VI. Democracy and the Will to Power

By James N. Wood

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DEMOCRACY AND THE WILL TO POWER

THE FREE LANCE BOOKS. V

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INTRODUCTION

What we have here is the first serious attempt, at least by an American, to get at the fundamentals of the democratic process of government. Upon the superficial phenomena of democracy, of course, there has been endless writing, some of it more or less honest and scientific; but all that sort of thing is a study of symptoms, not of the disease itself. Mr. Wood sees clearly, like Dr. Hans Delbrück, that democracy, in actual practise, has little if anything to do with the determination and execution of the popular will, or even of the will of the majority. There Dr. Delbrück, in his "Regierung und Volkswille," stops; he proves that the common notion is false, but in his approach to the truth he halts in a suburb of questions and surmises. Mr. Wood is bolder, perhaps because he has lived nearer to democracy all his life. The essential process, he argues, is a conflict between superior minority groups—superior, at all events, politically, in strategical sense, in clar-

ity of purpose and will-pressure—with each striving its utmost to arouse and victimize the great masses of the stupid and ignorant, and to convert them into infantry for its army. Under democracy, the largest battalions always win. Even when, as Dr. Delbrück shows from American history, the victory goes to an absolute minority, it is always relatively a majority. But the issues that mark the primary conflict of wills and the issues that are used to beat up recruits are by no means necessarily identical; in fact, they are seldom if ever identical. Thus there is an esoteric politics and an exoteric politics—a combat for ideas, advantages, position, power, and a combat for mere votes, the symbols of power.

It is this disparity that makes the political struggle under democracy so dishonest and so ridiculous. Practical politics consists, not in finding out what the majority wants and executing it as faithfully as possible, but in mobilizing an endless series of new majorities by inventing an endless series of new shibboleths and enthusiasms, most of them bearing no sort of contact with the underlying contest of wills, and many of them quite devoid of any intelligibility

whatsoever. It often happens, indeed, that the phrase used as bait for the general is at complete variance with the aim sought to be established by the will-group employing it. This was plainly the case in the national election of 1916. Here a typical democratic mob-master, eager and determined to take the United States into the war, faced a populace obviously averse to war, and so he had to carry out his enterprise by posing as an advocate and guardian of peace. Once the mob had made him secure in that character, he straightway flew to arms. But maybe I under-rate the self-deception of one in whose soul, after all, there was always much more of the popinjay than of the Machiavelli. What is to be remembered in every such case is that the politician is not the primary agent. He belongs to the victimized majority rather than to the machiavellian minority; he is, at best, no more than a kept captain, and if he ends by believing in his own idiotic war-cries, it is no more than a proof that he is full of human juices. In the case I cite there are historians who argue that the prater of peace was actually more or less honestly pacific. But certainly no sane man will ever argue that the will-group behind him

was of like mind. That will-group threw off all disguise the moment the ballots were safely in the box, and its subsequent career of legal and patriotic (and hence highly laudable) brigandage let in a brilliant light upon the true nature of its original aims and motives.

The history of a democracy is largely a history of just such swindles. The bewildered mob-man is forever holding coroner's inquests upon the mortal remains of his great passions of yesterday. Today a new idea enchants him, and he is full of Christian enthusiasm for it; tomorrow he discovers that it was a mere "cloake to goe invisible" for some enterprise having no sort of relation to it, save perhaps the depressing relation of complete antithesis. Often enough the idea is quite impossible of execution, even presuming the existence of good faith; here the swindle has its rise, not in the sinister operations of some concealed will, but in the very nature of things. The mob-man, in fact, is always crying for the moon. But while he divides himself into two tatterdemalion hosts, each led by leaders who tell him they will get it for him, the ordinary business of the world must go on on more earthly planes, and with greater regard for

realism. It is on these planes that the so-called Invisible Government lives and has its being. That government is composed of men who deal, not with glittering phrases, but with adamantine facts. Capital is such a fact—money, credit, the whole machine of orderly trade. The venality of politicians—their sole concern with their jobs—is another. The infinite credulity and sentimentality of the plain people is yet another. It is in terms of such harsh facts that the actual work of the state is carried on, even under a democracy. That work involves conflict, the nice adjustment of varying ideas, the triumph of will over will. Despite the alarms of those who scent the process without ever understanding it, there is seldom unanimity among those concealed masters. It is quite unusual, indeed, for all of them or nearly all of them to find their interests identical, as happened after the election of 1916. Too often they make war upon one another in a Berserker manner, and great bugaboos emerge from the conflict to startle and ride the general. I often wonder that some historian does not trace out the ultimate consequences, in public turmoil and epidemic indignation, of the old conflict between capital the

manufacturer and capital the merchant—that is, between the protective tariff and free trade. For generations the Republic was rocked by the struggle, and men came to imperishable fame by mouthing the gaudy phrases that it threw off, and millions of anonymous Americans tore all their passions to tatters trying to rise to its incessant challenges. The inner history of the Civil War has been investigated, but the long tariff battle is still spoken of in terms of McKinley, Dingley and Payne, which is precisely as if the American Revolution were spoken of in terms of the Hessians. Again, what lay under the League of Nations debate was probably no more than a contest between capital thinking internationally and capital still clinging to nationalism—between a will to conquer the world and a will to safeguard the loot so ripe for the harvest at home. Here was a genuine clash of wills. But in the practical politics of the time there was nothing save a clash of hollow words—phrases to beguile the inflammatory and unintelligent.

H. G. Wells, sensing this sharp distinction between the sham duel that goes on in sight of the populace and the real duel that goes on

behind the scenes, is full of plans, in his "Outline of History," for bringing the latter out upon the stage. What we have now, he says, is a "community of faith and obedience"—that is, the plain people are beguiled into acquiescence by appeals to their loyalties, their prejudices, their whole outfit of stupidities, and so kept from showing too much curiosity as to what is going on *in camera.* What he proposes to set up is a "community of will," which is to say, a social organization in which the plain people will be acutely conscious of all the interior issues, and so be in a position to settle them realistically and in their own fashion, without the present confusing intervention of bogus issues. A pleasing program, but not one that enters into practical politics. The forgotten factor is the populace's age-old credulity and sentimentality, its insatiable appetite for being fooled. The thing obviously goes beyond the bounds of a misfortune; too often it seems to take on the proportions of a grand passion. Let one demagogue lift the curtain ever so little, and there is always another one to pull it down again, or to choke the opening with flags, bunting and buckets of tears, or to draw attention from it by

giving a more familiar and hence a more charming show across the stage. In the long run, the odds are inevitably upon this demogogue of the second order. The plain people distrust and dislike truth-tellers, for the truth is something harsh, and they prefer their ease. It is the most comforting soothsayer who is always on top, once the clash of tin swords is over.

Wells is not unaware of this disconcerting fact, but, being a thoroughgoing utopian, he refuses to be discouraged. His remedy is education, a peruna with a name that is somehow familiar. Let in the light! School the proletarians! Polish and fertilize their minds until they can tell a hawk from a handsaw at one glance! Fill them with all the known politico-economical and politico-sociological facts, so that not even sobs can fool them more! . . . Alas, what an heroic effort to lift the mob-man by his boot-straps! Who is to do all this wholesale educating of the uneducatable? Who is to keep the mob supplied with the only true truth? Wells' answer, so far as I can make it out, seems to be: The Government. In other words, the powers that now rule so prosperously and so happily are to engage in a gigantic conspiracy

for their own destruction! Mr. Wood is a good deal less romantically hopeful. He sees quite clearly that nothing of the sort will ever come to pass. The actual agent in any such colossal uplifting would have to be the professional mob-master that he calls the corsair—and the corsair is no traitor to his beer and skittles. He serves the powers that be, perhaps not always with an easy conscience, but certainly always with a laudable diligence. He is the propagandist of correct ideas, the newspaper editorial writer, the college professor, the lawmaker, the learned judge. Wells himself, by a curious irony, has been of the fraternity; he served the group of mighty wills that is England, during the war, by preparing and disseminating official balderdash. He is a corsair and doesn't know it. Or perhaps his whole book is subtle propaganda for the same masters—a diabolical attempt to engage the forward-looking with a new kidney cure, the while the old sugar and albumen keep on accumulating.

Mr. Wood offers no remedy, real or quack. He is, in fact, under no illusions about human progress. It may be a fact, or it may be a dream. Viewing the scene at hand, he discerns

nothing properly describable as improvement. The process of retailing ideas that Wells calls education seems to Wood to be simply propaganda, and he points out very penetratingly that its ultimate effect, far from being an increased capacity for judgment and reflection, may be a total destruction of both, with a weakening of the general will for good measure. The American newspapers of today are certainly not educational influences, if education has anything to do with a grasp of the facts. They disperse a hundred times as many stupid and base ideas as sound and noble ideas. Nor are the schools and colleges much better. There was a day, perhaps, when the American professor was more or less a free agent—when he yet enjoyed some of the old high immunities of his predecessor, the theologian. But that day is no more. Today he can exist only as a corsair of docile habits. The moment he tries to expose and expound the realities behind the masquerade he is unfrocked and silenced. If he lets in the light ever so little, the holes must go through his own fair corpse.

James N. Wood was born at Petersburg, Va.,

in 1871. On his father's side he is descended from English Quakers who came to Pennsylvania with William Penn; on his mother's side he belongs to a Virginia family that descends from Bishop Burnet. He was educated in the schools of Alexandria, Va., Washington and Baltimore, and attended Swarthmore College, but did not graduate. His profession is that of a mechanical engineer, and he has designed and invented many useful machines, including coal trimmers, cotton presses, cigarette machines, and gas and steam engines. He has taken out more patents for the gin compression of cotton than any other inventor. In 1892 he designed an aeroplane, and was laughed at as a visionary.

Always interested in political and philosophical ideas, he became an active Socialist in New York in 1900, and was organizer of Local New York and a member of the State Committee. But the hollowness of Socialism soon disgusted him, and two years afterward he left the party. Later on the Socialists made his severance complete by formally expelling him. He has stood free of all party ties ever since.

H. L. MENCKEN.

THE WILL TO POWER

I

THE WILL TO POWER

1

The Concept of Progress

The concept of progress as a basic tendency in social life is derived from the theory of physical evolution, and is accepted by many still in doubt about the latter. He must be courageous who affirms a doubt as to the demonstrated validity of the principle, or even fails to find it clearly enough substantiated to warrant positing it in the category of immutable natural laws, so-called. That it is attractive and plausible cannot be denied, but it embraces many contradictions that escape its advocates. A scientific examination of it would involve prodigious labour, and this, in turn, might lead to the unfoldment of a novel and quite contrary idea. Physical evolution may or may not be true. Within historical times, certainly, nothing is observable to indicate any basic alteration in man. The link

between animal and human, even if it were ever found, would call for ten thousand anterior links, running back in a chain beyond the lower vertebrates. The most intelligent animal, oddly enough, is least like man in conformation: the elephant. The insect world, made up of creatures wholly unlike man, includes orders that display astonishing capacities, even for the complexities of social organization.

In time, of course, the diverse problems suggested by a candid survey of the matter may all be resolved by science. In spite of the negative attitude here assumed, the idea is not at all to question evolution broadly. It is a tremendous conception, one, in fact, that makes a powerful appeal to the mind, even without demonstration. Everything in nature passes through stages of growth: birth, unfoldment, decay. Change greets the vision everywhere. A theory that casts such phenomena into an orderly relation has an engaging plausibility, for order is something that man seeks always. Yet, has man descended from the ape, or is the latter his retrograding descendant? Even a theory as attractive as that of evolution must be approached with an open mind.

2

Scientific Theory

Theory, in science, is a changing quantity, responding to an evolutionary process of its own. How few are the brilliant hypotheses that have withstood the test of time, though all of them have been deferred to with enthusiasm in their day by an amazed world! The effort to detect a general principle, applicable to a definite range of relations, embodies an ideal as elusive as the phenomena to which it is sought to apply it. The faculty of generalization, or coordination, is perhaps the highest of those to which man owes his greatness. He cannot observe a series of relations without trying to link them to a common principle. Even when he is in error, the broad concept aids him in reaching understanding—but leaves him, alas, no alternative but to abandon the premise by which he achieved it. The history of science shows its share of such remains; they even repeat themselves, an old idea recurring, and resuming an importance not before suspected. Witness the mediaeval belief in a primordial substance, a final quintessence from which all other forms

of matter have arisen. The distillation of mercury was repeated hundreds of times to prove the falsity of the theory. Modern chemistry returns to it.

The indivisible atom diffuses itself into electrons, and these resolve into particles even more minute. They are quantities without existence; ethereal conceptions by which the mind essays to fix a series of probabilities that appear to call for transcendental littleness. Even that tenet supreme, the law of the conservation of energy, trembles before the bewildering attributes of radio-active elements. We behold molecular associations so transient that they dissolve spontaneously, hurling their constituent infinitesimalities into the voids of space. There opens ahead a fairy land of conjecture, but the path to positive knowledge is lost in a maze of dancing shadows.

3

Man in the Cosmos

If all this is true of quantities that can be followed through laboratory reactions, quantitatively and qualitatively, how far off is certainty as to the development of the actual nature of

man; how obscure his past; how mysterious his future!

All we may say is that, evolving or not, man is, for the time, at any rate, a stationary quantity, and that his attitude towards Nature shows a singular disregard of his environment. He wars against it, struggling to adapt it to his shape and will. This spirit seems characteristic of even the most inferior races. Between them and the highest animal there is an abyss of incalculable vastness. The real point to be determined in the natural history of man is not the type of form evolution, as valuable as such knowledge would be, but to what extent the struggle with Nature has modified mental attitudes and capacities; to what extent have they been strengthened or weakened by ages of conflict with the physical world.

The net result, so far, of applying this idea of evolution to social change has been to encourage formulae. The future is mapped out with surprising confidence. The idealistic state of the coming man is contemplated with an almost jealous longing, when contrasted with our present unhappy condition. There is doubt of the wisdom of considering the past at all, the

future is so bright and sure. None the less, the known facts indicate that historical man has not altered in physique, and that if he has altered mentally the nature of the alteration cannot be determined. Morally, his sameness is remarkable. He seems to be as good and as evil today as he was in Greece; just as, five thousand years before, the Egyptian was as good and as evil as the later Greek. The origin of human qualities is not to be detected in the habits of the amoeba. It is to be ascertained by a study of man himself, and of the bases of his mental variations.

4

The Struggle for Existence

Nature deals with man as with a step-child. He discovers himself at enmity with her from his birth. What he needs must be wrung from her. Between them there is spontaneous and endless antagonism. Man is therefore a child of war, and is gifted with warlike attributes. These are intelligence and will. So armed, he maintains war—and is not always victorious. None the less, his status renders him enormously

enterprising and aggressive. He struggles to conquer Nature, and even endeavours to surpass her. This leads him to modify the natural world; against its order he is forever at variance. The forest he replaces by cities; his structures avoid the infinite differentiation about him and follow the geometrical conformations of the microscopic world.

But Nature is the least of his opponents; there is another more potent and that is man himself. Man also fights man, thus facing two powerful antagonists at once. His conflict with Nature is due to the pressure of mere physical necessity, the elementary requirements of the animal functions, but when he fights man it is to determine a more complex thing; the quality and scope of the joint battle against environment. There is, then, a distinction between men: the desires of one do not coincide with those of another. This fact, so productive of the worst and most hopeless sorts of strife, has led to singular consequences in the mental world: dreams of a complete mergence of purposes, universal monotony achieved in a Utopia of peaceful brothers.

The dominant factor in all human activity is

the will to live and, among the majority it has been, at all times, almost the only recognizable impulse. Among men, however, two classes have always been apparent: those of one class desiring existence merely, and those of the other wishing an environment of their own creation. Let this second wish be called the will to create, as opposed to the mere will to exist. The superior man refuses to accept the limitations of life as he finds them on entering the world. In his imagination he perceives a super-world, and this he desires to make his theatre of action. But his effort at creation straightway involves opposition from the groups contented with mere living, and the superior then endeavours to subordinate the inferior to his own purpose. This tendency is apparent in all orders. The humble impose their will on those even less than themselves, and yield, in turn, to the will of superiors beyond them. This effort to subordinate the will of one to that of another has been called the will to power. In man it is characteristic. Throughout history it transcends all other factors. It is the cause alike of improvement and of disintegration. A veritable Saturn, it con-

sumes its own children. The various orders of the past were erected and destroyed by the force of this will to power in different epochs. So-called social evolution is merely the result of conflicts between rival groups, striving to master the inert and inferior man, to utilize him for their own purposes. The form of expression of this will constantly changes; its purpose remains invariable.

Such struggles are merciless in their nature; they are for existence itself in a definite sense, and admit of no quarter. Nor are they always decided in favour of the superior group. More often, indeed, the relatively inferior triumphs, and long periods elapse before the former level of progress is reached. Nevertheless, it tends to return in the end. The destruction of Greco-Roman civilization by its slave class led to a thousand years of darkness in Europe; the few fragments of a literature that remain are almost the only living testimonials to the exalted mental attainments of the destroyed order. Yet the influence of these fragments upon the new civilization of the West has been greater than the combined effects of all the other heirlooms

of antiquity. Their value springs from an independence and clarity of thought still lacking in the modern.

5

The Delusion of Equality

In spite of the fact that in all times and under every social form men have been living witnesses to the truth that no two are alike and equal, the error persists, constituting one of the most blatant negations of the obvious that has ever marked man's judgment of natural phenomena. But while vague allusions to such a fallacy appear in ancient writings, it remained for later generations to discover in equality a basis for political relation. In modern times the idea awoke into significant life during the struggle between a rising mercantile class and a landed aristocracy. Disguised in idealistic garments, it charmed a decaying intellectual caste, and was even applauded by dreamers of the class against which it was leveled. This supreme illusion was enunciated by doctrinaires who aimed to break down the bonds of the soil and force the inferior groups of men into cities, there to be exploited by a rising manufacturing power. The theory

was promulgated with the idea of convincing the worker that nothing distinguished the superior man from him but opportunity. Many of its leading advocates were men whose lives were a flat denial of it, but Europe at the time was swept by a ruthless spirit of revolt, and nothing was overlooked that promised help in the war against a master class that still ruled, but was beginning to waver and break up.

The whole movement offers an example of the ruthless means resorted to by one superior group to wrest from another control of the superior labour element. No method is considered unfair that achieves this. Members of a dominant caste are themselves often deceived by the hocus-pocus. It is clear and will become clearer as additional data is examined, that the high water mark of a given caste, that is, the period when it finds itself apparently safely entrenched and proof against attack is, in reality, a critical period. Other wills assert their power at such times, appealing to the inferior groups, the aim being to remove from a given structure its supporting means. In a sense, this subversion is always being attempted, even in the most stable societies, but history notes it only at vital inter-

vals. The antagonism then takes on the proportions of a tangible and bitter conflict.

6

Nietzsche

The notion of the will to power originated with Friedrich Nietzsche, but he got the germs of it from Arthur Schopenhauer, who, first among moderns, attempted a survey of existence with the object of observing it as it actually was and is. His doctrine of the will to live was the first step forward since Plato's time, and with it he renewed, at a stroke, the link with the Aryans, of which Greek philosophy had been the reflection in Europe. Schopenhauer recognized the eternal enmity of Nature, and despaired of conquering it. He viewed the world with the calm pessimism of a Christ or a Buddha, finding no good in it. But Nietzsche detected in the will to power the means through which man aims and struggles to become superior to his surroundings; that is, to Nature itself. He described man as a being forever at war. (The attempts subsequently made to find in this doctrine the inspiration of a particular war must be classed

with the humorous, or pathetic, incidents of history.)

The real eminence of this philosopher lies in the fact that he was the first of Europeans to reason philosophically from a scientific viewpoint. His opinions, as a consequence, embraced radical conclusions that led to his temporary isolation. This is a penalty that every wanderer in strange places must pay. The world resents change, and has no pity for daring spirits. Nietzsche added to his unpopularity by a bitterness of tone that was often derisive—a mental defence, perhaps, against an almost insuperable environment. His final collapse, mentally, has been held a reason for doubting his conclusions. Mediocrity always revels in the weaknesses of the great, and likes to feel that its own obtuseness makes it, in some way, superior to genius. The impressive thing about Nietzsche is the undeviating and uncompromising spirit in which he stood before the enigma of life. He essayed to view it in all its fulness—and all its terror. He beheld man triumphant in his conflict with Nature and his inferior associates, and in the superman he forecasted a

type that was to be superior to both. He was, therefore, the prophet of the ultimate scientific man: one powerful in will and knowledge, a master of environment and circumstance.

Nietzsche is rated one of the pessimistic philosophers, but they have considered him only casually who arrive at such a conclusion. That he refused to blind himself to the evil in the world only testifies to his strength. In an age that revels in illusion, in flagrant denial of the obvious, what surer antidote is there than Nature? How deny that which obtrudes at every step in her labyrinth, where mercy is ever absent and pity is unknown? Certainly, it is conceivable that it may be best for the weak to remain blind, lest their lack of spirit should cause the consciousness of reality to overwhelm them. But the strong man must face truth without faltering. Whether a transient monad or an eternal identity, he is nothing until he can stand before the cosmic problem unmoved.

Nietzsche should be classed among the great optimists. He believed that, even though environed by evil, man can become superior to it, and attain his ends regardless of it.

7

The War of Castes

The will to power may be taken as an attribute of the individual, and from such a standpoint it has been here discussed, but it may also be thought of as a dominating characteristic of castes, classes and states. In any society, the question of the form of government is secondary. Organization follows purpose, and purpose is the intent of intelligence. The significant question is, what is the nature of the primary means employed to maintain position, to exercise control, to foster the eminence of a controlling individual or group? The latter constitutes the ruling and directing power, and is, in fact, the embodiment of the will to power in a social sense. This power, apparent in all societies, may be likened to the crest of a wave, composed of the various particles that have attained separation from the more congested mass, and are bearing themselves onward to a fairer region of freedom and light.

But all this, of course, does not imply any excellence morally or intellectually. It may

be, indeed, that the more intellectual groups and individuals lack a pristine force, an adaptability to the details of life, that precludes their supremacy. They may merely become the intelligence of the actual over-group, or throw their influence to alternate groups, for, except in societies of phenomenal stability, the highest groups are, as a rule, constantly antagonistic. The world is more often ruled by fools than by wise men, for by reason of the vicissitudes of life the latter do not always reach the summit. The genuinely superior man, indeed, often labours under serious handicaps. Against him are combined all his inferiors, and among those of his own order he must contend with characters as egoistic as himself. Such men prefer to fight alone. Between such rivals the great wars of history have been fought, ending often in mutual disaster. Inferior groups have risen to power on the ruins of systems thus wrecked by desperate encounters among superiors. Only at far separated periods has the world seen men of such transcendent greatness that they have been able to seize control of the whole social structure and mould it to their wills. Even so, their tenure has always been brief. They last until

the lesser grasp the exact magnitude of the individual facing them. A union of forces, hitherto discordant, is then effected and the greater is hurled down. The destruction of such men may lead to calamitous consequences. The assassination of Julius Caesar left anarchy in Rome; a throne established by a man of such enterprise and foresight might have given the Empire a far more secure future. The remark of Plutarch that violence stayed the hand of the gods is not without acuteness. So likewise, the fall of Napoleon brought about the instability of modern Europe.

8

The Superior Group

From all this it may be safely laid down that no superior group can hope for an indefinite tenure of life. Once in power, its aim has always been to shape the social structure with a sole reference to the rights of itself and its heirs, and while such artificial forms may endure for long periods they inevitably fall at last as a result of pressure from below. It is paradoxical of all such efforts, indeed, that they defeat their own purpose. Succeeding generations, born to

power, may lack, or ignore, the attributes of those who made possible their dominance. Novel conditions may arise with which they find themselves unable to cope. Their intellectual aides, upon whom a certain dependence is unavoidable, may desert them.

Even so, the form of a social organization, once it is firmly set up, has more vitality than the will of those who moulded it. There is an inertia about it, due to the social functions that co-ordinate within it. As a rule, it is only after great lapses of time that it is completely destroyed. To effect so grave a result prolonged labour among subject groups is required; there must be radical changes in popular conceptions, and the secret establishment of novel norms. Even then, the new is composed of much of the old, superficially disguised—different names for similar things. These novelties, intrinsically inferior to what has preceded them, lack a secure basis in habit or experience, but they take on the aspect of dignity when the culture of the past has been interwoven with the new.

A favourite device of those who have dreamed of perpetuating a permanent caste has been that of breeding. All hereditary aristocracies are

based on the assumption that high qualities may be transmitted by blood. But that superior men can be deliberately bred is not a practical deduction of science, even if it is a theoretical one. There is some doubt, too, as to what constitutes general superiority. An excursion through the literature of the subject is not enlightening.

It may be safely said, however, that aristocracies decline as certainly as political systems, and that there are sound reasons for it. Primarily, the very strength of the social order that supports them may prove their undoing. The aggressive element is no longer taxed to exert itself, and so tends to languish. They may betake themselves to an artificial and exclusive environment, viewing the outer world through the eyes of a mediate class. They may lose themselves in the contemplation of the ideal, or in the enjoyment of an aesthetic luxury. They may lose their aggressive masculinity by imputing to the female moral qualities not actually possessed, thus weakening themselves by devotion to imaginary virtues.

Errors cannot be made with impunity by superior groups, for the lower are ever on the alert, and study to find the means and moment to at-

tack. No social form has ever been proof against all of these defects; some have existed longer than others; all default at last.

9

Sacerdotal Castes

It is significant of power groups that those evidencing the most security and length of life have been of a religious nature. While rising, in time, to control of vast temporal agencies, they yet depend, fundamentally, on control of the mental horizon of their subjects. To accomplish this control extraordinary methods are resorted to. Their personnel is rigourously trained in a regimen of will. The lives of all members are subordinated to the sustained imposition of this will on inferiors. Celibacy is an invariable prerequisite in such systems, for it obviates the liability to weakness through allegiance to family. Woman is viewed as a sex agent, purely, and must be content with the honours accorded her among the divinities. Men otherwise weak are thus transformed into forces of great potentiality. Systems rise and fall about them, but they go on and on, apparently beyond the reach of change. Contrasted with the method of selec-

tion by breeding, the outcome is altogether favourable to the sacerdotal scheme. All history proves its immeasurably greater effectiveness.

There is a democracy in such systems, too, since the avenues of advancement are open to all who choose to contend, and the men attracted to them are of a somewhat higher type than the ordinary, and real excellence and power are quickly recognized. More important still, exceptional characters, men of the genuinely superior orders, men wearied by the ceaseless pressure of inferiors, or overcome by the sorrows of life, find here a haven. In such organizations there are always a large number of such men. Their personality is merged in the mass of the order; their satisfaction is derived from helping to sustain it; their egotism is lost in a collective will which moves every moment towards a common object. The result is enthusiasm, the will's greatest stimulant. Such groups are almost irresistible. Only voluntary relapse from a primary ideal, or merciless extinction, as of the Magi in Susa, can dethrone them. Even then, the ideas that they leave behind them must be respected by their conquerors for long periods

of time, so potent is their grip on the intelligence of inferior men. It is for this reason that religion remains much the same from age to age, merely altering the names of its divinities, and adapting its method to new conditions.

10

The Ebb and Flow of Power

The will to power is, therefore, a mobile element in all organizations; something forever seeking, ever obtaining, ever losing. At any stage it is the best expression of superiority possible under the given conditions. Alteration follows only after the appearance of an individual or group of singular power, or after a compromise between unequal but related groups. Stability comes through the control of the instruments of power, or through a profound influence upon all inferior groups by the agency of specific ideas.

A study of society which omits a factor so dominant as the will to power cannot be looked on as more than superficial. Through its study the forces underlying surface movements may be detected, and their aim understood. The trans-

formations which occur may always be identified as the results of struggles in which new groups have successfully assailed others that have previously controlled.

DEMOCRACY, ARISTOCRACY AND MORALITY

II

Democracy, Aristocracy and Morality

11

The Democratic Idea

The name of a social organization is of little importance; it is the nature of the means by which it is maintained that counts—the form of the will to power underlying it, the method pursued by its dominant group to maintain superiority. These forces are sometimes direct and visible, but in democracies they are rarely so. There, veil conceals veil. Nothing is what it seems to be. The superficial is a cypher, a cryptogram. The democratic form now dominates in all civilized countries, although variously applied and revealed. It is within the limits of democratic society that the operations of the will to power are to be considered here, and the point of view will be further narrowed by confining the inquiry to the mass form, so-called, that is, to government by majority, for this is

the ideal towards which such societies assume to aim. Government within them, if this be true, is ordered by majorities. It is the will of a majority that rules—the joint intent of a vast number of individuals.

But democracy, itself, is a fluid term. There have been such forms since history began and some of its most brilliant chapters were written under so-called democratic conditions. This was, however, only in appearance. Democracy, in Greece, was aristocratic, in Venice it was oligarchical; the various Italian republics were chiefly aristocratic. The opening of new domains, following the discovery of America, led to the appearance of such governments under conditions distinct from any that had ever been seen before. In the United States, separation from Great Britain, a purely economic matter, was followed by a constitutional republicanism containing principles derived from French idealism.

The basis of the American system is a written constitution, a paper formulated by men of an extreme conservatism and plainly distrustful of the people. This is shown by the carefully developed checks to spontaneous action; the method

of balancing one branch against another. French influence is detected in the effort to limit executive power and in the enunciation of broad principles of personal liberty; that is, the right of free speech, and of the press, and the privilege of bearing arms. Actually, however, this influence was largely imaginary, the chief controlling force being fundamentally English, for that nation had ever maintained liberal ideas in this department, a result of the character of her people, going back to their Germanic origins. Northern Europe was the birthplace of modern democracy, the idea coming from the ancient assemblies in her gloomy forests. France, by reason of the attractive platitudes of her Eighteenth Century writers, simply became, for a time, the spokesman for all this ancient democracy.

But the long struggle against feudalism, during which the expression of ideas was curtailed, had made free speech a new fetich in revolutionary Europe and its inclusion in the American Constitution must, therefore, be granted to French influence specifically, in spite of the deeper English derivation behind it. At the time, France was the fashion, intellectually, and

Jefferson, Paine and Franklin were evidently governed by it. Washington was a conservative of the conservatives, and displayed little interest in the technique of Jacobin culture. Jefferson's attachment was largely that of a free thinker of the reserved class. A man of some brilliance, of high position, and given to idealism, his mind apparently wavered. The Declaration of Independence, a uniquely incongruous medley of contradictions, expressed the effort of an English mind to parade in terms transiently familiar to the boulevards. Paine, an unfortunate borne down by the pressure of circumstances, dreamed of individual eminence attained by a particular code of laws. He was thus the forerunner of the true American of today, who seeks in legislation a panacea for all ills.

The social forces behind the American movement were aristocratic and mercantile. The merchants of New England joined hands with the landed proprietors of the South, both confident there was room for each in a world new and unscarred by European traditions. Both were oblivious of the coming manufacturing caste that was to make them implacable enemies. Nothing can be less true than the popular idea that

the American Republic was the product of men longing for radical democracy.

12

Democracy in Practice

A pure democracy would be one in which the majority was absolute, and not limited by a written constitution, but except in negligible communities such commonwealths do not exist. In others,—that is, those of consequence in the world—there are either specific constitutions limiting action or legal traditions amounting to constitutional inhibitions but somewhat broader. Some include aristocracies which participate in the government by right of birth. Of all these varieties, the formal constitutional democracies are the least consistent. The fundamental documents upon which they are based are subject to interpretations which may reverse their meaning. Adhesion to them, theoretically demanded, may transform an individual simple enough to accept their clauses at face value into a criminal. Even mandatory clauses can be construed into negations. All depends upon the definition made by a court, and this adheres to the principle of expediency. This expediency is public

policy and can transcend the paper by which it is supposed to be limited. In mass societies, specifically, the governing will therefore concerns itself with moulding this policy to its interest. The tendency becomes more definite as public *morale* declines, always a striking phenomenon in such societies. Great contests originate over amendments which, when carried, are openly ignored. The theoretical suffrage rights of the coloured race in the United States, so ferociously fought for, exist today only in communities that voluntarily concede them. The right to bear arms, and freedom of speech and of the press, specifically defined, survive only as rhetorical affirmations. There follows the curious contradiction that a prison sentence may await the man who believes that positive statements convey ideas.

All democracies are affected by a further force, unexpressed, but present in each, to wit, tradition. This is the sum of the rights and privileges supposed to attach to the individual, forming a body of natural rights beyond the scope of law, a resisting quantity to which law conforms itself. These rights are readily detected in a given political body, and their ex-

tent always defines the limits beyond which legislation is resented. Liberty, as an intelligible expression, is embraced by them, for the spirit of independence in a given order always manifests itself by an insistence on the recognition of such rights. This is the unwritten constitution of the inferior group in all societies, and it is rarely threatened, save where the general will force has declined. This is an important observation. The aggressive power of the inferior group not only defines its own strength and importance; it likewise determines the quality of the ruling factions, when compared with those of other societies. From passive collectivities great men do not arise, and it is therefore the constant aim of inferior minds to lower the standard of individual aggressiveness. By this means the liberty of lower types is assured.

Traditional rights are racial; that is, they define the virility of masses, their masculinity and forcefulness. The liberalism of English customs does not trace to Magna Charta, for nothing is less justified than the exaggerated importance attached to that document. It results from the stubbornness, the brutality, of the basic Englishman. Men devoid of brutality are men de-

void of sex. The consequences of this brutality in English life have been, on the whole, beneficial. Primarily, it has led to a certain deference to individual liberty that has conferred on the race a deserved reputation for liberalism. But on the other hand, it has fathered a dominant caste of great acumen and power, for the reason that real skill and courage were requisite to mastering and directing a stubborn people. The gradual decline of this pristine vigour can alone lead to the fall of the race. The inauguration of mass democracy seems to indicate its impermanence. The elasticity existing for centuries as the result of high class tension is giving way, assuring either an absolute autocracy, or, more probably, a simple democratic state, governed by mediocrity.

13

Aristocratic Functions

Aristocracies, in modern societies, acutely affect the environment in which they persist. Their influence is spiritual, and to spiritual influence man is always more responsive than he is to merely material stimuli. Embracing the results of the only human breeding experiment

ever attempted, these classes include many men of natural distinction. Their characteristics are egotism and will, inbred for generations, and it is impossible for such individuals to participate in ordinary affairs without attracting attention by the display of these qualities. Even when nobler gifts have gradually been effaced, the former persist, and quite logically, for it was due to them, originally, that the ancestors of the present individuals forced their way to leadership. An aristocracy is the natural custodian of a nation's culture. Drawn to the arts through freedom from commercial pursuits, aristocrats treasure the works of genius, as they have been its patrons. The inner nature of such groups is, therefore, complex, including the highest conceptions, even when debased by habits that otherwise weaken character. The inner world of the superior man is always extensive when compared to that of the inferior; this is, above all else, the reason of his superiority. Will alone may carry the lowest to power; it is only the man who is profound inwardly, a complex of internal and external ideas, who is noble.

The moral effect of such a class is far reaching in whatever society it appears. Its presence

acts as a curb on ignoble tendencies; it deprives the purely sordid of the satisfaction of being worshipped; it forms a balance against grovelling materialism. Far from the common impression so often expressed, it views with a friendly air the more dependent classes, and is antagonistic to ruthless methods of dealing with them. Its extinction is always a significant phenomenon, for it shows a moral decline and the inauguration of a mediocre epoch.

This element, in America always small, has gradually been effaced here. The blood has become diffused in aimless crosses, but it is still marked in individuals at random intervals, and is responsible for occasional displays of spirit in unexpected quarters. On the whole, aggressiveness is not an American characteristic, nor could it well be so in view of the indiscriminate blending of inferior blood strains that has gone on here. The notion that this condition is favourable to the development of a novel type, uniquely efficient, is not borne out by experience. The thoroughbred is a product of selection, and the great races of history have been isolated and inbred, weakening in the end with the infusion of promiscuous blood lines. It is this tendency

that has lowered the individuality of recent peoples. Psychologically, it is largely responsible for the childish faith in the future—a characteristic phenomenon of the modern world.

14

Democracy and Wealth

In present day democracies life has resolved itself into a struggle for power, and this appears, primarily, as a universal effort to secure the element held to be synonymous with it, wealth. Through this the subjection of the ordinary and the extraordinary man is secured. Without it the most elementary ambitions come to naught; ideas remain incipient; existence becomes a vain effort to conquer disappointment and despair. Regardless of individual capacity, men strive to first bridge this chasm when birth has not dowered them with the key to the halls of power. It is a contest in which all are free to enter, and it acts as a leveller, in that success is taught to be possible to every one. He who fails in this primary test is not only condemned by the world, he condemns himself, since the ordeal has obtained the standing of a principle, the individual who fails to show gifts consonant with it being

rated defective in natural ability. In all mass, or democratic societies, this criterion maintains itself, whether denied or not. Intellectual gifts are esteemed inferior to it, for however desirable they may be, the existence of wealth and its significance as an open sesame of power, make it superior. In such societies all the relations of life are subordinated to success. The unsuccessful man is the weak man, and he repents his weakness as the religious man repents his sins. Since wealth can be derived from no other source than labour, and as labour in abundance is the essential prerequisite of any mode of getting benefits from it, labour, in turn, that is, productive commercial labour, is idealized too. This view of life is apparent in current American literature, where writers of all kinds evoke with varied formulae the appearance of the daemon. Even God has been likened to a day labourer, thus casting aside the concept of Divinity as Ruler of the universe to accommodate theology to the newly discovered equality of mankind. In this "philosophy" God is supreme where there is no supremacy.

None the less, this struggle for wealth is, in a sense, superficial. It is, of itself, only a mode

of expressing the innate desire for power. The will to power pervades all effort; each participant desires to impress his ideas and personality on the world. The common war for riches is essayed because it yields immediate capacity, when successful. The methods of success appear to be simple, and they are taught to the least as they are taught to the highest. Even when a man superior to those around him becomes aware of his own incompetence in this direction and turns to other ideas as a possible path to power, he retains a consciousness of the importance of the original means and reverts to it at the first favourable opportunity.

15

The Corsairs

The fact that all cannot succeed in the race for riches leads to important consequences in democratic societies. It forces men who have failed to pass the preliminary test to seek other means of reaching their ends. They have recourse to more intellectual efforts, or, more properly, to efforts involving more mental exertion. The most intellectual are rarely found among the holders of great wealth, unless it has come to

them through inheritance. Instead, the genuinely superior intellectual groups seek to prey upon the rich, and this they achieve through ideas that they popularize, or by plans they conceive that appeal to the upper groups. These plans may be of a varied nature. They may be elementary, in that they cover a mere philanthropical diversion, or they may be elaborate, involving the development of political and social movements, the success of which requires great sums, but the control of which conveys power.

These intellectual groups are peculiar to democracy and are deeply significant. They absorb great revenues and a diversity of minds, but lead to the development of movements of the greatest importance in maintaining social equilibrium. They are composed of men of a corsair spirit, who depend on their knowledge of human nature, its frailties particularly, to make their way. Their utility is increased by the nature of the executive problems facing the upper groups. Among these is that of securing mass action, numbers being of more importance than intelligence. It becomes essential to master great groups as a means of furthering the constant effort to increase revenue. This condition

lends itself to the purpose of the corsairs. They seek to find plausible ideas by which the masses may be swayed, of a character not repugnant to their rich supporters. They originate the ideas that they thus aim to popularize, and as these are always of a moral nature a certain sanctity attaches to their labour. This moral nature of their propaganda gives them great influence and power among the lower groups, for the latter look upon all questions of human relation from a moral point of view.

The ordinary man cannot free himself from certain conceptions of nature and the individual that are unknown to the superior man. He views everything from a standpoint of right and wrong. The sorrows of life, the mystery of death, the destructive outbursts of Nature, are to him in some way involved with moral delinquencies. He feels himself an immoral unit in a moral world. The order of the universe is ethical. He is haunted by the inherent sinfulness of his own consciousness. Pleasure is always under suspicion, even when he indulges it. He is, therefore, peculiarly susceptible to propaganda claiming a moral basis. In mass societies morality takes the place of the "right to power"

in older associations. An idea is vital to the extent that it conforms to mass-moral criteria. The ruling groups, aware of this, seek always to mask their ideas in a moral veil.

The prevalence of such propagandas colours social and industrial relations with moral hues. Those who depend on them possess an advantage which disconcerts any opposition. The man opposed is immoral; he resists moral ideas. Even those strong enough to reject these arbitrary ethical distinctions are swayed to some extent. Their aggressiveness is weakened, the real question at issue eludes them, for they must first meet the moral claims of those against whom they contend. These claims are supported by the moral sense of the average man, who looks with suspicion on those who do not agree with him. They are thrown on the defensive and half the battle is lost.

In mass societies, the moral factor appears in the most unexpected places, no issue being too trivial to miss its stamp. There arises a fixed mental attitude, which responds quickly to any impulse having such a moral basis. The sentiment of a community is quickly affected. These moral concepts may run counter to all

the experience of history and ethics, as defined by philosophy and even by religion, and yet still be accepted by the inferior classes. Their natural proneness to place all problems in ethical sub-divisions accentuates their weakness. The corsair plays upon this, nor does he shrink from attacking religious ethics, when they bar his way to power. Only those orders that cherish ideas beyond him are proof against his attack. Commonplace religion, that is, religion having no basis in tradition, he ruthlessly assails, subordinating it to his purpose and altering its morality to suit himself.

16

Corsair Propaganda

Corsair propaganda, with all its power, suffers from one defect: it lacks consistency and is therefore in constant flux. Its want of depth is concealed by profusion. Ethical ideals change quickly, to be succeeded by others of greater utility. The word "moral" alone remains constant.

The object of corsair propaganda is quite evident. Fundamentally, it aims to weaken the will of the understrata, and in this it usually

succeeds. Any elementary faculty of discrimination that may have existed is gradually effaced, or rendered negligible. This is often shown dramatically when a propaganda is launched that opposes one previously conducted by the same proponents. The mass ignores the palpable inconsistency and accepts the new revelation. During such intervals the corsair is particularly vindictive, no mercy being shown to backward converts of a previous crusade.

So deeply had pacifism affected the United States in the days before 1914 that a speaker who advocated rational preparation for war and a military spirit among the people was mobbed at a prominent university—Princeton. Yet later, none were more zealous than these very enthusiasts in condemning the unfortunates who had taken their ideas seriously, and stood up for them. Even the classes that had mixed religion with their folly were not spared, experiencing all the opprobrium that follows traitors. Some, of a more stubborn type, of the number that take propaganda to heart, found themselves in jail. A merciful dispensation, for it doubtless saved their lives. So quickly do the weak respond to

inferior stimuli; so barren are they of any rational principle; so incapable of consistency! Leaves blown by vagrant winds!

17

Success Religions

The ideal of success has called forth religions especially dedicated to it. Some of the most prosperous of these base their doctrines on a psychological method of achieving success, the struggle of life being guided to a benign issue by an attitude of mind. They even go beyond this, finding in introspective forces factors that govern physical processes, with health resolving itself into an affair of thought. The foundation of these beliefs is a morality of Nature, the result of a force devoid of "evil." The ills of the flesh are sins, or mental errors, as is the failure to succeed. Such ideas increase in popularity as the pressure of life rises. They give an excuse to the weak for their unfortunate condition, and they satisfy the successful, who are proud of their innate morality, a personal beatitude displayed in palpable gifts of the spirit. These peculiar sects, generally of feminine ori-

gin, contribute to philosophy an apotheosis of materialism that is quite new, for the oriental originators of the underlying concept viewed the world with the indifference of the cynic, no longer attracted by its charm.

THE MOB MASS

III

THE MOB MAN

18

The Philosophy of Democracy

The will to power under democracy is a will of variance, changing with the nature of the obstacles facing it; bending today; inflexible tomorrow. Decision is prompt and execution energetic, but a lack of foresight is always evident. It is the obvious that is sought; it is the immediate that must be grasped. The impression is general that life consists of the situation at hand; the future is not to be considered, for its beneficence may be depended on. Nor is permanence important, for it cannot exist. Motion alone is actual, certain and dependable. Expediency is supreme, the expediency of the moment. A warning voice is seldom heard and when it speaks it gets little attention.

Among the directing actors a remarkable confidence exists, a confidence derived from the

weakness of the lower groups. The latter are kept in hand by the corsairs, who, ceaselessly active, give to society a generally negative complexion. Intellectually, a state of lassitude results, concealed behind constant nervous excitement. There is perpetual activity, unsatisfied, nor to be satisfied. The mass below sways like a vast wave, impelled by diverse forces, abrupt, changeful, indefinite. The individuals developed in this strange maze partake of the nature of the forces among which they are. Above: narrow viewed, confident, autocratic; below: active, excitable, bewildered. Stability is absent. The impression conveyed is that of a concourse of spirits pursued by furies that deny them rest.

The average man of today exists within a mechanical environment, his life follows a narrower groove than he himself is aware of, and the advantages he believes he enjoys are deterrents to a rational expression of character. He is, unconsciously, part of a great machine and his movements, however swift, have little reason in them. The mind of this elementary man was shaped in the past by the quality of the ideas pervading his society, and by the forces press-

ing against him. His mental life was chiefly unconscious, and was made up of wishes and memories derived from the reactions between his inclinations and his consciousness of weakness. There thus appeared a form of poetic subconscious life, the simple idealization of desire contending vainly with the overmastering power of Fate. This led to a colouring of life with dream pictures that assumed distinct forms in different societies. They came to compose the spiritual life of the lower ranks of men and often embraced conceptions of great strength and beauty. Genius has found them a fruitful source of inspiration, and immortalized many of them in brilliant works. Such is the folk-tradition of all peoples: the ideal of a living Nature, the pensive melancholy of futile longing, the occasional accomplishment of the long-wished-for through the unexpected.

This body of dreams, purely passive, was strongly influenced by the ideas of the more intellectual ranks above, but the concepts of these superior minds underwent strange transformations below, taking on aspects undreamed of by their originators. None the less, there following an ennobling of the inferior man, and the de-

velopment of attributes that aided him to bear up against the antagonistic forces of actuality. This, in turn, awakened his respect for higher conceptions, sensed, if not understood. There thus arose a deference for art and an embryonic appreciation of its significance. These forces were the forming influences of common tradition; they founded the spiritual life of the elementary man.

In modern mass communities the enemy is the successful man; the suspect, the ambitious man, for he may succeed. Society has become an array of individuals pervaded by distrust. The simpler man of primitive days, more allied to nature, and of freer impulse, looked on his superior more candidly. Antagonism was less, for both were bounded by a mysterious sense of danger, the indefinable hostility of Nature. The general view of the world was naïve, and such intercourse as there was with superiors increased good will. But now the superior is the eternal enemy, not to be defied as an individual but subject to mass attack. He is no longer a moral force, for the old human relation between superior and inferior has ceased. As the forest monarch hears the bay of the pack, so the man of

distinction must reckon with the clamour of the throng.

Primitive impulses, inborn, take new forms. Failure is Fate, the shadow of a cloud that covers all. Weakness is the inability to pierce the gloom. Against it hope reacts and seeks in activity an antidote for deficiency. The intellectual range of the mob man never rises above the material. There is a path to another plane, of this he is sure, but of the latter's character he is not certain. It will be different, but misgivings haunt him; the goal beyond is indefinite, questionable, even immoral, for it doubtless involves culture. This he looks on as something foreign to life—a sort of higher dissipation.

In such ranks of men there exists no true interior life; the mental process confines itself to the contiguous and transient. Instinctive culture is unknown; the mind concentrates on existence, which must be continued at all hazards. There is a broad contempt for the past, but the future is full of hope. Thus hope becomes a god unconsciously worshipped by the weak, and the strength of men may be largely gauged by the extent of their dependence upon it.

This negation of mental life and the mergence

of identity in the struggle for existence shows itself in a restless spirit, a nervous contemplation of the world, a doubt-marred longing for the future. Vitality becomes mere physical exertion; the mental desert takes the bald form of a craving for excitement. There is an insistent demand for motion and noise to accentuate the obviousness of the phenomenal world. Beyond all else, such men desire to be safe from the consciousness of the inner abyss, a realm, that, to the superior man, is a world of living forms, sustaining him in hours of trial and delighting him in moments of reflection.

19

The Corsair Propaganda

The effect of propaganda on such human material is far-reaching and assumes a character hitherto unknown. A feverish state is produced, marked, at times, by an astounding credulity and at other times by a blatant doubt. Once the mob is sufficiently excited, no misrepresentation can be too flagrant to escape its acceptance, and every correction is angrily resented. The enunciation of facts and principles long axiomatic among rational men has no effect. Great sacri-

fices are made for fallacies, momentarily held. The mental world becomes a chaos of half-formed, antagonistic ideas. It is upon such material that the corsair works. The development of propaganda is his profession.

But since a stream cannot transcend its source, so the ceaseless agitation cannot excell the mental level of those behind it. This is set by the intelligence of the ruling groups which limits itself to the perfecting of methods of production and exploitation. These usually take the shape of so-called reforms, a term used to cover improvements which may or may not be real. As such measures never get far beyond the purpose of increasing wealth, and never show any true knowledge of the mind of the man to whom they are applied, strange results ensue, as mysterious to their originators as to their subjects. Man indeed, is not necessarily what a successful business leader conceives him to be. None the less, the pressure is developed on a masterly scale, and any momentary effect is accepted as nullifying all the experience of time.

The net result of all so-called reforms to date has been to magnify the range of psychopathic diseases, by increasing a nerve tension almost at

the breaking point under a manufacturing system keyed to the highest pitch. For modern industry has achieved more in this direction than was ever dreamed of before. Throughout the nineteenth century individual efficiency was forced upward, the range of working years in a life steadily diminishing until, as a publicist expressed it, the aim came to be to take out "the heart of the steak and throw the rest away." This savage pressure led to a rise in the use of stimulants, and the superior labour grades soon obtained a reputation for excess. On the side of the latter, the pressure was for shorter hours and increased compensation. The policy of the masters was imitated and organization membership was curtailed, while alliances with associated trades were formed. These factors, aided by the effects traceable to the increased application of synthetic chemistry and the more rapid processes of manufacture, brought about a condition that favoured aggression, and the use of certain beverages was prohibited.

Since relaxation could no longer be secured by an ancient device, nerve tension increased, and is increasing. The political effects are already observable.

20

Two Kinds of Labour

In any labour group two classes are to be distinguished, the difference marking itself in mental characteristics. The labour of the greatest capability is high strung, fitful, not always dependable, but extremely efficient in a drive. The other is more deliberate, steady, but incapable of the tense exertion of the other. That this last is the majority group need hardly be stated. The inferior accepts the rule forced on him, and even admits that coercion may be beneficial to him. The superior, more individualistic, resents the imposition, and expends all energy in a contest for power, as he understands it: still greater wages and still shorter hours. Bitterly opposed to the authority that he looks on as oppressive, he listens to radical propaganda, and perceives all employers as conspiring enemies. The radicals in labor groups are always the more intelligent, the more alert, the more ambitious, and it is these with whom the upper classes must finally reckon. The mass, however, brought under a new regimen, straightway relax from efforts they cannot maintain, and, for the time,

become even less rebellious than they were. This subject is to be considered at greater length in a subsequent chapter: summed up broadly the net result of the struggle is a lowering of resisting power in the mass, and an accentuation of the symptoms of mass degeneracy. Caffeine and other such stimulants help in a degree to maintain physical stability, and the new forms of amusement momentarily allay the unrest of a class gradually purged of all the deeper faculties. Of these amusements, that furnished by the moving picture machine is now supreme.

This invention has made it possible to create for the inferior man an artificial soul; his mind follows without effort the speeding concourse of dream pictures. He readily submits to this stimulus, receiving sympathetically a series of psychological impacts that powerfully influence a brain already negative. The class of subjects and the method of treatment adopted by manufacturers of such diversions indicate the nature of the intellects to which they appeal. Nothing of depth is attempted. Artistry has not yet been attained; perhaps its futility is accepted as already too apparent. Themes of extravagant ad-

venture; the display of great physical strength; the sex lure, grotesquely tinselled; the successful man;—these appeal to the mob. The actor becomes supreme. He leads a charmed life, the life of a cherished god. The identity of the author is unimportant and rarely known.

21

The Intellectual Level

The will to power in commonwealths dominated by such influences is limited in range by the nature of the element upon which it acts. It lacks clearness; it is incapable of attaining a stable view of life. Considered socially, it is in a formative stage and has not reached the altitude of sound vision. The really superior man is, therefore, at a fearful disadvantage. He must curb his conceptions; he must conceal his objects. Once marked as an individual standing apart from the highways of popular propaganda, his position is precarious. Though made safe by the possession of means, the supposed assurance of independence, his usefulness as a social force may be quite destroyed. On the ruling group a reaction follows; they decline in

moral strength. In such societies, the tendency is always to accentuate depression. All social degrees move downward.

This state of affairs is the source of great power to the corsairs. In the simpler communities preposterous religions become instruments of political and social prestige. Beyond the few faiths that possess the dignity of taking themselves seriously, there exist a myriad of beliefs the doctrines of which can be classed only among the dreariest superstitions—strange anomalies in a world of supposed intelligence. Throughout great democratic areas, where the corsair has established a suzerainty not to be questioned, a concourse of sects co-ordinate, voicing barren ethical codes and finding targets for their anathemas in the personal habits of men. To them, the nature of man is as inscrutable as the Zohar; the profound depths of the human mind are utterly unknown. Self-appointed mentors, their life object is to torment their neighbours. Their fundamental religion may be described as the will to power expressing itself as a mode of destroying joy. These types admirably illustrate that doctrine which discovers in certain repressed

impulses a stimulant of cruelty. They love to inflict and witness particular kinds of pain.

Politically, their influence is extensive. They have dominated elections during great crises. Unable to rise above the ant hills from which they survey the world, they zealously pushed their melancholy propaganda while their countrymen were struggling to participate in world-enterprise, at the sacrifice of life and treasure. Tireless and indefatigable, they climb always towards the moon, although the sun is shining. This is not irrational in them, for they see only by reflected light—the light thrown from the shadows that people their imaginations. The nature of these phantoms they declare in the vision they proclaim, for they speak only of evil.

The level of intellectual life in such societies is therefore low at all times; sameness prevails; there is aversion to novelty; everywhere is formula. This reacts on the individual, making him afraid of being thought different from others. Anything indicative of individualism is dreaded. Even humour takes stereotyped forms, the adventures of slapstick characters running on from decade to decade, the amusing point

consisting in the injury of one by another. There is ridicule of all natural goodness—the cynicism of fatigue. Yet, oddly enough, the illusion is widespread in these societies that they are the source of lofty ideals, long neglected. Lack of spiritual tradition thus masks itself in bizarre garments; pseudo-religious concepts are derived from the most questionable sources; there is worship of a gospel of success that sacrifices all the deeper phases of man's nature to the vain adulation of inferior men.

The common longing is to be similar. Garb conforms to mass conceptions; divergence from the standard is resented. The mind derives its conclusions from sensing the conclusions around it. Individual discrimination almost disappears; the desire is to be of the mass; for numbers indicate authority and certitude. In number there is strength; the man who stands apart must be wrong. He is suspected, and he suspects himself. It is better to yield to the general pressure. He follows the mob; he acts with the mob; his mind is the mob mind.

To secure action from him the mass must be moved; he can be depended on to follow. It is more important to show him that he is with the

larger number than to prove to him that he is right. He avoids forlorn hopes; they excite his derision. In the political world he desires more to be with the winning side than to stand firmly by a principle, and every fresh attempt to attract him has this as a fundamental handicap.

ORIGINS AND TENDENCIES

IV

Origins and Tendencies

22

The Rivalry of Wills

At the risk of monotony an effort must be made to distinguish the elementary impulses that result in the general phenomena of social strife. It is usual to do this by outlining the history of anterior societies, or by tracing evolutionary unfoldment through successive advances of civilization. This is a method not attempted here, nor will it bear analysis. Man has contact with the world through his will, and it is the purpose he has in view and his manner of applying that will that are important.

It is characteristic of mass societies that vast energies must be applied to preliminary work, the forming of convictions among inferiors. Such societies are thus wasteful as efficiency systems. They are like poorly designed machines, in which most of the applied power is lost

in friction. As they expand the waste increases, from causes to be noted; nevertheless, it must be borne.

In any society two elements are at work, one seeking to control, the other to resist. One is motion; the other, inertia. This relation, of course, constantly alters. An impulse to control wakens in the inert mass; if it were not for this the social status would remain fixed. The inferior, in fact, always pushes back, more or less, against the superior. Periods come when this pressure is very powerful.

Considered broadly, there is, in a given social structure, a varying antagonism between units, a multiple rivalry of wills. Many of these merely neutralize each other, leading to their common elimination. They become negation. From others, of a more decisive character, certain tendencies merge in a given direction, at last expressing themselves as a group will, since they include the common ideas of a large number. A similar conflict then follows between groups, and more of the positive powers are cancelled. There results, in the end, a series of ideas that are the ideas of a dominant class, and these become the governing impulses in the society con-

sidered. This class may, or may not, be homogeneous; it may, or may not, recognize its community of interest. None the less, it does work towards a common end by reason of a similarity of purpose and, in a well established social form, it will assume a shape of visible unity.

It is clear that in the psychological differentiation here described a vast number of values are infinitesimal, and are quickly eliminated. It is only as stronger impulses develop that fixed quantities appear. These, by addition, increase in potency, to be either cancelled later by equally powerful antagonistic forces or to find themselves, at last, a part of the paramount social will.

There are, in any society, a relatively small number who force their way against all opposition, possessing a natural superiority that nothing can withstand. The nature of this class depends, to some extent, on the culture of the society in which it acts. Such a class may be military, intellectual, or commercial. That a purely labour group is never to be considered seriously as an executive force will be shown later. The latter, however, may become a powerful aid to a dominant group at a vital moment.

In modern societies commercial groups rule, sometimes alone, but more often in union with military or intellectual sub-groups. The intellectual group is forever striving to make headway, but it is weaker than either the military or the commercial. Aligned with either, it reaches utility and power.

23

The Intellectual Group

The so-called intellectuals are an altering force. They compose what may be even termed a transient group, dividing power with the stronger for intervals only. That group is forever separating within itself, for the reason that in the mental world ideas change rapidly, and so wills of the intellectual type tend to combat associated intellects. The holding power in society is not, therefore, the purely intellectual group, but is composed rather of those of a more elementary will-form—those in which there is a driving impulse towards authority for its own sake. Against this force, in a normal society, nothing can stand. As said, however, an alliance more or less tangible always exists between

the intellectual group and those of pure power, and so social supremacy seems to rest, as a rule, in the hands of the intellectual group, nor is the reason for this far to seek.

A transient intellectual group that has been relieved, after a period of rivalry, from the pressure of the innumerable minor contestants, finds itself facing new and distinctive units—individuals who have actually towered above their fellows but who have had to conceal their strength and stature. Once in contact with these, the ascending group must agree, or undertake war on a higher plane. It most often elects to assume a passive state toward the forces to which it has become contiguous, and a positive one toward the lower forces from which it has risen. It is for this reason that the actual superior group is usually hidden, standing behind the transient intellectual group which it intimidates, and, through it, society as well. Neither form of government or form of society can resist the imposition of this will. They, at best, constitute only its executive agencies. The really superior group is thus, essentially, a will group; that is, it includes a minority in whom the will to power

is particularly strong, power having been its object at all times. Through the vicissitudes of life, it has established its position, passing all the material tests.

The ascending pressure of groups of lesser degree, defective in physical force, inevitably takes on an intellectual colour. As the end product of a series of conflicts involving great numbers, such a group shows a synthesis of ideas that have become more and more definite through elimination. In addition to this, the final group form, as if aware of its own inferiority from the standpoint of force, endeavours to compensate for the defect by intellectual attrition. Such a group becomes, finally, the actual embodiment of social intelligence. It is the social understanding, in contradistinction to the social will.

This phenomenon is common to all societies and explains the apparent contradiction universally found, to wit, that the actual ruling group is never the more intellectual, although the intellectual always allies with it. On the appearance of a new force group, however, the intellectual group may desert its former associations, and history is full of instances of the kind.

24

The Machinery of Power

The relation of the dominant group to the lesser forces co-ordinating with it is not direct. It is distinctive of the will to power in its highest form that it views great masses as mere instrumentalities which, directly or indirectly, it sways in the way of its purpose. These constitute the machine with which it accomplishes its object in the world.

There are at work, at all times, the vast differentiated activities through which this supremacy is continued, but the upper is not always aware of their specific nature, for its primary interests lie within the scope of its own immediate undertakings. There sometimes come critical moments when it finds these activities vital, and it may then assume direct control of them, defining specifically their quality and range. As a general rule, however, this is not done. The factors that ordinarily check the force of will from below act as permanent agents of the inferior mass, and are, in a measure, independent. They, of themselves, absorb great units of social strength.

They furnish avenues through which ambitious men satisfy their craving for power, and to the general enterprise the diverse activities of the corsairs lend themselves admirably. In democratic societies these stabilizing forces are very important, and they become more so as the general structure grows more complicated.

Yet it sometimes happens that the propaganda of this subordinate class, exerted upon the mass, may become antagonistic to the higher groups. This may result from a gradual increase and perfection of organization, or by the complete demoralization of the mass, and the conversion of the latter into a state of uncontrolled fanaticism. In such an event its very weakness may make it formidable, for it has no sense of responsibility or proportion. Through the efforts of unwise leaders it may become detached from all intellectual and spiritual restraints, ending in the tragedy of a moral frenzy. Religion has sometimes effected such results, but it is also possible in a political state in which the ruling group depends too much on inferior methods. A people wrought to this pitch have only one object: the utter extirpation of every trace of culture.

This danger of the mob running amuck is a menace at all times in every society, but it reaches the critical point only at intervals. Such an outbreak may result from a purposeful agitation, from gradual spiritual degeneration, or from the decline of a once strong caste. The phenomenon has appeared at many times in history, especially during the last days of Rome; and in mediaeval times. It was apparent in Germany during the economic rebellions that are usually traced, erroneously, to religious causes. In England it displayed itself in many outbursts, culminating in the Puritan revolt that destroyed Charles I. Its power during the French revolutionary epoch is too recent to call for remark. But at no time has it ever achieved such consequences as were involved in the general confusion that pervaded Asia Minor at the time of the appearance of Christianity. The remarkable nature of this revolt lies in the mystery surrounding it. Its origin was partly due to the relaxation of Roman authority, but the cause of the specific religious form it assumed is unknown.

25

Christianity

When the tremendous effects of Christianity on western civilization are considered, its advent must remain the greatest enigma of history, certainly, at any rate, until the discovery of documents that will furnish light as to just what transpired among the medley of races then blended in Western Asia, which were to witness the fall of the greatest world power of which there is any record. The scriptural accounts are of doubtful value, but, as they have been transformed by the successive labours of great minds, they have taken a form of tender and affecting feeling that sways thought far more forcefully than would a cold recital, harmoniously logical. These records have left their mark upon the moral life of a great epoch of civilization.

It would appear from the accounts of Josephus, from Roman remains and from Jewish tradition that it was a time of great social unrest. That any religious factor was present seems to have escaped the Romans, a race remarkable for tolerance, and also Josephus, save

as the peculiar tenets of the Hebrews entered the matter. But the evident excitement among the lower social orders, and the events accompanying the fall of Jerusalem, infer the reasonableness of assuming the presence of an agent, or agents, that strove to mould the unrest of the people to a tangible purpose. That spiritual forces played a part is clear. There was a rise of mystical religion, and even philosophy became esoteric. Philo Judaeus evidences the power of mysticism among the most intellectual Jews, and the Neo-Platonists of Alexandria show the tendency of the whole mental world. There is sound basis for believing that the lower group, too, was violently agitated, and set itself strongly against the more ordered traditions of Greek philosophy.

Not without some parallel in modern times, there was a tendency towards mystical segregation. "The Contemplative Life" of Philo is enough to confirm this. The existence of ascetic communities on a large scale is certain. It is as the precise period of Christian origin is approached that the obscurity deepens, the only records that can be found being, apparently,

those embraced by the Evangels. But that these are only secondary sources is the practically unanimous opinion of modern scholarship.

The general nature of the time, however, is sufficiently definite. Old ideas were collapsing, or being pushed aside in a general chaos. The will to power that had made Rome a world mistress was in dissolution. The great wasted their strength in futile contests with each other, or diffused themselves in aesthetic debauchery. The gradual decline of Roman citizenship resulted in the rise of a frantic rabble, permeated by a desire for liberation from the inevitable ills of life. Toil was its synonym for pain. Within the confines of the mighty empire great forces, inferior psychologically, began to dream of power. The intellectual world of Alexandria puzzled over Platonic concepts no longer understood, or diverted itself in strange speculations that resulted in Gnosticism, a mode of thought of which so little remains that it is difficult to identify it. Lesser minds paused before problems once boldly faced by greater spirits.

In the meantime, novel doctrines were appearing among the lower classes, and incipient Chris-

tianity pointed a certain path towards freedom from sorrow, labour and death. These ideas gradually permeated the social body, through secret associations, and the slave dreamed of a tomorrow when all his ills would be gone. The more intelligent heard, with amazement, of a renewal of bodily functions after death; of a religion so material that it demanded a post mortem rehabilitation of the fleshly envelope that philosophy had heretofore ignored. This doctrine, so consonant with the hopes of a dependent class, grew rapidly, but as more developed minds were approached, more spiritual conceptions were required, and the ideas of Plato, added in the Gospel of John, probably appeared to allay their dissatisfaction. Society, truly, was in decay. The military powers no longer responded to the master's will; revolution and counter revolution followed fast. Beyond, the shadow of the northern horde, still inspired by the wild theology of Scandinavia, crept with remorseless certainty towards the sacred city.

That something akin to the spirit of revolution in modern times flowed through the lower

strata of society is plainly to be seen. The hatred of woman, so evident among early Christians, was clearly a reflection of the sentiment inspired among the lowly by the self-attained emancipation of the Roman woman from the rigorous moral virtues so long imposed by a masculine race. It was some time before the Egyptian Isis reappeared, resuming sway as the ever-virgin, the earthly mother of Divinity. Of the arguments advanced against the new doctrines by contemporaries little is known. The works of Celsus on the subject are no more; of other writers we have only fragments. Evidence so vital to posterity disappeared, destroyed by over-wrought mobs, or by superior minds that were evilly disposed. The thrilling narrative of Tacitus terminates at a significant point, the fall of Jerusalem. Nothing could confirm more amply the moral degeneration everywhere prevalent. Even the charge that Rome was burned, not by Nero, but by members of a new sect is not as improbable as historians affect to believe it—nay, it is infinitely more credible than the received version. The possibilities latent in a frenzied populace are clearer today than they once were. The methods of inspiring clamour

are better understood, and more deliberately undertaken. If the man of genius will die for an idea he believes to be true, the mob-man, with equal fervour, would destroy the Phidian Jove because it declared a God he did not worship, or burn the world's libraries if convinced that they threatened his system of ethics.

These transports were allayed by the rise of superior men who moulded the strange doctrines into forms compatible with rational power, and the history of modern Europe began.

26

Mob Emotions

Spells of fury are more likely to emanate from weak bodies than from strong, for the former respond to excitants more quickly than the latter. Weak men prefer to act together and, in the security of numbers they feel, for the time, a strength they do not possess. Strong men are patient, forbearing, but resolute in action. Excited, the weak man strikes wildly and furiously, carried away by the temporary sense of power that pervades him. He is the agent and the menace of revolution.

27

Parvenu Manoeuvres

Genuine force, in man, seeks always to conceal itself or, more properly, to develop a moral authority for its exercise. The man of triumphant will covers it with a spiritual garment, and assumes the language and manners of the intellectual. Given time, then, any originally pure force group will blend its theory with the ideals and desires of the intellectuals. This gives the spiritual strength requisite to a supremacy. Within limits, this is a refining and stimulating effect.

A novel dominant group will, from the same nature, attempt to borrow the motive of a prior group, its personnel evidencing a leaning towards the descendants of such groups. It concedes the truth of the theory of illustrious descent, and, through admixture of blood, attempts to blend an ancient will power with its own. Aristocracies thus perpetuate aristocracies, even when in appearance they have been destroyed.

28

The Virtues of Decadence

There is in all societies an apparent effort of Nature, a term here used to cover breeding and association, to produce a unit type—that is, of physical will and perfect understanding, combined in single personalities. At rare intervals individuals do appear who approximate such perfection, and at all times partial successes are met with. On the whole, however, the development of spiritual elements in the physical force man weakens him, even though his ideas may have expanded and his conceptions have become clearer. New qualities assert themselves to replace a confidence that is slipping away: subtlety, diplomacy, craft, cunning. Decadent races always possess these qualities in marked degree.

On the other hand, the appearance of this tendency indicates the arrival of a definite period in the history of a dominant group; it no longer aims exclusively at power, which is by now assumed to be a right inherent, but turns to the possibility of incorporating persistence in its

own line. There results, unconsciously, a decided effort to limit the reception of recruits from below. The dominant thus essay to check the rise of unknown superior men; that is, men to all intents equal to or, perhaps, more capable than themselves. Such men are continually appearing and may or may not succeed in getting a foothold in the upper group. Failing, they sometimes menace, or even destroy, a social structure, through acutely conceived ideas and plans, with which they work in the lower world. Older societies often try to care for a part of this excess force through honour or emolument. Simpler ones, more confident, ignore it.

This tendency towards exclusion is significant always, indicating a formal assumption of position, and challenging definitely those that strive to rise. It works primarily against the intellectual groups and it is from these, as a consequence, that efforts in rebuttal come. In a well defined social fabric the path to power follows specific lines, and it becomes the task of the dominant group to circumscribe these as much as possible. Thus the very technique of so-called success may prove a bar to genuinely higher types. Such men may then turn their energies towards a slow

and deliberate weakening of the social structure, introducing entirely new elements in the struggle. They will seek to act on the defective will groups, pervading them with their own ideas, inaugurating tendencies, inspiring enthusiasms. This is the weak spot in all societies, and one from which the greatest dangers arise. Revolutionary movements follow the struggle, though the period of agitation may extend over so great a time that the changes gradually taking place in popular ideas may escape those whose tenure they threaten. Whenever a power group has become fixed and surrounded itself with a favourable environment it becomes a target for such efforts. Its inherent strength is thus tested, and in the long run it either attains to still greater power, or gives way to a rising and more virile group.

POWER TRANSITION: INDUSTRIALISM, SOCIALISM AND SLAVERY

V

Power Transition: Industrialism, Socialism and Slavery

28

The Dawn of the Modern Age

From the fall of Rome to the beginning of the modern epoch Europe ran the gamut of vicissitudes; it was an era of thrilling events and multiple contradictions. Strength was apparent on every hand, the dominating energy of conscious physical power, yet it was balanced by a certain vacillation, a fear of the unknown. There was a daring that did not falter at any obstacle; a willingness to risk all that seemed most dear, regardless of odds; a faith that accepted staggering sacrifices for an intangible idea, the spirit of the Crusades. Religious certitude received the representations of barefoot mendicants at their face value and risked life and treasure for a tradition. It was the age of faith *par excellence*,

as its successor has been one of doubt. But, at its end, men viewed the broken links that had bound them to it without regret, roused by new promises. There was the chanting song of a golden voice that told of a rosy dawn; mystic syllables that evoked forms as fair as Aphrodite rising from the mist. What dreams, indeed! A coming elysium, a newer earth, where poverty was to be unknown! The brotherhood of man; a reign of virtue and joy! How dismal seemed the past in the light of that glowing expanse! What cruelty and wrong were buried behind dead shadows! Out of darkness into the light, the light of long hid happiness, to feel the rapture of a new endeavour!

Time keeps a record of its own, and sheds no tears over failure, nor does it smile at success. It indites a tedious chronicle, leaving the wise to decipher the sibylline phrases. Still, it is a story strangely similar; a theme that varies only in its scenes. The plodding worker toils on; the ambitious strive for an unknown prize; the spirit of wisdom seeks new terms in which to tell an oft told tale.

29

Feudalism

The decline of the ancient order had made way for another in Europe. To replace the fiat of a world-weary power, feudalism spread among new nations. This system had its own pages to scrawl in the book of human accomplishment and it filled them with many a brilliant line; betimes, with gloomy pictures. It was something not derived from Roman antecedents, although, by degrees, the Latin tradition dominated it. Proceeding deliberately, it built an order based on duties that were graded to suit powers and capacities. From the ground-slave, a mere appanage of the soil, to the favoured lord, each was bound by a principle of obligation. If the slave must submit to the limitations of his life, the lord must fulfill the task his position ordered, rendering to each according to his authority. It was a time of childlike belief, and of simple philosophy. The problems of life were few; family and state were indissolubly linked. Neither could exist without the other.

The industrial order was elementary, yet it did not shrink from high achievement. It reared

vast piles, dedicated to its kings and to its faith, exhausting talent in their embellishment. Through centuries it laboured to complete an edifice, thinking of neither past nor future, but only of the excellence of its own work. Art it could not separate from its lowliest endeavours. The heritage of its artisans is still precious; mute masterpieces of thoroughness and patience. The craftsman's life flowed into his work. It lived on, to verify the immortality of his thought.

They laid on canvas eternal tints, and vivified images glimpsed in fleeting visions. The virgin rock took shape, to renew the glory of another age. With all this there was a strange simplicity, a delighting candour, a complete humanness, something they scarcely thought was to pass with them. They were rough in manner, direct in speech. The world was what it seemed to be. They were men bound by much grossness —and sin. But sin was inevitable since, before all else, they were men. Of their sins they repented; of their manhood they were not ashamed. For those who sought a different life, a life apart, they built great edifices where the dreamers might pursue their own illusions. The exactions of those who chose seclusion they bore pa-

tiently, for the visions narrated were a source of delight to them. Even the inmates could not cast off the fetters of the natural. It was an age of naïveté.

Military power has always been supreme as the instrument of authority, but under feudalism it was the law of life. The world was a battlefield and all men were brothers in arms. Physical strength and skill were universal. To bear weapons of the first class was a special privilege. Those who carried them were renowned for deftness. Families became celebrated for their swordsmen. Power appeared at its zenith in this primeval form. For the time, the intellect was in abeyance, but it was already weaving new methods for itself. Knowledge was an affair of language; wisdom, of quotations from Latin manuscripts. When Greek returned to Europe, it has been computed that only three men understood it. Mental life, stagnant in the mass, found expression in an idealization of the palpable. The chivalry of a soldier-race satisfied its longing by a triple phrase that embraced a moral concept of the world: "My God, my Lady and my King." Raising woman to this pedestal followed the warrior's effort to fix, in the pheno-

menal world, a reflex of his highest thought. It was the outer expression of his inner mind, but this mind was only an abiding place of dreams. In the divinity he had created he beheld all the fairness of his illusions. She became his soul, for with his own he had dowered her. He thus defined three aspects of duty, extending from the unknown to the earth-lord. It was a time of strange fables and delightful tales, the fairyland of history.

There was endless war. Men fought for the right to rule and to be ruled. King against king; lord against lord. Ever and anon the memory of Rome returned and centuries of conflict followed, in the vain hope of renewing the splendour of the Eternal City. This led to the development of great characters and astute minds, and they essayed to use the instruments time had lent them.

The intelligible history of the period was that of war and statecraft. The intellectual life embraced the latter—and the fine arts. Stability came, and cities were filled with free classes that purveyed to the great. It was from these that our modern industrial society came. By degrees, wealthy citizens began to imitate those

they had once feared. Increasing sources of revenue, growing accumulations, inspired them to muse over equality, something that once would have been madness.

As the old age had followed war, so the new began to pursue industry. A natural antagonism was implied; each needed and sought to control the lower groups, the toiling mass. This struggle was not reconcilable with traditions as they were, and so new doctrines began to be whispered. A condemning finger pointed to those above. From their happiness, it was now argued, came the unhappiness of others. All men were essentially the same. The great had greater chances, that was all.

30

The Process of Transition

Each declining caste seems to pass through a final interval of dissipation and folly, attended by a treacherous brilliance that exhausts itself in a pursuit of the fatuous. Historians usually link the phenomenon of this brilliance with the cause of the disaster; the scheme introduces an ethical element that harmonizes with the fancy of the common man. But such phenomena, of

course, are in no sense responsible for what follows. A social isolation has been effected, but is not yet perceived. A new society is already living, of which the old forms no part. There results a period of irresponsibility, masked as apparent security. Energy centres on enjoyment; life has solved its problem, and men forget the world in the illusions of beauty. Nevertheless, an awakening comes. The resources of credit become strained. Unwittingly, income is being divided with an unknown. Revenue becomes a problem; fresh methods of raising it must be devised; taxation grows into a burning question; the path goes downward. There is the temptation to vie with the prodigality of a new caste, the real strength of which is not appreciated. Many explanations of the causes leading to the final riot of splendour that accompanied the fall of the French nobility have been given. The simple, yet probable effort of nominal ruling groups to surpass the opulence of an ascending class has been forgotten, but it is worthy of consideration. It cannot be said that the *noblesse* were effete, or that they were immoral, as compared to the mass. Their acts were more open, that was all. They basked in a light that

revealed every movement, indifferent, nonchalant, confident. But impoverishment and ruin were at the door. The Revolution, itself, was only the orgy of a mob, incited to destroy what new groups desired to be rid of. The applause of vapid historians to the contrary notwithstanding, there was nothing great about it but its infamy. When the end sought had been accomplished peace was restored with little effort. Revolution is a brief holiday for the mob man. He never participates in the division that follows.

31

Industrialism

The gradual rise of industrialism in Europe has been described too often to call for retelling the story. It was far advanced when the French Revolution boldly sought to overthrow a caste that got its strength out of the past. The latter proved unequal to the task of defending its heritage. Masters of industry grasped the sceptre that fell from a trembling hand.

In modern society, commercial activity has marked the chief group relations. Within this sphere have occurred the various rivalries of contending wills.

In the earlier history of the struggle its form was simple, although the numerical factors were relatively greater, at least in so far as the upper groups were concerned. These were composed of a heterogeneous collection of small manufacturers, balanced by a few whose enterprises rated in the first class. Organization was at a low point, and the actual worker group was a negligible participant. The important elements fought among themselves for advantage. There was a single aim: increase of capital. The improvement of machinery was soon recognized as an aid to this end. It was not until later that the economic fabric assumed a tangible outline, the forerunner of more acute rivalries among holding groups. The period was one of narrowness; fantastic systems of political economy marked it. The doctrine of freedom was in every mouth, and absent from every heart. The great slogan was "individual liberty." This consisted in the right to buy labour in the open market—at the lowest price. "Freedom of contract" was the phrase employed to cover the necessity that forced an employed class to produce at a minimum rate. To question this principle was immoral.

Between holding groups, diversity of interest at first expressed itself in plain competition in buying and selling, with the object of controlling the market. But this rivalry soon stimulated the improvement of mechanical devices, and affected the work and habits of the labourer. The detail system took the form of specialization in machine operation. Facility, in a general sense, was to become less marked. The period of skilled specialism was at hand. The appearance of machinery early proved a cause of labour difficulties. Resentment against the use of automatic devices was shown. Subsequently, this took another form. More efficient worker groups opposed the introduction of inferior grades, called to replace them or to share their work with them. Combinations among skilled groups voiced this opposition. Stringent regulations limited the membership of such orders. Apprenticeship privileges were made more difficult. Aggressive leaders pushed union ideas. The will to power in these groups manifested itself in a tentative outreaching towards authority over automatic production.

Within the employing groups the will to power aimed, primarily, at two objects: the mainte-

nance of supremacy over labour, and the conquest of competitors among themselves. Corporate growth curtailed intrusion by new opponents. The governing idea was extension. It was a time of profound materialism, a day of glory for a triumphant trading caste.

Unionism followed the rise of mechanical production, step by step. It sought to balance the influence of manufacturers by uniting producing units. Great contests occurred, but the issues were of secondary importance: wages, conditions, hours. The new group was tangible, however, and its ideas were impelled by industrious leaders. Associations numerically great followed, but they related to specific trades, each independent.

The term "trade" took on a variable meaning. Originally applied to a particular craft, this involving a complete process, it came to cover a detail only. Later, broadly unskilled trades appeared, those in which the training requisite to efficiency was nominal, permitting the rapid education of an effective workman. This tendency grew with the perfecting of machinery, manufacturers becoming less dependent on highly skilled men.

32

The Union Movement

Corporate bodies and individual manufacturers had, at first, displayed an attitude of great hostility towards organization among employés. All the literature of the period confirms this. It was held, generally, that the efficient worker would not escape recognition and reward, and unions were charged with seeking to force employers to compensate the inefficient as liberally as the efficient. The truth of this charge is partly confirmed by the history of unionism. There have been groups of workers, peculiarly favoured by conditions, who successfully opposed the introduction of other labour units, regardless of the necessities of the latter, maintaining a wage schedule far beyond the average of other worker groups.

Extension of enterprise and growth of monopoly production brought into being a new class of labour leaders. The conception of a single organization, to include all trades, skilled and unskilled, developed. This caused bitter differences, but led to a partial realization of the idea. In the United States, the Knights of

Labour was the first of these. It had for its basis the theory of a commonalty of interest of all trades. Of brief but furious life, its appearance was portentous of the future, constituting the first serious effort to weld the labour groups into a coherent machine, to be used economically and politically.

The growing power of confederated capital developed a more liberal policy in the ranks of labour, and recognition was accorded to lines of employment previously ignored. The betterment of mechanical devices really forced the change. The trend towards labour of an average efficiency, adaptable to any, or to various trades, was unmistakable.

Meanwhile, collective labour associations passed through stages of antagonism, not unlike those among the controlling groups. New dominant personalities came forward, guided the more advanced movements, and took for their own the advantages of leadership. None the less, as each order is, perforce, limited by the very nature of its ideas and the character of the material upon which it works, none of these could go beyond the heights of their own conceptions. The new trade unionist, there-

fore, found himself in turn threatened by new menaces. Within the environment he had formed another force began to act, and it aimed to alter the very principle of united purpose.

33

Socialism

Socialism, in genesis, was nothing less than a demand, not for the betterment of industrial conditions, but for the abrogation of the property rights of the holding class, and their transfer to a new will group, struggling to master the actual toilers.

The new movement came in gradually, at first merely as a fancy of what appeared to be erratic minds. But superior men eventually took up many of its ideas and worked them into orderly dogmas, with a philosophical basis that appealed to the imagination. Progress, as a principle of life, lent itself powerfully to the new conceptions, for the rationale of action as now defined seemed to follow fixed paths that were laid down by the theory of evolution, but had not been hitherto observed. These were boldly indicated in an aggressive propaganda. The elucidation of such theories was the work

of a class that was more intellectual than the old class of labour leaders, and, under its tutelage the novel ideals made headway. The changing order of life and the passing of individualism aided in all this. The fact that the demand took the form of insistence on greater individual freedom merely indicated the antithetical lines along which the common mind is always swayed. Socialism demanded labour's access to a machine to be owned by itself, and passed over the fact that all that made such propaganda plausible was that ownership of the worker had already passed to the machine.

34

The Union Leader

The union leader, as a will agent, is of a definite type and his traits are readily distinguishable. A man of detail, he is well versed in all questions immediately affecting his organization, but his range of thought is narrow. His mental world is composed of a combination of wage and hour issues, and of the various means by which labour groups may be influenced; he devotes himself to the study of such individuals as may threaten his own posi-

tion. Anything in the nature of a general program he views with suspicion. He is not ignorant of his own limitations, and opposes any step that may unduly extend the field of labour activities, since this would involve the rise of a different leader-type, of more intelligence, and perhaps of more character. The propaganda for a general mergence of all organizations into one, to be controlled by a single group, fails to receive his approbation. Political action by labour he likewise distrusts, for it implies other chiefs, more ambitious men, greater deftness and insight. Yet such a trend persists, fostered by determined pressure from Socialist factions. These aim to unite the labour forces into a single political body, specifically opposed to those holding groups that now own and control the social machinery.

The threat has engendered a disposition to deal more equitably with labour as a whole. No tendency is more remarkable, at present, than that of the employing caste to increase the comfort and well-being of the employed, wherever it is economically possible. But the dark records of the past are often stumbling blocks in the way of creating a fraternal feeling, for

the lower find it difficult to believe that such offerings are rendered in good faith. The aggressive efforts of Socialists towards the organization of a universal body, with economic and political aims, never relent, regardless of the opposition of conservative leaders, but even this tendency is limited by the quality of the personnel it is sought to control. In the building up of the industrial order, and of the social forces accompanying it, the character of the individual has been affected. This psychological factor is generally ignored, but throughout the modern era it has played its part. A pronounced trend towards personal lassitude has brought about a lowering of the resisting power of the masses.

The forces which thus tend to weaken the will of the lower classes become of transcendent importance, and their activity is stimulated to an extraordinary degree by artificial means. Radical energy finds itself opposed by many unlooked for agents, and meets effective counter-strokes in unexpected quarters. There are, too, certain effects on the general mind from the very orderliness of everyday life that in-

duce habits of dependence not easily shaken, however detrimental they may be to individualism. The ordinary man seeks always the path of least resistance, having an inborn aversion to initiative.

35

Women in Industry

The increased use of women, both economically and politically, has further reduced the strength of the lower classes. The improvement of machinery, while itself the work of trained minds and hands, has, in many industries, simplified production to an astonishing degree. The object of so-called labour saving machinery is to effect one of two objects: either to enlarge output with fewer employés, or to enable the utilization of greater numbers of the unskilled. The last is the more important, since it acts as a deteriorating force on labour, for the reason that it dispenses with much of the training once required. Thus the way is made easy for women, but harder for men.

That the increased employment of women has resulted from a general increase of mentality

among them, following superficial education, is one of the popular illusions of the age. As a matter of fact, it has been brought about simply because the mechanism of production has been lifted to a point of effectiveness where the elementary qualifications of the female may be profitably utilized. In the cotton industry, which utilizes some of the most ingenious and complicated devices ever devised by mechanical genius, women have long been employed. Cotton-working machines, through extensive experimentation and test, have been brought to such a degree of perfection that they need only the most nominal oversight. Women can thus manage them. But the entry of women has weakened the labour group and increased the difficulties of those who seek to organize it for aggressive warfare. The ability of inferior social elements to operate machinery has reduced the general level of the stronger section of the labour group.

The psychological tendency is always downward, and the lower groups show less and less resistance to pressure; accepting readily all novel impositions. On the other hand, the

vigour of the holding group augments, due to the reduced *morale* of the opposition, and the increasing scope of industrial development. The ideal of this class is the perfecting of an industrial process so complete in detail and method that the quality of the operating labour units will not sensibly vary. This is the "average efficiency" so often alluded to, and which is sought by the superior groups as eagerly as it is looked forward to by some of the radical labour advocates. In such a field the extraordinary man would not be wanted, and even the ordinarily exceptional man would be out of place. This position, implying that civilization will rise as man descends, forms an interesting commentary on the spirit of the age.

Labour was not ignorant of the danger of admitting woman as an associate, but feminine propaganda could not be resisted. This demanded the right to servitude as a privilege accruing from her "rise," and the "increase" in her intelligence, and as a reasonable compensation for the long period of "subjection" she had been unjustly forced to endure. These pleas identify the object that is really sought, *i. e.*, sex

liberty, for towards this woman ever drives. Within the labour program there were tenets that furthered her cause. With the intention of strengthening certain theoretical principles, forming part of the spiritual propaganda of labour, her right to work had been allowed, and her equality with the male affirmed.

Nevertheless, it is significant of a certain natural insight on the part of those who conduct the war of the more aggressive branches of the labour movement that they have viewed sex equality with suspicion at all times, and that their endorsement of the extension of the suffrage was always weak. This was and is doubtless due to the nature of the sex relation among the lower groups of workers. It is more candid than above; there is an absence of that finesse which appeals to the superior so powerfully. Among the lower classes, too, the moral qualities of the weaker sex are more accurately gauged. In spite of this labour has been forced to accede to the aggressiveness of the feminine through the necessity of standing by its own abstract principles. The activity of the corsairs increases the dilemma of the male workers, for these corsairs always push woman for-

ward as a weakening agent of the first magnitude.

36

A Glance at History

To balance the general argument, and to understand the particular way in which changes have occured in our society, a running historical survey of will-tendencies in the United States must be undertaken. Economic and political development in this country has been unique in modern times. Sequestered from the rest of the world, members of all races here found themselves facing a free domain of unknown richness and apparently of boundless range. A period of pure agrarianism was quickly passed through. Manufacturers appeared to supply increasing needs; discoveries of iron and coal furnished materials. Labour was then a scarce commodity. After awhile railroads and steamboats opened new areas and broadened the avenues of production. The extent of territory implied the supremacy of steam highways and their associated trades. The consumption of rails and supplies, and the development of locomotives and rolling stock, confirmed it. Other

branches responded to the stimulus. The manufacturing system of the North soon compared favourably with that of Great Britain.

There was an insistent demand for labour, but only one source from which to obtain it—Europe. Immigration was stimulated. There followed a steady influx of skilled and unskilled labour, joined to agriculturists who flowed westward, to become new consumers of fabricated products. The growth of urban population followed the general trend. Increasing factory production compelled it. Cities began to assume great magnitude. The atmosphere everywhere was that of confidence and ambition.

Interest in political questions was marked. Apart from the ever-growing antagonism between the free labour system of the North and that of slavery in the South, the tariff forged to the front as a vital issue. The new manufacturing groups sought protection from cheaper markets, and a means of assuring profits in the future. The South, with agriculture as its source of revenue, contended consistently against a tax that was making the North dangerously rich and powerful. With it were allied the shipping interests

of New York, and the fast disappearing remnants of a formerly active maritime group.

The influx of immigrants gave to the voting population a changing personnel, and called for frequent modifications to cover a varying electorate. The cities became renowned for political groups that favoured liberal treatment in the matter of franchise privileges; newly incorporated nationalities fell into alignment with the party that treated them best. Election machinery was crude; its control meant power. The expanding cities called for improvements conformable to their growth. Considered relatively, municipal contracts were huge. They became the support of cliques that wielded a decisive influence on national issues, through their control of the concentrated populations of the big cities.

This condition led to differences that often approximated war among city partisans. An election was a serious matter. Thuggery was prevalent, for individualism was elementary and extreme. Public feeling was always high. Political corruption was a by-word. It was, however, a state that was not to last. Industrial depres-

sion brought labour to the fore, with new issues to puzzle the politicians. The system of production expanded faster than its markets. Eras of speculation increased the confusion. Great strikes occurred. The railroads experienced conflicts partaking of the magnitude of civil war; the destruction of property was enormous, and life was not spared. Vast confederated bodies among the worker groups were formed. Labour began to break away from the idea of depending on the efficacy of local wage agreements, and attempted to enforce its will by a refusal to operate entire industries.

It was significant of the period outlined that Socialism had not yet appeared in any form. There are records of idealistic colonies having a communistic basis, but a parallel to Socialism as a class issue is not to be found. It was not until a later date that an effort was made to form a branch of the Internationale, and it met with no encouragement. The means employed by labour to gain its ends were simpler and more direct than any that Socialism could offer, and had little basis in reason: the boycott, violence, secret groups given to a policy of terror and revenge. The Mollie Maguires distinguished

themselves in the coal fields by a reign of murder.

So implicit was confidence in the abstract right of the citizen that all efforts to spread the class idea, so strong abroad, were futile. The American identified this idea with a recognition of aristocracy, of social elements distinguished by birth, and refused to admit its tenability under the conditions about him. It is only in the last decade that the principle has made actual progress in the United States, extraordinarily stimulated by the recent war.

In the meanwhile, powerful forces were effecting changes. The Civil War had passed, leaving demoralization in its wake. One section of the country had been practically eliminated as a political factor, even suffering the ills of a conquered province. In the cities, political organizations had become compact bodies, and the tenseness of feeling on general questions assured each one a large following, irrevocably allied. Political affiliation was maintained with the tenacity of religious conviction, and was deemed as sacred. Behind this, astute groups had inaugurated a policy of public exploitation that became a national reproach. The principles so long

potent during the pre-war period disappeared, or became secondary. Instead, plunder distinguished all city campaigns. In many places it was openly and defiantly conducted. On the other hand, new commercial groups had followed the war, based on the vast profits derived from it. These became a conservative force.

37

Stages of Power

Broadly, the stages of power development in the United States clearly class themselves.

During, and immediately after the Revolution, the upper group was an alliance of aristocrats and merchants, including with the latter a considerable shipping element. This alliance was succeeded by a rapidly evolved manufacturing group, lacking in organization but united with reference to a general labour policy. In it, a few of the older aristocrats and merchants held on, but they were disappearing rapidly. The Civil War founded a mercantile class of vastly greater wealth, that was to consummate a concentration of industry entirely unforeseen.

The franchise followed a rational unfoldment. The aggressive partisan of pre-war days main-

tained his position, but the pressure of independent units began to be felt. The after-war demoralization was marked by unusual political corruption. The national stakes had expanded in importance. One or two states insured success to the party carrying them. On the other hand, a growing tension in the struggle for political supremacy led to strenuous election methods. The voter was watched, challenged; even attacked physically. A record of his preference was kept. It was a serious matter to him, since his livelihood might be involved after the balloting. The ward politician was supreme. He had made his trade a profession.

Political reform then grew into an issue. The secret ballot was adopted. This move was superficially an improvement, but it indicated a breaking down of primitive self-reliance. Regardless of the order and decency following it, the fact remains that individual independence had collapsed. To balance this, the political sentiment of a considerable portion of the population became an unknown quantity.

The abrupt rise of monopoly production placed in power a group that transcended all others, and that challenged even national author-

ity. Court decrees appeared always to confirm its eminence. The average man looked on it as practically unassailable on any question involving law. The period was one of merciless commercial war on a colossal scale, attended by an utter disregard of private rights. Many ancient allies were dropped, or ruined irrevocably.

The political reformers who arose in the cities during this period are worthy of attention, for they throw an interesting sidelight on the subject of power. Primarily, they voiced a desire on the part of conservative power groups to wrest control of local power from the class that had built up political machines. The reformers were always narrow in ideas, economy in municipal or state administration being their one watchword. This is a negative virtue, politically, and never touches the popular imagination. The worker groups, allied with municipal ring leaders, opposed any curtailment of public expenditure. Worse, though disguised as reform, these antagonisms were often nothing more than struggles between rival corporate interests, bent on controlling the vast contracts involved in city disbursements. This war, from small beginnings, grew to an extent that developed more

insidious objects, and political machines found themselves faced by a reformer of a new class, the moral corsair. New ethical concepts were instilled into the minds of the lower classes. It was a policy that succeeded beyond all hope. Great cities lost their independence, and submitted tamely to the domination of rural sections where the moral corsair is lord. The power of the ring leader was broken and, at a stroke, the psychological status of the mob man lowered.

Electoral secrecy led to many apparent improvements. A more intellectual type came forward and often succeeded in wresting a municipal administration from former incumbents. As a rule, however, the pure reformer had a brief life, politically. There was in him a lack of sympathetic feeling towards the lower, a feeling quickly sensed. His class also included numbers who, forced out of old occupations by economic changes, looked to politics for a more stable career. Simultaneously, these dubious reformers worked for legislation favourable to the interests with which they had been allied.

The gradual organization of industry, and its rise to stability, simplified issues. The stronger groups modified their opposition to the national

administration, and effected a moral alliance with it. This led to important changes in the laws, and the recognition of monopoly production. Events aided in the confirmation of this new status, the upper groups becoming masters of general authority. Intermediate parties, conservatively radical, received no encouragement from the public. Efforts to form them always failed. The great mass organizations of old held their own; success became certain to one or the other. To the average man, the purpose of elections is always simply to win. He is bound by his adhesion to the religion of success. The independent, in America, has always been an outlaw.

38

The Corsair Triumphs

Corsair propaganda has displayed, in nothing more than in this, its grasp of public character. Specific reforms have been wisely left to special bodies, and propaganda has confined itself to the ethical cloud thrown over each, and to the secret terror inspired among public representatives devoid of character. The result has been a final supremacy, politically, the new element replac-

ing the old ring chiefs, but more subtly, more efficiently and with vastly greater resources. Issues become secondary to the moral guidance of the mass-man. He naturally approves policies that accord with ethical teachings that he approves.

The decay in the significance of the ballot made possible the success of women in their demand for it. Just as the development of machine industry made their employment inevitable, so the conversion of the franchise into a passive force assured their acquirement of it. The last amusing struggle of a few bewildered men to check their success merely showed a lack of appreciation of the changes that had come to pass. The brilliant intrigue of the sex was evidence of their inborn capacity to excel at deception.

39

A Conflict of Two Wills

Returning, after this digression, to the main theme, it is clear that unionism, in itself, presents no grave problem to the master groups. The time of deep feeling against it is in the past, when the industrial order was elementary. The destruction of older forms, the downfall of an

ancient caste, had left the worker groups a legitimate prey to the conquerors, and they were exploited without mercy. The overthrow of feudalism followed by the vain illusions of equality, brought a term of darkness so far as labour was concerned, from which it is only now emerging. The rise of machine civilization has brought new conditions and a more liberal policy, the result of the activity of strong will determinants in the lower mass. Trades-Unionism has come, at last, to be looked on as something inevitable, and though harassed at times by wage demands, the upper class finds in it a defence against the more insidious menace of Socialism behind it.

The apparent intention of labour groups to strive for control of the operation of industrial machinery brings into relief an ancient antagonism: the will to exist as opposed to the will to create. The perfection of modern production methods has, it would seem, made possible the maintenance of life with little effort. A majority of the details of living are performed by automatic processes, easily operated. By concentrating energy on these, eliminating the profits of the dominant group, destroying individual luxury, and diverting the proceeds to the more

nominal demands of the ordinary man, it is conceived that a general average of comfort may be attained that will definitely solve the question of existence for the mass man.

Scientific socialism claims a basis in the doctrine of evolution, and is taught as the natural symptom of an "upward" tendency. Man arose from the animal, and, after various stages, attained to civilization. His forward movements have always paralleled industrial developments, and improvements in the latter field have actually defined his character and ideas at each stage, including in the term "ideas" all cultural elements, art, science, and philosophy. This is "the materialistic conception of history," and it is accompanied by another fundamental principle: "the historic mission of the working class." This "mission" lies in the ultimate seizure of all the means of production, capital, tools and land, to be operated by, and in the interest of, the working class. Since this event will mean the disappearance of all non-working groups, society will consist of but one class. In other words, the mission of the working class is to abolish class society.

This is the general foundation of Socialism.

It has enlisted many brilliant men, and a propaganda has been sedulously pushed in all civilized countries since the labours and enunciations of Karl Marx, Friederich Engels, and Ferdinand Lasselles launched the formal movement. These men taught that in present societies the ruling system is capitalism, a term expressing a formula of exploitation, and that the worker labours only partly for himself, a portion—and usually a major portion—of his product being retained by the employer. This unearned increment they called surplus value; for it, they said, the artisan receives nothing. It is the use or sale of this portion that yields profit, and the problem that faces the capitalist is how to secure that profit. The worker, getting only a part of his own output, obviously cannot buy back the excess in his employer's hands; as a consequence, it must be disposed of in foreign markets. There results a constant pressure for such markets among rival capitalist groups, and as the productive power of the modern state constantly augments, the problem becomes ever more acute, nay, it is one of life or death. It is believed that the pressure will finally lead to a cataclysm, due to the impossibility of exchang-

ing a mountain of surplus in a world incapable of paying for it. There must, then, come a crisis of such proportions that the capitalist order will collapse and the "hour of the class conscious worker strike."

This critical point, always looked forward to, is to find the producer organized and ready, but, more important, efficient as well, since the capitalist's own machine will have converted him into a capable engineer. The historic mission of the producing class is then, to be effected: "the expropriated expropriating the expropriators."

Socialism offers the classical example of the application of the theory of evolution to sociology. Everything moves with mechanical precision; the ultimate socialistic society is as inevitable as an eclipse. Indeed, so great has been the confidence on this point that many adherents have questioned the utility of an active Socialist movement, "Socialism being inevitable," anyway. However this may be, the theory is mechanical and for that reason open to suspicion, for human relations have never been determined by anything approximating the regularity of machinery.

40

Delusions of Socialism

That evolution is a "fixed" law of nature and that man is pushed forward by it with the relentless certainty of fate, however engaging as a theory, remains a mere theory none the less. The peculiar property of this "law" is that it involves movement "upward" and "forward." Societies, therefore, are said to all tend to improve; the knowledge of each age transcends that of the preceding, while the condition of humanity grows steadily better.

Within historical times there has always been civilization in some form, and in each age great achievements have been wrought by men of genius. The era of universal savagery is hypothetical. The civilization of modern times is distinguished by its vast additions to scientific knowledge and by the superiority of its mechanical development; it is the latter, particularly, that the popular mind identifies as "progress." The great inventions, such as relate to transportation, the transmission of ideas, and automatic production, are signs of "progress" to the multitude, but, however wonderful they may be, they

constitute nothing more than instrumentalities developed during the perpetual combat of wills, and may conceivably be dispensed with without "retrogression" in future phases of that conflict.

Certain it is that the social will to power as a collective impulse emanating from a master group finds in this very mechanism an aid, even though behind it lurks the threat of a proletariat state. Superficially, the Socialist is right in claiming that the mechanical environment of the superior renders him more vulnerable to attack, but he errs in believing that the perfecting of the system has strengthened the producers morally. Far from that, it has involved them in a web from which they cannot escape. They are, paradoxically, slaves without masters. If there is any tendency so pronounced as to strike the observer by its obviousness it is that industrial "evolution" moves, not towards industrial freedom, but from a condition of involuntary to one of voluntary slavery. The fact that the present organization and trend are gregarious does not imply the absence of the master, it merely alters his form and really increases his strength, since he has become impersonal.

But this master will disappear when the ma-

chine becomes the property of the worker? It cannot become the property of the worker; the most he can hope for is to have it the property of the state; a worker's state, let it be conceded; even so the machine is valuable only because it is one in a chain of machines, all of which coordinate. *But the output of the machine will belong to the worker, where now the excess over his maintenance passes to a capitalist?* The excess will go to the Socialist state, which will find ways to utilize it in the development of further projects, the upkeep of existing equipment, the extension of public improvement. As this is what happens to it now, indirectly, even in the hands of the capitalist, an equality of terms is arrived at. *But the capitalist is self-made, self-foisted on the industrial rêgime; he returns no equivalent to society for the unusual stipend he exacts for his luxuries.* This view is exaggerated, but, conceding it, does it not form the essential requirement of any type of overman? *But there can be no overman under Socialism.* Why not?

The Socialist movement is a revolt of an intellectual caste and is not, as popularly supposed, a protest of the working class. In the develop-

ment of the present commercial order the road to power has been made increasingly difficult to men of a certain mental type—men little interested in the ordinary methods of commercial life, averse to the habits of the business world, and lacking the qualities essential to success in making money. They are, as a rule, men of ideas, but their ideas are remote from the favoured atmosphere of everyday life. But they are yet desirous, no less than others, to exert an influence in some way on the life about them. They have been, as a general thing, individuals with no liking for service as corsairs and of a markedly higher type, expressing openly their contempt for all the partisans of pseudo-reforms. They have been capable of grasping the rationale of the modern world and have, as they believe, discovered how the commercial group can be undermined by means of subversion of the worker groups. The result has been the appearance of various philosophies of progress, historic parallels, accounts of the gradual rise of labour through the ages; the history of "class society." In addition, some of the most potent psychological supports of the present state have been attacked. Religion has been assailed, and

all the objections of science to theories of revelation have been exploited to the limit. Most important of all, there has been inculcated the concept of a solidarity of labour, embraced in the idea of "class consciousness," the belief in the permanence and coming power of a submerged class, by right the lawful heir of all the estates of civilization.

The theory of "class consciousness" has obtained the status of a principle as fixed as a religious dogma, and once well instilled is practically unshakable. Henceforth, the capitalist and his society are abhorrent to the "wakened" worker, and he dreams of the millennial day just as did the early Christians.

This movement, therefore, is the outer manifestation of a more significant struggle. It is the will to power of an intellectual group endeavouring to cope with the will to power of a great commercial class, and it is a movement of vast possibilities, for it does not aim at all at liberating the worker, for that is impossible without destroying mechanical civilization, but would simply replace the present ruling group by one of a non-commercial type.

That the tendency of modern industrial growth

is towards the Socialist idea in a modified form is undeniable, but it is an error to suppose that the mere operation of the industrial machine by government is Socialism as officially sanctioned. One of the apprehensions of these leaders has been that the capitalist group would effect this very step, renewing their power by the authority of the state exercised over individual and machine, this state being dominated by the capitalist. It is clear that there is an element of uncertainty here, for if the government is in the hands of one group under a majority system, it can certainly be passed on to another by the mere matter of an election. The superior number is always in the hands of the inferior group. It is understood by the leaders of the movement that any improvement in the condition of the worker militates against them, for it is then difficult to hold in line the men upon whom they have to depend. They are also aware of the power of the vast propaganda agencies at work, maintaining the present order of things, and it is for this reason that hope is entertained at all times that exceptional events may introduce a critical situation, of which instant advantage may be taken.

41

The Socialist State

The question arises as to what form the will to power would take in such a society. Conceding the "triumph" of Socialism, in what way would it differ from the present régime?

The force of habit engendered by the new industrial methods is one of the most effective agents for holding the existing status. The mind of the ordinary man is not proof against the insidious influence of that cruel regularity, that essential imitation of the movements of automata. It is a question if even the superior mind can long stand against it, and genius only escapes because it will have nothing to do with it. The average mind drops into a rut, and thereafter desires only the uniformity of life to which it has become accustomed. This tendency extends into many avocations supposed to be beyond machine influence, because all the processes of life become more ordered and simplified as time passes. Civilization actually threatens to take on the conventionalism of the Egyptian order, in which even art succumbed. Standardization is the rule throughout; the elimination of

originality is always sought; a series of movements always the same. The result is a structure that is invariable, or, at all events, that is composed of invariable elements. This trend can hardly escape the thoughtful man. It helps Socialism as a theory, but militates against it as a fact, by reason of the effect on the mind of the individual. It is, broadly, the implacable foe of change.

Under Socialism the actual working groups would take a military form of organization, but with the leaders selected by vote. The battle for power would first appear in this primary sphere, but would extend, with time, to the higher and more important directorships, those involving the general handling of the social machine. Unless under this order all the precedents of experience proved inapplicable, the tendency in this higher group would be towards permanency. The question arises as to what method would be employed to assure the higher from the lesser. Obviously, the method of increasing the interest and ardour among the contestants of lower grades in their fights for their own coveted niches—a diversion to hold them to the plane to which they belong. Again, there might be an increase in

the difficulties to be surmounted to reach the upper, the creation of conditions precluding the ascent of inferiors. It may be suggested that this would not be an easy matter, the lower being on the alert for all such efforts. But it is the very difficulty of the thing that would attract daring spirits; it is this taste for the difficult which assures the eminence of the stronger in any society. The personal element cannot be set aside; some men are naturally more enterprising and daring —and more popular—than others. The superior would aim to add to the difficulties, and so discourage faint-hearts.

The elimination of directly controlled wealth might prove more helpful to the superior class than now seems likely. In the first place, the struggle for property would have disappeared, with its vast dissipation of energy. The position of the producer as such would be fixed. The superior man would thus be freer to pursue his own plans. No longer harassed from below, he could concentrate his power against his equals. Observing the past, it is worthy of remark that the strongest orders hitherto have always been those supported by a combination of military and intellectual forces. Contempt for the

money maker has been a significant phenomenon in all of them. So profound, indeed, was this sentiment in feudal times that it still persists, and the self-made man of great commercial ability yet suffers from it. Wealth gives power under a certain social form, but only the wealth of an individual, or of a group, can be brought to bear on a given object. In the collective state, the superior group would control the whole wealth of that state. It would sway the state machine, and maintain its power by its intellectual and moral propaganda. The power of propaganda, under such a system, would be taken away from individuals, for their use of it would be looked upon as inimicable to the state; it would, therefore, assume a state form and would be in the hands of the upper group. Their position would thus become practically unassailable.

All systems aim to prevent the rise of the exceptional man but none succeed, except in part. He will, inevitably, force his way. Education cannot change this fact, although the Socialists believe that, combined with average labour efficiency, it will effect universal equality. Education is merely a polish on material, and the finer always reflects a higher lustre. The man of

ideas will stand apart at all times and, except at moments of fanatical excitement, hold his own. It is this very capacity that makes him exceptional.

There is another factor generally overlooked in treating this subject, and that is religion. It is often assumed, because of the remarkable materialism of the modern Socialist movement, that, should it succeed, religion would practically disappear. This reasoning is not sound. The general attitude of Socialism towards religion has been due to a belief among its advocates that ecclesiasticism has had for its object the support of ruling castes, through spiritual control of the mass mind. This is a legacy from the French revolutionary "philosophers." The extreme materialism of nineteenth century science strengthened the attitude, and the Darwinian hypothesis, peculiarly engaging to the scientific Socialist, since it is a master element in his own theory, still further accentuated the distrust of popular religion. In Europe, where governments were more clearly identified as mere instrumentalities of ruling groups, the support of religion by the state was accepted as palpable evidence of the truth of the position. Religion

was viewed, then, as an adjunct of capitalism (in the modern era), and the idea of class consciousness was promulgated as an opposing principle. But as a matter of fact, the general question is one over which division exists among Socialists. Some follow idealistic impulses purely, the Socialist program being held to be a means of attaining the passive individual relation defined in Christian ethics.

In some modern democracies religion has become an active political force, due to the influence of corsair propaganda. The general popular distrust of religion as an institution aiming to coalesce church and state no longer exists. To speak plainly, this is a menace feared in connection with one church alone, that which was identified with feudalism in Europe. All others participate in political movements without protest, their control having passed to the aggressive corsair caste, which modifies their ethics to harmonize with political and economic expediency. Religion could thus exist in a socialist state as fully as in any other, and might, indeed, develop into an institution of great force, for, should it include the proper spiritual elements to appeal to the ordinary mind, an avenue

would be furnished through which the will to power of an important class might express itself. In any consideration of this subject it has to be borne in mind that the trend of will expression among the lower classes is always towards negation, and they could readily be led to adapt themselves to new spiritual leadership. Such tendencies would persist under Socialism, regardless of all opposite principles enunciated during the period of revolutionary propaganda. The ultimate union of political and spiritual agencies would thus be easily possible, and the result would be the appearance of an industrial theocracy.

42

The Thirst for Liberty

These ideas, admittedly conjectural, are offered merely in general rebuttal of the prevailing notion of a democratic industrial order. A state swayed by spontaneous public opinion is an impossibility, for the masses have no opinion, beyond the small things of life, except as it is suggested to them. The ordinary man is, in the main, satisfied with life as he finds it; dissatisfaction is an evil gift of the gods to the superior.

Socialism, itself, as an intelligent movement, is the result of the labour and aspiration of men who have aimed to rise to power along novel lines, nor is this a reflection on them, for the motive is essentially human and universal.

The rise of democratic systems, whether they are good or bad, has not resulted from the demands of the masses of the people for liberty. They have been created by variations of the mode of expression of the will to power, and have been advocated because and whenever they have furnished a better vehicle for that expression. The democratic form of government has, in modern times, proven itself particularly adapted to such purposes. It is certainly within the range of probability that it may some day pass, in the future changes incident to the endless struggle.

No system indeed, can be looked on as permanent and if history is any criterion the democratic state is the most transient of all. It may give way at any time, to be replaced by some form of the state returning to more primitive models. Science may discover keys that will give a new group an actual physical superiority over the rest of society. The forces of nature are

as yet but little understood, but the direction of investigation is toward fields promising more concentrated forms of energy. Genius is, in a sense, a constant menace to the inferior, and may finally bind the race in bonds more cruel than any man has ever known.

43

Slavery

Of those institutions that have distinguished the past and have been lapped over into the modern epoch none is more misunderstood than slavery. The word is one of reproach, and historians love to dilate on the imaginary sufferings the institution caused in another age. But to enter into the true spirit of any question involving another epoch it is necessary to consider the habits and feelings of that epoch. Not otherwise can a correct idea of the conditions it met be obtained. Many things are permissible today that once would have been frowned on, and the reverse is also true. Each era has motives of its own; habits distinct from those of others; particular hopes and fears.

Of slavery itself the popular conception is, of course, erroneous. It would be more correct

to speak of it as a labour system having a compulsory form. The great architectural and engineering enterprises of antiquity demanded manual labour on a prodigious scale. Between the engineers and those who carried out their ideas an immense gap existed. Slaves, themselves, were carefully classified, the heavier burdens going to the physically fit. Intelligence was quickly recognized; it has always been a rarity and, like gold, commands its price. Numerous slaves were men of intellect, even of superior culture, as is conclusively shown by their literary remains. The treatment accorded varied with their position, just as it does in the modern world. The brawny foreman of rough gangs, selected for his ability to drive his men by physical force, had his prototype in the past.

The master could punish, and even destroy, but the latter prerogative was limited in civilized societies by the moral influence of the holding groups, for the man who is wantonly cruel has never been popular anywhere. Unquestionably, the slave was the master's property, subject to the commands of an overseer, but this status was not so onerous as it now appears. Primarily, he was cared for and, as a rule, well cared

for. Pleasures were not prohibited him, and, to some extent at least, he partook of the triumphs of the master. In some cases a free marriage relation was respected, but in an age when sex was viewed differently from what it is to-day this was not as important as it now seems. Generally, the condition of a slave under one master was as good as under another; there was small inducement to wander elsewhere. Distances were great; transportation was poor, there was little reason to long for other scenes and opportunities when it was certain that no improvement would be found.

Life was more settled. Wealthy families remained so for generations, their fall from affluence more often being occasioned by war or politics than by anything else. In the former case, the master certainly suffered more than his slaves, although the disaster was common. In the latter case, misfortune overtook the owner alone. That deep attachments existed between certain slaves and their masters is specifically alluded to in many ancient chronicles. It at least proves that the human element was present, and that it must have been accompanied by its usual concomitant, good feeling.

There was a class of free labour, also, in the olden days. The cause of its survival is not far to seek, and is interesting as bearing on the subject of the will to power. All ancient nations were military powers. None could maintain independence or favourable alliances without a professional military caste. It was essential to their existence, therefore, that types suitable to war should compose a permanent part of the population. These were drawn from the agrarians, the lower nobility, above all, from free labour. Will, in these groups, was stronger; their members were forceful men, easily prepared for the hazards of war. Slaves were not generally employed in such pursuits, primarily because they constituted a type defective in aggression. There were exceptions to this among some nations, to be sure; in these some of the soldiers were actually, or practically, slaves, and were even goaded into action with the whip. But they were not regarded as dependable, and among the more powerful military nations they were not found. The armies of Rome were composed of a Latin nucleus, with allies and mercenaries; war then constituted a legitimate and permanent trade.

In more modern times there was the bond slave of Europe, the soil slave who could not leave his plot of ground. Yet he had certain rights. If he was bound to the soil, at least he was free to remain on it; the master could not drive him off, and even on sale or transfer of the ground the occupant's privilege was inviolable. He still retained his right to cultivate, and had to be cared for and protected in the event of war. That he could not go where he pleased seems an evil today, but the world was different then. Travel was a serious matter, involving expense and arms. The highways were dangerous. It is certain that in the social relaxations of those days inferiors had a share, and these entertainments were on a scale undreamed of now. Feasting, drinking and games went on for weeks, and the underling had his pleasure with the lord, and no bill to pay.

These facts have been lost sight of, on account of the merciless propaganda of the French revolutionists, who desired to blacken as much as they could the system they were bent on destroying. But no intelligent man now can see anything more in that period of philosophical madness than the summit of a movement that

finally broke down feudalism, not to liberate man, but to force him into the arms of a rising factory system. He became free—but only to sell his toil at a sacrifice of privilege, and for a bare subsistence wage. It is notorious that at the time the factory system arose, when France and England were warring for commercial supremacy, wages were lower than they had been for centuries, considering their purchasing power. It was only after prolonged labour conflicts that conditions again approximated ancient levels. The story of the state of English labour at the close of the eighteenth century is almost incredible, and yet the ancestors of this wretched class had been the yeomanry of Merrie England.

In more recent days slavery became a burning issue in America. The propaganda against the southern slave owner was charged with misrepresentation, wilful and otherwise. No tale of cruelty was too wild to find avid believers. Yet these stories were, in the main, quite untrue. Cruelty existed, to be sure, for there were cruel men in the South, as there were in the North, but they were looked down upon by all decent men. The most cruel class was that of the overseers, and they were often slaves themselves. The

destruction of the slave system in the South was not, however, due to the propaganda mentioned. That was only an instrument used after the thing had been decided on. An economic antagonism had developed between the sections, and it was not altogether simple in character. Its dominant factors were, first, friction over the tariff system of the North, which taxed the planter, whose relations were almost altogether with Europe, since it was there he disposed of his cotton, and secondly, the belief in the North that free coloured labor could be used there to compete with the white European.

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Free Labor

Chattel slavery has now disappeared. In its place there exists a vast system of so-called free labour. This is not only free to bargain for its wages; it also possesses specific political rights. It has become an immense body, and a considerable portion is organized in unions and federations. In some countries it works together in political parties. It has a degree of liberty which, at first blush, makes its estate seem infinitely superior to that of the ancient slaves. It

can go and come at its own behest; it possesses property rights; it can marry and found families. For exceptionally gifted individuals all the avenues of advancement are open.

On the other hand, these advantages are accompanied by an environment which does not very much outshine the old environment of the slaves. If the labourers of today may go and come at their own will and expense, their movement from point to point can, as a practical matter, have but one object: the obtaining of employment. They must work to live. This necessity forever compels them. They are dependent on themselves at all times, and on themselves alone, for sustenance. Their wage rarely exceeds the cost of maintenance. Property can be acquired only by cruel abstinence; obtained, it is a bond to keep them wherever it may be. A radical change in environment due to an industrial crisis may force its sale at a great loss. Their political rights are large, but they must stand on a level with others having the same rights, and their opportunities to judge men and measures are not favourable. They are borne down by ceaseless propaganda, and there is little in their lives to give them the insight to make

rational distinctions. They are a continued prey to hopes, only to find them deferred. They sometimes have the joy of victory, but rarely its fruits. Age comes apace. They deteriorate early, for the vast machine they feed craves young blood. They step aside unregretted; their savings seldom equalling what they really require for the last days. Hope pursues them like a will o' the wisp. There is no one there with a whip, but hunger is at the door, and it is stronger than the lash. No matter what party they espouse, they find it is only to help another upward—beyond them. Yet, in a thousand tongues they hear a siren song of a golden future!

WOMAN AND GENIUS

VI

Woman and Genius

45

Effects of Propaganda

It is necessary to determine more precisely than has been done the nature of the forces that further a decline of resisting power among subordinate groups of men, and that, to some extent, debase even the upper groups. Such forces pervade the general structure of mass societies, though modified partly by counter tendencies that save the affected units from a complete destruction of the will. Tradition is a powerful source of opposition to this decay. It tends to stabilize the attitude of inferior groups, just as it colours the temperament of superiors. In transient societies, therefore, where this factor scarcely exists, the effects of positive depressing influences are better defined. The common mind yields easily, following unconsciously an impetus it does not comprehend.

Do the changes constantly perceptible on every hand originate in conscious and intelligent prevision, taking on the nature of method or conspiracy? Does the ascending will group become so far-seeing that it adopts plans that look to the future and shapes policies having for their object the continued depletion of the lower will? The question must be answered negatively. All such undertakings develop spontaneously and without deliberation from the very nature of the conflict always raging in society, whatever its form. Certainly, experience lends itself to judgment, and the desirability of a course of action may make itself obvious. It has to be kept in mind, too, that the corsairs always include individuals, or minor propaganda groups, alert to shifting circumstances. This is their trade; they seek weak spots, and capitalize them quickly. But even here the specific object is not necessarily to demoralize the lower groups, and so augment their weakness. What is aimed at is often no more than a mere display of virtuosity—the imposition of an artificial standard by art—artificial because arbitrary, malicious and unnatural. Imbued with this spirit, the corsairs move from phase to

phase of social conduct and idea, essaying among other things to eliminate temptation by the simple expedient of destroying all tempting agents. The operation of the mind that has craved the alleged evils is not considered at all. Why has it looked for and found that which is, apparently, harmful? There must have been a psychological reason, but no attention is given it. This cause persists, in spite of the brutal surgery that seeks to destroy it. Unable to satisfy itself, the old appetite seeks another form of excitement, not necessarily more virtuous. Nevertheless, an important object has been achieved, consciously or unconsciously, and it redounds to the benefit of the corsair. The mass, once imposed upon, gravitates towards the condition of a body that yields to any external pressure. Two positive results follow: first, the will is no longer called on to act for itself in resisting an inclination that may, or may not, be deleterious. Secondly, the will becomes accustomed to conforming to the arbitrary impulses of other wills. In either case, it declines as a resisting force, the individual becoming passive. Such is the result of all corsair morality.

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The Rise of Woman

Since it is the stronger who feel these forces most sharply, the weaker being normally negative, it follows that in a general social decline the actual effect will not be noted until those who were once positive have been forced into alignment with the lower level. It is for this reason that delay occurs before sex enters as a factor of importance. Certain masculine groups gradually descend until they are either on a footing with the feminine psychologically, or approximately so. This statement must be qualified. There is not an actual identity of wills, although the masculine has ceased to have its earlier force. Preceding the recent successful struggle for equal suffrage, the industrial structure had been accommodating itself to a lower labour class and the male was formed into alignment with the opposite sex in an effort to meet the new conditions. Unable to resist them, he became negative in a double sense, morally and economically. The rise of woman as an active industrial rival and then as a political equal was thus extremely significant, for it indi-

cated a material deterioration of the will of the male. Within a comparatively brief space of time, historically considered, a group originally strong in all positive qualities reached a station where it was balanced by a group of ages-old inferiors.

In America, more than in any other modern state, there were agencies that lent themselves to the process, but of which the average man remained strangely ignorant. In the first place, the position of woman in an incipient society, and one in which her numerical minority was pronounced, gave an advantage to her in the matter of selection, for in the estimation of the male her value rose with her rarity. This apparent value was augmented by her sequestered life, her absence from the excitement of every day strife, her gentleness, and her characteristic shrewd reserve, all of which made her seem apart from the world of action and evil. Virtues transcendant were imputed to her, and their imagined existence placed her on a throne where she reigned as a moral paragon—a sort of virgin goddess in a world of sin. Early American literature teems with this idea. It pervades Poe's most affecting lines. It was a source of general

national pride, and the cause of invidious references to less favoured lands. The American man deferred to this new image as the feudal gallant bowed down to his. The causes were identical: the masculine pursuit of the ideal, that strange impulse universal among men!—the quest for a tangible expression of the intangible! —something that would fix in the external world the elusive visions of the unreal! It is in elementary societies that this tendency is most definite—in societies still lacking in avenues of expression, and where spiritual forces are limited in range. Woman worship always fades with the rise of art and intellectual development, for they include surer and better means of revealing the higher longings of the spirit.

Deference to women, then, followed the recognition of an imaginary moral superiority, and did not result from any regard for her physical weakness. Except for the false effect on the minds of the immature this was not, in itself, an evil, save in so far as ignorance is always of that quality, but during adolescence the consequences of any such error are especially pronounced, changing the future character. False ideals, in fact, are always traitors to the will,

and here, in his most cherished fantasy, man bent in his youth to one that lowered his own strength, and assisted in the growth of a positive will among women.

The masculine and feminine principles have been well likened to functions divisible in either, thus allowing for a possible man-woman and woman-man. While this is somewhat overstating the matter, it is undeniable that women often manifest strong masculine traits, and men feminine. This becomes marked in those societies where the two are merged on the industrial and political planes, and results ensue which were unknown in earlier times. Woman, among the many, is still looked on as a strange, even mysterious being, whose true nature is unknowable. She is a veritable sphynx, destroying all who essay to solve her riddle. This view, however, is purely modern and occidental, the ancients and orientals evidencing no perception of an enigma so portentous. That the common man is at last on a plane with her is not, therefore, altogether unfortunate, since he may thereby come to realize the absurdity of the error he has so long cherished. For it is characteristic of mass society that, in its transformation, it has placed

woman in a position where she is eager to make clear, even to the least, how barren of mystery her impulses are. No learned thesis is required to prove that they actually respond to natural factors that are as simple as her nature.

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Man and the Universe

Man is a being of will and it is through his will that he has his contacts with the universe. Against this universe he eternally contends. He surveys it as something apart from himself, as something he must subordinate to his ends. He not only struggles against it, he strives to understand it. There is in him this constant craving for knowledge, this resolution to understand, this will to know. He may, indeed, be called a being of both will and understanding, for the two involve the very keys of his nature. They result in his thirst for truth; with him, the possession of it is a living necessity. This primal impulse is observable even in the most inferior. The trait is essentially masculine and forms the basis of man's natural veracity. Flat negation of a truth, and to an equal, he rates an unpardonable sin.

It does not follow from this that man either perceives or expresses the truth; the significance lies in his inclination, his attitude. Within himself he reflects over the answers nature seems to make to him, endeavouring, by his reason, to test their validity. He builds another and superior world as a result of his deductions, and the images he perceives become the impulses of his actions. In this respect he is ever alert. He senses the same quality in other men and, unconsciously, defers to those whose natures are more austere and complex than his own. If the loftier attributes are all weak in the inferior man, they are at least present. In the superior they take on the proportions of nobility. Man, to survive in the world, must be strong and, compared to nature, he is so at all times. It is only when balanced against his fellows that degrees of strength appear in him, and these are determined by relative forces of will.

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The Feminine Mind

Woman is in the world for an obvious purpose, and her nature accords with it. All her functions converge towards the end she is sup-

posed to achieve: the bearing and care of children. Her system and mind agree with this purpose, and she cannot escape it any more than a natural object can fail to respond to the impact of natural forces. Her very weakness before the external world defines the quality of her inner nature. Deception is, to her, a law as immutable as that which causes the tides. To effect the purpose of life she must conquer man, and he is, therefore, her eternal object. All the force she commands, distinct from that absorbed by the mother function, she applies to the contest with the male. Since she is weak and he is strong, she veils her limitation in profound and perpetual dissimulation. She aims, at all times, to appear the sought, although forever seeking. Mendacity is her life. The search for truth and courage to face it are aspects of existence utterly foreign to her. She beholds the universe only in so far as it relates to sex, and her inner nature is a domain of impulses which she strives to hide, even from herself.

These inherent qualities make her, in some respects, superior to man. In the natural world she is not hampered by introspective weaknesses. She proceeds more directly towards an object;

she does not shrink from little things; she has no sentiment. She possesses a faculty of patient repetition, almost unknown to man, which adds to her value in the industrial world. Her mind is essentially practical; ideals are, to her, illusions purely, and masculine reverence for them bewilders her at times, so foreign is it to her. The right to property she never entirely concedes, and her weakness in this respect has made her face many embarrassments. None the less, within range of what is contiguous, she is quicker than man and, seeking only utility, is more practical. She sometimes follows the male in his illusions, for she desires to appear his ally, but once free to make her own choice, she will reject the ideals he has sought and return post haste to that which gives immediate, if not lasting satisfaction.

She is, consequently, variable, elusive, unmoral. She is, however, limited in her display of these qualities by the supreme law of her being, sex. This is ever before her; more, it pervades and is herself, since she is sex incarnate. Submissive to the strong, she affects independence towards the weak. On discovering man bound, as it were—for in his descent he in-

evitably reaches such a stage—she casts aside dissimulation and boldly unveils. It is a common phenomenon of the time and requires no commentary. For all this, she still hopes to hide the longing that is in her heart. Under the conditions surrounding her she dreams of power within the scope of her inborn capacities, and sees in political rights the possibility of abrogating the limitations within which man has confined her—the abolition of the moral principles he has imputed to her, but which she understands clearly that he, himself, imposed on her.

The will to power as a positive force in man has no parallel in the nature of woman. This may seem a contradiction, but is so only in appearance. Man seeks to impose his will upon the world. His vision ranges over the visible universe; it is his theatre; his field of action. The war in which this attitude involves him becomes his life. He is satisfied only by the conquest of natural conditions; he values himself according to his ability to effect a return for the energy he expends. His life is will, and this he pours forth in a stream of power. Failure to achieve his object mars his very existence; more, it is equivalent to his destruction, for he

deals with a force that must attain its goal or leave him barren, disappointed, and self-condemned. His positive life he gives to Nature, seeking, in return, the fulfilment of the visions that have welled from his understanding. For the impalpable, he gives the palpable; for the negative, the positive. This psychological status is reflected in many of his ordinary qualities. Even the commonplace man dreams of a height where largesse will be possible to him. He views this height as a place of freedom, for on it he would liberate his nature from a restraint that is foreign to it.

In woman, the object of life is within herself; the world is herself, and to that self no sacrifice can be too great. Powerless to face the problems of existence alone, she seeks to learn their import by mastering the masculine will, for through this all that she desires may be obtained. Man's gradual reduction of the onus of life has taken from her much of the labour of other days. But her nature it has not altered, for it still impels her to hold her enemy to a path conformable to her wish. Man, stirred by deeper passions, is forever dissatisfied with the result of his achievement. A destiny beyond

his control urges him to attempt new conquests. The higher the type, the more vulnerable it is to this impulse. Among the greatest the mind almost loses contact with the actual, so absorbed does it become in the study of its conjectures. It is a favourite vagary of the superficial to speak of woman as an inspiration to the man of genius. Nothing could be less true. The introspective faculty is, to her, an enemy against which she brings to bear all the weapons with which Nature has armed her. She perceives in it something that makes man independent of her. Achievement she desires, but the achievement of the average, or something less than herself. She dreads a passion that leads man to pass over the point and circumstance of ordinary things, to reach what to her seems nothing less than a shadow. Woe to the man of talent who permits himself to enter into an alliance with her! His life will become a struggle to escape the commonplace, to which she will ever lure him. Genius protects itself by inconstancy, and receives for it the derision of mediocrity. The amours of superior men are the delight and despair of women. They find themselves matched by a type as variant and subtle as themselves.

To awaken masculine sympathy, woman loves to dilate on the limitations nature has placed about her; she even exaggerates her weakness and assumes it a virtue that she is reconciled to a destiny bounded by physical disabilities. She desires that man should feel a certain responsibility for this state; that he should understand that in some way he has been the cause of it. However great he may be, he cannot ascend so high that she will not reach him. His failure to admit his guilt becomes an evidence of degraded brutality. The purpose of his life should be to serve this lesser self. The ideal man of woman would labour solely toward such an end. She grasps, with anguish, the painful truth that the sex relation is, to him, only incidental, and that to the man capable of great things it is even less so than to the ordinary. She therefore contends with the inmost nature of her associate, and strives to divert him from its influence. She delights in watching his descent, even while she weeps over his unhappiness. His interest in the stars astounds her, incapable as she is of rising above the thought of her own personality.

It is only during the adolescence and decline of states that woman becomes powerful.

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Groups of Women

But these antagonisms manifest themselves differently on the various social planes. The woman of the lower groups is less marked by the novel developments of "progress," for the reason that her relation to man has always been simpler and less affected. The form and circumstance of her life have paralleled an economic status from which her associate could not free himself. As the weaker of the feminine orders she has taken little part in the demand for enfranchisement, the gift being forced on her, rather, by more positive groups. These embrace the more independent women above her, themselves divisible into grades. Among the latter another element has led to great consequences. In the extension of mechanical improvement vast changes have been wrought in the living conditions of a class of women once bound by household and family detail almost as closely as those of the lower groups. So great has been the extent of this emancipation that a new class has actually been created, a newly rich group that, paradoxically, need not be rich at all to enjoy

an enforced leisure. It consists of a mixture of middle class independents and wives of salaried men. This group form is so much freed from the minutiae of life that it can pursue ideas, and these ideas visualize themselves as political and pseudo-philanthropical movements, through which the promoters aim to make more positive and important their relation to society. Such groups tend to be increased in strength by the mechanical achievements of man. True to her nature, woman avails herself of the opportunity thrust upon her and forms an important branch of the corsair group, and insists on the exploitation of her "moral" qualities by becoming a "moral" criterion. In all movements which aim to convert ethics into a negative virtue she is found as an active agent. She assumes this "moral" superiority, but begins to doubt the authenticity of its basis, the maternal function, and insists on the right to control the latter. She claims that this function is, in itself, an inherently "moral one," and that the discharge of it makes her super-moral. None the less, she begins to question the desirability of exercising it, and discovers many new "moral" problems involved in the bearing of children, the sum

of which amounts to a tacit demand to be free from the obligation altogether. But she still insists on all the privileges accorded the child-bearing woman.

The situation is complicated by the fact that women themselves are divisible into classes by varying manifestations of the sex impulse. There are women who naturally desire children; there are others in whom the maternal instinct fades into a wish to influence man without its exercise. Such women reach a high degree of culture, and nature often gives them great powers of fascination. Barrenness among them becomes very conspicuous, but they veil it under a "moral" propaganda, involving the duties and responsibilities of maternity. In any society in which man declines as a positive force such feminine rebellions tend to increase and so the contrasting will-forces come to equilibrium.

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The Barren Woman

The activity of the barren woman in the world follows her innate character. She wishes to control the relations of men by sex, and she also desires to regulate the movements of other

women, and to interfere with the vestiges of family life that still persist. The poor are her prey; the powerful must be wary to escape her machinations. Her native secrecy makes the spy's task congenial. She loves to trace the peccadillos of her own sex and those of her natural enemy, the male. She transforms a simple physical relation into a problem of the ages. Special tribunals have been devised for her where she may exercise her craving for lubricity. Her powers extend to the children of others; she is able to drag them from their parents on sworn statements, often of questionable authenticity. Defense is difficult, the authority wielded being extraordinary. Few experiences can yield more of the harrowing than a visit to one of these so-called children's courts. Here is to be witnessed the delight such paid spies derive from the exercise of their functions. It is in the nature of a revelation to observe the writhing of impotent spirits, dazed by a malice shrouded in the gloom and majesty of law. The separation of families once cited against the South in the days of slavery is here a commonplace event.

For, if woman is the natural antagonist of man she is, more particularly, the bitter enemy

of her own sex, and this fact has been sharpened in modern times by potent psychological forces that are but little understood. Mutual distrust has always distinguished women, but between the distinct divisions of the sex itself there is a deeper hostility. To the mother woman, the normal of her kind, since she obviously observes the intent of nature, the view of life is modified by her physical relation to it. Man, to her, is not only the means by which she achieves her object; he is also the instrument by which she finds a necessary shelter from the world. Her regard for him springs from this. Her love depends on the extent of his adhesion to his duty. Maternity marks her passion; her mate is also a child for whom she cares. Virtue, with her, lies in maintaining the ascendancy of the maternal. She regards her partner favourably only to the degree that he proves faithful to the obligation he has taken.

The barren woman, or superwoman aims at a different object. She desires to hold man by a simpler means, and with what seems a simpler rule. His imagination becomes the weak spot; he is assailed by suggestion. This is a type that has always played a broad part in the world, but

under novel conditions it has discovered new forms of power. In its most brilliant aspect it has been contrasted with genius in man, but where genius is creative, the other is destructive. By it, all the nobler masculine impulses are subject to attack, for the members of this insidious class can discover no other object in life than the fleeting satisfaction, often illusory, of a primal power. If nature has often made them sterile, it has balanced the imperfection with all the subtleties of grace. During decadent epochs they always appear in increased numbers, as if some super-social force impelled them forward as warning signs of impending calamity.

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The Third Sex

Between the mother and the neuter there is natural war, and the latter is usually the stronger. The environment of modern life favours her, and her antagonist is thrown on the defensive. The war leads to a vast over-accentuation of sex, accompanied by its partial nullification. A real neutral species comes into the world, to which no definite analogy can be drawn from the past. Expressed in terms of

mathematics, it may be described as that of a mean between the positive and negative sexes. A transient genus, among which women have no sex and men no masculinity. These strange individuals experience the sensations of eroticism by purely mental processes. In them natural impulses have all but disappeared, and are replaced by inexplicable longings that baffle and control their lives. Their existence is one of suppressed frenzy, displaying itself in a vicious deception that speaks only in terms of a vitiated morality. It is to this class that moving pictures of a certain type have become a spiritual food. In the spectacle of exaggerated allurement they discover a satisfaction not otherwise to be experienced. They feel and display their new power by becoming ascendant over the more ordered class whose lives follow rational paths. From them come many curious reformers, aesthetic oddities, bewildered illuminati—most dangerous, the spy personnel that preys upon the weak. They are true children of Lilith, but if she was without soul, they, alas, are also without bodies. They are ghouls, whose joy comes from dead dreams.

52

The Sex Struggle.

The sex struggle has taken a new form. Under the extraordinary conditions now prevailing in the world it becomes possible to force and hold man into an inferior position regardless of his will, by reason of his fanatical allegiance to the social contract. Particularly is this true among the lower groups, in whom the aggressive spirit has fallen to a negligible point. Women thus have reason to harbour hope of attaining even more remarkable authority than they have today, but their activity will lead to consequences little dreamed of by the thoughtless. Epochs in which such movements appear must be viewed as extraordinary, decadent and lacking in equilibrium—periods destined to pass.

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The Man of Genius

There are, however, men of a singular nature upon whom the forces that affect other men seem to operate without result. The vast energies of the political and economic worlds slip by them, leaving them untouched. The rise of ordinary

men and the aggressive demands of women are alike lost on them. Living, as it were, charmed lives, they partake of the common life like members of a superior and alien race, whom the flitting panorama only momentarily diverts from a realm in which they survey more pleasing vistas.

Of striking personality and extreme egoism, such men display an astonishing aptness for whatever they incline to undertake. With an extraordinary capacity for absorbing knowledge they join a faculty of intuition by which their mastery of a given subject follows swiftly any grasp of its basic facts. Given one link in a chain of ideas, they quickly find the others, and even add to them.

Many definitions of genius have been attempted, some based on rational ideas, others, and these are more frequently met with, endeavouring to connect it with the laws governing mediocrity, that divinity of equality. In industrial societies it has been defined "as an infinite capacity for taking pains," an explanation very popular, for the reason that it implies a genuflection to the god of toil and success. The thing is not, of course, explained by the definition. It

should be said, rather, that the ends of genius are attained by an infinite capacity for understanding, and an infinite facility. The man of genius sees beyond the range of other men, and accomplishes easily what to others is an affair of great difficulty. Labour, with him, remains secondary to introspection, and is indulged in only at feverish moments. The endless rush and striving of the inferior man he passes over with contempt, and is equally critical of the superior, when superiority boasts a material basis. Above all else, he is self-confident, and has little respect for the opinions around him, convinced, as he is, that they are erroneous.

Apparently a synthesis of the intellectual world, the man of genius is no part of the intellectual group that supports what has been termed the dominant class. He more usually takes umbrage at both, and criticizes them as mercilessly as they criticize the lower. Such men seldom show interest in power of itself. The will to power in them expresses itself as thought, in contradistinction to knowledge, popularly conceived—that is, encyclopedic culture, adhesion to accredited forms, the everlasting obeisance of

mediocrity to formula. They cannot touch the most ordinary theme without hitting on something new.

Genius naturally gravitates towards aristocratic associations, finding in them a certain regard for its peculiarities, and respect for its moral independence, since in this environment there is a broader view of the ethical ideas to which the inferior shows such deference. It also finds here the atmosphere of ease and culture that it forever seeks, and is encouraged to display its gifts.

The fact that genius may manifest itself in any station of life, from the humblest to the highest, is often advanced as a reason for claiming it to be essentially democratic, but this notion is not supported by the facts. Society is so artificial a thing that it offers no true criteria of the standing of individuals, save as its institutions harmonize with the phenomena of will or have favoured the breeding of specific types. A dominant caste will always attempt to continue its own cardinal traits, and these will relate especially to the will to power, but the formula does not, evidently, cover the origin of genius, any more than do the indiscriminate crosses of

the inferior. The precise reason for the singular balance of mental gifts in these characters is still a mystery to science. Nevertheless, their extremely egoistic traits must identify them with the more exclusive realm of the dominant group in any coherent society. There is always in them a profound and unconcealed aversion to mediocrity, that god of the obscure.

Their horizon embraces nature and man, but these they conceive as ideas, and to fathom the quality of them seems an inborn craving. As a result, they often foresee tendencies which do not appear in the deductions of science until long after. This is not mere imaginative speculation with them but the result of a naïveté towards the world that makes them supremely impressionable to its phenomena. Genius is an exclusive masculine quality, representing man in his highest manifestation. Woman cannot rise above sex, and is incapable of that impersonality that is essential to the mind that seeks to contemplate truth.

Within elementary societies such characters play a difficult part. They are, to begin with, moral outcasts, refusing utterly to abide by the ethical pronunciamentos of the corsairs, and re-

maining, at all times, a law unto themselves. When endured at all—that is, after a transient recognition has been accorded some achievement to which the lesser can but defer—the moment of tolerance is succeeded by a pressure but too briefly relaxed. They are looked on as men marred by a species of insanity, and receive, therefore, much the same sort of respect that the ancients accorded the mad.

In mass democracies, the phenomena of genius is not frequent, nor is it desired or sought. In such societies indeed the activity of such types may be artificially limited, or even suppressed altogether as a consequence of their natural contempt for the forms popularly favoured or authorized by the corsair class. Indeed, what often passes for genius in such societies is scarcely more than a clever mediocrity which repopularizes the once popular. The weak dread novel ideas, for they compel a change in their concept of themselves, and of the world.

THE RATIONALE OF POWER

VII

THE RATIONALE OF POWER

54

Revolution

In democratic societies the forces of antagonistic purpose express themselves chiefly in specific political movements, but these, in turn, simply reflect the ideas in the underlying morality. The latter marks the limits within which the mass mind acts. Only those movements get anywhere which harmonize with the common ideas. Revolutionary propaganda is possible only when it includes the basic ideas that are popularly held.

The struggle in mass societies is not altogether between holding and non-holding groups. Primarily the interests of all the powerful groups are similar, but differences arise that lead to sharp conflicts. Friction follows divergence as to the precise method of using the economic machine. Except in the case of genius, there is,

among the higher groups, consideration for power alone, and men and states are measured by the degree to which they manifest it. The great struggles in society are civil wars between such types. It is only during so-called revolutionary periods that there appears to be a decline of aggressiveness between the upper groups. The common danger draws them together. Revolutions are fruitless save when these groups have experienced deterioration. They thus offer a chance for exceptional individuals of the lower group to force their way to eminence, for the resistance above is slackened.

The primal aim is always mastery, and this implies the subordination of the weaker. Even when there is no visible revolution there is always a persistent drive towards control of the law, its nature and execution, and a consequent interest in the personnel of legislative and political bodies. Through these, weaker groups are restrained from full participation in the fruits of power. They are held to enterprises that are not inimical to the interests of the superior. But there are times when vast undertakings must be consummated, even beyond the power of the highest, and then co-operation must be used.

The narrow line between the Socialist state and the modern commonwealth here clearly stands out.

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Political Leadership

In the political world all leadership must accord with the mediocre concepts of the inferior groups. The characters who play their parts within it are of a type that can sympathetically entertain the viewpoint of those whom they dominate. They are men thoroughly conscious of the power of sentiment and are often themselves swayed by it. Obviously, men so swayed are the only sincere proponents of the propaganda employed, but they defer at all times to the more cynical and discerning; that is, to those who have grasped the secret of converting specific interests into terms of general sentiment. Greatness, as a human attribute, cannot be granted the mere politician, for his sole claim to genius lies in a certain acumen in gauging mass prejudices and mass situations. Exceptional individuals of course, sometimes do appear. But once their native egoism has been sensed, their destruction follows swiftly. Nevertheless, broad conse-

quences are sometimes effected by them before their fall.

It is only when the affairs of a given state force relations with other states that men to whom true greatness may be conceded manifest themselves; these are rarely politicians. Foreign relations, so-called, are determined by men of broad knowledge, devoid of illusions, cold and unyielding, except to superior power. Save at important junctures the connection between the upper groups and the politician is psychological only. Normally, politics is carried on in the more hospitable mental atmosphere of the lower groups. Its intellectual character is shaped by the persistent labours of corsairs, and politicians are too lacking in reflective power to be able to distinguish the nature of the influences surrounding them. Elemental passions harmonize with the nature of politics. It quickly responds to like and dislike as actuating principles. Love and hate waken it to life, hate more especially, so nearly allied to envy, the unconscious concomitant of all inferiority.

During power conflicts among the higher groups, the verdict may be left to the lower. At such times society is at war with itself. Control

of electorates then calls for extended and concentrated labour. Uncertainty adds to the interest; political characters select sides, their judgment identifying their intelligence. During such periods the vast extent of the franchise privilege aids the stronger and more daring, for when doubt exists novel and irrelevant issues may be pushed forward, championed by popular individuals. The mass divides into smaller groups, absorbed in the fortunes of factions newly aligned. Men of real force are often disposed of in this way, their fire and energy diffused in unimportant contests.

But the tendency in democratic societies is in the direction of more subtle coercive measures, and these aim to lower the quality and power of the law-maker. They imply his limitation as a free agent in the expression of his views; as a moral factor by negativing any personal acuteness that may have distinguished him in the legislative struggle. This trend involves the submission to electorates of legislative questions; the right of reviewing the actions of officials; the power to abruptly terminate official tenure. These systems greatly affect the general character of the individuals who aspire to public emi-

nence, for the strong man, of conviction and independence, will not participate in a struggle where his position is to be one neither of trust nor of honor. Inferiors only will take part where personal merit and integrity are of no consequence. Under such conditions the general temper is governed by organized propaganda, the voters merely echoing ideas that have been made popular among them. Propaganda becomes the ruling power. Its impersonality adds to its effectiveness.

There follows the natural deduction, supported by all experience, that the legislative personnel in such societies tends to a low moral standard, nor can it be otherwise. Apparently the representatives of electorates, the law-makers are, in fact, nothing more than mirrors that reflect decisions already made by the powers controlling the mental world of the electors. Aware of these secret tribunals, private conviction is put in abeyance; the acts of the legislature are regulated by the intent of the will behind the propaganda. The power of the corsair under these conditions is too obvious to be remarked.

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"Educating" the Masses

Men of great resources may privately encourage specific corsair groups, or even, when sufficiently wealthy, undertake great changes in the morals of states. These movements are anarchical in basis, since they are not founded on any rational psychological principle, but merely voice the private views of some sombre or peculiar individual. This extension of private power offers a novel means of attack on groups otherwise unassailable. Their property and position may be outlawed morally and destroyed, because incompatible with a transient ethic. Public expenditure, the source of all exchange, becomes subject to unforeseen regulation. Commercial groups are enabled to prey on each other in a novel and insidious way. The income of some may be extinguished or diverted to channels controlled by rivals. Economic war thus evokes moral propaganda, and finds in it a potent ally.

The character of the individuals composing the dominant groups in commercial societies, and the nature of the means by which they have risen to power, encourage all the tendencies described.

The commercial mind cannot get away from the principle of expediency; it surveys man and the world merely as producing engines. The individual is regarded as an object of value only in so far as he participates in social labour, and on the most economical basis. The very abstemiousness of some individuals of the superior type often develops in them an unconscious aversion to any act that does not relate itself to the material details of existence. They dream of labour made into a perfect producing agent, and capable of no motion foreign to that end. The diminution of such labour's wants must, over a period of time, lead to a lowering of the expense of maintenance. The withdrawal of temptations to extravagance is thus desirable, since a cheapening of the labour product will ultimately follow. Although usually unexpressed, such reasons are constant concepts in the purely commercial mind and play a part in the philanthropical diversions of great individuals. There enters, also, the profound effect of sadism, reflecting an innate hatred of pleasure.

There is yet another phase of this subject, and one more relevant in cases of genuine benevolence of intention. As he rises abruptly to

wealth from narrow origins, the will to power impels the recipient to apply his means along channels that, to him, seem abstract and therefore altruistic. With no conception of the beautiful, beyond an apprehension of it as something infinitely dangerous, he seeks a moral course through which to express his power. The habits of inferiors are sufficiently diverse to supply a range for such essays. He also, by this process, controls equals who find solace in the form of pleasure upon which he has centred his indignation. His reward, in the event of triumph, is double: there is the satisfaction inspired by the consciousness that he can arbitrarily modify the conduct of his inferiors, and a colder and deeper joy attends the moral mastering of his equals. These tendencies are elementary outreachings towards an expression of the philanthropist's inner nature, and reveal his soul in its grim nakedness.

The social machinery necessary to the success of these demonstrations of individual power also lends itself to other purposes. The inauguration of specific inhibitions compels the simultaneous creation of involved systems of espionage, the powers of which may be later diverted to any

other enterprise. Distrust and suspicion become universal phenomena, and the mass-man cringes before a force that follows his every movement and inflicts its penalties with pitiless inflexibility.

The creation in this manner of artificial crimes, and the legal recognition of grave public offences in acts of personal immorality, when combined with a developed system of espionage, may serve as a weapon against individuals whom it would be difficult to reach otherwise. Such a system may furnish a pretext for abrupt and unexpected access to private records, otherwise protected by the fundamental principles of law, or it may effect a sudden detention of the person. So thorough has been the development of the public attitude towards certain offenses, particularly where they relate to sex, that when a charge is made it overwhelms the accused. His private character may never recover from the taint, and at the moment of accusation all his social rights may automatically cease. It is for this reason that murderers so often attack the reputations of those whom they have slain, public sentiment applauding an act the basis of which it accepts as sound. Only individuals of great power can withstand such attacks. They

thus favour the ascendancy of the higher sort of man, for the inferior, recognizing his own helplessness, seldom offers resistance. But psychologically, the use of espionage is a symptom of weakness, for it indicates apprehension, another word for fear. History marks the phenomena as an unfailing sign of approaching disaster. The reason for this is so simple that it should be obvious. Power, fixed and sustained by cogent individuals, is always bold, confident and daring. The truly superior recognize the perpetual imminence of danger, but are certain of their ability to master it. To accept, as essential, the risk of circumstance is the candour of the strong. It is from this spirit that magnanimity is derived: a moral quality only possible to the great.

Transitory though these "moral" tendencies may be in the United States, they are worthy of note, for they convey an idea of underlying social conditions, and define clearly the extent of will-decline in the nation. With the appearance of stronger intellectual groups greater tolerance and frankness are to be expected. Their influence always brings in cultural epochs, during which natural impulses have a rational sway. Art awakens a true concept of Nature and the

world, and the gap between the upper and lower classes leaves each freer to follow its own impulses. The slave overseer has always been a harsh master.

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The Decline of Legislatures

In the political world, the gradual submergence of individualistic representation and its replacement by organized propaganda has led to the disappearance of the fundamental traditional rights of the lower groups. Each principle involved has passed, in turn, under a moral ban. There is now little opposition to this,—a result of the persistent decline of will, due to the constant pressure. It is worthy of note, when there is such a gradual lapse of theoretical democracy, that the last vestiges of it linger in the higher representative bodies; those, in fact, less directly chosen, of longer official tenure, and more remote from the immediately selected groups. The cause of this is not difficult to fathom, for the members of these higher bodies were, from the first, of a more responsible and assertive class, and hence morally superior—usually men of wealth and independent position, not bound by

circumstances to seek the offices they occupied. As a result, while always conservative to an extreme degree towards economic questions, there was, and is, among them, the natural independence inseparable from their superior caste. From them there has been a certain resistance to the extensive propaganda forces that have eliminated their lower associates as responsible moral agents. But now even this higher group tends to fall, for the system of indirect selection gradually gives way, thus opening the path to high office to less courageous characters, men more easily moulded by corsair influence. None the less, in the last stages of a representative system, it stands longest against the engulfing tide of mediocre irresponsibilities. The phenomena is not confined to democratic systems, for in monarchical orders the invasion of mediate classes has also usually been followed by periods of national melancholy and materialism.

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Impediments to Power

Because the avenues of influence are so varied that success would appear to be always a certainty, it does not follow that checks do not inter-

fere with the plans of master groups. The complexity of the modern state, the numerous minor castes that are constantly struggling to play some part in the general exercise of authority, the unexpected appearance of rare individuals, obstructive of plans in contemplation, are elements that affect the situation. At times, they lead to the cautious abandonment of a line of action, or unexpected disappointment from a popular verdict. Such results are healthy, for they give confidence to the lower orders, assuring them of the good faith underlying the system they support and sustaining the theory of democracy. Such setbacks, too, are often helpful to the superior, who are far from a perfection that cannot err. Restrained or delayed in the accomplishment of one purpose, they may throw their energy into another more matured. They always have the advantage of being able to follow a fixed policy, which, persisting over a long period of time, eventually succeeds, for the opposition of the lower is, as a rule, sporadic, passionate, and therefore not lasting.

These conditions are most prevalent where a certain vitality still exists among unsettled and divided upper groups, with passing enmities

leading a faction to side occasionally with the inferior. As society becomes more stable these differences languish or are satisfied, the machinery of propaganda and legislation acts more harmoniously, and the executive branches of the government grow more positive and important. So pronounced becomes this movement that the masses eventually turn to administrative leadership rather than to that of legislative bodies. The former is positive and dramatic. It appeals to the popular imagination. Weakness always defers to strength and has for it an involuntary respect, even though this be tinctured with fear. In moments of national gravity, nothing remains of governmental forms but the upper. Any effort to limit the prerogatives of the latter is resented by popular clamour.

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The Nature of Revolt

The word "revolution" is greatly misused. Often, comparatively innocuous movements are so labelled, when, as a matter of fact, they are only minor changes advocated by interest or enthusiasm and are in no sense antagonistic to existing tradition or order. This confusion is

due to the intensive employment of sentiment in moving the mass mind, the average man yielding to the effects of this impulse unconsciously. The profound significance of personal or group interest escapes him altogether. Sentiment also accords with his moral view of the world, and causes him to observe with feeling any effort that may change it. To identify an idea with revolution is, to him, equivalent to condemning it, the question actually involved being given no consideration. Actual revolution is an affair of slow growth, at once its weakness and its strength. No movement is genuinely of this nature that does not include a change in fundamental social concepts and the destruction, or replacement, of established ruling groups. In modern society Socialism alone measures up to this standard. Anarchism is nothing more than individualism gone mad, and merits no attention.

Imminence of revolution often leads to desperate diversions, for the really intelligent appreciate the gravity of the situation at hand, and the portentous possibilities with which the future may be fraught. Extreme measures are often tried; for example, war, or vast luxury in public works. These may stay the torrent for a time,

but unless the moral forces of the old order have the virility that comes from rational and solid foundations, foundations barren of illusion, the hour of force can only be delayed, and the final issue must fall to the decision of arms.

During revolutionary periods, when an established order is fighting for its life, the immediate problem of the victors—where these are the revolutionists—is to satisfy the ardour of their partisans. The great promises made, the scope of the hopes spread broadcast, call for quick amelioratives, for in the excited state induced by dramatic scenes strange characters may enter and threaten the success of those who have triumphed. Great coups are possible, having for their object the accomplishment of privately cherished ends. All is uncertain; the air is vibrant with fearful rumours. The masters of the old have passed and the new have not yet made themselves secure. It is for this reason that the attention of adherents is so often turned to the persons and tangible property of the fallen, the latter being sacrificed to the passions of the lowest. Nor is this course unreasonable, for all revolutionists discover, in the moment of victory, that they have nothing to offer their followers

but a change of names and a modified system of labour. They learn, abruptly, that the vast surplus revenue looked for is inadequate utterly to meet the demands of an eager multitude that has so long coveted what they have not understood. The surrender of the upper caste to them, the practical outlawry of the latter, saves the new leaders from the effects of a disappointment that might redound against themselves. They leave the lesser to tire themselves out by the very force of fury. In the respite thus obtained the beginnings of a new order may be developed, or differences between ambitious partisans fought out.

The elementary feelings that then glut themselves with blood and loot are the pent up emotions, long repressed, that are always present in the inferior mind. Envy and hate satiate themselves for imaginary wrongs; propaganda silences every noble impulse and justifies every excess. This repletion is, to the inferior orders, the fruit of victory and is all they derive from it. It is not without value, even though transient. So intense is their gratification that the effects linger for generations, effectually concealing the futility of hopes long cherished. This is the

menace that hangs over each ruling caste, and explains the often remorseless measures adopted to hold back the revolutionary spirit. In these antagonisms neither wants to yield anything. Compromise fails. This is due to the impossibility of making an agreement that does not call for the sacrifice of essential numbers of the ruling class, to make way for new units. It is clear that the personnel of such groups must, perforce, be limited.

Revolutions, once at the apex of success, undergo swift alteration in purpose and idea. The group of propagandists to whose labours the conclusion is due find themselves facing characters that had lurked in the background, awaiting the critical and opportune moment when their own plans might be pushed forward. With revolution as a watchword, they attack the ordinary men who still cherish the illusion that they are, at last, on the threshold of great achievement. The new group boldly essays to dominate the seething mass about it, labouring to recast society along lines favourable to its ends. This is the reason that such struggles always result in disappointment to those immediately concerned; the temporary excitement gives them their only solace.

The enthusiasm characteristic of revolutionary epochs is a sovereign force in compelling the lower to accept new—and often—more relentless masters. To question the integrity of the revolution becomes a supreme crime, and the inferior is bound again in the very bonds he has dreamed of seeing on others.

That physical force must be appealed to at last does not imply the necessary fall of an older ruling caste. It may prove equal to the crisis by which it is faced and beat down the assailing forces. These struggles are of unmatched fury and bitterness, the effects sometimes enduring for centuries and changing the entire future of races.

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Democracy and Revolution

In democratic societies it is difficult for such a catastrophe to take place, so far-reaching are the means that interest finds to guide the popular mind, and so diverse the political forms that grant satisfaction to the masses. In these societies, as they develop, there is a constant augmentation of interest in purely political contests, elections multiplying and novel questions com-

ing forward. These movements constitute a sportive phase of life and popular interest becomes absorbed in the fortunes of parties and individuals. Issues excite little attention. The concept of success, so important in life, appears again in another world, where each longs to be with the victor.

All democracies are autocracies in embryo; the change ensues upon their moral collapse. It does not follow, however, that, superficially, any alteration takes place in the actual form of organization, for democratic forms may persist for an indefinite period, even flaring up into transient importance, and always furnishing channels for the expression of the ambitions of inferior men.

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On Greatness

The changes in states that mark the steps of what is termed progress are nothing more than intervals of transition—the descent of an old power group; the ascent of a new. Greatness in commonwealths is distinguished by the character of those who compose such groups. The brilliance or pusillanimity of nations is simply a

reflection of brilliant or pusillanimous personalities. The state does not create greatness in individuals, but greatness in individuals creates greatness in states. Civilization itself is only a manifestation of the effect of powerful spirits on the primary human relations. The quality of an epoch, morally and intellectually, can be no higher than those qualities among its superior groups. This becomes transparent after serious national disasters, in which an older caste either disappears or becomes impotent. An immediate change is apparent in the ideas and actions of the masses. The spell of the great mind is gone; mediocrity is ascendant. It is as if a new nation had been born. Nothing of the old remains but a name and a tradition.

It is certain from this that every state will, at intervals, undergo mental decline, rising again as stronger characters appear and achieve their will. The war that forever maintains among men is this struggle, and nothing else. In it there will be periods when real eminence will be impossible, and at such times and in such nations long lapses of vacillation and weakness must ensue. In modern times the diverse agencies that control public thought make it possible

for combinations of mediocrities to balance or surpass actually superior types. Intellectually, this fact limits all real greatness, and even ordinary thought is hampered. It is only in commonwealths dominated by powerful minds that a free expression of opinion is tolerated. The mediocre man takes no risk that can be avoided and harshly confines the range of permissible ideas to those that favour his cringing path. He is beset by fear, the guerdon of the weak, but the strong, swayed by no such weakness, remain indifferent to sentiments that, to them, are casual and puerile. They feel superior to them at all times.

It has been under the protection of the great that the world's periods of apex culture have been attained. This is a universal principle, and one confirmed by every record.

REFLECTIONS

VIII

Reflections

62

The Struggle for Self-Expression

The eternal struggle of the superior man for independence: such is the history of society, rightly understood. It is apparent that his aim is never achieved. He can, at best, become but part of a dominant caste, and even here his path is lined with difficulties. Obstacles face him at every step. The lives of the truly great are therefore always tragical. Mediocrity, even when exalted by a transient fire, eventually turns upon and destroys them.

The man of genius alone attains some approach to freedom, but this is due to the peculiar, even unique, expression that the will to power assumes in such personalities. Disdainful of environment, they treat the world more as idea than as reality, and act upon it as they would act

upon other ideas. Genius may be regarded as an essay of nature to produce a master type, the so-called superman, but if so the effort so far has failed. It is curious, also, that such men rarely perpetuate themselves or, if they do, their offspring evince few of their gifts. Nor is their low fecundity due to any neglect of sex, for their singular characteristics and brilliant personalities prove irresistible attractions to women.

In the will war woman always appears as a weakening factor. This position is logical, for Nature ever impels her to war upon the male. The study of her status is important, for from it is to be inferred the degree of masculinity, or will, in man. Woman does not "rise," the world to the contrary notwithstanding. Her relation to society is constant; she is Sex, and cannot escape her inborn limitation; nor should this, in any sense, be held derogatory. The mere fact that such a view may be entertained confirms the falseness of her present position. That the consequences must be fruitful of evil in their effects on breeding is to be deplored, but cannot be avoided. Under the conditions existing, the masculine will must experience further deterioration, but that eventually a balancing counter

tendency will appear is reasonably certain, since this has always been the case in the past. The ascendant woman is not new to history.

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Happiness

Happiness and pleasure are often confounded. The latter is really a form of pain, and gives satisfaction because it offers a variation in sensation. To that degree, it may be termed happiness, but it is of a transitory nature. Such as it is, it is accessible to all, and particularly to the weak.

The nature of the superior man defines the limit of his access to the internal satisfaction that constitutes happiness as a moral experience. His driving impulse is the will to power, and he is bound by it as remorselessly as is woman by sex. It is in the expression of this will to power, in the imposition of this will, that he finds joy. Happiness comes to him, therefore, as the result of war. Genius attains the nearest approach to it of all, but that is because it lives in a world of its own.

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Evolution and the Machine

The idea of evolution is confounded with much that is irrelevant to it. The development and improvement of machinery is a favourite theme with the prophets of social evolution. All the problems of life are to be solved by more perfect mechanical devices.

Machinery is a means of making profitable many forms of labour otherwise valueless. It appeared with the increase of raw materials that followed trade extensions to America and the Indies, and it made available great labour deposits of a crude form. The triangular contest of England, Holland and France to hold the skilled artisan is a matter of history. The machine eased a difficult situation, and it proved a stepping stone by which a new ruling caste rose to power. Of itself, machinery is only one of the many modes the will to power has adopted to achieve its constant purpose. Its broad use has led to many changes in the details of living, but the method by which man works and moves from point to point does not, of itself, prove that a change has occurred

in him so fundamental that it can be said that "he has progressed." Men still walk, although aviators can fly; the latter is not more civilized than the pedestrian.

To the philosopher, evolution can be interesting only in so far as its effects can be traced on will and understanding. It is in the mind, therefore, that significant changes must be sought. Had he been given the calculus could the ancient Egyptian have understood and used it? Could his mind have assimilated the theoretical principles involved? Is the mind of the man of today peculiar to itself, and perhaps distinguished from that of his ancestors by greater range and effectiveness? If it is, it has progressed, evolved, gone on. Would the ancient Greek, brought into the modern world, absorb its knowledge? Or fail by mental incapacity? This is progress, if there is any. The number of arms or legs a man may have is of no importance.

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The Goal of Progress

A survey of the general tendencies of civilization during the past two thousand years makes it difficult to resist the conclusion that the entire

period is only a part, and a small part at that, of an epoch in which all social and governmental elements are in a condition of flux. That these may crystallize into a fixed form eventually does not seem an unreasonable conjecture; nevertheless, it is conjecture, purely. If the latter be true, however, the point of destination is still too obscured by distance to enable its being reached by even mental vision. In what is transpiring no phenomenon is revealed from which the probable nature of the future may be inferred. Broadly, the world has been in chaos ever since the decline of Greco-Roman civilization. The extent of that disaster has never been thoroughly grasped, and the rise of machine civilization has helped to conceal it.

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Will Deterioration

The weakening of the will of the lower mass may be carried to a point where it becomes a source of weakness to the controlling group. A condition of such lassitude may ensue that it destroys the activity of worker groups. Their efficiency departs. Anything that tends to produce negative qualities weakens will. A soli-

tary man on a desert island is not necessarily a saint, although the corsair would have it that he is one.

Oriental races have shown admirably the effects of extreme will deterioration; can it be possible that the "vices" of the Occident are renewing their place in the world?

ANCIENT AND MODERN: A STUDY IN CONTRASTS

IX

Ancient and Modern: A Study in Contrasts

67

The Ancient Historians

Between ancient and modern historians there is a marked difference in method. Among the former a singular broadness prevails. In such writers as Herodotus, Thucydides and Tacitus, names taken at random, the fact is very evident. The first of these, the so-called father of history, has been reproached with many things, but his lucid survey of a world that he looked at in the living flesh remains a triumph of descriptive work that baffles imitation. This is particularly significant when it is borne in mind that to the Greek the world beyond Hellena was barbarous. Notwithstanding a limitation so fundamental, wars and institutions are described without prejudice, the aim being to elucidate the bald fact

—truth as it was conceived to be. Such candour is not to be found among moderns, where bias marks every inspection of circumstance. The delightful feature of the old writers is their superb simplicity, their singleness of purpose, their childish intentness towards act as act. Apparently, they had no idea of the psychological or the apologetic.

The absence of the deductive or prophetic also distinguishes them. The consequences of a series of movements were left to the reader—if, for that matter, he ever exercised such a faculty, or was expected to. Certainly it may be said that stories and legends interspersed the narrative. But what of it? Perhaps the reader was not as naïve as he is now thought to have been. Humour is not a modern invention. The ancients laughed more frequently than we, their descendants. We smile lugubriously, through many tears.

In seeking for an explanation of this lack of sibylline power, so conspicuous today, the reason may be ventured that the contrast arises from the greater stability of form of living and of institutions among the ancients. It will, of course, be contended that this could not have been true;

that, as a matter of fact, governments then suffered frequent overthrow and war was a constant menace. Nevertheless, the alterations that followed in the long ago were slight. Tradition and the social norms were not affected. War and its consequences were viewed as essential elements of life, unchangeable factors, simple manifestations of the innate tendency of ambition. Even Plato, in his ideal Republic, extolled the military profession as one of the noblest. Each man was to be an able soldier.

These differences are worthy of attention. What historian of today would consider his work finished without a homily on the future? Without deductions from the events he has described? If he overlooks so general a duty he may rest assured that another will do it for him. Prophecy has become one of the most popular of the arts. They formerly left it to oracles.

The modern historian approaches his subject with an *a priori* theory, and the text must harmonize with it. If he is a royalist, the rise of democracy is described as retrogression. If he is a democrat, civilization improves as the franchise extends. If he is a socialist, all progress follows industrial forms, changing with them.

There is an even more distinctly modern method, not to be paralleled in the past. This is the use of pseudo-history, in which everything is shown to be moving towards a specific end, to wit, the writer's hobby. The idea of progress is peculiar to modern history. It suggests a marked change in the mental attitude of man.

Of course, something akin to progress appears in the work of the ancients, but there it takes a purely psychological form. Plato's "becoming" related to variations in the life of the soul rather than to differences in the dealings of men with each other, or in the details of life. As the modern world has dismissed all spiritual elements as nothing more than phases of intellectual development, the idea of "becoming" can hardly be construed into an earlier conception of progress, or as being prophetic of its later advent.

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Nietzsche the Greek

It is at least an interesting coincidence that, of moderns, Nietzsche alone confines progress to the change that takes place in man himself. That is, he makes it a psychological matter rather than a process depending on alterations in en-

vironment. Yet he views man from a purely materialistic standpoint. His much misunderstood superman is a being tempered by experience and wisdom, controlling environment and life by his mastery of natural laws, his perfect understanding of cause and effect in nature and in man. The more popular notion today is that man is a creature of his surroundings, changing with them. This is the basis of so-called scientific Socialism. Some writers foresee bald headed races and toothless men. Others astound reason by descriptions of coming monsters that are to be all brain. These possibilities are proper subjects for prayer. Nietzsche reflects a more ancient view, and one decidedly Greek. This Greek outlook is characteristic of all his work.

69

Ancient and Modern Views

Man's attitude towards the world is mental, whether he will have it so or not. It presents itself to him as a means and an obstacle. He seeks to transform it through his will. The ancients assumed that in Nature man was supreme, shadowed only by destiny, the hazard of action.

He was immeasurably above his surroundings. This seems odd today when his relative helplessness before Nature is universally admitted. To the ancient, the external world could act on him only to the degree that his will was weakened. Today it is believed that environment can modify that will. It is a complete reversal of view.

70

The Subtle Modern

There rises a greater problem: the method by which intellectual means are used to modify general ideas. Here the same contrast between ancient and modern looms. In one, act predominates; in the other, there is more regard to thought. But thought must take a moral form—and obviously follow an ethics to the author's taste. Nevertheless, being morality, it is not debatable. Right is right.

Here is a radical divergence in point of view: life as something being formed, rather than as something forming itself—will being willed rather than will willing. What is indicated is a change in the method of applying will, an alteration in the mode of manifesting the will to power. This leads directly to the problem of how domi-

nant spirits assert their power. It embraces the entire record of so-called progress. It is, indeed, the secret history of all systems.

Just as the elder chronicles were more candid, so were the ways of the ancients more direct. There was no meandering. Violence proceeded directly to its object. The new way is indirect; the end sought is to control thought. This achieved, the rest follows. Written history thus becomes a field for philosophical analysis, not to discover an ideal system, but to ascertain the nature of the impelling ideas that appear on the surface only through their effects.

The distinction between the work of ancient historians, contrasted with moderns is, therefore, the result of a change in the means by which forms of supremacy are maintained. In one, the actor moved directly; with the other there is more of the devious, yet it is stronger. The mass responds to the treatment it receives because it is trained to accept certain principles as beyond dispute. Its norm is submission. Here, ancient and modern meet on common ground.

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The Eternal Struggle

Aspects of the course of this struggle have formed the theme of these pages. It is a vast expanse and only an outline has been attempted. Broadly, it appears that the aim is constantly to harass the weak, imposing authority in one way or another. But this view is superficial. It results from an undue emphasis on the dramatic acts in the world of action. The real struggle is between powerful minds. Among these there is a tacit assumption that the mass will respond to the stimulation of intelligent purpose. The question at issue is merely that of primacy between the contending spirits.

It is a struggle that never ends, although its forms alter. Mediocrity, ever at bay, ever essays to rise, but intellect and will achieve their object, even though great personalities go down. More cogent masters peer from the future. Intervals of lassitude interlap. Thus the end never varies, but method changes with circumstance.

Historical work will, then, more than ever reflect this fact. It will become part of the men-

tal equipment of the corsairs. It will deal less with fact and more with popular philosophy. It will not be a record of events, purely as such, but of a moral point of view: that of the will which is imposed on the minds of majorities.

THE END