much a matter of course do they seem that certain great philosophers in the past worked out a doctrine of natural rights, by which it was assumed that each individual brought with him certain rights into the world and that they were inherent in his very nature as a human being. This served a useful practical purpose at the time because it was so much better than other doctrines then prevailing, and it is still held by many. But in dealing with modern social problems it is important to recognize that every right is a social right; that is, it is a condition of life in an organized group and is established by the common opinion of the group. Even those rights that we regard as most fundamental, sometimes called the rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, are not absolute, but are conditioned upon certain relationships to society.

The condition upon which an individual is permitted to enjoy certain rights is called an obligation or duty. Every right has its corresponding obligation. A person's right to life rests upon the obligation to use it within certain limitations. If he uses it to destroy that of another person or to commit treason against his country, he forfeits the right to his life, and society proceeds to take it away from him. The right to liberty is another of the greatest of all rights; but if he uses his liberty to infringe upon the rights of others, as by trespassing or theft or arson, his liberty is taken away and he is shut up in prison. The pursuit of happiness is another of the great rights of life, and is allowed by society to each individual provided it does not lead him to deprive others of happiness. You might derive much happiness from the excitement of driving a sixty horse-power automobile

at forty miles an hour thru the crowded streets of a city. But if you undertake to gratify this desire for happiness, you will speedily find that your right in that direction is definitely limited, and you may soon be deprived of both happiness and liberty.

13. The Greatest Happiness of the Greatest Number.—

Even the most fundamental rights are not absolute, but limited by the society of which each individual is a member. The basis upon which we live together in our modern complex societies is a tangled mass of rights, duties and obligations which become so much a matter of our very nature that perhaps no one would be able to analyze them completely. Thru the whole runs the fundamental idea of the greatest happiness of the greatest number. The tendency is for society to leave each individual unhampered in the pursuit of his interests up to the point where further liberty means enough pain, suffering or loss on the part of other individuals or of society at large to offset any happiness which he might gain. In the end each is the gainer by limitations of this kind. If it were not so, organized society would not continue to exist. If we are inclined to chafe at any particular time because we find our liberty of action restricted, it is helpful to reflect that at this very moment we are probably benefiting more by limitations placed on other people than we are losing by the limitations placed upon ourselves.

Occasionally society for one reason or other grants to certain individuals special advantages which in some way tend to promote their happiness or well-being. These are called privileges, and if granted by common social consent are usually harmless because in some indirect way they tend toward general social benefit. But if

conferred by a powerful group within the society, for selfish reasons, upon themselves or upon other favored individuals, the result is usually harmful, because these privileges infringe upon the rights of others. Many of the world's greatest revolutions have been the result of the efforts of the common people to maintain their own rights against the encroachment of the privileges of certain smaller classes.

REVIEW.

How do feelings impel the individuals to action?

To what extent is man's action dependent upon his beliefs?

Describe man's existence in the collection stage.

What is a matriarchy? A patriarchy?

How does the nation differ from the race?

To what extent is a member of a community free to pursue his own interests?
