

# SOCIAL EFFICIENCY

## INDIA'S GREATEST NEED

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## INTRODUCTION.

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THIS book on Social Efficiency should be of service, alike to the studious reader and to the practically minded citizen; since its subject appeals to both, and its treatment also. For while arising from the "Efficiency Movement," now for a good many years past so prominent in discussion, and so frequent in application in the United States, it carries out the theory more boldly and more extensively, and so seeks to apply it more widely and more deeply. All this too with relation to Indian conditions; for these include Indian possibilities.

That there is ample room for such a book, and corresponding need of it, and in the two-fold directions here indicated, none surely will deny. Be the reader of optimistic or pessimistic temperament, or temper, he may learn either way from this strenuous meliorist, whom a varied life-experience has taught to combine freshness of observation, freedom of speculative

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thought, and range of social knowledge, and the technical efficiency of the engineer, as well as of the man of science. Here in fact we have an example, still too rare, of an incipient social process: the emergence of the engineer with all his practicality of aims, beyond the customary plane of the mechanical and physical sciences to which engineers are still supposed to be limited, and with disastrous social results. For here these aims are humanised, by the added resources and outlooks of the sciences of life and mind, of society and morals.

Mr. Pherwani tells me that the bulk of this book was written before he joined me in teaching here: and indeed it is this attitude of mind, with its unusual harmony of scientific and practical interests, which has brought us kept us together as colleagues. For our very twinned subjects, of Sociology and Civics, although among the most widely comprehensive of all in the academic world, since seek to attain the concrete interpretation of social life, of which philosophy seeks the abstract are by no means merely academic in

current sense, of withdrawal into the study or library, and away from everyday life and practice. On the contrary, it is this social life which we students of Sociology seek to understand: it is this practice, which, as students and workers in Civics, we seek to advance.

Of course our author ranges widely, and fixes his efficiency standards high: but his subject compels this. Thus sharply to have outlined so many efficiency schemes, is itself a stimulus to further endeavour: for here, even more than in ordinary economic life, a large and well defined demand is the best of stimulus towards supply. So in the later volume which this leads us to expect from him, we shall see justifications of this bold treatment, this height of aim, since substantiated by experimental evidence from far and near, and thus, ere long, from India, as well as from America.

In short then here is a good general statement of the needs and possibilities of increased efficiency, and not only for society in general but for India in particular. It is by a keen student of affairs, a direct critic and an

emphatic writer; and it may safely be predicted that his own continued efficiency-studies and endeavours will bear fruit increasingly, in meeting the needs he so outspokenly states. So as to ways and means of efficiency-increase, he will yet give us not only a wealth of concrete and suggestive examples, but also, I doubt not, of initiatives of his own.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY  
AND CIVICS, UNIVERSITY  
OF BOMBAY.

*11th February, 1923*

PATRICK GEDDES.



## PREFACE.

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INDIA lies prostrate through poverty, ignorance, disorganisation, and imperfect assimilation of her varied population elements. Her well wishers want to see her organised, united, prosperous, educated and noble. This can only be achieved through associated effort, of all men of good will, used in the most efficient manner. It is my object to enlist the sympathy of all true well wishers of India, towards a practical programme of regional and civic reconstruction, through raising the population quality, through pointing out the peaceful conquests open to associated and enlightened endeavour. The subject is vast, the effort has been inadequate. The suggestions put forth are illustrative not exhaustive. It will be for enlightened associated endeavour to solve the problems set forth.

Whence shall India recruit energy for this reconstruction? From men and women of all

ages and occupations ; but, to start with, from a revival of the ancient Ashram of Vanaprasth, the dedication of the third quarter of one's life to civic and social effort. After the householder's stage, the man of mature experience devoted his time to the welfare of his city. Retiring to the quiet precincts of his village or city, he worked for the welfare of all the families in the village or city, and not only for his own. Thus the ancient scheme of Hindu Life provided a definite period for such larger activity, undertaken with a view to benefit not only one's own narrow domestic circle but the wider social whole, the families surrounding and sustaining one's own family. If the programme be revived, and every one reserve a portion of his life for such social welfare work, society would benefit through the constructive genius of many of the workers of this type, and the helpfulness of all.

At this most critical juncture, India needs the gospel of Social Efficiency. We the people of India are athirst for improving our national status. But national status cannot be improved

without understanding the social forces that are at work, and that have made and kept us, what and where we are. The problem of social amelioration is here tackled from the point of view of scientific management, and the results of the deliberations set forth from the standpoint of social engineering.

Civilisation means for me, a series of conquests. A civilised people, means a people who have solved the problems of conquest of bread, shelter, clothing, of ignorance and disease, of discord, and outside attack.

In India we have the further difficulty that the various elements of the population are imperfectly assimilated. To hasten the assimilation of the different elements, and organise them for the various peaceful conquests within each region, is the problem of Social Efficiency. On the basis of a common birthplace, a common place of residence and common needs, if we can induce common efforts, or closer and more effective co-operation, for the fulfilment of those needs, we shall have increased our social efficiency.

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applying efficiency principles to social problems, I had cherished before I met him. It was suggested to me by Aronovici's 'Social Survey,' and Richmond's 'Social Diagnosis.' But under Prof. Geddes, I got the opportunity to develop my ideas in the light of his teachings as well. To Emerson then I owe introduction to Efficiency, and to Prof Geddes increased interest in Society; to the two then, this combination towards Social Efficiency.

I am painfully aware of the many shortcomings in this book. The chapters were written at various times, in the course of the last three years. There is thus some repetition and some break of unity. The problems are vast and will need a lifetime to work out. I have therefore simply set forth first suggestions, and appealed to local investigation in every case. Some of the important factors for measuring and increasing our social efficiency have been suggested in the barest outline. I invite the attention of abler hands, clearer heads, and nobler hearts, to carry forward whatever suggestions appeal to them, and work

towards a better fed, better clothed, better housed, better educated, happier and nobler India, with her vast human resources utilized for the better service of Humanity. To the readers of this book then I entrust this great and glorious mission.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY  
AND CIVICS, UNIVERSITY  
OF BOMBAY.  
11th February 1943.

S. N. PHERWANI, M.A.,

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