

## Sidney Armor Reeve

Social Energetist

By IRVING M. KASS

**S**IDNEY ARMOR REEVE (1866-1941) was an outstanding authority on entropy, energy and thermodynamics who applied the scientific method to sociology. His scientific textbooks are used today in the universities, and his steam turbine tables are standard in Annapolis, where he lectured on the interaction between moving ships. He was a qualified expert in Federal Courts on ship collision, explosion and pressure.

Unfortunately, his work in social science was not so readily recognized. He was compelled to leave the Polytechnic Insti-

tute in 1906, where he had been a Professor of Steam and Hydraulic Engineering for ten years, because of his publication of sociological books.

Reeve was inspired to study sociology by a reading of Henry George's "Progress and Poverty." Although as early as 1909 he had assembled sufficient calculations and data to found a Science of Sociology, he was not ever permitted to lecture, debate or present his theory, thus meeting the same conspiracy of silence that has greeted George himself.

Reeve founds the Science of Social Energetics on the same firm base as all other science. With careful reasoning in mathematics, he carries forward Johann Kepler's proof of motion step by step, until the different forms of energy transformation have been sufficiently examined to leave no loophole for error. Then he applies these laws to the social body. He spent twenty-seven years in an historical research to prove, by the testimony of man's record of war and social changes, that the same mathematics and reasoning applied equally to Entropy, Energy and Pressure, whether they were in a steam boiler or in the social body.

As an illustration: If more and more pressure, due to continuously applied heat, strains a boiler, it will burst with enough force to blow up a building. Likewise, if too much unassimilated economic pressure is applied to the communications of the social body, although it first plasters patches on the weak spots, hopelessly trying to forestall the inevitable break, the energetic social pressure will finally break all bounds into a Social Convulsion.

Reeve's calculations were all scientific, in nowise mystical. In 1906 he wrote that, "we are approaching a convulsion period." In 1928 he wrote that, "by 1930 our circulating medium of stocks and bonds would go the way of the French assignats." Shortly before his death last year he wrote that,

"we would have thousands of men overseas in less than a year," betting the entire scientific value of his work on this statement, and that, "the social convulsion we are in will last until 1970 and cost 50 to 60 million lives, 5 to 10 from the United States." In 1939 he wrote that, "the national debt will be more than 100 billion by 1942," commenting on a *Saturday Evening Post* article that predicted it would be 42 billion. These are all precision calculations in scientific, mathematically measured reasoning from cause to effect, the result of forty-eight years of work.

Why did Reeve not at least get the opportunity to compare his calculations with those of his intellectual peers?

Fortunately, a devoted following has enabled the publication of five of Reeve's books, and much of his work remains in manuscript form in the New York Public Library. In this hour of crisis, every person who feels responsibly concerned over the destiny of our country should consult the work of Reeve, especially "Social Energetics," "Natural Laws of Social Convulsion" and "Cosmic Energetics."