

THE SOCIAL WORLD

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The Social World by José María Moncada & Aloysius C. Gahan

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JOSÉ MARÍA MONCADA & ALOYSIUS C. GAHAN

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The Social World

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH

BY

ALOYSIUS C. GAHAN

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The author begs all, believers or nonbelievers, to read this book tolerantly. It is the expression of a sincere conviction.

There is in existence an eternal poem, written in space and in the firmament, whose meaning was grasped by man upon the awakening of his intellect. Genesis, speaking of creation, has condensed this poem into the two simple words:

FIAT LUX

This phrase is the most eloquent, profound, true and suggestive that has ever been written upon earth. It is the sum and substance of life and eternity in matter and spirit.

ALPHONSO TO...
REAR...
... ..

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It is inferred that there exists in man what may be termed an instinct of personal rights—a feeling that leads him to claim as great a share of natural privileges as is claimed by others—a feeling that leads him to repel anything like an encroachment upon what he thinks his sphere of original freedom. By virtue of this impulse, individuals, as units of social mass, tend to assume like relationships with the atoms of matter, surrounded as these are by their respective atmospheres of REPULSION as well as of ATTRACTION. And perhaps social stability may ultimately be seen to depend on the due balance of these forces.

—HERBERT SPENCER, "Social Statics."

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CHAPTER I.

ANCESTRAL AGES.

THE evolution of the species is no longer debated by scientists. Darwin and his successors have established the truth of evolution with respect to all things and all beings. Man is the child of nature itself. He is an animal, spiritualized through work and selection. It is living matter that functions, thinks and speaks.

Science also demonstrates that life manifests itself in different grades in the beings and things that constitute creation, in the same way as intelligence is graded in animals. Marble consists of particles, or atoms, which are in a state of constant movement. The infinitely small particles of matter have placed themselves in juxtaposition in millions and millions of forms, and from the manner of their union all beings and things have proceeded.

Therefore, the stone that we tread upon in the street is a living mass, for if movement constitutes life the stone lives, since it is constantly agitated by invisible convulsions. With the aid of powerful lenses, we might behold the movement, the union, the polarization of its particles. It looks as if it were composed of a compact

mass; but, nevertheless, an infinite network of pores separates its molecules. Everything in the world, then, is the result of development or evolution, which is a process of indefinite perfection. Nature copies, changes, and reproduces itself, raising the grades of matter and elevating the intelligence of animals.

Sensation, or the impression communicated by touch to beings at the bottom of the scale, has become differentiated in transmission from one species to another, and has multiplied and manifested itself in what we understand as the senses. These, in turn, have produced intelligence. Intelligence is reaching its highest degree of development in man.

What has given rise to these phenomena? Evolution. Man is the best organized of all organized beings.

If organization be adaptation, and if organization and adaptation perfect themselves in the course of the ages, we must suppose, or rather the conclusion is forced upon us, that man appeared upon the planet almost at the same time as the antediluvian animals; that he appeared in another form and with other organs. The first form in which he appeared was, however, the seed or essence and root of humanity as it now exists.

We are able to verify this process of evolution, historically and prehistorically, back to a certain point. Anthropology has disinterred ancestral man, and has arrived at the conclusion that he was as a being of another species and of another race. In the most remote ages there must have been much mingling of man with the other ani-