
FOURIERISM.

IN the last week of December, 1843, and first week of January, 1844, a Convention was held in Boston, which may be considered as the first publication of Fourierism in this region.

The works of Fourier do not seem to have reached us, and this want of text has been ill supplied by various conjectures respecting them; some of which are more remarkable for the morbid imagination they display than for their sagacity. For ourselves we confess to some remembrances of vague horror, connected with this name, as if it were some enormous parasitic plant sucking the life principles of society, while it spread an apparently equal shade, inviting man to repose under its beautiful but poison-dropping branches. We still have a certain question about

Fourierism, considered as a catholicon for evil, but our absurd horrors were dissipated, and a feeling of genuine respect for the friends of the movement ensured, as we heard the exposition of the doctrine of Association, by Mr. Channing, and others. That name already consecrated to humanity, seems to us to have worthily fallen, with the mantle of the philanthropic spirit, upon this eloquent expounder of socialism; in whose voice and countenance, as well as in his pleadings for humanity, the spirit of his great kinsman seemed to speak.

We cannot sufficiently lament that there was no reporter of the speech in which Mr. Channing set forth the argument derived from the analogy of nature, against the doctrine of community of goods to the exclusion of individual property. It was the general scope of the argument, to show that Life was forever tending to individuality of expression, and could not be refused the material order also, as a field for the scope of this tendency, and that individual property was the expression of this universal law; the lowest expression certainly, but still an expression. It would not be fair to give a garbled report of his masterly and delicate sketch of the ultimate result of denying this principle. He divided the truth on this subject to right and left, with the sword of pure spirit. Let it be sufficient to say, that only the ecstasy of self-love could understand it as casting personal reflections; and that it could not be expected to find an understanding heart with the ecstasy of destructiveness, which has seized many modern reformers.

But in the absence of reports of this and other speeches, we will give a sketch of Fourierism, as we gathered it from the debates of the Convention, and conversation with its friends; and then take the liberty of stating some qualifications, and limitations, which seem to have escaped the attention of its enthusiastic disciples. The general view upon which Fourier proceeds is this: that there is in the Divine Mind a certain social order, to which man is destined, and which is discoverable by man, according to his truth in thought to the two poles of Christian perfection, Love of God and Love of Man.

He assumes the fact, which will hardly be disputed, that the present social organizations are not this divine order;

but that they perpetually and necessarily generate external evils, which so complicate the temptations of man, as to make innocence impossible, and virtue only the meed of crucifixion; nor even attainable by that, except in instances of being endowed with supernatural energy. For the proof of this fact, he appeals to all history and all experience.

Environed, as he felt himself also to be by this extreme disorder, yet Fourier had the courage to attempt to discover the Divine order, and labored forty years at the work. Brought up in mercantile life, and keeping this position, which enabled him to know personally the customs and laws of trade, as it is; and endowed with a genius for calculation, which, in the service of justice and benevolence, followed out the bearings of these customs and laws, and the effects of large monopolies upon the social happiness and moral character of the various men directly and indirectly affected by them; he yet, to use his own words, 'labored in distraction for seven years, before he obtained the clue.' At last, having seen that Labor stands, in the social world, for the analogous fact of motion in the physical, he pronounced the word *Attraction*, which arranged to his mind the universe of men, as once before, that same word, to a kindred genius, arranged the universe of matter.

The question then became, what is that social arrangement, so broad, and so elastic, that every man shall find, at every hour of the day, and every season of his life, *just that labor* which is to him attractive and not *repugnant*.

As Fourier places among the constituent passions of men every social charity, and even a passion for *self-sacrifice*, he could maintain that there is nothing done, and nothing to be done in the world, which might not find a willing agent, were circumstances properly arranged.

But to induce a desire for this arrangement, and evoke the ability to make it, mankind must have its scientific foundations, or harmony with the nature of things, made manifest to their reason. Man therefore must be analyzed into his constituent powers; and then the tendencies of each of these powers be studied out, and corresponding circumstances imagined, which should yield to each power its legitimate range; for such circumstances must neces-

sarily be the Divine Order of Society to which man is destined.

Thus analyzed, man, according to Fourier, is constituted of twelve fundamental passions, consisting, firstly, of the five senses; secondly, of the four social passions, friendship, ambition, love, and the parental sentiment; and thirdly, of three intellectual powers, whose strange names, according to our best recollection, are Cabalism, Alternatism, and Emulation.

The training of these twelve powers into their appropriate activities, that each may contribute its share, both to the harmony of the Universe, and the unity of the individual, is what Fourier calls the social development of the passions.

This view of the constituency of man and the necessity of his training, may be made plainer perhaps by translating his language into that of another remarkable thinker, who seems to have had, fundamentally, the same view. Swedenborg says, that man's soul is made up of Loves, and every Love must find its Wisdom, the marriage unions of Love and Wisdom, being made manifest in Uses. The Angel of Love must find the Angel of Wisdom to whom it is betrothed, on penalty of becoming a devil, says Swedenborg. If the passions do not find their developments, by the law of groups and series, says Fourier, they become principles of disorder, and produce what we see now all around us, — *a world lying in wickedness and dead in sin.*

There is one of man's passions which has found its social development, so far as to become an illustration of the meaning of this theory with regard to all the rest; and this is the Passion of Hearing. Music is the Wisdom of this passion, and the progress of this science has involved the large variety of musical instruments, and created the song, the chorus, the opera, the oratorio, and the orchestra. So, according to Fourier, each of the senses, each of the social passions, each of the intellectual powers, in finding its legitimate scope, must create a music in its sphere, with instruments corresponding, and weave men into groups corresponding with the chorus, the opera, the oratorio, and the orchestra. And there are intimations of this. The passion of Sight has created Painting, Sculpture, Architecture. And even what seem to be the humbler powers of

Touch, Taste, Smell, have not failed to bring the tribute of their exactions to the comforts and elegancies of life, and the science of vitality.

One obvious and undisputed function of the senses, is to build up bodies, and contribute to physical well-being. But this is not all. There is another function which the senses have to perform, beside this obvious one; and also beside the transcendental one of creating harmonies in five different modes; even though we may admit that all these harmonies may rise to the spiritual elevation of that divine art which Beethoven has carried to the acme of symbolizing the highest intellectual, moral, and even religious exercises of the soul. This function is to perfect the Earth on which we live, and make it not only yield its treasures for physical well-being to every creature, but perform adequately its part in the Sidereal Universe.

At this point of Fourier's system, there opens upon us a quite poetical extent of view. Geologists and geographers have intimated to us heretofore, that the earth needs to be dressed and kept by men, in order not to become in several ways desert, and that the climates, which depend much more upon the state of the surface of the earth, than upon its relations with the sun, should be ameliorated. Fourier would demonstrate that *the cursing of the ground for man's sake*, sung of by the old Hebrew prophet, is no metaphor; but that, literally, man's falling below his destiny, has, as its natural consequence, the return of the earth to a state of chaos. He demonstrates, that, following out the suggestions of the senses of taste and smell, the human race must cultivate the whole vegetable creation, if not the animal, to a perfection which would involve an agricultural science, absolutely sublime in its extent; while the spring-carriage, and easy railroad car, and every contribution the mechanical arts have made to the commodity of man, would fall among the meanest and vulgarest class of the innumerable results of seeking for the wisdom of the sense of Touch.

But is the earth to be restored to the state of Paradise, through the labors of man, merely to react upon his physical nature, and contribute to his personal enjoyments? By no means. But the earth thus cultivated and perfected, shall shine as a brighter star in the firmament of other

worlds; shall hold, by its imponderable fluids, a more perfect relation with the sun, and through that star with the whole sidereal heavens.

It is hardly fair to Fourier to touch, without entering into his reasonings, upon a part of his system which is so original, and which requires, in order to be appreciated, at least all that he has himself said upon it.

If the development and training of the senses to results of science and art, have these wide bearings upon the sidereal universe, we may not doubt that Fourier makes the development and bearings of the social passions, open another captivating and exalting vista of thought.

The word Friendship, in this nomenclature, stands for the sentiment of humanity, in its widest and in its most delicate relations. Fourier attempts to show that to give this passion its scope, the social system, which is according to the divine order, will realize in its institutions all, and more than all, that declarations of the Rights of man have ever suggested; all that his hopes have aspired to and expressed, under the images of the Millennium and Fifth Monarchy.

And to balance this great liberty, the second social passion must have its scope. This passion, which he defines as the love of order, in graduating persons according to their comparative worth with relation to each other, he calls *Ambition*; thus casting out of this word its bad meaning, — for its object is no longer the exaltation of *self*, but of *worth*. It gives to every man and woman their exact place in the social scale, and justifies the idea of government. By the balance of the two passions of Friendship and Ambition, Liberty and Law will become, as they should do, the poles of a living political order.

The Passions of Love, and the Parental Sentiment, will also, when, through a general ease of circumstances, they are left free to find their legitimate exercises, dignify woman universally; and by consequence, purify the institution of marriage, and unfold the family, to their highest ends of refining, and sanctifying, and cherishing human beings, into the richest forms of life.

The Christian world, as it is, can hardly fail to acknowledge, that although Christianity has sanctified the *formula* of monogamy, yet the whole deep significance of that insti-

tion is yet to be widely appreciated. To marry from any consideration but the one of sentiment, must be considered a crime, before mankind will cease from that adultery of the heart, of which Christ warned his disciples.

Lastly, the three intellectual passions into which Fourier analyzes the Reason, have for their office to estimate the natures and ends of the foregoing nine passions, and interweave them into one web of life, according to their natures and ends; and then they will take the still higher range, of enjoying the divine order, and tracing in the happiness thence resulting, the image of God.

We see from the above rude outline, that Fourier thinks he has discovered the divine order, which is the true organization of society, by studying each of the twelve passions of man, with the same respect that the passion of hearing has been studied, in order to derive from thence the present living art of music. He thinks, that by following out the results of this study in practice, the earth would be cultivated and restored to the state of Paradise; with the superstructure thereon of a world of art, in harmony with the beauty of nature. Also, that political institutions would combine all desirable liberty, with all that can come from the observance of law, by distributing all men according to the gradation of their natures, and that individual families would be established in the purest and most powerful form; lastly, that the functions of Reason would be vindicated to their worthiest objects, of perpetually unfolding and keeping in order this great estate of man, internal and external.

If Fourier had done nothing but suggest to his race, that the divine order of society was a possible discovery, and thus have given a noble object to human investigations, and presented a worthy prize for human energy, in this direction, he would have done much. It is claimed, however, by those who have studied his works, that he has done a great deal more; that he has himself successfully worked at the practical problems; and the *Phalanx* which he has discovered in detail, is, as it were, a house already builded, into which men may go, and at once live, freed from a multitude of the evils that press upon the modern civilized state. A word or two in explanation of this Phalanx.

It is not a community of goods. It is a state of society

which provides a public fund, as all societies do, and on a better security for its return in just proportions to those who produce it, but which admits of individual property as much as any partnership in trade. It is indeed a great partnership, in which the members throw in capital of three species, namely, labor, skill, and money, (which last is the representative of past labor and skill.) All these species of capital will draw a large interest, when the Phalanx is in operation; but in order to prevent any great inequality of the third species of capital, (money,) it is a fundamental law of the Phalanx that small sums shall draw interest in a larger ratio than large ones. The common property, accumulated by the Phalanx in its corporate capacity, shall be subject to the will of the members, expressed by ballot and otherwise; its general destination being to provide for all children, without distinction of rank or birth, an individually appropriate education, according to their genius and capacity; also to provide public conveniences, and common comforts and amusements, and means of expressing their genius, to all the members.

The labor in the Phalanx will be organized upon scientific principles, i. e. by the law of groups and series, and individual genius and disposition will be the guide as to the distribution of the members into the several groups and series. The well being and good training of the laborer will never be sacrificed to the external object of the labor, for Fourier endeavors to demonstrate that, in the divine order, the necessity of such a sacrifice can never occur, even though all ends are answered.

The first objection that strikes a spiritual or intellectual person, at the presentation of Fourierism, is its captivating material aspect. A system which presents the social passions, and even the senses of man in full, and puts them on the same ground with the functions of Reason, seems to be a dead-leveler.

Undoubtedly, at first sight, it is especially captivating to the sensualist. But, on a little investigation, it will be found to present no bed of roses for the sluggard, nor paradise for the mere epicure. The discharge of the external functions of the senses, involves the keenest and most health-giving labor, though a labor that must have all the characteristics of the chase, and other chosen amusements of

manly men and women; nor can the labor fall upon any one to the degree of making a drudge.

Also, the abundance which this discharge of the external functions of the senses will bring forth from the earth, to the physical well-being of man, will leave him leisure to follow out the leadings of his social passions, which now are cramped and warped from their objects, by the necessity that rests upon every man to *scramble*, in order to get his sufficiency out of the present scarcity of provisions on the globe. For, undoubtedly, it is because poverty is in the world, and because all the accumulated riches, if divided, would not leave even a competence to each, that even the rich cannot get rid of this all-devouring instinct of hoarding, or getting more. Were every man assured of the necessities and comforts of life, where would be the stimulus to this morbid passion for gain, which consumes the civilized man, and makes him sacrifice the purity and warmth of his friendship, love, and parental sentiment?

But, then, the social passions, thus set free to act, do not carry within them their own rule, nor the pledge of conferring happiness. They can only get this from the free action upon them of the intellectual passions which constitute human Reason.

But these functions of Reason, — do they carry within themselves the pledge of their own continued health and harmonious action?

Here Fourierism stops short, and, in so doing, proves itself to be, not a life, a soul, but only a body. It may be a magnificent body for humanity to dwell in for a season; and one for which it may be wise to quit old diseased carcasses, which now go by the proud name of civilization. But if its friends pretend, for what has been now described, any higher character than that of a body, thus turning men from seeking for principles of life essentially above organization, it will prove but another, perhaps a greater curse.

In being a body, however, it is as much entitled to consideration, as any other body which has been created. It has the presumptive advantage of being a creation of the Christian life. The question is, whether the Phalanx acknowledges its own limitations of nature, in being an organization, or opens up any avenue into the source of life that shall keep it sweet, enabling it to assimilate to itself contrary elements, and consume its own waste; so that,

Phoenix-like, it may renew itself forever in great and finer forms.

This question, the Fourierists in the Convention, from whom alone we have learnt anything of Fourierism, did not seem to have considered.

But this is a vital point. Did our time and space permit, we should be tempted to follow out some curious analogies, suggested to us by reading Carl Ottfried Mueller's History of the Dorians. In looking over Fourier's analysis of human nature, as given above, we notice that every one of his passions, whether sensuous, social, or intellectual, was recognised as a *god*, by some separate tribe in antiquity. The Oriental religions, with the exception of the Hebrew, and the European also, consisted in deification of the Forces and the Functions of Being. The Dorians alone, in their fidelity to the beautiful individuality of their Apollo, gave to Grecian culture that polarity which is essential to a reproductive life; and made Greece what it is in the history of humanity.

But it is not our purpose to recommend the worship of Apollo to the Fourierists. The Word of God, the doctrine of the expiation, which even divinity must make, if it would act upon earth; all that Apollo beautifully intimated in his human form of superhuman beauty; in his destruction of the Pythoness; or in his pilgrimage to Tempe, where Jove made inquisition for blood; or in his reappearance from the Hyperborean land of perpetual summer, with wheat sheaves for men; all is symbolized and realized in Christ. And this is now the only name under heaven, by which men may be saved from spiritual death. Christian churches in the midst of a Phalanx, might be the Dorian cities of another Greece. Only let each member be at once subject and law-giver, like a Lycurgus, pupil and master like a Pythagoras; like Lacedemon, fighting and conquering for self-preservation only, and the liberty of the conquered.

In a former article, we suggested the idea, that the Christian churches planted by the Apostles, were only initiatory institutions, to be lost, like the morning star, in the deeper glory of a kingdom of heaven on earth, which we then fancied Socialism would bring about.

Since then, by the study of ancient nationalities, and also of Neander's History of the Churches of Christ up to the time of Constantine, together with observations on the attempt at West Roxbury, we have come to see that initiatory churches

will have an office as long as men are born children; and that a tremendous tyranny is necessarily involved by constituting society itself the *VISIBLE* church of Christ. Those who have ideas, and who, individually, and free from human constraining, have pledged themselves to live by them alone, or die, must be a select body, in the midst of the instinctive life that is perpetually arriving on the shores of Being, and which it is not fair or wise to catch up and *christen* before it can understand its position, and give its consent. We must be men before we are Christians, else we shall never be either Christians or men.

The life of the world is now the Christian life. For eighteen centuries, Art, Literature, Philosophy, Poetry, have followed the fortunes of the Christian idea. Ancient history is the history of the apotheosis of Nature, or natural religion; modern history is the history of an Idea, or revealed religion. In vain will any thing try to be, which is not supported thereby. Fourier does homage to Christianity with many words. But this may be *cant*, though it thinks itself sincere. Besides, there are many things that go by the name of Christianity, that are not it. Let the Fourierists see to it, that there be freedom in their Phalanx for churches, unsupported by its material organization, and lending it no support on its material side. Independently existing, within them, but not of them, feeding on ideas, forgetting that which is behind, petrified into performance,—and pressing on to the stature of the perfect man, they will finally spread themselves in spirit over the whole body.

In fine, it is our belief, that unless the Fourierist bodies are made alive by Christ, 'their constitution will not march;' and the galvanic force of reaction, by which they move for a season, will not preserve them from corruption. As 'the corruption of the best is the worst,' the warmer their friends are, the more awake should they be to this danger, and the more energetic to avert it.

We understand that Brook Farm has become a Fourierist establishment. We rejoice in this, because such persons as form that association will give it a fair experiment. We wish it God-speed. May it become a University where the young American shall learn his duties, and become worthy of this broad land of his inheritance.

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