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Review of the book: ***The Theory of Human Progression***, by Patrick Edward Dove

Patrick Edward Dove's great work, "The Theory of Human Progression," can now be had in paper covers .

The charm of "The Science of Politics," by Patrick Edward Dove, is the knowledge of what will be which is shewn therein. He is the philosophic prophet of the Land Question, who convinces men of a new condition of existence.

In the first part he treats of "The Theory of Human Progression and the Natural Probability of a Reign of Justice." In the introduction he points out that science is nature seen by the reason; that political science treats of men in equity and aims at obliterating all injustice. Politics therefore comes after Political Economy and before Religion, and professes to discover the laws by which human actions ought to be regulated in so far as men interfere with each other.

Liberty and *Property*, he says, are the matters involved in Political Science. In making laws regarding Game, in Excise (Customs), and other things, there has been a want of consideration. What men need is a combination of knowledge and reason to change credence in these matters, as may be seen from the abolition of slavery and the repeal of the Corn Laws. The progress of man in a political aspect has been from a diversity of privilege towards an equality of rights. If the alternative be in our choice, the combination of knowledge and reason should be used rather than force to work a change on that line.

Man's intellectual progression is according to the order of the sciences, which Mr. Dove gives. Truth has had as little to do with legislation as it had with alchemy or astrology; and, although Socialism and Communism are built on fallacies, there are truths at the bottom of those systems. Man's practical progression leads Mr. Dove to outline an argument that there is a natural probability in favour of the Reign of Justice. The scriptural millenium is more; but a political millenium will come, because it forms part of that greater scheme. The system that makes wealth —not man—the ultimate, is monstrous. But political truth is growing and being adopted in part; because the creature is apprehending the divine intention of the Creator. Science has had an influence on man's terrestrial condition. In applying the theory of progression from logical and mathematical science,

through the physical sciences, and up to man science, Mr. Dove considered man's doings have been the cause of distress: man's wrong arrangement of the world is the cause of pauperism. The radical evil is the alienation of the soil from the State, and the consequent taxation of the industry of the community.

There are two parties, the privileged and the unprivileged; and two questions, personal liberty and natural property. Bacon rightly laid hold of the minors of the sciences—laws began at the wrong end. They assumed crime instead of ascertaining what crime was. And wrong proceedings in politics are worse than any other, because man is concerned. Why should laws regarding crime be considered alterable and not those regarding property? Crime and property are anterior to law and superior to it. All past arrangements regarding land are open to be revised, because it is given for the benefit of all. Law is not the measure of moral right and wrong. Yet men venerate law and care nothing for justice, just as they venerate the priest and forget God.

In defining crime we must inquire, "What does man do as man?" Slavery has not been abolished; it has only been generalised: the negroes ("the black squad") are still to do the work. At certain seasons there is not work for the whole body of the labourers. The shopkeepers are only transformed labourers that still belong to the lord. They are still serfs of the proprietors, freemen without privileges and oppression (!) The lord has profit without labor, and the serfs labor without profit.

Mr. Dove writes for equality in the eye of the law and in the scheme of the State. The landlord can support a family without labour on the profits created by the labours of others. Regarding the disposition of the soil, he questions the arrangement of one generation descending to another. The acts of the past are no more binding in politics than in astronomy or theology. He also discusses the conversion of arable land into pasture, the enclosure of commons, and the politics of landed property.

In his fourth chapter he gives a brief outline of a historical sketch which is an attempt to apprehend the sentiments of the human mind which have ruled society, and to appreciate the psychological development of man through historical manifestations—quite a philosophy of the feudal system in all its modifications. Upon what terms, or according to what system, must the earth be possessed by the successive generations? This is the question, No actual division

of the soil, he replied, is anticipated: it is the division of the advantages—by the division of its annual value or rent, by making that rent the common property of the nation, by taking the taxes out of it, and so emancipating industry from burden. Note, the tenement possessed by the *tenant* is *holden* by the superior lord. Rates and paupers are co-relatives ; because of the severance between the peasantry and the soil. Historical argument won't do; men must go forward. The *gepidoe* (loiterers) remain in the rear; they dread change because of their interest in the present state of affairs; therefore change is bad for them.

Others see Society in a state of transition move in action because The sentiments of the human mind which have ruled Society are – pennon feudalism, that pursued war in the field; parchment feudalism, that pursued pleasure in the court. Then the merchants became notable who pursued money with policy as lords. But we must give the palm to those who express man's higher acquirements, rational and moral nature. The king ruled not in the field, but in the cabinet, till George III. fixed national debt on the labourers. Political Economy followed policy in the Victorian age, and politics, or the science of equity, came next. This progress is shewn in a tabular form—from fighting qualities up to benevolence.

The conclusion Mr. Dove comes to is, that scepticism is really and truly a valid process when brought to bear on superstition; that scientific method naturally comes into contact with the traditional. In Britain scripture keeps us right; but elsewhere, where philosophy is the theology of men, moral theology, which depends on moral science, is still incapable of assuming a scientific form: and every attempt to make a more complete theology than science warrants only produces scepticism. With the development of social science and moral science there arises a moral theology and the doctrine of a moral Deity.