

Part I: Classics

Saint-Simon and the Sociology of Industrialism

Selection of The Organizer [1819], Industrial

System [1821] and On Social Organization [1825].

Excerpts taken from the following volumes:


Saint-Simon, Henri. Henri Saint-Simon (1760-1825): Selected writings on science, industry, and social organization. Croom Helm. 1975.

Comte de saint-Simon (ed. Markham), Henri Comte de Saint-Simon 1760-1825 Selected Writings. Blackwell Oxford, 1952.

HENRI DE
SAINT-SIMON

Social Organization,
the Science of Man
and
Other Writings

Edited and Translated with an Introduction
by FELIX MARKHAM

HARPER TORCHBOOKS  The Academy Library
Harper & Row, Publishers
New York and Evanston

HENRI SAINT-SIMON (1760–1825)

Selected writings on science, industry
and social organisation

Translated and edited by
KEITH TAYLOR

 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

FIRST EXTRACT FROM THE 'ORGANIZER' (1819)

SUPPOSE that France suddenly lost fifty of her best physicists, chemists, physiologists, mathematicians, poets, painters, sculptors, musicians, writers; fifty of her best mechanical engineers, civil and military engineers, artillery experts, architects, doctors, surgeons, apothecaries, seamen, clockmakers; fifty of her best bankers, two hundred of her best business men, two hundred of her best farmers, fifty of her best ironmasters, arms manufacturers, tanners, dyers, miners, cloth-makers, cotton manufacturers, silk-makers, linen-makers, manufacturers of hardware, of pottery and china, of crystal and glass, ship chandlers, carriers, printers, engravers, goldsmiths, and other metal-workers; her fifty best masons, carpenters, joiners, farriers, locksmiths, cutlers, smelters, and a hundred other persons of various unspecified occupations, eminent in the sciences, fine arts, and professions; making in all the three thousand leading scientists, artists, and artisans of France.¹

These men are the Frenchmen who are the most essential producers, those who make the most important products, those who direct the enterprises most useful to the nation, those who contribute to its achievements in the sciences, fine arts and professions. They are in the most real sense the flower of French society; they are, above all Frenchmen, the most useful to their country, contribute most to its glory, increasing its civilization and prosperity. The nation would become a lifeless corpse as soon as it lost them. It would immediately fall into a position of inferiority compared with the nations which it now rivals, and would continue to be inferior until this loss had been replaced, until it had grown another head. It would require at least a generation for France to repair this misfortune; for men who are distinguished in work of positive ability are exceptions, and nature is not prodigal of exceptions, particularly in this species.

Let us pass on to another assumption. Suppose that France preserves all the men of genius that she possesses in the sciences, fine arts and professions, but has the misfortune to lose in the same day Monsieur

¹ Artisan usually means an ordinary workman. To avoid circumlocution, I mean by this expression all those who are concerned with material production, viz., farmers, manufacturers, merchants, bankers, and all the clerks and workmen employed by them.

the King's brother, Monseigneur le duc d'Angoulême, Monseigneur le duc de Berry, Monseigneur le duc d'Orléans, Monseigneur le duc de Bourbon, Madame la duchesse d'Angoulême, Madame la duchesse de Berry, Madame la duchesse d'Orléans, Madame la duchesse de Bourbon, and Mademoiselle de Condé. Suppose that France loses at the same time all the great officers of the royal household, all the ministers (with or without portfolio), all the councillors of state, all the chief magistrates, marshals, cardinals, archbishops, bishops, vicars-general, and canons, all the prefects and sub-prefects, all the civil servants, and judges, and, in addition, ten thousand of the richest proprietors who live in the style of nobles.

This mischance would certainly distress the French, because they are kind-hearted, and could not see with indifference the sudden disappearance of such a large number of their compatriots. But this loss of thirty-thousand individuals, considered to be the most important in the State, would only grieve them for purely sentimental reasons and would result in no political evil for the State.

In the first place, it would be very easy to fill the vacancies which would be made available. There are plenty of Frenchmen who could fill the function of the King's brother as well as can Monsieur; plenty who could take the place of a Prince as appropriately as Monseigneur le duc d'Angoulême, or Monseigneur le duc d'Orléans, or Monseigneur le duc de Bourbon. There are plenty of Frenchwomen who would be as good princesses as Madame la duchesse d'Angoulême, or Madame la duchesse de Berry, or Mesdames d'Orléans, de Bourbon, and de Condé.

The ante-chambers of the palace are full of courtiers ready to take the place of the great household officials. The army has plenty of soldiers who would be as good leaders as our present Marshals. How many clerks there are who are as good as our ministers? How many administrators who are capable of managing the affairs of the departments better than the existing prefects and sub-prefects? How many barristers who are as good lawyers as our judges? How many vicars as expert as our cardinals, archbishops, bishops, vicars-general, and canons? As for the ten thousand aristocratic landowners, their heirs could need no apprenticeship to do the honours of their drawing-rooms as well as they.

[The prosperity of France can only exist through the effects of the progress of the sciences, fine arts and professions.] The Princes, the great household officials, the Bishops, Marshals of France, prefects and idle

landowners contribute nothing directly to the progress of the sciences, fine arts and professions. Far from contributing they only hinder, since they strive to prolong the supremacy existing to this day of conjectural ideas over positive science. They inevitably harm the prosperity of the nation by depriving, as they do, the scientists, artists, and artisans of the high esteem to which they are properly entitled. They are harmful because they expend their wealth in a way which is of no direct use to the sciences, fine arts, and professions: they are harmful because they are a charge on the national taxation, to the amount of three or four hundred millions under the heading of appointments, pensions, gifts, compensations, for the upkeep of their activities which are useless to the nation.

These suppositions underline the most important fact of present politics: they provide a point of view from which we can see this fact in a flash in all its extent; they show clearly, though indirectly, that our social organization is seriously defective: that men still allow themselves to be governed by violence and ruse, and that the human race (politically speaking) is still sunk in immorality.

The scientists, artists, and artisans, the only men whose work is of positive utility to society, and cost it practically nothing, are kept down by the princes and other rulers who are simply more or less incapable bureaucrats. Those who control honours and other national awards owe, in general, the supremacy they enjoy, to the accident of birth, to flattery, intrigue and other dubious methods.

Those who control public affairs share between them every year one half of the taxes, and they do not even use a third of what they do not pocket personally in a way which benefits the citizen.

These suppositions show that society is a world which is upside down.

The nation holds as a fundamental principle that the poor should be generous to the rich, and that therefore the poorer classes should daily deprive themselves of necessities in order to increase the superfluous luxury of the rich.

The most guilty men, the robbers on a grand scale, who oppress the mass of the citizens, and extract from them three or four hundred millions a year, are given the responsibility of punishing minor offences against society.

Ignorance, superstition, idleness and costly dissipation are the privilege of the leaders of society, and men of ability, hard-working and thrifty, are employed only as inferiors and instruments.

To sum up, in every sphere men of greater ability are subject to the control of men who are incapable. From the point of view of morality, the most immoral men have the responsibility of leading the citizens towards virtue; from the point of view of distributive justice, the most guilty men are appointed to punish minor delinquents.

22. [ON THE REPLACEMENT OF GOVERNMENT BY ADMINISTRATION]

(Extracts from *Deuxième extrait de mon ouvrage sur l'organisation sociale, L'Organisateur*, pt. II, 1820)

Hitherto rulers have regarded nations as patrimonies. The essential aim of all their political arrangements has been to exploit or expand these domains. Even those arrangements which have benefited the governed were really conceived by the rulers only as means of rendering their property either more productive or more secure. The resulting advantages have been regarded even by the people as favours, not as duties binding the rulers.

Undoubtedly, this situation has undergone successive modifications, but only modifications; that is, the progress of enlightenment has always reduced governmental action more and more, but it has not yet changed its nature. Today this action is exercised less freely and in a smaller sphere, but it retains the same character. The old principle that kings are, by divine right, the born owners of their peoples is still accepted, at least in theory, as the fundamental principle. This is proved by the fact that every attempt to refute it is treated by the law as a crime against the social order.

Nevertheless, on the other hand, a new general principle of politics has been put forward by the governed. It has been recognised that the rulers are only the administrators of society, that they must direct it in conformity with the interests and will of the ruled, and that, in short, the happiness of nations is the sole and exclusive purpose of social organisation. This principle has been adopted by the rulers, or at least it has already been accepted by them together with the old principle; that is, the rulers have recognised that they should administrate in this sense, although they still regard themselves as born administrators. One may consider the new principle to be established, since it is the constitutional function of one of the three parliamentary powers (the House of Commons) to defend it and turn it to account.

The establishment of this principle is undoubtedly a thoroughly capital step towards the organisation of a new political system; but nevertheless this principle cannot, in its present state, have any really important consequence. One cannot hide the fact that hitherto it has been only a modifying principle, not a guiding principle. This is because it is much too vague actually to become the basis and point of departure of a new social order. It will not definitely assume this character until it is stated precisely, or rather completed. This is what we shall now endeavour to develop and prove.

In the present situation it is acknowledged that the permanent and sole duty of governments is to work for the happiness of society. But how is society's happiness to be achieved? This is a subject on which public opinion has not yet pronounced at all, on which, perhaps, there is not even one definite and generally accepted idea. And what has been the result? The general direction of society is inevitably left entirely to the arbitrary decision of the rulers . . .

Without entering into more detailed considerations, every person who thinks about it for a moment will be convinced that as long as society merely orders its rulers in a vague fashion to make it happy, without having decided how, in general, its prosperity is to be achieved, rule will inevitably be arbitrary in the most general and most essential respect, since the rulers will find themselves having to add to their natural function of guiding society in a given direction, the function — also very important — of choosing the direction. It follows, therefore, that the main object of the work of publicists today should be to establish ideas on the route to be taken by society towards prosperity, and to persuade society to take that route . . .

In the new political order, the sole and permanent object of social organisation should be to apply as well as possible the knowledge acquired in the sciences, fine arts, and arts and crafts to the satisfaction of man's needs; to disseminate that knowledge, improve it and increase it as much as possible; in short, to combine in as useful a way as possible all the particular works of the sciences, fine arts, and arts and crafts.

This is not the place to show in detail what astonishing prosperity society could achieve through such an organisation. It can in any case easily be imagined. We shall simply give a general indication, as follows.

Hitherto men have, so to speak, exercised on nature only purely individual and isolated efforts. Furthermore, their forces have always in large measure destroyed each other, since the human race has hitherto been divided into two unequal parts, and the smaller has constantly employed all its power, and often even some of the power of the larger part, in order to dominate the latter, while the larger part has used up a great deal of its power in order to withstand domination. Nevertheless, it is certain that in spite of this enormous loss of power, the human race has, in the most civilised countries, achieved a quite remarkable degree of comfort and prosperity. From this one may judge the level it would reach if almost no power were lost, if men, instead of commanding one another, organised themselves to exercise their combined efforts on nature, and if nations adopted the same system! . . .

In a society organised for the positive aim of working for its prosperity through the sciences, fine arts, and arts and crafts, the most important political act, the act which involves determining the direction in which society is to advance, no longer belongs to men invested with social functions; it is exercised by the social body itself, in such a way that society, taken collectively, can really exercise sovereignty, a sovereignty which then consists not in an arbitrary opinion established in law by the mass, but in a principle derived from the very nature of things, whose justice men have only to recognise and whose necessity they have only to proclaim. In such a situation the citizens charged with the various social functions, even the highest, only perform, from a certain point of view, subordinate roles, since their functions, however important they are, involve no more than following a course which they themselves have not chosen. Furthermore, the aim and object of such an organisation is so clear, so settled, that there is no longer any room for the arbitrariness of men, or even of laws, because both can be exercised only in the realm of uncertainty which is, so to speak, their natural element. The act of governing, in the sense of commanding, then plays no or almost no part. All the questions which have to be debated in such a political system – What are the enterprises through which society can increase its present prosperity with the help of the knowledge it possesses in the sciences, fine arts, and arts and crafts? What measures must be taken to disseminate knowledge and improve it as much as possible? Finally, by what means can these various enterprises be undertaken with the least possible expense and in the least possible time? – These questions, we say, and all those to which they may give rise are eminently positive and answerable; decisions can only be the result of scientific demonstrations, absolutely independent of all human will, which may be discussed by all those educated enough to understand them. Besides, precisely because in such a system all social functions have a positive character and a clearly determined object, the capacity required in order to fulfil them is so clear, so easy to ascertain that there could never be any indecision on the subject, and every citizen must naturally tend to confine himself to the role for which he is most suited. And just as every question of social interest will then inevitably be decided as well as it can be with acquired knowledge, so will all social functions inevitably be entrusted to the men most capable of performing them in conformity with the association's general aim. Thus, in this situation the three principal disadvantages of the present political system – arbitrariness, incapacity, and intrigue – will be seen to disappear all at once.

If, in our summary statement of the aim which social organisation should henceforth assume, we have not included the maintenance of order, it is because the maintenance of order is certainly a fundamental condition if society is to apply itself to any kind of enterprise, but cannot be regarded as the aim of society . . .

The functions which are particularly concerned with the maintenance of order will be classed, moreover, in the new social organisation only according to their natural rank, that is, as subordinate police functions.

. . . This part of social action is the only one in the new system requiring a certain degree of command in relations between men, since all the rest, as we have explained, involve the action of principles. It follows that the action of governing, properly speaking, will then be limited as much as possible. In this order men will consequently enjoy the highest degree of liberty compatible with the state of society. It must also be noted that this function of maintaining order can then easily become, almost entirely, a task shared by all citizens, whether it be to contain trouble-makers or to settle disputes . . .

[*Oeuvres*, vol. II, pt. 2, pp. 186-91, 193-5, 197-202.]

28. [ON LIBERTY] ⁶⁸

(Extract from the preface to *Du système industriel*, pt.I, 1821)

. . . The maintenance of liberty was bound to be an object of primary concern as long as the feudal and theological system retained some of its force, because liberty was then exposed to grievous and continuous attacks. But today there need no longer be the same anxiety during the establishment of the industrial and scientific system, since this system must inevitably and automatically bring with it the highest degree of social liberty, temporal as well as spiritual. In such a situation, a great political apparatus especially designed to preserve liberty from attacks to which it can no longer be seriously exposed would be very much like Don Quixote's battle against the windmills.

Besides, the maintenance of individual liberties can in no case be the object of the social contract. Liberty, in its true perspective, is a *consequence* of civilisation — both progress together — but it cannot be its *aim*. Men do not associate in order to be free. Savages associate to hunt, to make war, but certainly not to produce liberty. In this respect it would be better for them to remain isolated. I repeat: an *active* aim is necessary, and that cannot be liberty, since liberty is a by-product of activity. True liberty is not simply a matter of keeping one's arms folded in the association, if one so desires. Such an inclination should be severely repressed whenever it arises. On the contrary, liberty means developing a temporal or spiritual capacity useful to the association, without hindrance and to as great an extent as is possible.

We may observe, moreover, that as civilisation progresses, the division of labour — both spiritual and temporal — considered from the most general point of view increases at the same rate. The inevitable result is that men depend less on each other as individuals, but that they all depend commensurately more on the mass. Now, if the vague and metaphysical idea of liberty current today continued to be taken as the basis of political doctrines, it would tend severely to impede the action of the mass on individuals. From this point of view, it would be contrary to the development of civilisation and the organisation of a well-ordered system, which demands that the parts should be firmly linked to the whole and dependent on it.

I shall not speak of political liberty, because it is all too clear that as an aim of association it is even less deserving of consideration than individual liberty. However, I will observe on this subject, as a statement of the true state of affairs, that the right to participate in

public affairs irrespective of capacity, conferred in theory on every citizen as a *natural* right, and limited only in its exercise but never according to capacity, is the most complete and most obvious proof of the vagueness and uncertainty which still shroud political ideas. How else are we to explain the indirect but unambiguous declaration that political thinking requires no natural capacity?

Why is it not declared that Frenchmen who pay a thousand francs in direct taxation are qualified to make discoveries in chemistry, when exactly the same principle is established in politics, which is in fact much more difficult and important than chemistry?⁶⁹ Why? Because the kind of capacity required in chemistry is clear, while that required in politics is not. And to what is this difference due? The fact that chemistry is today a positive science, while politics is still only a conjectural doctrine which does not deserve the name of science.

It is characteristic of metaphysics, precisely because it teaches nothing real, to argue that one is qualified for everything without any need for special study. The remarkable situation which I have just indicated exists today only in politics and philosophy, its mother, because they alone, among all the branches of our knowledge, are still metaphysical. But there is an analogy with the sciences which are today the most positive, in the period when they were still plunged in the obscure realms of metaphysics. The kinds of capacity needed in order to study these sciences did not become clear and precise, nor did they cease to be the subject of universal dispute, until the sciences assumed a positive character based on observation. It must be absolutely the same in politics. Today it is not thought ridiculous when people argue that political science is innate or that to be a Frenchman by birth is sufficient proof of capacity to reason. Such language is even regarded as patriotic. But when politics has risen to the ranks of the sciences of observation, which must be before too long, the conditions of capacity will become clear and fixed, and the cultivation of politics will be entrusted exclusively to a special class of scientists who will impose silence on all twaddle.

[*Oeuvres*, vol. III, pt. 1, pp.15-17 (footnote).]

30. LETTER TO THE WORKERS

(Henri Saint-Simon à Messieurs les ouvriers, Du système industriel, pt. II, 1821)

Gentlemen,

The chief aim which I set myself in my works is to improve your situation as much as possible. I hold no office, I possess no power. Thus, the only way I can be of use to you is to give you good advice. I invite you to speak as follows to the chiefs of the most important houses of agriculture, manufacture, and commerce. It seems certain to me that great advantages will result for you, and that your existence will be quickly improved. It is you who are going to speak.

'Gentlemen – Heads of the Most Important Houses of Agriculture, Manufacture, and Commerce,

'You are rich, and we are poor. You work with your brains, we with our hands. As a result of these two fundamental differences between us, we are and we should be your subordinates.

'Since you are our leaders, gentlemen, it is to you that we must address the grievances which we wish to reach the throne; and that is what we are going to do, by inviting you to make known to His Majesty what we say to you. Henry IV thought all the Government's energy should be directed towards making it possible for us to eat chicken every Sunday. The present Bourbons can realise the desire of this good Prince of whom they are glorified to be the descendants!

'Gentlemen,

'Our good sense is sufficient to show us that the affairs of the French nation are very badly administered, its resources are badly employed, its activity is badly directed, or rather is paralysed through the wrong direction it has been given.

'Again, our good sense is sufficient to show us that it would be easy to enrich the nation, to render it happier and more powerful than it has hitherto been. It is also sufficient to make us realise what means must be employed to achieve this great aim.

'Gentlemen,

'In less than ten years the value of French territory can be doubled. To do that it would be necessary to clear uncultivated land, drain marshland, open up new roads, improve those that already exist, construct all the bridges necessary to shorten routes, and build all the canals which can be of use for shipping as well as for irrigation.

‘There will be no shortage of funds with which to realise a good project for the general improvement of French territory. The capital will soon be forthcoming if the State (restricting itself to the increase in taxation which will inevitably result from the growth of wealth) grants to entrepreneurs, as far as is possible, all the benefits resulting from their enterprises.

‘There will be no shortage of labour either, for in the absence of the measure which we have just recommended, which is the only one able generally to stimulate production, a large number of navvies are always unemployed. The ordinary work of agriculture provides full employment during the harvest, but once the harvest has ended, one-eighth of the population is all that is required for ploughing, seeding, harrowing, threshing, and looking after the herds; so that in those places where the population is not employed in the manufacture of wrought goods, the vast majority of workers have nothing to do for a large part of the year. It may certainly be estimated that six million navvies are without work between harvests.

‘Gentlemen, trouble yourselves to fix your attention on what we have just said; think about the idea which we have just submitted to you; and you will easily recognise that if the Government announced that it would, as far as is possible, grant to the entrepreneurs of projects promoting an increase in the value of French territory all the particular advantages resulting from these projects, enterprises of this kind would be energetically pursued and quickly carried out.

‘You will recognise equally that the adoption of this measure will bring, for you as well as for us, the most important advantages which society can afford. It will increase your wealth, it will give us work and consequently the comforts of life.

‘Those of you and those of us engaged in agriculture will enjoy directly the advantages resulting from this operation. Those engaged in manufacturing wrought goods and in commerce will be just as well off, although for them the advantages can only be indirect, since agricultural workers, finding themselves employed all year, will receive 120 to 150 millions more in salaries each month, and will consequently consume 1,500 to 1,800 millions more per year, which will increase manufacturing and commercial activity to a degree hitherto unknown, even in England.

‘The present administration of public affairs is defective on this first count: the number of administrators and their subordinates is much too large, which makes the cost of this administration exorbitant, imposing a heavy burden on the nation, which is of no use to it.

‘It is defective on one even more important count: the administrators are chosen from the classes of society whose capacity is not administrative, whose interests are in many respects contrary to those

of the productive class, which is the only class whose work aims directly to increase the power, comfort, and positive happiness of the nation.

'The disadvantages resulting from the poor composition of the administration are infinitely greater than those occasioned by the multiplicity of employees, and by the huge number of appointments made to staff-offices placed uselessly at the head of every administrative body.

'The economies which could be made in the cost of the present administration would amount in all to 200 millions per year at most; and one can estimate without exaggeration that France would increase its capital value (both land and moveables) by 3,000 millions per year if the administration were composed of capable men, men interested in giving the greatest stimulus to every branch of industry.

'In short, the present administration is directed chiefly by nobles, lawyers, and the military. Now, these three classes understand perfectly well how to consume the products of industry, but they are completely incapable of directing the work of producers; they even have, in certain respects, an interest in opposing the success of industry, because success of this kind tends to increase the importance of the producers and diminish that of the nobles, lawyers, and the military.

'It is our class, gentlemen, which suffers directly the disadvantages of the present maladministration. It pays most taxation and receives no salary. It proves that it alone has everything to gain. It is thus natural that we should be taxing our ingenuity to find the remedy for the evils which afflict us in particular.

'These disadvantages, gentlemen, have an even more direct and powerful effect on workers such as us than on you who are rich and able, since as a result more of us face suffering in terms of life's primary needs. It is thus up to us to take the initiative in indicating the means of bringing to an end our miseries which will obviously cease as soon as public affairs are decently administered.

'Here is what we propose to you.

'We invite you – you who are our leaders, who have become, through the progress of civilisation, the nation's most important, most useful, and most capable persons – to ask the King to give you responsibility for directing the administration of public affairs. We invite you to declare to *His Majesty* that you are certain to enrich France by more than 3,000 millions per year; that you are certain to provide us all with the means of *eating chicken every Sunday*; finally, that you are certain to establish a lasting peace by destroying all the factions that will continue to exist (whatever one does) as long as the waste of public money, which each hopes to turn to its own

benefit, is allowed to go on.

'We authorise you, gentlemen, to make this demand in our name. Thus, it will be on behalf of twenty-five million men. Now, since this demand is in conformity with every principle of justice, and aims directly to improve the condition of the vast majority of the nation, we can hope that it will receive the attention of *His Majesty*.'

Gentlemen – Workers,

The only obstacle of any importance which today stands in the way of an improvement in your condition arises from the industrial chiefs' lack of confidence in their capacity to administer public affairs. I shall address to them at once a text to remove their worries on this account, and to rectify their ideas with respect to some other errors that they commit every day, and which are extremely prejudicial to them, as well as to you.

I have the honour to be,
Gentlemen, Workers,
Your most humble servant,

HENRI SAINT-SIMON
Rue de Richelieu, No. 34

P.S. All industrials who want this brochure may come to me for it. I shall let them have copies for themselves and their friends.

[*Oeuvres*, vol. VI, pp.437-44.]

37. FRAGMENTS ON SOCIAL ORGANISATION

(Extracts from *De l'organisation sociale. Fragments d'un ouvrage inédit, Opin. litt.*, 1825)

SECOND FRAGMENT

Proof that the French proletariat is capable of successfully administering property

It is a question of proving here that the most numerous class, in short, the people, today consists of men who no longer need to be subject to any special supervision, men whose intelligence is sufficiently developed, and whose capacity for prudence* is great enough to enable them, without inconvenience, to establish a system of organisation which admits them as members.

First of all, let us examine the case of the farmers.

At the time of the sale of national lands⁸³ several thousand proletarians, availing themselves of the limitless facilities offered to those with enough character to speak out in the face of the entire European aristocracy, purchased those properties and suddenly joined the class of landowners. Now, the way in which this mass of proletarians, having suddenly become property owners, directed the administration of their property has proved and established a great political fact: that the nation's largest class is today composed of men whose intelligence is sufficiently developed, and who have acquired sufficient prudence to enable the law, without any threat to public order, to put an end to the tutelage hitherto exercised over them; and that henceforth, since one must consider the nation to be composed of individuals who are all capable of administering property, the law must establish the political system in which the direction of common interests will be entrusted to the most distinguished men, men with capacities of the most general and most positive utility, so that governmental, controlling action will be exercised only over those men whose conduct tends to disturb public order.

We shall cite a fact which we witnessed personally, and which proves how the capacity for administering property is today generally shared by men who, through accident of birth, belong to the proletarian class.

A small province, Cateau-Cambrésis, belonged in its entirety to the Archbishopric of Cambrai and other ecclesiastical establishments. The population of this province was so thoroughly proletarian, in respect of immoveable property, that there was not a single person who

*See the note at the end of the fragment.

could not be expelled from the manor he occupied.

What happened when the land in this province was put up for sale?

By mutual agreement all the inhabitants formed an association. They made themselves adjudicators of the land of their communes, and they divided it up between them, so that one whole section of the population, quite an important section, suddenly moved out of the proletarian class and into the class of landowners.

Well! This sudden change did not cause the least disorder in agriculture. The new owners proved themselves to be much more capable than the old ones, for the very next year the lands began to produce much better crops than they had ever produced before.

It clearly follows from what happened during the sale of national lands, and from a local fact which we have just cited in support of the general fact, that the French nation (considering the present stage in the development of its intelligence) can be governed much better and much more economically than at present; and that a stable social situation will not be achieved until governmental action is surpassed by the activity of those men whose capacities are of the highest degree and the most general and positive utility.

Let us go on now to consider the working men employed by manufacturers and merchants, and the proof they have provided of their capacity.

At the beginning of the Revolution many entrepreneurs in manufacturing and commercial industry were ruined by the pillage which followed the insurrections. Those entrepreneurs who escaped pillage were crushed by the law of the *maximum*,⁸⁴ while those who were fortunate enough to escape these two industrial calamities and survive financially saw their wealth wiped out by requisitions and the burning of English merchandise.

What would have happened, after such widespread misfortune, if a large number of the working men employed by the ruined and morally destroyed manufacturers and merchants had not been capable enough to replace them?

For a long time the factories and commerce of France would have lost much of their importance, and France would today be paying an industrial tribute to foreigners much greater than the one it had to bear before the Revolution. In short, production in France would have declined.

In actual fact, production of all kinds has increased greatly since and even during the misfortunes of the Revolution. In all the manufacturing and commercial workshops men who used to be employed as ordinary workers have become entrepreneurs and directors of these enterprises, and have shown themselves to be more intelligent and energetic than their predecessors. Consequently, France is today much more prosperous, more productive, and more important in

agricultural, manufacturing, and commercial industry than it was before the Revolution, although the present directors of these kinds of enterprise have come very largely from the class of common people.

Could there be surer and more complete proof that the common people, that is, the majority of the nation are now sufficiently intelligent to enable French society to be organised directly for the public good, without any threat to public order, and, on the contrary, with great advantages for all social classes?

Note to the second fragment

The education of all classes is divided into two parts: education properly speaking and instruction.

The improvement of education properly speaking is more important than the improvement of instruction from the point of view of increasing social welfare.

It is education properly speaking which forms habits, develops feelings, and fosters general prudence. It is education which teaches each person to apply principles and to use them as sure guides to conduct. Education may be regarded as the continual teaching of knowledge which is absolutely necessary for the maintenance of social relations.

Let us suppose that children receive the most thorough instruction but are entirely deprived of education. Let us assume for a moment the existence of an establishment in which children follow courses given by the best teachers in every subject, and are separately shut away between classes to prevent them from being distracted. These children would consequently be deprived of all education. What would happen to them when their studies came to an end? What would become of them when they went out into the world?

Those children would be ignorant of all knowledge which might help them to live a good social life. They would have no experience of relationships. They would have to serve a very long apprenticeship before being able to perform any social function. And if a population brought up in this way was left to fend for itself, it would not be very much more civilised than the first human societies.

We may add, in support of what we have just said, that in every generation some of the knowledge acquired by previous generations becomes so common that the fathers or guardians of children inevitably possess this knowledge, and are therefore qualified to teach their children in this respect. Now, such unstudied teaching of these rudiments develops children's intelligence so that they are much more able to grasp the more abstract knowledge given to them by their real teachers.

It is chiefly in and for the proletarian class that education is much more important than instruction . . .

People still fail to appreciate just how civilised the lowest class is in France, and how much positive improvement in intelligence there has been among the proletarian class . . .

It is mainly because of the superiority in civilisation of its most numerous class over the most numerous classes of other nations – unquestionably the most positive superiority of all – that the French nation excels over all others.

If one compares the French proletariat with the English, one finds the latter inspired by sentiments which incline them to commence the war of the poor against the rich as soon as the right circumstances arise, whereas the attitude of the French proletariat towards the wealthy industrials is generally one of attachment and goodwill . . .

THIRD FRAGMENT

Since the proletarian class are fundamentally as civilised as the class of property owners, the law should recognise them as full members of society.

The mechanism of social organisation was inevitably very complicated as long as the majority were too ignorant and imprudent to administer their own affairs. As long as their intelligence was still not fully developed, they were ruled by brutish passions which urged them towards insurrection and consequently every kind of disorder.

In such a state of affairs, which had to precede a better social situation, it was necessary (in order to hold the majority in check and exert a strong hold over the nation) for the minority to be organised along military lines, to claim an exclusive right to the law-making power, and to frame the law so as to give themselves a monopoly of power. Thus; the chief forces in society have hitherto been employed simply to maintain society as a society, and work directed towards improving the moral and physical well-being of nations has had to be regarded as subordinate.

Today this situation must change completely, and the most important work must be directed towards improving our moral and physical well-being. This can be done, since a small amount of force is sufficient to maintain public order, now that the majority have acquired a taste for work (which eliminates every tendency towards disorder) and have recently proved themselves to be capable of administering moveable and immoveable property.

The minority no longer need force to keep the proletarian class in subordination, so they must now concentrate on arranging things

so that 1) the proletariat has the greatest possible interest in maintaining public order; 2) the transmission of immoveable property is made as easy as possible; 3) the workers are given the highest degree of political importance.

The right arrangements should be very simple and very quick to find, once people have taken the trouble to apply their own intelligence to the situation, and have entirely shaken off the mental bondage imposed by the political principles of our fathers, principles which were good and useful in their time, but which are no longer applicable in present circumstances.

Since the population today consists entirely of men who (apart from some exceptions which occur more or less equally in all classes) are capable of administering moveable or immoveable property, we can and must work directly for an improvement in the moral and physical well-being of the social body.

Now, the most direct way to bring about an improvement in the moral and physical well-being of the majority of the population is to give priority in State expenditure to the provision of work for all fit men, so as to assure their physical existence; to disseminate as quickly as possible among the proletarian class the positive knowledge which has been acquired; and finally to ensure that the individuals composing this class have forms of leisure and interests which will develop their intelligence.

In addition, measures must be taken to ensure that national wealth is administered by the men who are most capable in administration, and who have the greatest interest in good administration, that is, the most important industrials.

And society, by means of these fundamental arrangements, will be organised in a way which will completely satisfy reasonable men of every class. Then there will no longer be any fear of insurrections, and consequently no need to maintain numerous permanent armies to oppose them. It will no longer be necessary to spend enormous sums on the police department; and there will be nothing to fear from abroad, for thirty million happy men could repel a combined attack by the entire human race.

To that we may add that neither princes nor peoples will ever take extravagance to the point of attacking a nation composed of thirty million men who are in no way offensive to their neighbours, and who are united through good management of their interests.

We may add further that there is no need for espionage in a society where the vast majority are interested in maintaining the established order . . .

* * * *

FOURTH FRAGMENT

On the administration and government of public affairs

People may say to us:

'Your most important view on politics, the view to which you relate all your ideas, is that calm and stability can best be established in Europe by superimposing administrative power on governmental power. Your first duty, therefore, must be to trace a clear dividing line between the administrative and governmental capacities. You must show exactly what each of them involves, so that you will be in a position to explain clearly why the administrative capacity should be superimposed on the governmental capacity.'

The high administration of society embraces the invention, examination, and execution of projects useful to the people.⁸⁵

The high administrative capacity thus involves three capacities: the capacity of the artists, the capacity of the scientists, and the capacity of the industrials, whose collaboration fulfils all the conditions necessary for the satisfaction of society's moral and physical needs.

In the great enterprise of working directly for the establishment of the system of public good, the artists, the men of imagination, will lead the way. They will proclaim the future of the human race. They will take the age of gold out of the past and offer it as enrichment to future generations. They will inspire society to increase its well-being by presenting it with a rich picture of new prosperity, and by showing that all members of society will soon share the pleasures which have hitherto been the prerogative of a very small class. They will sing of the benefits for civilisation, and in order to achieve their aim they will put to work every means offered by the fine arts, oratory, poetry, painting, music. In short, they will develop the poetical part of the new system.

The scientists, the men whose chief occupation is to observe and reason, will demonstrate the possibility of a great increase in well-being for all classes of society, for the most hard-working class — the proletariat — as well as for the richest class. They will show what are the most certain and most rapid means of guaranteeing continuity of work for the mass of producers. They will lay the foundations of public education. They will establish laws of hygiene for the social body, and in their hands politics will become the complement of the science of man.

The most important industrials, relating all ideas to production, will judge what is immediately practicable in the projects of public utility conceived and elaborated in concert by the scientists and artists. They will plan methods of execution to be directed by the bankers,

who are always at the head of financial movements.

That is the administrative course — firm, frank, and loyal — which the scientists, artists, and industrials will follow when they are entrusted with the direction of general interests.

Let us compare it with the course adopted by the present Government. Let us see what miserable arrangements the governmental capacity has been reduced to by the progress of enlightenment and civilisation.

Trapped in a circle of antiquated feudal doctrines, the rulers, whose intentions for the public good are generally the best, make vain efforts to organise a calm and stable situation.

Believing that they cannot maintain themselves without a large staff in every branch of administration, and a great apparatus of governmental power, they are ultimately reduced to extracting as much money as possible from the nation, whether it be through taxes or loans, while at the same time they are careful not to arouse any obvious discontent. They thus exhaust themselves in subtle arrangements for improving and collecting taxes.

They are reduced to using the greatest part of the nation's money to cover the costs of official business, while a tiny portion goes on expenditure which is really useful to the producers.

They are reduced to maintaining the nobles and courtiers in positions of great political importance, and they tax their ingenuity to provide them with enough money to keep them in the luxury which they consider so indispensable.

Let us examine the conduct of the Minister-President,⁸⁶ who is still the person who has best understood the importance of industry and the state of society. Let us examine the way he has used governmental power.

We have seen him use all the ministerial influence at his disposal to get a large number of nobles and idle rich into the Chamber of Deputies, and to carefully keep out the most notable industrials, the scientists, and the most capable artists.

He has made Parliament septennial,⁸⁷ but has done nothing to change the age requirement of forty years for entry to the Chamber. In this way he has considerably diminished its energy, has made it dependent on the ministry, and has made it subject at the same time to the influence of the high nobility.

He has concentrated the supreme direction of national interests in the hands of nobles, bishops, soldiers, lawyers, and bureaucrats. They are undoubtedly all quite honourable in terms of their private characters or the services they or their ancestors have been able to render the nation; but they have learned administration only at the expense of the public (who have always had to pay for their mistakes) and never

at their own expense, as the industrials do every day.

At the Ministry of the Interior, out of respect for ministerial dignity, he maintains a distinguished barrister, but one who is very ignorant of everything concerning industry, the sciences, and the fine arts; a man who, unaware of their importance and the respect due to them, forgets himself to the point of having his clerks maltreat in every way the men whose work brings most honour to France.

The same Minister-President also believes, out of deference to the old doctrines, that he must allow the Jesuits to have a great influence over public education, their ultimate aim being to inculcate in youth the idea that mediocre capacities should surpass and direct capacities of the highest order, and that vague knowledge should be superimposed on useful and positive knowledge.

Finally, in an attempt to promote industry, M. de Villèle has established a Supreme Council of Commerce, but he has composed it chiefly of men who have never practised in any branch of industry. Only through human respect, apparently, has he actually admitted two or three retired industrials.

These are the sad remnants of the governmental capacity. Swept along by the torrent of civilisation it tries in vain, by clinging to the past, to maintain the predominant role attributed to it in previous societies . . .

FIFTH FRAGMENT

Continuation of the subject dealt with in the previous fragment

. . . It is a question of deciding what means should be employed to superimpose administrative action on governmental action.

Should this change be brought about all at once through direct measures, or slowly through a succession of measures?

Our opinion is that the change should be brought about all at once through direct measures.⁸⁸

We base this opinion, first of all, on the following great and unique fact.

Let us examine the only change of social system of which history has preserved an exact and detailed record, and see how this change was brought about. Let us remind ourselves whether it was slowly and through a succession of operations that men passed from polytheism to theism, from the regime of the Greeks and Romans to the social organisation adopted by the Europeans of the Middle Ages.

We recognise that the first Christians substituted directly a belief in one single God for the belief in a multitude of divinities, and that they did not undertake to reduce the thousands of acknowledged

divinities to hundreds and then to tens before arriving at the idea of a single God. Thus, we are justified in saying that men passed all at once from polytheism to theism.⁸⁹

It was also all at once that the powers of the Chieftains, Goths, Visigoths, Ostrogoths, Danes, English, Franks, Saxons, Germans, etc. replaced the powers of the consuls and proconsuls.

Finally, the nature of slavery also changed all at once, when slaves ceased to depend directly on their masters and became bound to the soil.

Another fact, essentially different from the first, lends further support to our opinion.

The natural consequence of the first fact is that changes of system are brought about all at once; and the consequence we shall draw from the fact we are now going to discuss is that half-measures, however powerful, cannot produce a change of system.

Could there be anything more powerful, more decisive, more severe than the measures taken at the beginning of the Revolution against the priests and nobles? They were nearly all plundered, massacred, or banished. At the same time they were deprived of their moveable and immovable property as well as their political powers so that the common people found themselves in exclusive control of the public interest.

What was the result of all these atrocities?

Nothing of real importance. The feudal system was not destroyed. It was soon reborn out of its ashes, and within a few years, with some slight modifications, it had reproduced itself. It was the re-establishment of this system which destroyed anarchy. Most importantly, it was the common people themselves who actually reconstructed the feudal system, who created a new nobility, and who established majorats, that is, entailed estates. Foreigners therefore found France completely *refeudalised* when they were in the position of having to make the laws there.

We shall give a very simple explanation of this fact, which at first seems inexplicable, and which has not yet been properly analysed.

The massacre, expulsion, and pillage of the nobles was, despite all its atrocity, only a half-measure. It placed power in different hands, but did not change the nature of power.

Society has always remained subject to governmental action. During the Revolution governmental action continued to reign supreme over administrative action.

Now, it is in the nature of governmental action to maintain or establish hereditary political rights, just as it is a consequence inherent in administrative action to establish the greatest political equality in respect of rights of birth, and to base political rights on superiority

in positive capacities.

From what we have just said we conclude, in support of our opinion, that:

1. The only change of social system of which history has preserved an exact and detailed record was brought about all at once and through a radical change of principles.
2. The Revolution, in spite of all its violence, did not result in the change required by the progress of enlightenment, because it did not alter the principles on which the feudal system was based . . .

[*Oeuvres*, vol. V, pt. I, pp.116-29, 136-42, 151-5.]

ON SOCIAL ORGANIZATION (1825)

THE mechanism of social organization was inevitably very complicated so long as the majority of individuals remained in a state of ignorance and improvidence which rendered them incapable of administering their own affairs. In this state of incomplete intellectual development they were swayed by brutal passions which urged them to revolt and every kind of anarchy.

In such a situation, which was the necessary prelude to a better social order, it was necessary for the minority to be organized on military lines, to obtain a monopoly of legislation, and so to keep all power to itself, in order to hold the majority in tutelage and subject the nation to strong discipline. Thus the main energies of the community have till now been directed to maintaining itself as a community, and any efforts directed to improving the moral and physical welfare of the nation have necessarily been regarded as secondary.

To-day this state of affairs can and should be completely altered. The main effort should be directed to the improvement of our moral and physical welfare; only a small amount of force is now required to maintain public order, since the majority have become used to work (which eliminates disorder) and now consists of men who have recently proved that they are capable of administering property, whether in land or money.

As the minority no longer has need of force to keep the proletarian class in subordination, the course which it should adopt is as follows:

- (1) A policy by which the proletariat will have the strongest interest in maintaining public order.
- (2) A policy which aims at making the inheritance of landed property as easy as possible.
- (3) A policy which aims at giving the highest political importance to the workers.

Such a policy is quite simple and obvious, if one takes the trouble to judge the situation by one's own intelligence, and to shake off the yoke enforced on our minds by the political principles of our ancestors—principles which were sound and useful in their own day, but are

no longer applicable to present circumstances. The mass of the population is now composed of men (apart from exceptions which occur more or less equally in every class) who are capable of administering property whether in land or in money, and therefore we can and must work directly for the improvement of the moral and physical welfare of the community.

The most direct method of improving the moral and physical welfare of the majority of the population is to give priority in State expenditure to ensuring work for all fit men, to secure their physical existence; spreading throughout the proletarian class a knowledge of positive science; ensuring for this class forms of recreation and interests which will develop their intelligence.

We must add to this the measures necessary to ensure that the national wealth is administered by men most fitted for it, and most concerned in its administration, that is to say the most important industrialists.

Thus the community, by means of these fundamental arrangements, will be organized in a way which will completely satisfy reasonable men of every class.¹

¹ Men are not as bad as they think they are: they are more severe on themselves than they deserve. It is true that theoretically they appear to be strongly inclined to despotism, but, in actual fact, they prefer equality.

If an Englishman obtains a post in India, he goes there with enthusiasm, and in his imagination pictures the delights that despotism will procure for him. He can, if he likes, keep a harem; he will be surrounded by hundreds of servants—some to keep off the flies which might irritate him, others always ready to carry him in a palanquin. The whole population will crawl before him; he will have the power to order a beating for any Indian who does not obey his wishes with enough zeal or intelligence.

Well, this Englishman who in India wallows in the delights of despotism, hastens to return to England, as soon as he has made his fortune, to enjoy again the advantages of equality. The moment he arrives in harbour in Great Britain he finds himself rudely hustled by the people, and yet that does not make him wish to return to the place where everybody makes way for him.

We see Russians of vast wealth leaving their country to live in western Europe, while western Europeans only go to Russia to make their fortune, and hasten to bring back to their own homes the wealth they have acquired there.

There are good reasons why rich men prefer to live in countries where equality between the members of the community is most far advanced, since these countries are at the same time those where they can most easily and fully satisfy their wants.

In any French town of some importance, a man with money can, at any hour and without previous notice, eat well at a moderate price. In Russia only the great nobles can obtain good food.

If a traveller has a breakdown of his carriage anywhere in England, he can either have his carriage repaired or buy on the spot a carriage as good as the other. In Russia, a traveller whose carriage breaks down on a main road between big towns, is forced to finish his journey in a peasant's cart.

Thus, in fact, the richest and most powerful men have an interest in the growth of

There will no longer be a fear of insurrection, and consequently no longer a need to maintain large standing armies to suppress it; no longer a need to spend enormous sums on a police force; no longer a fear of foreign danger, for a body of thirty millions of men who are a contented community would easily repel attack, even if the whole human race combined against them.

We might add that neither princes nor peoples would be so mad as to attack a nation of thirty millions who displayed no aggressive intentions against their neighbours, and were united internally by mutual interests.

Furthermore, there would no longer be a need for a system of police-spying in a community in which the vast majority had an interest in maintaining the established order.

The men who brought about the Revolution, the men who directed it, and the men who, since 1789 and up to the present day, have guided the nation, have committed a great political mistake. They have all sought to improve the governmental machine, whereas they should have subordinated it and put administration in the first place.

They should have begun by asking a question the solution of which is simple and obvious. They should have asked who, in the present state of morals and enlightenment, are the men most fitted to manage the affairs of the nation. They would have been forced to recognize the fact that the scientists, artists and industrialists, and the heads of industrial concerns are the men who possess the most eminent, varied, and most positively useful ability, for the guidance of men's minds at the present time. They would have recognized the fact that the work of the scientists, artists, and industrialists is that which, in discovery and application, contributes most to national prosperity.

They would have reached the conclusion that the scientists, artists and leaders of industrial enterprises are the men who should be

equality, since the means of satisfying their wants increases in the same proportion as the levelling of the individuals composing the community.

It is commonly assumed that those who profit by an abuse are strongly attached to it. This is an error; what they are determined on is not to let themselves be deprived of advantages which pass into the hands of others. It was the nobles who in France initiated the suppression of the privileges which they enjoyed, and they regretted this sacrifice only when they saw, first, all the former commoners behave towards them like members of a privileged order, and then a new aristocracy growing up in which the former nobles were only admitted as inferiors.

In conclusion to this note, let me say what perhaps should have been stated first, that the improvement of the lot of the masses secures the welfare of men of every class, and that, to improve the lot of the masses, it is necessary not merely to transfer privilege, but to abolish it. It is necessary not merely to let abuses change hands, but to eliminate them.

entrusted with administrative power, that is to say, with the responsibility for managing the national interests; and that the functions of government should be limited to maintaining public order.¹

The reformers of 1789 should have said to themselves as follows.

The kings of England have given a good example to monarchy by agreeing to give no order without the approval and signature of a minister. The magnanimity of the kings of France demands that they shew still greater generosity to their people, and that they should agree to make no decision affecting the general interests of the nation without the approval of the men most fitted to judge their decisions—that is to say, without the approval of the scientists and the most eminent artists, without the approval of the most important industrialists.

The community has often been compared to a pyramid. I admit that the nation should be composed as a pyramid; I am profoundly convinced that the national pyramid should be crowned by the monarchy, but I assert that from the base of the pyramid to its summit

¹ I propose to explain briefly how the imposition of government on top of administration produces harmful effects at the present day, when the mass of the nation consists of men who no longer require to be closely supervised, since they have shewn themselves capable of administering all kinds of property. To-day the proletarian class can only become dangerous to public order, if the administrators of the national interests are so inept or selfish as to let them become unemployed.

It is easy to convince oneself, and others, that one has the capacity to govern, because the ability or lack of ability to govern can only be proved by experience. Any man can imagine and persuade others that he would govern well, so long as he has not governed already.

It is not the same in the case of mathematics, physics, chemistry, physiology, mechanics, poetry, painting, sculpture, architecture, farming, manufacture, commerce, and banking. It is easy for any man to judge whether he possesses great ability in the sciences or arts; it is easy to verify whether he has attained great importance in a branch of industry. In any case, errors of this sort would not be serious, since his neighbours would soon open his eyes, if they were blinded by vanity.

It follows from what I have said that the ambition of scientists, artists and industrialists, to participate in the administration of national interests, is not dangerous to the community. It is advantageous rather, since they can only succeed in their ambition through solid achievements; while the ambition which aims at a place in the government is harmful to the community, because the most incapable men may be consumed by such an ambition and, in order to satisfy it, strive to overthrow the whole social order.

One of the important effects of this ambition, which inflamed almost all Frenchmen when the government of the unfortunate Louis XVI was overturned, is very extraordinary. It was with the aim of being governed less, and less expensively, that the nation embarked on revolution. Up to the present it has achieved as a result more government, and more expensive government, than it had before the Revolution.

The industrialists produce much more than before the Revolution, but a great part of the increased production is used to pay useless military staffs, and a mass of clerks who employ their time for the most part in reading newspapers and sharpening pens—a result which satisfies neither the needs nor the feelings of the producers.

the layers should be composed of more and more precious materials. If we consider the present pyramid, it appears that the base is made of granite, that up to a certain height the layers are composed of valuable materials, but that the upper part, supporting a magnificent diamond, is composed of nothing but plaster and gilt.

The base of the present national pyramid consists of workers in their routine occupations; the first layers above this base are the leaders of industrial enterprises, the scientists who improve the methods of manufacture and widen their application, the artists who give the stamp of good taste to all their products. The upper layers, which I assert to be composed of nothing but plaster, which is easily recognizable despite the gilding, are the courtiers, the mass of nobles whether of ancient or recent creation, the idle rich, the governing class from the prime minister to the humblest clerk. The monarchy is the magnificent diamond which crowns the pyramid.

Positivism and the Birth of Sociology

Auguste Comte, *A General View of Positivism* [1848] (excerpts)

A

GENERAL VIEW OF POSITIVISM.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF

AUGUSTE COMTE,

BY

J. H. BRIDGES,

Physician to the Bradford Infirmary ; late Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford.



LONDON:

TRÜBNER AND CO., -60, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1865.

CHAPTER III.

THE ACTION OF POSITIVISM UPON THE WORKING CLASSES.

Positivism will not for the present recommend itself to the governing classes, so much as to the People.

POSITIVISM whether looked at as a philosophical system or as an instrument of social renovation, cannot count upon much support from any of the classes, whether in Church or State, by whom the government of mankind has hitherto been conducted. There will be isolated exceptions of great value, and these will soon become more numerous : but the prejudices and passions of these classes will present serious obstacles to the work of moral and mental reorganization which constitutes the second phase of the great Western revolution. Their faulty education and their repugnance to system prejudice them against a philosophy which subordinates specialities to general principles. Their aristocratic instincts make it very difficult for them to recognise the supremacy of Social Feeling ; that doctrine which lies at the root of social regeneration, as conceived by Positivism. That no support can be expected from the classes who were in the ascendant before the Revolution, is of course obvious ; and we shall probably meet with opposition, quite as real though more carefully concealed, from the middle classes, to whom that revolution transferred the authority and social influence which they had long been coveting. Their thoughts are entirely engrossed with the acquisition of power ; and they concern themselves but little with the mode in which it is used, or the objects to which it is directed. They were quite con-

vinced that the Revolution had found a satisfactory issue in the parliamentary system instituted during the recent period of political oscillation. They will long continue to regret that stationary period, because it was peculiarly favourable to their restless ambition. A movement tending to the complete regeneration of society is almost as much dreaded now by the middle classes as it was formerly by the higher. And both would at all events agree in prolonging the system of theological hypocrisy, as far as republican institutions admitted of it. That policy is now the only means by which retrogression is still possible. Ignoble as it is, there are two motives for adopting it; it secures respect and submission on the part of the masses, and it imposes no unpleasant duties on their governors. All their critical and metaphysical prejudices indispose them to terminate the state of spiritual anarchy which is the greatest obstacle to social regeneration; while at the same time their ambition dreads the establishment of a new moral authority, the restrictive influence of which would of course press most heavily upon themselves. In the eighteenth century, men of rank, and even kings, accepted the purely negative philosophy that was then in vogue: it removed many obstacles, it was an easy path to reputation, and it imposed no great sacrifice. But we can hardly hope from this precedent that the wealthy and literary classes of our own time will be equally willing to accept Positive philosophy; the avowed purpose of which is to discipline our intellectual powers, in order to reorganize our modes of life.

The avowal of such a purpose is quite sufficient to prevent Positivism from gaining the sympathies of any one of the governing classes. The classes to which it must appeal are those who have been left untrained in the present worthless methods of instruction by words and entities,

who are animated with strong social instincts, and who consequently have the largest stock of good sense and good feeling. In a word it is among the Working Classes that the new philosophers will find their most energetic allies. They are the two extreme terms in the social series as finally constituted; and it is only through their combined action that social regeneration can become a practical possibility. Notwithstanding their difference of position, a difference which indeed is more apparent than real, there are strong affinities between them, both morally and intellectually. Both have the same sense of the real, the same preference for the useful, and the same tendency to subordinate special points to general principles. Morally they resemble each other in generosity of feeling, in wise unconcern for material prospects, and in indifference to worldly grandeur. This at least will be the case as soon as philosophers in the true sense of that word have mixed sufficiently with the nobler members of the working classes to raise their own character to its proper level. When the sympathies which unite them upon these essential points have had time to show themselves, it will be felt that the philosopher is, under certain aspects, a member of the working class fully trained; while the working man is in many respects a philosopher without the training. Both too will look with similar feelings upon the intermediate or capitalist class. As that class is necessarily the possessor of material power, the pecuniary existence of both will as a rule be dependent upon it.

The working man who accepts his position is favourably situated for the reception of comprehensive principles and generous sympathies.

These affinities follow as a natural result from their respective position and functions. The reason of their not having been recognised more distinctly is, that at present we have nothing that can be called a philosophic class, or at least it is only represented by a few iso-

lated types. Workmen worthy of their position are happily far less rare; but hitherto it is only in France, or rather in Paris, that they have shown themselves in their true light, as men emancipated from chimerical beliefs, and careless of the empty prestige of social position. It is, then, only in Paris that the truth of the preceding remarks can be fully verified.

The occupations of working men are evidently far more conducive to philosophical views than those of the middle classes; since they are not so absorbing as to prevent continuous thought, even during the hours of labour. And besides having more time for thinking, they have a moral advantage in the absence of any responsibility when their work is over. The workman is preserved by his position from the schemes of aggrandisement, which are constantly harassing the capitalist. Their difference in this respect causes a corresponding difference in their modes of thought; the one cares more for general principles, the other more for details. To a sensible workman, the system of dispersive speciality now so much in vogue shows itself in its true light. He sees it, that is, to be brutalizing, because it would condemn his intellect to the most paltry mode of culture, so much so that it will never be accepted in France, in spite of the irrational endeavours of our Anglo-maniac economists. To the capitalist, on the contrary, and even to the man of science, that system, however rigidly and consistently carried out, will seem far less degrading; or rather it will be looked upon as most desirable, unless his education has been such as to counteract these tendencies, and give him the desire and the ability for abstract and general thought.

Morally, the contrast between the position of the workman and the capitalist is even more striking. Proud as most men are of worldly success, the degree of moral or

mental excellence implied in the acquisition of wealth or power, even when the means used have been strictly legitimate, is hardly such as to justify that pride. Looking at intrinsic qualities rather than at visible results, it is obvious that practical success, whether in industry or in war, depends far more on character than on intellect or affection. The principal condition for it is the combination of a certain amount of energy with great caution, and a fair share of perseverance. When a man has these qualities, mediocrity of intellect and moral deficiency will not prevent his taking advantage of favourable chances; chance being usually a very important element in worldly success. Indeed it would hardly be an exaggeration to say that poverty of thought and feeling has often something to do with forming and maintaining the disposition requisite for the purpose. Vigorous exertion of the active powers is more frequently induced by the personal propensities of avarice, ambition, or vanity, than by the higher instincts. Superiority of position, when legitimately obtained, deserves respect; but the philosopher, like the religionist, and with still better grounds, refuses to regard it as a proof of moral superiority, a conclusion which would be wholly at variance with the true theory of human nature.

The life of the workman, on the other hand, is far more favourable to the development of the nobler instincts. In practical qualities he is usually not wanting, except in caution, a deficiency which makes his energy and perseverance less useful to himself, though fully available for society. But it is in the exercise of the higher feelings that the moral superiority of the working class is most observable. When our habits and opinions have been brought under the influence of systematic principles, the true character of this class, which forms the basis of

modern society, will become more distinct; and we shall see that home affections are naturally stronger with them than with the middle classes, who are too much engrossed with personal interests for the full enjoyment of domestic ties. Still more evident is their superiority in social feelings strictly so called, for these with them are called into daily exercise from earliest childhood. Here it is that we find the highest and most genuine types of friendship, and this even amongst those who are placed in a dependent position, aggravated often by the aristocratic prejudices of those above them, and whom we might imagine on that account condemned to a lower moral standard. We find sincere and simple respect for superiors, untainted by servility, not vitiated by the pride of learning, not disturbed by the jealousies of competition. Their personal experience of the miseries of life is a constant stimulus to the nobler sympathies. In no class is there so strong an incentive to social feeling, at least to the feeling of Solidarity between contemporaries; for all are conscious of the support that they derive from union, support which is not at all incompatible with strong individuality of character. The sense of Continuity with the past has not, it is true, been sufficiently developed; but this is a want which can only be supplied by systematic culture. It will hardly be disputed that there are more remarkable instances of prompt and unostentatious self-sacrifice at the call of a great public necessity in this class than in any other. Note, too, that in the utter absence of any systematic education, all these moral excellences must be looked upon as inherent in the class. It is impossible to attribute them to theological influence, now that they have so entirely shaken off the old faith. The type I have described would be generally considered imaginary; and at present it is only in Paris that it can be fully realized. But the fact

of its existence in the centre of Western Europe is enough for all rational observers. A type so fully in accordance with what we know of human nature cannot fail ultimately to spread everywhere, especially when these spontaneous tendencies are placed under the systematic guidance of Positivism.

This the Convention felt; but they encouraged the People to seek political supremacy, for which they are not fit.

These remarks will prepare us to appreciate the wise and generous instincts of the Convention in looking to the Proletariate as the main-spring of its policy; and this not merely on account of the incidental danger of foreign invasion, but in dealing with the larger question of social regeneration, which it pursued so ardently, though in such ignorance of its true principles. Owing, however, to the want of a satisfactory system, and the disorder produced by the metaphysical theories of the time, the spirit in which this alliance with the people was framed, was incompatible with the real object in view. It was considered that government ought as a rule to be in the hands of the people. Now under the special circumstances of the time popular government was undoubtedly very useful. The existence of the republic depended almost entirely upon the proletariat, the only class that stood unshaken and true to its principles. But in the absolute spirit of the received political theories, this state of things was regarded as normal, a view which is incompatible with the most important conditions of modern society. It is of course always right for the people to assist government in carrying out the law, even to the extent of physical force, should the case require it. Interference of this subordinate kind, whether in foreign or internal questions, so far from leading to anarchy, is obviously a guarantee for order which ought to exist in every properly constituted society. Indeed in this respect our habits in France are

still very defective ; men are too often content to remain mere lookers on, while the police to whom they owe their daily protection is doing its duty. But for the people to take a direct part in government, and to have the final decision of political measures, is a state of things which in modern society is only adapted to times of revolution. To recognise it as final would lead at once to anarchy, were it not so utterly impossible to realise.

Positivism rejects the metaphysical doctrine of the Sovereignty of the people. But it appropriates all that is really sound in the doctrine, and this with reference not merely to exceptional cases but to the normal state ; while at the same time it guards against the danger involved in its application as an absolute truth. In the hands of the revolutionary party the doctrine is generally used to justify the right of insurrection. Now in Positive Polity, this right is looked upon as an ultimate resource, with which no society should allow itself to dispense. Absolute submission, which is too strongly inculcated by modern Catholicism, would expose us to the danger of tyranny. Insurrection may be regarded, scientifically, as a sort of reparative crisis, of which societies stand in more need than individuals, in accordance with the well-known biological law, that the higher and the more complicated the organism, the more frequent and also the more dangerous is the pathological state. Therefore, the fear that Positivism, when generally accepted, will encourage passive obedience, is perfectly groundless ; although it is certainly not favourable to the pure revolutionary spirit, which would fain take the disease for the normal type of health. Its whole character is so essentially relative, that it finds no difficulty in accepting subordination as the rule, and yet allowing for exceptional cases of revolt ; a course by which

It is only in exceptional cases that the People can be really 'sovereign.'

good taste and human dignity are alike satisfied. Positivism looks upon insurrection as a dangerous remedy that should be reserved for extreme cases ; but it would never scruple to sanction and even to encourage it when it is really indispensable. This is quite compatible with refusing, as a rule, to submit the decision of political questions and the choice of rulers to judges who are obviously incompetent ; and who, under the influence of Positivism, will of their own free will abdicate rights which are subversive of order.

The truth involved in the expression is that the well-being of the people should be the one great object of government.

The metaphysical doctrine of the Sovereignty of the people, contains, however, a truth of permanent value, though in a very confused form. This truth Positivism separates very distinctly from its dangerous alloy, yet without weakening, on the contrary, with the effect of enforcing, its social import. There are two distinct conceptions in this doctrine, which have hitherto been confounded ; a political conception applicable to certain special cases ; a moral conception applicable to all.

In the first place the name of the whole body politic ought to be invoked in the announcement of any special measure, of which the motives are sufficiently intelligible, and which directly concern the practical interests of the whole community. Under this head would be included decisions of law courts, declarations of war, etc. When society has reached the Positive state, and the sense of universal solidarity is more generally diffused, there will be even more significance and dignity in such expressions than there is now, because the name invoked will no longer be that of a special nation, but that of Humanity as a whole. It would be absurd, however, to extend this practice to those still more numerous cases where the people is incompetent to express any opinion, and has merely to

adopt the opinion of superior officers who have obtained its confidence. This may be owing either to the difficulty of the question or to the fact of its application being indirect or limited. Such, for instance, would be enactments, very often of great importance, which deal with scientific principles; or again most questions relating to special professions or branches of industry. In all these cases popular good sense would, under Positivist influence, easily be kept clear from political illusions. It is only under the stimulus of metaphysical pride that such illusions become dangerous; and the untaught masses have but little experience of this feeling.

There is, however, another truth implied in the expression, Sovereignty of the people. It implies that it is the first of duties to concentrate all the efforts of society upon the common good. And in this there is a more direct reference to the working class than to any other; first, on account of their immense numerical superiority, and, secondly, because the difficulties by which their life is surrounded require special interference to a degree which for other classes would be unnecessary. From this point of view it is a principle which all true republicans may accept. It is, in fact, identical with what we have laid down as the universal basis of morality, the direct and permanent preponderance of social feeling over all personal interests. Not merely, then, is it incorporated by Positivism, but, as was shown in the first chapter, it forms the primary principle of the system, even under the intellectual aspect. Since the decline of Catholicism the metaphysical spirit has been provisionally the guardian of this great social precept. Positivism now finally appropriates it, and purifies it for the future from all taint of anarchy. Revolutionists, as we should expect from their characteristic dislike to the separation of the two powers, had treated

the question politically. Positivism avoids all danger by shifting it to the region of morality. I shall show presently that this very salutary change, so far from weakening the force of the principle, increases its permanent value, and at the same time removes the deceptive and subversive tendencies which are always involved in the metaphysical mode of regarding it.

The People's function is to assist the spiritual power in modifying the action of government.

What then, it will be asked, is the part assigned to the Proletariate in the final constitution of society? The similarity of position, which I pointed out, between themselves and the philosophic class, suggests the answer. They will be of the most essential service to the spiritual power in each of its three social functions, judgment, counsel, and even education. All the intellectual and moral qualities that we have just indicated in this class concur in fitting them for this service. If we except the philosophic body, which is the recognized organ of general principles, there is no class which is so habitually inclined to take comprehensive views of any subject. Their superiority in Social Feeling is still more obvious. In this even the best philosophers are rarely their equals; and it would be a most beneficial corrective of their tendency to over-abstraction to come into daily contact with the noble and spontaneous instincts of the people. The working class, then, is better qualified than any other for understanding, and still more for sympathising with the highest truths of morality, though it may not be able to give them a systematic form. And, as we have seen, it is in social morality, the most important and the highest of the three branches of Ethics, that their superiority is most observable. Besides, independently of their intrinsic merits, whether intellectual or moral, the necessities of their daily life serve to impress them with respect for the great rules of

morality, which in most cases were framed for their own protection. To secure the application of these rules in daily life, is a function of the spiritual power in the performance of which they will meet with but slight assistance from the middle classes. It is with them that temporal power naturally resides, and it is their misuse of power that has to be controlled and set right. The working classes are the chief sufferers from the selfishness and domineering of men of wealth and power. For this reason they are the likeliest to come forward in defence of public morality. And they will be all the more disposed to give it their hearty support, if they have nothing to do directly with political administration. Habitual participation in temporal power, to say nothing of its unsettling influence, would lead them away from the best remedy for their sufferings of which the constitution of society admits. Popular sagacity will soon detect the utter hollowness of the off-hand solutions that are now being obtruded upon us. The people will rapidly become convinced that the surest method of satisfying all legitimate claims lies in the moral agencies which Positivism offers, though it appeals to them at the same time to abdicate political power which either yields them nothing or results in anarchy.

So natural is this tendency of the people to rally round the spiritual power in defence of morality, that we find it to have been the case even in mediæval times. Indeed this it is which explains the sympathies which Catholicism still retains, notwithstanding its general decline, in the countries where Protestantism has failed to establish itself. Superficial observers often mistake these sympathies for evidence of sincere attachment to the old creeds, though in point of fact they are more thoroughly undermined in those countries than anywhere else. It is an historical

error which will, however, soon be corrected by the reception which these nations, so wrongly imagined to be in a backward stage of political development, will give to Positivism. For they will soon see its superiority to Catholicism in satisfying the primary necessity with which their social instincts are so justly preoccupied.

In the Middle Ages, however, the relations between the working classes and the priesthood were hampered by the institution of serfage, which was not wholly abolished until Catholicism had begun to decline. In fact a careful study of history will show that one of the principal causes of its decline was the want of popular support. The mediæval church was a noble, but premature attempt. Disbelief in its doctrines, and also retrograde tendencies in its directors, had virtually destroyed it, before the Proletariate had attained sufficient social importance to support it successfully, supposing it could have deserved their support. But we are now sufficiently advanced for the perfect realization of the Catholic ideal in Positivism. And the principal means of realizing it will be the formation of an alliance between philosophers and the working classes, for which both are alike prepared by the negative and positive progress of the last five centuries.

Their combined efforts result in the formation of Public Opinion. The direct object of their combined action will be to set in motion the force of Public Opinion. All views of the future condition of society, the views of practical men as well as of philosophic thinkers, agree in the belief that the principal feature of the state to which we are tending, will be the increased influence which Public Opinion is destined to exercise.

It is in this beneficial influence that we shall find the surest guarantee for morality; for domestic and even for personal morality, as well as for social. For as the whole tendency of Positivism is to induce every one to live as

far as possible without concealment, the public will be intrusted with a strong check upon the life of the individual. Now that all theological illusions have become so entirely obsolete, the need of such a check is greater than it was before. It compensates for the insufficiency of natural goodness which we find in most men, however wisely their education has been conducted. Except the noblest of joys, that which springs from social sympathy when called into constant exercise, there is no reward for doing right so satisfactory as the approval of our fellow-beings. Even under theological systems it has been one of our strongest aspirations to live esteemed in the memory of others. And still more prominence will be given to this noble form of ambition under Positivism, because it is the only way left us of satisfying the desire which all men feel of prolonging their life into the Future. And the increased force of Public Opinion will correspond to the increased necessity for it. The peculiar reality of Positive doctrine and its constant conformity with facts facilitate the recognition of its principles, and remove all obscurity in their application. They are not to be evaded by subterfuges like those to which metaphysical and theological principles, from their vague and absolute character, have been always liable. Again, the primary principle of Positivism, which is to judge every question by the standard of social interests, is in itself a direct appeal to Public Opinion; since the public is naturally the judge of the good or bad effect of action upon the common welfare. Under theological and metaphysical systems no appeal of this sort was recognised; because the objects upheld as the highest aims of life were purely personal.

In political questions the application of our principle is still more obvious. For political morality Public Opinion is almost our only guarantee. We feel its force even now

in spite of the intellectual anarchy in which we live. Neutralized as it is in most cases by the wide divergences of men's convictions, yet it shows itself on the occasion of any great public excitement. Indeed, we feel it to our cost sometimes when the popular mind has taken a wrong direction; government in such cases being very seldom able to offer adequate resistance. These cases may convince us how irresistible this power will prove when used legitimately, and when it is formed by systematic accordance in general principles, instead of by a precarious and momentary coincidence of feeling. And here we see more clearly than ever how impossible it is to effect any permanent reconstruction of the institutions of society, without a previous reorganization of opinion and of life. The spiritual basis is necessary, not merely to determine the character of the temporal reconstruction, but to supply the principal motive force by which the work is to be carried out. Intellectual and moral harmony will gradually be restored, and under its influence the new political system will by degrees arise. Social improvements of the highest importance may therefore be realised long before the work of spiritual reorganization is completed. We find in mediæval history that Catholicism exercised a powerful influence on society during its emergence from barbarism, before its own internal constitution had advanced far. And this will be the case to a still greater degree with the regeneration which is now in progress.

Public opinion involves, (1) principles of social conduct, (2) their acceptance by society at large, (3) an organ through which to enunciate them.

Having defined the sphere within which Public Opinion should operate, we shall find little difficulty in determining the conditions requisite for its proper organization. These are, first, the establishment of fixed principles of social action; secondly, their adoption by the public, and its consent to their application in special cases;

and, lastly, a recognised organ to lay down the principles, and to apply them to the conduct of daily life. Obvious as these three conditions appear, they are still so little understood, that it will be well to explain each of them somewhat more fully.

The first condition, that of laying down fixed principles, is, in fact, the extension to social questions of that separation between theory and practice, which in subjects of less importance is universally recognised. This is the aspect in which the superiority of the new spiritual system to the old is most perceptible. The principles of moral and political conduct that were accepted in the Middle Ages were little better than empirical, and owed their stability entirely to the sanction of religion. In this respect, indeed, the superiority of Catholicism to the systems which preceded it, consisted merely in the fact of separating its precepts from the special application of them. By making its precepts the distinct object of preliminary study, it secured them against the bias of human passions. Yet important as this separation was, the system was so defective intellectually, that the successful application of its principles depended simply on the good sense of the teachers; for the principles in themselves were as vague and as absolute as the creeds from which they were derived. The influence exercised by Catholicism was due to its indirect action upon social feeling in the only mode then possible. But the claims with which Positivism presents itself are far more satisfactory. It is based on a complete synthesis; one which embraces, not the outer world only, but the inner world of human nature. This, while in no way detracting from the practical value of social principles, gives them the imposing weight of theoretical truth; and ensures their stability and coherence, by connecting them with the whole series of laws on which the

life of man and of society depend. For these laws will corroborate even those which are not immediately deduced from them. By connecting all our rules of action with the fundamental conception of social duty, we render their interpretation in each special case clear and consistent, and we secure it against the sophisms of passion. Principles such as these, based on reason, and rendering our conduct independent of the impulses of the moment, are the only means of sustaining the vigour of Social Feeling, and at the same time of saving us from the errors to which its unguided suggestions so often lead. Direct and constant culture of Social Feeling in public as well as in private life is no doubt the first condition of morality. But the natural strength of Self-love is such that something besides this is required to control it. The course of conduct must be traced beforehand in all important cases by the aid of demonstrable principles, adopted at first upon trust, and afterwards from conviction.

There is no art whatever in which, however ardent and sincere our desire to succeed, we can dispense with knowledge of the nature and conditions of the object aimed at. Moral and political conduct is assuredly not exempt from such an obligation, although we are more influenced in this case by the direct promptings of feeling than in any other of the arts of life. It has been shown only too clearly by many striking instances how far Social Feeling may lead us astray when it is not directed by right principles. It was for want of fixed convictions that the noble sympathies entertained by the French nation for the rest of Europe at the outset of the Revolution so soon degenerated into forcible oppression, when her retrograde leader began his seductive appeal to selfish passions. Inverse cases are still more common; and they illustrate the connection of feeling and opinion as clearly as the others. A

false social doctrine has often favoured the natural ascendancy of Self-love, by giving a perverted conception of public well-being. This has been too plainly exemplified in our own time by the deplorable influence which Malthus's sophistical theory of population obtained in England. This mischievous error met with very little acceptance in the rest of Europe, and it has been already refuted by the nobler thinkers of his own country ; but it still gives the show of scientific sanction to the criminal antipathy of the governing classes in Great Britain to all effectual measures of reform.

Next to a system of principles, the most important condition for the exercise of Public Opinion is the existence of a strong body of supporters sufficient to make the weight of these principles felt. Now it was here that Catholicism proved so weak ; and therefore, even had its doctrine been less perishable, its decline was unavoidable. But the defect is amply supplied in the new spiritual order, which, as I have before shown, will receive the influential support of the working classes. And the need of such assistance is as certain as the readiness with which it will be yielded. For though the intrinsic efficacy of Positive teaching is far greater than that of any doctrine which is not susceptible of demonstration, yet the convictions it inspires cannot be expected to dispense with the aid of vigorous popular support. Human nature is imperfectly organized ; and the influence which Reason exercises over it is not by any means so great as this supposition would imply. Even Social Feeling, though its influence is far greater than that of Reason, would not in general be sufficient for the right guidance of practical life, if Public Opinion were not constantly at hand to support the good inclinations of individuals. The arduous struggle of Social Feeling against Self-love requires the

constant assertion of true principles to remove uncertainty as to the proper course of action in each case. But it requires also something more. The strong reaction of All upon Each is needed, whether to control selfishness or to stimulate sympathy. The tendency of our poor and weak nature to give way to the lower propensities is so great that, but for this universal co-operation, Feeling and Reason would be almost inadequate to their task. In the working class we find the requisite conditions. They will, as we have seen, form the principal source of opinion, not merely from their numerical superiority, but also from their intellectual and moral qualities, as well as from the influence directly due to their social position. Thus it is that Positivism views the great problem of human life, and shows us for the first time that the bases of a solution already exist in the very structure of the social organism.

Working men's clubs. Working men, whether as individuals or, what is still more important, collectively, are now at liberty to criticise all the details, and even the general principles, of the social system under which they live; affecting, as it necessarily does, themselves more nearly than any other class. The remarkable eagerness lately shown by our people to form clubs, though there was no special motive for it, and no very marked enthusiasm, was a proof that the checks which had previously prevented this tendency from showing itself were quite unsuited to our times. Nor is this tendency likely to pass away; on the contrary, it will take deeper root and extend more widely, because it is thoroughly in keeping with the habits, feelings, and wants of working men, who form the majority in these meetings. A consistent system of social truth will largely increase their influence, by giving them a more settled character and a more important aim. So far from being in any way destructive, they form a natural

though imperfect model of the mode of life which will ultimately be adopted in the regenerate condition of Humanity. In these unions social sympathies are kept in constant action by a stimulus of a most beneficial kind. They offer the speediest and most effectual means of elaborating Public Opinion: this at least is the case when there has been a fair measure of individual training. No one at present has any idea of the extent of the advantages which will one day spring from these spontaneous meetings, when there is an adequate system of general principles to direct them. Spiritual reorganization will find them its principal basis of support, for they secure its acceptance by the people; and this will have the greater weight, because it will be always given without compulsion or violence. The objection that meetings of this kind may lead to dangerous political agitation, rests upon a misinterpretation of the events of the Revolution. So far from their stimulating a desire for what are called political rights, or encouraging their exercise in those who possess them, their tendency is quite in the opposite direction. They will soon divert working men entirely from all useless attempts to interfere with existing political institutions, and bring them to their true social function, that of assisting and carrying out the operations of the new spiritual power. It is a noble prospect which is thus held out to them by Positivism, a prospect far more inviting than any of the metaphysical illusions of the day. The real intention of the Club is to form a provisional substitute for the Church of old times, or rather to prepare the way for the religious building of the new form of worship, the worship of Humanity; which, as I shall explain in a subsequent chapter, will be gradually introduced under the regenerating influence of Positive doctrine. Under our present republican government all progressive tendencies are

allowed free scope, and therefore it will not be long before our people accept this new vent for social sympathies, which in former times could find expression only in Catholicism.

In this theory of Public Opinion one condition yet remains to be described. A philosophic organ is necessary to interpret the doctrine; the influence of which would otherwise in most cases be very inadequate. This third condition has been much disputed; but it is certainly even more indispensable than the second. And in fact it has never been really wanting, for every doctrine must have had some founder, and usually has a permanent body of teachers. It would be difficult to conceive that a system of moral and political principles should be possessed of great social influence, and yet at the same time that the men who originate or inculcate the system should exercise no spiritual authority. It is true that this inconsistency did for a time exist under the negative and destructive influence of Protestantism and Deism, because men's thoughts were for the time entirely taken up with the struggle to escape from the retrograde tendencies of Catholicism. During this long period of insurrection, each individual became a sort of priest; each, that is, followed his own interpretation of a doctrine which needed no special teachers, because its function was not to construct but to criticise. All the constitutions that have been recently established on metaphysical principles give a direct sanction to this state of things, in the preambles with which they commence. They apparently regard each citizen as competent to form a sound opinion on all social questions, thus exempting him from the necessity of applying to any special interpreters. This extension to the normal state of things of a phase of mind only suited to the period of revolutionary transition, is an error which I have already sufficiently refuted.

In the minor arts of life, it is obvious that general principles cannot be laid down without some theoretical study; and that the application of these rules to special cases is not to be entirely left to the untaught instinct of the artisan. And can it be otherwise with the art of Social Life, so far harder and more important than any other, and in which, from its principles being less simple and less precise, a special explanation of them in each case is even more necessary? However perfect the demonstration of social principles may become, it must not be supposed that knowledge of Positive doctrine, even when it has been taught in the most efficient way, will dispense with the necessity of frequently appealing to the philosopher for advice in questions of practical life, whether private or public. And this necessity of an interpreter to intervene occasionally between the principle and its application, is even more evident from the moral than it is from the intellectual aspect. Certain as it is that no one will be so well acquainted with the true character of the doctrine as the philosopher who teaches it, it is even more certain that none is so likely as himself to possess the moral qualifications of purity, of exalted aims, and of freedom from party spirit, without which his counsels could have but little weight in reforming individual or social conduct. It is principally through his agency that we may hope in most cases to bring about that reaction of All upon Each, which, as we have seen, is of such indispensable importance to practical morality. Philosophers are not indeed the principal source of Public Opinion, as intellectual pride so often leads them to believe. Public Opinion proceeds essentially from the free voice and spontaneous co-operation of the people. But in order that the full weight of their unanimous judgment may be felt, it must be announced by some recognised organ. There are, no

doubt, rare cases where the direct expression of popular feeling is enough, but these are quite exceptional. Thus working men and philosophers are mutually necessary, not merely in the creation of Public Opinion, but also in most cases in the manifestation of it. Without the first, the doctrine, however well established, would not have sufficient force. Without the second, it would usually be too incoherent to overcome those obstacles in the constitution of man and of society, which make it so difficult to bring practical life under the influence of fixed principles.

In fact, this necessity for some systematic organ to direct and give effect to Public Opinion, has always been felt, even amidst the spiritual anarchy which at present surrounds us, on every occasion in which such opinion has played any important part. For its effect on these occasions would have been null and void but for some individual to take the initiative and personal responsibility. This is frequently verified in private life by cases in which we see the opposite state of things; we see principles which no one would think of contesting, practically inadequate, for want of some recognized authority to apply them. It is a serious deficiency, which is, however, compensated, though imperfectly, by the greater facility of arriving at the truth in such cases, and by the greater strength of the sympathies which they call forth. But in public life, with its more difficult conditions and more important claims, such entire absence of systematic intervention could never be tolerated. In all public transactions even now we may perceive the participation of a spiritual authority of one kind or other; the organs of which, though constantly varying, are in most cases metaphysicians or literary men writing for the press. Thus even in the present anarchy of feelings and convictions, Public Opinion cannot dispense with guides and interpre-

ters. Only it has to be content with men who at the best can only offer the guarantee of personal responsibility, without any reliable security either for the stability of their convictions or the purity of their feelings. But now that the problem of organizing Public Opinion has once been proposed by Positivism, it cannot remain long without a solution. It plainly reduces itself to the principle of separating the two social powers ; just as we have seen that the necessity of an established doctrine rested on the analogous principle of separating theory from practice. It is clear, on the one hand, that sound interpretation of moral and political rules, as in the case of any other art, can only be furnished by philosophers engaged in the study of the natural laws on which they rest. On the other hand these philosophers, in order to preserve that breadth and generality of view which is their principal intellectual characteristic, must abstain scrupulously from all regular participation in practical affairs, and especially from political life : on the ground that its specialising influence would soon impair their speculative capacity. And such a course is equally necessary on moral grounds. It helps to preserve purity of feeling and impartiality of character ; qualities essential to their influence upon public as well as upon private life.

Such, in outline, is the Positive theory of Public Opinion. In each of its three constituent elements, the Doctrine, the Power, and the Organ, it is intimately connected with the whole question of spiritual reorganization ; or rather, it forms the simplest mode of viewing that great subject. All the essential parts of it are closely related to each other. Positive principles, on the one hand, cannot count on much material support, except from the working classes ; these in their turn will for the future regard Positivism as the only doctrine with which they can sympathise. So,

again, with the philosophic organs of opinion ; without the People, their necessary independence cannot be established or sustained. To our literary classes the separation of the two powers is instinctively repugnant, because it would lay down systematic limits to the unwise ambition which we now see in them. And it will be disliked as strongly by the rich classes, who will look with fear upon a new moral authority destined to impose an irresistible check upon their selfishness. At present it will be generally understood and welcomed only by the proletary class, who have more aptitude for general views and for social sympathy. In France especially they are less under the delusion of metaphysical sophisms and of aristocratic prestige than any other class ; and the Positivist view of this primary condition of social regeneration will find a ready entrance into their minds and hearts.

All three conditions of Public Opinion exist, but have not yet been combined.

Our theory of Public Opinion shows us at once how far we have already gone in organizing this great regulator of modern society ; how far we still fall short of what is wanted. The Doctrine has at last arisen : there is no doubt of the existence of the Power ; and even the Organ is not wanting. But they do not as yet stand in their right relation to each other. The effective impulse towards social regeneration depends, then, on one ultimate condition ; the formation of a firm alliance between philosophers and proletaries.

Of this powerful coalition I have already spoken. I have now to explain the advantages which it offers to the people in the way of obtaining sufficient recognition of all legitimate claims.

Of these advantages, the principal, and that by which the rest will speedily be developed and secured, is the important social function which is hereby conferred upon them. They become auxiliaries of the new spiritual power ;

auxiliaries indispensable to its action. This vast proletary class, which ever since its rise in the Middle Ages has been shut out from the political system, will now assume the position for which by nature it is best adapted, and which is most conducive to the general well-being of society. Its members, independently of their special vocation, will at last take a regular and most important part in public life, a part which will compensate for the hardships inseparable from their social position. Their combined action, far from disturbing the established order of things, will be its most solid guarantee, from the fact of being moral, not political. And here we see definitely the alteration which Positivism introduces in the revolutionary conception of the action of the working classes upon society. For stormy discussions about rights, it substitutes peaceable definition of duties. It supersedes useless disputes for the possession of power, by inquiring into the rules that should regulate its wise employment.

A superficial observer of the present state of things might imagine our working classes to be as yet very far from this frame of mind. But he who looks deeper into the question will see that the very experiment which they are now trying, of extending their political rights, will soon have the effect of showing them the hollowness of a remedy which has so slight a bearing upon the objects really important to them. Without making any formal abdication of rights, which might seem inconsistent with their social dignity, there is little doubt that their instinctive sagacity will lead them to the still more efficacious plan of indifference. Positivism will readily convince them that whereas spiritual power, in order to do its work, must ramify in every direction, it is essential to public order that political power should be as a rule concentrated. And this conviction

Spontaneous tendencies of the people in a right direction. Their Communism.

will grow upon them, as they see more clearly that the primary social problems which are very properly absorbing their attention are essentially moral rather than political.

One step in this direction they have already taken of their own accord, though its importance has not been duly appreciated. The well-known scheme of Communism, which has found such rapid acceptance with them, serves, in the absence of sounder doctrine, to express the way in which they are now looking at the great social problem. The experience of the first part of the Revolution has not yet wholly disabused them of political illusions, but it has at least brought them to feel that Property is of more importance than Power in the ordinary sense of the word. So far Communism has given a wider meaning to the great social problem, and has thereby rendered an essential service, which is not neutralised by the temporary dangers involved in the metaphysical forms in which it comes before us. Communism should therefore be carefully distinguished from the numerous extravagant schemes brought forward in this time of spiritual anarchy; a time which stimulates incompetent and ill-trained minds to the most difficult subjects of thought. The foolish schemes referred to have so few definite features, that we have to distinguish them by the names of their authors. But Communism bears the name of no single author, and is something more than an accidental product of anomalous circumstances. We should look upon it as the natural progress in the right direction of the revolutionary spirit; progress of a moral rather than intellectual kind. It is a proof that revolutionary tendencies are now concentrating themselves upon moral questions, leaving all purely political questions in the back-ground. It is quite true that the solution of the

problem which Communists are now putting forward, is still as essentially political as that of their predecessors; since the only mode by which they propose to regulate the employment of property, is by a change in the mode of its tenure. Still it is owing to them that the question of property is at last brought forward for discussion: and it is a question which so evidently needs a moral solution, the solution of it by political means is at once so inadequate and so destructive, that it cannot long continue to be debated, without leading to the more satisfactory result offered by Positivism. Men will see that it forms a part of the final regeneration of opinion and of life, which Positivism is now inaugurating.

To do justice to Communism, we must look at the generous sympathies by which it is inspired, not at the shallow theories in which those sympathies find expression provisionally, until circumstances enable them to take some other shape. Our working classes, caring but very little for metaphysical principles, do not attach nearly the same importance to these theories, as is done by men of literary education. As soon as they see a better way of bringing forward the points on which they have such legitimate claims, they will very soon adopt the clear and practical conceptions of Positivism, which can be carried out peaceably and permanently, in preference to these vague and confused chimeras, which, as they will instinctively feel, lead only to anarchy. Till then they will naturally abide by Communism, as the only method of bringing forward the most fundamental of social problems in a way which there shall be no evading. The very alarm which their present solution of the problem arouses helps to stir public attention, and fix it on this great subject. But for this constant appeal to their fears, the metaphysical delusions and aristocratic self-seeking of the govern-

ing classes would shelve the question altogether, or pass it by with indifference. The errors of Communism must be rectified; but there is no necessity for giving up the name, which is a simple assertion of the paramount importance of Social Feeling. However, now that we have happily passed from monarchy to republicanism, the name of *Communist* is no longer indispensable; the word *Republican* expresses the meaning as well, and without the same danger. Positivism, then, has nothing to fear from Communism; on the contrary, it will probably be accepted by most Communists among the working classes, especially in France, where abstractions have but little influence on minds thoroughly emancipated from theology. The people will gradually find that the solution of the great social problem which Positivism offers is better than the Communistic solution.

Its new title
of Socialism.

A tendency in this direction has already shown itself since the first edition of this work was published. The working classes have now adopted a new expression, *Socialism*, thus indicating that they accept the problem of the Communists while rejecting their solution. Indeed that solution would seem to be finally disposed of by the voluntary exile of their leader. Yet, if the Socialists at present keep clear of Communism, it is only because their position is one of criticism or inaction. If they were to succeed to power, with principles so far below the level of their sympathies, they would inevitably fall into the same errors and extravagances which they now instinctively feel to be wrong. Consequently the rapid spread of Socialism very naturally alarms the upper classes; and their resistance, blind though it be, is at present the only legal guarantee for material order. In fact, the problem brought forward by the Communists admits of no solution but their own, so long as the revolution-

ary confusion of temporal and spiritual power continues. Therefore the universal blame that is lavished on these utopian schemes cannot fail to inspire respect for Positivism, as the only doctrine which can preserve Western Europe from some serious attempt to bring Communism into practical operation. Positivists stand forward now as the party of construction, with a definite basis for political action ; namely, systematic prosecution of the wise attempt of mediæval statesmen to separate the two social powers. On this basis they are enabled to satisfy the Poor, and at the same time to restore the confidence of the Rich. It is a final solution of our difficulties which will make the titles of which we have been speaking unnecessary. Stripping the old word *Republican* of any false meaning at present attached to it, we may retain it as the best expression of the social sympathies on which the regeneration of society depends. For the opinions, manners, and even institutions of future society, *Positivist* is the only word suitable.

The peculiar reality of Positivism, and its invariable tendency to concentrate our intellectual powers upon social questions, are attributes, both of which involve its adoption of the essential principle of Communism ; that principle being, that Property is in its nature social, and that it needs control.

Property is
in its nature
social, and
needs control.

Property has been erroneously represented by most modern jurists as conferring an absolute right upon the possessor, irrespectively of the good or bad use made of it. This view is instinctively felt by the working classes to be unsound, and all true philosophers will agree with them. It is an anti-social theory, due historically to exaggerated reaction against previous legislation of a peculiarly oppressive kind, but it has no real foundation either in justice or in fact. Property can neither be created, nor even trans-

mitted by the sole agency of its possessor. The co-operation of the public is always necessary, whether in the assertion of the general principle or in the application of it to each special case. Therefore the tenure of property is not to be regarded as a purely individual right. In every age and in every country the state has intervened, to a greater or less degree, making property subservient to social requirements. Taxation evidently gives the public an interest in the private fortune of each individual; an interest which, instead of diminishing with the progress of civilization, has been always on the increase, especially in modern times, now that the connection of each member of society with the whole is becoming more apparent. The practice of confiscation, which also is in universal use, shows that in certain extreme cases the community considers itself authorised to assume entire possession of private property. Confiscation has, it is true, been abolished for a time in France. But this isolated exception is due only to the abuses which recently accompanied the exercise of what was in itself an undoubted right; and it will hardly survive when the causes which led to it are forgotten, and the power which introduced it has passed away. In their abstract views of property, then, Communists are perfectly able to maintain their ground against the jurists.

They are right, again, in dissenting as deeply as they do from the Economists, who lay it down as an absolute principle that the application of wealth should be entirely unrestricted by society. This error, like the one just spoken of, is attributable to instances of unjustifiable interference. But it is utterly opposed to all sound philosophical teaching, although it has a certain appearance of truth, in so far as it recognises the subordination of social phenomena to natural laws. But the Economists seem to

have adopted this important principle only to show how incapable they are of comprehending it. Before they applied the conception of Law to the higher phenomena of nature, they ought to have made themselves well acquainted with its meaning, as applied to the lower and more simple phenomena. Not having done so, they have been utterly blind to the fact that the Order of nature becomes more and more modifiable as it grows more complicated. This conception lies at the very root of our whole practical life; therefore nothing can excuse the metaphysical school of Economists for systematically resisting the intervention of human wisdom in the various departments of social action. That the movement of society is subject to natural laws is certain; but this truth, instead of inducing us to abandon all efforts to modify society, should rather lead to a wiser application of such efforts, since they are at once more efficacious, and more necessary in social phenomena than in any other.

So far, therefore, the fundamental principle of Communism is one which the Positivist school must obviously adopt. Positivism not only confirms this principle, but widens its scope, by showing its application to other departments of human life; by insisting that, not wealth only, but that all our powers shall be devoted in the true republican spirit to the continuous service of the community. The long period of revolution which has elapsed since the Middle Ages has encouraged individualism in the moral world, as in the intellectual it has fostered the specialising tendency. But both are equally inconsistent with the final order of modern society. In all healthy conditions of Humanity, the citizen, whatever his position, has been regarded as a public functionary, whose duties and claims were determined more or less distinctly by his

faculties. The case of property is certainly no exception to this general principle. Proprietorship is regarded by the Positivist as an important social function ; the function, namely, of creating and administering that capital by means of which each generation lays the foundation for the operations of its successor. This is the only tenable view of property ; and wisely interpreted, it is one which, while ennobling to its possessor, does not exclude a due measure of freedom. It will in fact place his position on a firmer basis than ever.

But Positivism rejects the Communist solution of the problem. Property is to be controlled by moral not legal agencies.

But the agreement here pointed out between sociological science and the spontaneous inspirations of popular judgment, goes no farther. Positivists accept, and indeed enlarge, the programme of Communism ; but we reject its practical solution on the ground that it is at once inadequate and subversive. The chief difference between our own solution and theirs is that we substitute moral agencies for political. Thus we come again to our leading principle of separating spiritual from temporal power ; a principle which, disregarded as it has hitherto been in the system of modern renovators, will be found in every one of the important problems of our time to be the sole possible issue. In the present case, while throwing such light on the fallacy of Communism, it should lead us to excuse the fallacy, by reminding us that politicians of every accredited school are equally guilty of it. At a time when there are so very few, even of cultivated minds, who have a clear conception of this the primary principle of modern politics, it would be harsh to blame the people for still accepting a result of revolutionary empiricism, which is so universally adopted by other classes.

I need not enter here into any detailed criticism of the utopian scheme of Plato. It was conclusively refuted

twenty-two centuries ago, by the great Aristotle, who thus exemplified the organic character, by which, even in its earliest manifestations, the Positive spirit is distinguished. In modern Communism, moreover, there is one fatal inconsistency, which while it proves the utter weakness of the system, testifies at the same time to the honorable character of the motives from which it arose. Modern Communism differs from the ancient, as expounded by Plato, in not making women and children common as well as property; a result to which the principle itself obviously leads. Yet this, the only consistent view of Communism, is adopted by none but a very few literary men, whose affections, in themselves too feeble, have been perverted by vicious intellectual training. Our untaught proletarians, who are the only Communists worthy our consideration, are nobly inconsistent in this respect. Indivisible as their erroneous system is, they only adopt that side of it which touches on their social requirements. The other side is repugnant to all their highest instincts, and they utterly repudiate it.

Without discussing these chimerical schemes in detail, it will be well to expose the errors inherent in the method of reasoning which leads to them, because they are common to all the other progressive schools, the Positivist school excepted. The mistake consists in the first place, in disregarding or even denying the natural laws which regulate social phenomena; and secondly, in resorting to political agencies where moral agency is the real thing needed. The inadequacy and the danger of the various utopian systems which are now setting up their rival claims to bring about the regeneration of society, are all attributable in reality to these two closely-connected errors. For the sake of clearness, I shall continue to refer specially to Communism as the most prominent of these systems.

Liberalism

Jeremy Bentham, Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation, Chapter I: “ Of the Principle of Utility”

John Stuart Mill, Principles of Political Economy, Book II, chapter I: "On Property".

Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation

Jeremy Bentham

Chapter 1

Of the Principle of Utility

I. Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, *pain* and *pleasure*. It is for them alone to point out what we ought to do, as well as to determine what we shall do. On the one hand the standard of right and wrong, on the other the chain of causes and effects, are fastened to their throne. They govern us in all we do, in all we say, in all we think: every effort we can make to throw off our subjection, will serve but to demonstrate and confirm it. In words a man may pretend to abjure their empire: but in reality he will remain subject to it all the while. The *principle of utility* recognizes this subjection, and assumes it for the foundation of that system, the object of which is to rear the fabric of felicity by the hands of reason and of law. Systems which attempt to question it, deal in sounds instead of sense, in caprice instead of reason, in darkness instead of light.

But enough of metaphor and declamation: it is not by such means that moral science is to be improved.

II. The principle of utility is the foundation of the present work: it will be proper therefore at the outset to give an explicit and determinate account of what is meant by it. By the *principle of utility* is meant that principle which approves or disapproves of every action whatsoever, according to the tendency it appears to have to augment or diminish the happiness of the party whose interest is in question: or, what is the same thing in other words to promote or to oppose that happiness. I say of every action whatsoever, and therefore not only of every action of a private individual, but of every measure of government.

III. By utility is meant that property in any object, whereby it tends to produce benefit, advantage, pleasure, good, or happiness, (all this in the present case comes to the same thing) or (what comes again to the same thing) to prevent the happening of mischief, pain, evil, or unhappiness to the party whose interest is considered: if that party be the community in general, then the happiness of the community: if a particular individual, then the happiness of that individual.

IV. The interest of the community is one of the most general expressions that can occur in the phraseology of morals: no wonder that the meaning of it is often lost. When it has a meaning, it is this. The community is a fictitious *body*, composed of the individual persons who are considered as constituting as it were its *members*. The interest of the community then is, what is it?—the sum of the interests of the several members who compose it.

V. It is in vain to talk of the interest of the community, without understanding what is the interest of the individual. A thing is said to promote the interest, or to be *for* the interest, of an individual, when it tends to add to the sum total of his pleasures: or, what comes to the same thing, to diminish the sum total of his pains.

VI. An action then may be said to be conformable to then principle of utility, or, for shortness sake, to utility, (meaning with respect to the community at large) when the tendency it has to augment the happiness of the community is greater than any it has to diminish it.

VII. A measure of government (which is but a particular kind of action, performed by a particular person or persons) may be said to be conformable to or dictated by the principle of utility, when in like manner the tendency which it has to augment the happiness of the community is greater than any which it has to diminish it.

VIII. When an action, or in particular a measure of government, is supposed by a man to be conformable to the principle of utility, it may be convenient, for the purposes of discourse, to imagine a kind of law or dictate, called a law or dictate of utility: and to speak of the action in question, as being conformable to such law or dictate.

IX. A man may be said to be a partizan of the principle of utility, when the approbation or disapprobation he annexes to any action, or to any measure, is determined by and proportioned to the tendency which he conceives it to have to augment or to diminish the happiness of the community: or in other words, to its conformity or unconformity to the laws or dictates of utility.

X. Of an action that is conformable to the principle of utility one may always say either that it is one that ought to be done, or at least that it is not one that ought not to be done. One may say also, that it is right it should be done; at least that it is not wrong it should be done: that it is a right action; at least that it is not a wrong action. When thus interpreted, the words *ought*,

and *right* and *wrong* and others of that stamp, have a meaning: when otherwise, they have none.

XI. Has the rectitude of this principle been ever formally contested? It should seem that it had, by those who have not known what they have been meaning. Is it susceptible of any direct proof? it should seem not: for that which is used to prove every thing else, cannot itself be proved: a chain of proofs must have their commencement somewhere. To give such proof is as impossible as it is needless.

XII. Not that there is or ever has been that human creature at breathing, however stupid or perverse, who has not on many, perhaps on most occasions of his life, deferred to it. By the natural constitution of the human frame, on most occasions of their lives men in general embrace this principle, without thinking of it: if not for the ordering of their own actions, yet for the trying of their own actions, as well as of those of other men. There have been, at the same time, not many perhaps, even of the most intelligent, who have been disposed to embrace it purely and without reserve. There are even few who have not taken some occasion or other to quarrel with it, either on account of their not understanding always how to apply it, or on account of some prejudice or other which they were afraid to examine into, or could not bear to part with. For such is the stuff that man is made of: in principle and in practice, in a right track and in a wrong one, the rarest of all human qualities is consistency.

XIII. When a man attempts to combat the principle of utility, it is with reasons drawn, without his being aware of it, from that very principle itself. His arguments, if they prove any thing, prove not that the principle is *wrong*, but that, according to the applications he supposes to be made of it, it is *misapplied*. Is it possible for a man to move the earth? Yes; but he must first find out another earth to stand upon.

XIV. To disprove the propriety of it by arguments is impossible; but, from the causes that have been mentioned, or from some confused or partial view of it, a man may happen to be disposed not to relish it. Where this is the case, if he thinks the settling of his opinions on such a subject worth the trouble, let him take the following steps, and at length, perhaps, he may come to reconcile himself to it.

1. Let him settle with himself, whether he would wish to discard this principle altogether; if so, let him consider what it is that all his reasonings (in matters of politics especially) can amount to?

2. If he would, let him settle with himself, whether he would judge and act without any principle, or whether there is any other he would judge an act by?
3. If there be, let him examine and satisfy himself whether the principle he thinks he has found is really any separate intelligible principle; or whether it be not a mere principle in words, a kind of phrase, which at bottom expresses neither more nor less than the mere averment of his own unfounded sentiments; that is, what in another person he might be apt to call caprice?
4. If he is inclined to think that his own approbation or disapprobation, annexed to the idea of an act, without any regard to its consequences, is a sufficient foundation for him to judge and act upon, let him ask himself whether his sentiment is to be a standard of right and wrong, with respect to every other man, or whether every man's sentiment has the same privilege of being a standard to itself?
5. In the first case, let him ask himself whether his principle is not despotic, and hostile to all the rest of human race?
6. In the second case, whether it is not anarchial, and whether at this rate there are not as many different standards of right and wrong as there are men? and whether even to the same man, the same thing, which is right to-day, may not (without the least change in its nature) be wrong to-morrow? and whether the same thing is not right and wrong in the same place at the same time? and in either case, whether all argument is not at an end? and whether, when two men have said, "I like this", and "I don't like it", they can (upon such a principle) have any thing more to say?
7. If he should have said to himself, No: for that the sentiment which he proposes as a standard must be grounded on reflection, let him say on what particulars the reflection is to turn? if on particulars having relation to the utility of the act, then let him say whether this is not deserting his own principle, and borrowing assistance from that very one in opposition to which he sets it up: or if not on those particulars, on what other particulars?
8. If he should be for compounding the matter, and adopting his own principle in part, and the principle of utility in part, let him say how far he will adopt it?
9. When he has settled with himself where he will stop, then let him ask himself how he justifies to himself the adopting it so far? and why he will not adopt it any farther?
10. Admitting any other principle than the principle of utility to be a right principle, a principle that it is right for a man to pursue; admitting (what is not true) that the word *right* can have a meaning without reference to

utility, let him say whether there is any such thing as a *motive* that a man can have to pursue the dictates of it: if there is, let him say what that motive is, and how it is to be distinguished from those which enforce the dictates of utility: if not, then lastly let him say what it is this other principle can be good for?

Chapter III

Of the Four Sanctions or Sources of Pain and Pleasure

I. It has been shown that the happiness of the individuals, of whom a community is composed, that is their pleasures and their security, is the end and the sole end which the legislator ought to have in view: the sole standard, in conformity to which each individual ought, as far as depends upon the legislator, to be *made* to fashion his behaviour. But whether it be this or any thing else that is to be *done*, there is nothing by which a man can ultimately be *made* to do it, but either pain or pleasure. Having taken a general view of these two grand objects (*viz.* pleasure, and what comes to the same thing, immunity from pain) in the character of *final* causes; it will be necessary to take a view of pleasure and pain itself, in the character of *efficient* causes or means.

II. There are four distinguishable sources from which pleasure and pain are in use to flow: considered separately they may be termed the *physical*, the *political*, the *moral* and the *religious*: and inasmuch as the pleasures and pains belonging to each of them are capable of giving a binding force to any law or rule of conduct, they may all of them termed *sanctions*.

III. If it be in the present life, and from the ordinary coursed of nature, not purposely modified by the interposition of these will of any human being, nor by any extraordinary interposition of any superior invisible being, that the pleasure or the pain takes place or is expected, it may be said to issue from or to belong to the *physical sanction*.

IV. If at the hands of a *particular* person or set of persons in the community, who under names correspondent to that of *judge*, are chosen for the particular purpose of dispensing it, according to the will of the sovereign or supreme ruling power in the state, it may be said to issue from the *political sanction*.

V. If at the hands of such chance persons in the community, as the party in question may happen in the course of his life to have concerns with, according to each man's spontaneous disposition, and not according to any settled or concerted rule, it may be said to issue from the *moral* or *popular sanction*.

VI. If from the immediate hand of a superior invisible being, either in the present life, or in a future, it may be said to issue from the *religious sanction*.

VII. Pleasures or pains which may be expected to issue from the *physical, political, or moral* sanctions, must all of them be expected to be experienced, if ever, in the *present* life: those which may be expected to issue from the *religious* sanction, may be expected to be experienced either in the *present* life or in a *future*.

VIII. Those which can be experienced in the present life, can of course be no others than such as human nature in the course of the present life is susceptible of: and from each of these sources may flow all the pleasures or pains of which, in the course of the present life, human nature is susceptible. With regard to these then (with which alone we have in this place any concern) those of them which belong to any one of those sanctions, differ not ultimately in kind from those which belong to any one of the other three: the only difference there is among them lies in the circumstances that accompany their production. A suffering which befalls a man in the natural and spontaneous course of things, shall be styled, for instance, a *calamity*; in which case, if it be supposed to befall him through any imprudence of his, it may be styled a punishment issuing from the physical sanction. Now this same suffering, if inflicted by the law, will be what is commonly called a *punishment*; if incurred for want of any friendly assistance, which the misconduct, or supposed misconduct, of the sufferer has occasioned to be withholden, a punishment issuing from the *moral* sanction; if through the immediate interposition of a particular providence, a punishment issuing from the religious sanction.

IX. A man's goods, or his person, are consumed by fire. If this happened to him by what is called an accident, it was a calamity: if by reason of his own imprudence (for instance, from his neglecting to put his candle out) it may be styled a punishment of the physical sanction: if it happened to him by the sentence of the political magistrate, a punishment belonging to the political sanction; that is, what is commonly called a punishment: if for want of any assistance which his *neighbour* withheld from him out of some dislike to his *moral* character, a punishment of the *moral* sanction: if by an immediate act of *God's* displeasure, manifested on account of some *sin* committed by him, or through any distraction of mind, occasioned by the dread of such displeasure, a punishment of the *religious* sanction.

X. As to such of the pleasures and pains belonging to the religious sanction, as regard a future life, of what kind these may be we cannot know. These lie not

open to our observation. During the present life they are matter only of expectation: and, whether that expectation be derived from natural or revealed religion, the particular kind of pleasure or pain, if it be different from all those which he open to our observation, is what we can have no idea of. The best ideas we can obtain of such pains and pleasures are altogether unliquidated in point of quality. In what other respects our ideas of them *may* be liquidated will be considered in another place.

XI. Of these four sanctions the physical is altogether, we may observe, the ground-work of the political and the moral: so is it also of the religious, in as far as the latter bears relation to the present life. It is included in each of those other three. This may operate in any case, (that is, any of the pains or pleasures belonging to it may operate) independently of *them*: none of *them* can operate but by means of this. In a word, the powers of nature may operate of themselves; but neither the magistrate, nor men at large, *can* operate, nor is God in the case in question *supposed* to operate, but through the powers of nature.

XII. For these four objects, which in their nature have so much in common, it seemed of use to find a common name. It seemed of use, in the first place, for the convenience of giving a name to certain pleasures and pains, for which a name equally characteristic could hardly otherwise have been found: in the second place, for the sake of holding up the efficacy of certain moral forces, the influence of which is apt not to be sufficiently attended to. Does the political sanction exert an influence over the conduct of mankind? The moral, the religious sanctions do so too. In every inch of his career are the operations of the political magistrate liable to be aided or impeded by these two foreign powers: who, one or other of them, or both, are sure to be either his rivals or his allies. Does it happen to him to leave them out in his calculations? he will be sure almost to find himself mistaken in the result. Of all this we shall find abundant proofs in the sequel of this work. It behoves him, therefore, to have them continually before his eyes; and that under such a name as exhibits the relation they bear to his own purposes and designs.

John Stuart Mill, *Principles Of Political Economy*,

Chapter I. Of Property.

§ 1. Individual Property and its opponents.

The laws and conditions of the Production of Wealth partake of the character of physical truths. There is nothing optional or arbitrary in them. It is not so with the Distribution of Wealth. That is a matter of human institution solely. The things once there, mankind, individually or collectively, can do with them as they like. They can place them at the disposal of whomsoever they please, and on whatever terms. The Distribution of Wealth depends on the laws and customs of society. The rules by which it is determined are what the opinions and feelings of the ruling portion of the community make them, and are very different in different ages and countries; and might be still more different, if mankind so chose. We have here to consider, not the causes, but the consequences, of the rules according to which wealth may be distributed. Those, at least, are as little arbitrary, and have as much the character of physical laws, as the laws of production.

We proceed, then, to the consideration of the different modes of distributing the produce of land and labor, which have been adopted in practice, or may be conceived in theory. Among these, our attention is first claimed by that primary and fundamental institution, on which, unless in [pg 156]some exceptional and very limited cases, the economical arrangements of society have always rested, though in its secondary features it has varied, and is liable to vary. I mean, of course, the institution of individual property.

Private property, as an institution, did not owe its origin to any of those considerations of utility which plead for the maintenance of it when established. Enough is known of rude ages, both from history and from analogous states of society in our own time, to show that tribunals (which always precede laws) were originally established, not to determine rights, but to repress violence and terminate quarrels. With this object chiefly in view, they naturally enough gave legal effect to first occupancy, by treating as the aggressor the person who first commenced violence, by turning, or attempting to turn, another out of possession.

In considering the institution of property as a question in social philosophy, we must leave out of consideration its actual origin in any of the existing nations of Europe. We may suppose a community unhampered by any previous possession; a body of colonists, occupying for the first time an uninhabited country. (1.) If private property were adopted, we must presume that it would be accompanied by none of the initial inequalities and

injustice which obstruct the beneficial operation of the principle in old society. Every full-grown man or woman, we must suppose, would be secured in the unfettered use and disposal of his or her bodily and mental faculties; and the instruments of production, the land and tools, would be divided fairly among them, so that all might start, in respect to outward appliances, on equal terms. It is possible also to conceive that, in this original apportionment, compensation might be made for the injuries of nature, and the balance redressed by assigning to the less robust members of the community advantages in the distribution, sufficient to put them on a par with the rest. But the division, once made, would not again be interfered with; individuals would be left to their own exertions and to the [pg 157]ordinary chances for making an advantageous use of what was assigned to them. (2.) If individual property, on the contrary, were excluded, the plan which must be adopted would be to hold the land and all instruments of production as the joint property of the community, and to carry on the operations of industry on the common account. The direction of the labor of the community would devolve upon a magistrate or magistrates, whom we may suppose elected by the suffrages of the community, and whom we must assume to be voluntarily obeyed by them. The division of the produce would in like manner be a public act. The principle might either be that of complete equality, or of apportionment to the necessities or deserts of individuals, in whatever manner might be conformable to the ideas of justice or policy prevailing in the community.

The assailants of the principle of individual property may be divided into two classes: (1) those whose scheme implies absolute equality in the distribution of the physical means of life and enjoyment, and (2) those who admit inequality, but grounded on some principle, or supposed principle, of justice or general expediency, and not, like so many of the existing social inequalities, dependent on accident alone. The characteristic name for this [first] economical system is Communism, a word of Continental origin, only of late introduced into this country. The word Socialism, which originated among the English Communists, and was assumed by them as a name to designate their own doctrine, is now, on the Continent, employed in a larger sense; not necessarily implying Communism, or the entire abolition of private property, but applied to any system which requires that the land and the instruments of production should be the property, not of individuals, but of communities, or associations, or of the government.

It should be said, moreover, that Socialism is to-day used in the distinct sense of a system which abolishes private property, and places the control of the capital, labor, and combined industries of the country in the hands of the state. The essence [pg 158]of modern socialism is the appeal to state-help and the weakening of individual self-help. Collectivism is also a term now used by German and French writers to describe an organization of the industries of a country under a collective instead of an individual management. Collectivism is but the French expression for the system of state socialism.

§ 2. The case for Communism against private property presented.

The objection ordinarily made to a system of community of property and equal distribution of the produce, that each person would be incessantly occupied in evading his

fair share of the work, points, undoubtedly, to a real difficulty. But those who urge this objection forget to how great an extent the same difficulty exists under the system on which nine tenths of the business of society is now conducted. And though the "master's eye," when the master is vigilant and intelligent, is of proverbial value, it must be remembered that, in a Socialist farm or manufactory, each laborer would be under the eye, not of one master, but of the whole community. If Communistic labor might be less vigorous than that of a peasant proprietor, or a workman laboring on his own account, it would probably be more energetic than that of a laborer for hire, who has no personal interest in the matter at all.

Another of the objections to Communism is that if every member of the community were assured of subsistence for himself and any number of children, on the sole condition of willingness to work, prudential restraint on the multiplication of mankind would be at an end, and population would start forward at a rate which would reduce the community through successive stages of increasing discomfort to actual starvation. But Communism is precisely the state of things in which opinion might be expected to declare itself with greatest intensity against this kind of selfish intemperance. An augmentation of numbers which diminished the comfort or increased the toil of the mass would then cause (which now it does not) immediate and unmistakable inconvenience to every individual in the association; inconvenience which could not then be imputed to the avarice of employers, or the unjust privileges of the rich.

[pg 159]

A more real difficulty is that of fairly apportioning the labor of the community among its members. There are many kinds of work, and by what standard are they to be measured one against another? Who is to judge how much cotton-spinning, or distributing goods from the stores, or brick-laying, or chimney-sweeping, is equivalent to so much plowing? Besides, even in the same kind of work, nominal equality of labor would be so great a real inequality that the feeling of justice would revolt against its being enforced. All persons are not equally fit for all labor; and the same quantity of labor is an unequal burden on the weak and the strong, the hardy and the delicate, the quick and the slow, the dull and the intelligent.¹⁴⁴

If, therefore, the choice were to be made between Communism with all its chances and the present state of society with all its sufferings and injustices, all the difficulties, great or small, of Communism, would be but as dust in the balance. But, to make the comparison applicable, we must compare Communism at its best with the *régime* of individual property, not as it is, but as it might be made. The laws of property have never yet conformed to the principles on which the justification of private property rests. They have made property of things which never ought to be property, and absolute property where only a qualified property ought to exist. Private property, in every defense made of it, is supposed to mean the guarantee to individuals of the fruits of their own labor and abstinence. The guarantee to them of the fruits of the labor and abstinence of others, transmitted to them without any merit or exertion of their own, is not of the essence of the institution, but a mere incidental consequence, which, when it reaches a certain height, does not promote, but conflicts with the ends which render private property legitimate. To judge of the final destination of the institution of property, we must suppose everything [pg 160]rectified which causes the institution to work in a manner opposed to

that equitable principle, of proportion between remuneration and exertion, on which, in every vindication of it that will bear the light, it is assumed to be grounded. We must also suppose two conditions realized, without which neither Communism nor any other laws or institutions could make the condition of the mass of mankind other than degraded and miserable. One of these conditions is, universal education; the other, a due limitation of the numbers of the community. With these, there could be no poverty, even under the present social institutions: and, these being supposed, the question of socialism is not, as generally stated by Socialists, a question of flying to the sole refuge against the evils which now bear down humanity, but a mere question of comparative advantages, which futurity must determine. We are too ignorant either of what individual agency in its best form, or socialism in its best form, can accomplish, to be qualified to decide which of the two will be the ultimate form of human society.

If a conjecture may be hazarded, the decision will probably depend mainly on one consideration, viz., which of the two systems is consistent with the greatest amount of human liberty and spontaneity. It is yet to be ascertained whether the communistic scheme would be consistent with that multiform development of human nature, those manifold unlikenesses, that diversity of tastes and talents, and variety of intellectual points of view, which not only form a great part of the interest of human life, but, by bringing intellects into stimulating collision and by presenting to each innumerable notions that he would not have conceived of himself, are the mainspring of mental and moral progression.

§ 3. The Socialists who appeal to state-help.

For general purposes, a clearer understanding of the various schemes may be gained by observing that (1) one class of socialists intend to include the state itself within their plan, and (2) another class aim to form separate communities inside the state, and under its protection.

Of this first system there are no present examples; but the object of most of the socialistic organizations in the United [pg 161]States and Europe is to strive for the assumption by the state of the production and distribution of wealth.¹³² At present the most active Socialists are to be found in Germany. The origin of this influence, however, is to be traced to France.¹³³ Louis Blanc,¹³² in his "Organisation du Travail," considers property the great scourge of society. The Government, he asserts, should regulate production; raise money to be appropriated without interest for creating state workshops, in which the workmen should elect their own overseers, and all receive the same wages; and the sums needed should be raised from the abolition of collateral inheritance. The important practical part of his scheme was that the great state workshops, aided by the Government, would make private competition in those industries impossible, and thus bring about the change from the private to the socialistic system.

The founder of modern German socialism was Karl Marx,¹³³ and almost the only Socialist who pretended to economic knowledge. He aimed his attack on the present social system against the question of value, by asserting that the amount of labor necessary for the production of an article is the sole measure of its exchange value. It follows from this that the [pg 162]right of property in the article vests wholly in the laborer, while the capitalist, if he claims a share of the product, is nothing less than a robber. No just system, he avers, can properly exist so long as the rate of wages is fixed by free contract between the employer and laborer; therefore the only remedy is the nationalization of all the elements of production, land, tools, materials, and all existing appliances, which involves, of

course, the destruction of the institution of private property. An obvious weakness in this scheme is the provision that the Government should determine what goods are to be produced, and that every one is bound to perform that work which is assigned by the state. In this there is no choice of work, and the tyranny of one master would be supplanted by the tyranny of a greater multiplex master in the officers of Government. Moreover, it can not be admitted that exchange value is determined by the quantity of labor alone. Every one knows that the result of ten days' labor of a skilled watch-maker does not exchange for the result of ten days' labor of an unskilled hodman. Of two men making shoes, one may produce a good the other a poor article, although both may work the same length of time; so that their exchange value ought not to be determined by the mere quantity of labor expended. Above all, Marx would extend the equality of wages for the same time to the manager and superintendent also. In other words, he proposes to take away all the incentives to the acquirement or exercise of superior and signal ability in every work of life, the result of which would inevitably lead to a deadening extension of mediocrity.

This system gained an undue attention because it was made the instrument of a socialist propaganda under the leadership of Ferdinand Lassalle.¹²¹ This active leader, in 1863, founded the German "Workingmen's Union," a year earlier than the "International¹²² Association." In 1869 Liebknecht and his friends established the "Social Democratic Workingmen's Party," which after some difficulties absorbed the followers of Lassalle in a congress at Gotha in 1875, and form the [pg 163]present Socialist party in Germany. Their programme,¹²³ as announced at Gotha, is as follows:

I. Labor is the source of all riches and of all culture. As general profitable labor can only be done by the human society, the whole product of labor belongs to society—i.e., to all its members—who have the same duties and the same right to work, each according to his reasonable wants.

In the present society the means of work are the monopoly of the class of capitalists. The class of workingmen thus become dependent on them, and consequently are given over to all degrees of misery and servitude.

In order to emancipate labor it is requisite that the means of work be transformed into the common property of society, that all production be regulated by associations, and that the entire product of labor be turned over to society and justly distributed for the benefit of all.

None but the working-class itself can emancipate labor, as in relation to it all other classes are only a reactionary mass.

II. Led by these principles, the German Social Workingmen's party, by all legal means, strives for a free state and society, the breaking down of the iron laws of wages by abolishing the system of hired workingmen, by abolishing exploitation in every shape, and doing away with all social and political inequality.

The German Social Workingmen's party, although first working within its national confines, is fully conscious of the international character of the general workingmen's movement, and is resolved to fulfill all duties which it imposes on each workingman in order to realize the fraternity of all men.

The German Social Workingmen's party, for the purpose of preparing the way, and for the solution of the social problem, demands the creation of social productive associations, to be supported by the state government, and under the control of the working-people. The productive associations are to be founded in such numbers that the social organization of the whole production can be effected by them.

The German Social Workingmen's party requires as the basis of state government:

1. Universal, equal, direct, and secret suffrage, which, beginning with the twentieth year, obliges all citizens to vote in all State, county, and town elections. Election-day must be a Sunday or a holiday.
2. Direct legislation by the people; decision as to war and peace by the people.

[pg 164]

3. General capability of bearing arms; popular defense in place of standing armies.
4. Abolition of all exceptional laws, especially those relating to the press, public meetings, and associations—in short, of all laws which hinder the free expression of ideas and thought.
5. Gratuitous administration of justice by the people.
6. General and equal, popular and gratuitous education by the Government in all classes and institutes of learning; general duty to attend school; religion to be declared a private affair.

The German Social Workingmen's party insists on realizing in the present state of society:

1. The largest possible extension of political rights and freedom in conformity to the above six demands.
2. A single progressive income-tax for State, counties, and towns, instead of those which are imposed at present, and in place of indirect taxes, which unequally burden the people.
3. Unlimited right of combination.
4. A normal working-day corresponding with the wants of society; prohibition of Sunday labor.
5. Prohibition of children's work and of women's work, so far as it injures their health and morality.
6. Protective laws for the life and health of workingmen; sanitary control of their dwellings; superintendence of mines, factories, industry, and home work by officers chosen by the workingmen; an effectual law guaranteeing the responsibility of employers.
7. Regulation of prison-work.
8. Unrestricted self-government of all banks established for the mutual assistance of workingmen.

The above scheme also represents very well the character of the Socialist agitators in the United States, who are themselves chiefly foreigners, and have foreign conceptions of socialism. On this form of socialism it is interesting to have Mr. Mill's later opinions²⁴ in his own words.

“Among those who call themselves Socialists, two kinds of persons may be distinguished. There are, in the first place, (1) those whose plans for a new order of society, in which private property and individual competition are to be superseded and other motives to action substituted, are on the scale of a village community or township, and would be applied to an entire country by the multiplication of such [pg 165]self-acting units; of this character are the systems of Owen, of Fourier, and the more thoughtful and philosophic Socialists generally. The other class (2) who are more a product of the Continent than of Great Britain, and may be called the revolutionary Socialists, propose to themselves a much bolder stroke. Their scheme is the management of the whole productive resources of the country by one central authority, the general Government. And with this view some of them avow as their purpose that the working-classes, or somebody in their behalf, should take possession of all the property of the country, and administer it for the general benefit. The aim of that is to substitute the new rule for the old at a single stroke, and to exchange the amount of good realized under the present system, and its large possibilities of improvement, for a plunge without any preparation into the most extreme form of the problem of carrying on the whole round of

the operations of social life without the motive power which has always hitherto worked the social machinery. It must be acknowledged that those who would play this game on the strength of their own private opinion, unconfirmed as yet by any experimental verification, must have a serene confidence in their own wisdom on the one hand, and a recklessness of people's sufferings on the other, which Robespierre and St. Just, hitherto the typical instances of those united attributes, scarcely came up to."

§ 4. Of various minor schemes, Communistic and Socialistic.

[Of the schemes to be tried within a state], the two elaborate forms of non-communistic Socialism known as Saint-Simonism and Fourierism are totally free from the objections usually urged against Communism. The Saint-Simonian¹⁵⁸ scheme does not contemplate an equal, but an [pg 166]unequal division of the produce; it does not propose that all should be occupied alike, but differently, according to their vocation or capacity; the function of each being assigned, like grades in a regiment, by the choice of the directing authority, and the remuneration being by salary, proportioned to the importance, in the eyes of that authority, of the function itself, and the merits of the person who fulfills it. But to suppose that one or a few human beings, howsoever selected, could, by whatever machinery of subordinate agency, be qualified to adapt each person's work to his capacity, and proportion each person's remuneration to his merits, is a supposition almost too chimerical to be reasoned against.¹⁵⁸

The most skillfully combined, and with the greatest foresight of objections, of all the forms of Socialism is that commonly known as Fourierism.¹⁵⁹ This system does not contemplate the abolition of private property, nor even of inheritance: on the contrary, it avowedly takes into consideration, as an element in the distribution of the produce, capital as well as labor. It proposes that the operations of industry should be carried on by associations of about two thousand members, combining their labor on a district of about a square league in extent, under the guidance of chiefs selected by themselves (the "phalanstery"). In the distribution a certain minimum is first assigned for the subsistence of every member of the community, whether capable or not of labor. The remainder of the produce is shared in certain proportions, to be determined beforehand, among the three elements, Labor, Capital, and Talent. [pg 167]The capital of the community may be owned in unequal shares by different members, who would in that case receive, as in any other joint-stock company, proportional dividends. The claim of each person on the share of the produce apportioned to talent is estimated by the grade or rank which the individual occupies in the several groups of laborers to which he or she belongs, these grades being in all cases conferred by the choice of his or her companions. The remuneration, when received, would not of necessity be expended or enjoyed in common; there would be separate *ménages* for all who preferred them, and no other community of living is contemplated than that all the members of the association should reside in the same pile of buildings; for saving of labor and expense, not only in building, but in every branch of domestic economy; and in order that, the whole buying and selling operations of the community being performed by a single agent, the enormous portion of

the produce of industry now carried off by the profits of mere distributors might be reduced to the smallest amount possible.

Fourierism was tried in West Virginia by American disciples, and it was advocated by Horace Greeley. A modified form appeared in the famous community at Brook Farm (near Dedham, Massachusetts), which drew there George Ripley, Margaret Fuller, and even George William Curtis and Nathaniel Hawthorne.

There have been many smaller communities established in the United States, but it can not be said that they have been successful from the point of view either of numbers or material prosperity. The followers of Rapp, or the Harmonists, in Pennsylvania and Indiana; the Owenites,¹⁸ in Indiana; the community of Zoar, in Ohio; the Inspirationists, in New York [pg 168]and Iowa; the Perfectionists, at Oneida and Wallingford—are all evidently suffering from the difficulties due to the absence of family life, from the increasing spirit of personal independence which carries away the younger members of the organizations,¹² and the want of that executive ability which distinguishes the successful manager in private enterprises.

§ 5. The Socialist objections to the present order of Society examined.

“The attacks¹² on the present social order are vigorous and earnest, but open to the charge of exaggeration.

“In the first place, it is unhappily true that the wages of ordinary labor, in all the countries of Europe, are wretchedly insufficient to supply the physical and moral necessities of the population in any tolerable measure. But when it is further alleged that even this insufficient remuneration has a tendency to diminish; that there is, in the words of M. Louis Blanc,*une baisse continue des salaires*; the assertion is in opposition to all accurate information, and to many notorious facts. It has yet to be proved that there is any country in the civilized world where the ordinary wages of labor, estimated either in money or in articles of consumption, are declining; while in many they are, on the whole, on the increase; and an increase which is becoming, not slower, but more rapid. There are, occasionally, branches of industry which are being gradually superseded by something else, and in those, until production accommodates itself to demand, wages are depressed.

“M. Louis Blanc appears to have fallen into the same error which was at first committed by Malthus and his followers, that of supposing because population has a greater power of [pg 169]increase than subsistence, its pressure upon subsistence must be always growing more severe. It is a great point gained for truth when it comes to be seen that the tendency to over-population is a fact which Communism, as well as the existing order of society, would have to deal with. However this may be, experience shows that in the existing state of society the pressure of population on subsistence, which is the principal cause of low wages, though a great, is not an increasing evil; on the contrary, the progress of all that is called civilization has a tendency to diminish it, partly by the more rapid increase of the means of employing and maintaining labor, partly by the increased facilities opened to labor for transporting itself to new countries and unoccupied fields of employment, and partly by a general improvement in the intelligence and prudence of the population. It is, of course, open to discussion what form of society has the greatest power of dealing successfully with the pressure of population on subsistence, and on this

question there is much to be said for Socialism; but it has no just claim to be considered as the sole means of preventing the general and growing degradation of the mass of mankind through the peculiar tendency of poverty to produce over-population.

“Next, it must be observed that Socialists generally, and even the most enlightened of them, have a very imperfect and one-sided notion of the operation of competition. They see half its effects, and overlook the other half. They forget that competition is a cause of high prices and values as well as of low; that the buyers of labor and of commodities compete with one another as well as the sellers; and that, if it is competition which keeps the prices of labor and commodities as low as they are, it is competition which keeps them from falling still lower. To meet this consideration, Socialists are reduced to affirm that, when the richest competitor has got rid of all his rivals, he commands the market and can demand any price he pleases. But in the ordinary branches of industry no one rich competitor has it in his power to drive [pg 170]out all the smaller ones. Some businesses show a tendency to pass out of the hands of small producers or dealers into a smaller number of larger ones; but the cases in which this happens are those in which the possession of a larger capital permits the adoption of more powerful machinery, more efficient by more expensive processes, or a better organized and more economical mode of carrying on business, and this enables the large dealer legitimately and permanently to supply the commodity cheaper than can be done on the small scale; to the great advantage of the consumers, and therefore of the laboring-classes, and diminishing, *pro tanto*, that waste of the resources of the community so much complained of by Socialists, the unnecessary multiplication of mere distributors, and of the various other classes whom Fourier calls the parasites of industry.

“Another point on which there is much misapprehension on the part of Socialists, as well as of trades-unionists and other partisans of labor against capital, relates to the proportion in which the produce of the country is really shared and the amount of what is actually diverted from those who produce it, to enrich other persons. When, for instance, a capitalist invests £20,000 in his business, and draws from it an income of (suppose) £2,000 a year, the common impression is as if he were the beneficial owner both of the £20,000 and of the £2,000, while the laborers own nothing but their wages. The truth, however, is that he only obtains the £2,000 on condition of applying no part of the £20,000 to his own use. He has the legal control over it, and might squander it if he chose, but if he did he would not have the £2,000 a year also. For all personal purposes they have the capital and he has but the profits, which it only yields to him on condition that the capital itself is employed in satisfying not his own wants, but those of laborers. Even of his own share a small part only belongs to him as the owner of capital. The portion of the produce which falls to capital merely as capital is measured by the interest of money, since that is all that the owner of capital obtains [pg 171]when he contributes to production nothing except the capital itself.

“The result of our review of the various difficulties of Socialism has led us to the conclusion that the various schemes for managing the productive resources of the country by public instead of private agency have a case for a trial, and some of them may eventually establish their claims to preference over the existing order of things, but that they are at present workable only by the *élite* of mankind, and have yet to prove their power of training mankind at large to the state of improvement which they presuppose.”

§ 6. Property in land different from property in Movables.

It is next to be considered what is included in the idea of private property and by what considerations the application of the principle should be bounded.

The institution of property, when limited to its essential elements, consists in the recognition, in each person, of a right to the exclusive disposal of what he or she have produced by their own exertions, or received either by gift or by fair agreement, without force or fraud, from those who produced it. The foundation of the whole is, the right of producers to what they themselves have produced. Nothing is implied in property but the right of each to his (or her) own faculties, to what he can produce by them, and to whatever he can get for them in a fair market: together with his right to give this to any other person if he chooses, and the right of that other to receive and enjoy it.

It follows, therefore, that although the right of bequest, or gift after death, forms part of the idea of private property, the right of inheritance, as distinguished from bequest, does not. That the property of persons who have made no disposition of it during their lifetime should pass first to their children, and, failing them, to the nearest relations, may be a proper arrangement or not, but is no consequence of the principle of private property. I see no reason why collateral inheritance should exist at all. Mr. Bentham long ago proposed, and other high authorities have agreed in the opinion, that, if there are no heirs either in the descending or in the [pg 172]ascending line, the property, in case of intestacy, should escheat to the state. The parent owes to society to endeavor to make the child a good and valuable member of it, and owes to the children to provide, so far as depends on him, such education, and such appliances and means, as will enable them to start with a fair chance of achieving by their own exertions a successful life. To this every child has a claim; and I can not admit that as a child he has a claim to more.

The essential principle of property being to assure to all persons what they have produced by their labor and accumulated by their abstinence, this principle can not apply to what is not the produce of labor, the raw material of the earth. If the land derived its productive power wholly from nature, and not at all from industry, or if there were any means of discriminating what is derived from each source, it not only would not be necessary, but it would be the height of injustice, to let the gift of nature be engrossed by individuals. [But] the use of the land in agriculture must indeed, for the time being, be of necessity exclusive; the same person who has plowed and sown must be permitted to reap.

But though land is not the produce of industry, most of its valuable qualities are so. Labor is not only requisite for using, but almost equally so for fashioning, the instrument. Considerable labor is often required at the commencement, to clear the land for cultivation. In many cases, even when cleared, its productiveness is wholly the effect of labor and art. One of the barrenest soils in the world, composed of the material of the Goodwin Sands, the Pays de Waes in Flanders, has been so fertilized by industry as to have become one of the most productive in Europe. Cultivation also requires buildings and fences, which are wholly the produce of labor. The fruits of this industry can not be reaped in a short period. The labor and outlay are immediate, the benefit is spread over

many years, perhaps over all future time. A holder will not incur this labor and outlay when strangers and not himself will be benefited by it. If he [pg 173]undertakes such improvements, he must have a sufficient period before him in which to profit by them; and he is in no way so sure of having always a sufficient period as when his tenure is perpetual.

These are the reasons which form the justification, in an economical point of view, of property in land. It is seen that they are only valid in so far as the proprietor of land is its improver. Whenever, in any country, the proprietor, generally speaking, ceases to be the improver, political economy has nothing to say in defense of landed property, as there established.

When the "sacredness of property" is talked of, it should always be remembered that any such sacredness does not belong in the same degree to landed property. No man made the land. It is the original inheritance of the whole species. Its appropriation is wholly a question of general expediency. When private property in land is not expedient, it is unjust. The reverse is the case with property in movables, and in all things the product of labor: over these, the owner's power both of use and of exclusion should be absolute, except where positive evil to others would result from it; but, in the case of land, no exclusive right should be permitted in any individual which can not be shown to be productive of positive good. To be allowed any exclusive right at all, over a portion of the common inheritance, while there are others who have no portion, is already a privilege. No quantity of movable goods which a person can acquire by his labor prevents others from acquiring the like by the same means; but, from the very nature of the case, whoever owns land keeps others out of the enjoyment of it. When land is not intended to be cultivated, no good reason can in general be given for its being private property at all. Even in the case of cultivated land, a man whom, though only one among millions, the law permits to hold thousands of acres as his single share, is not entitled to think that all this is given to him to use and abuse, and deal with as if it concerned nobody but himself. [pg 174]The rents or profits which he can obtain from it are at his sole disposal; but with regard to the land, in everything which he does with it, and in everything which he abstains from doing, he is morally bound, and should, whenever the case admits, be legally compelled to make his interest and pleasure consistent with the public good.

Tocqueville and The Sociological Analysis of Political Institutions

Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* [1835 - 1840] (excerpts).

Democracy in America

Alexis de Tocqueville

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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS • CHICAGO AND LONDON

Chapter IV: The Principle of the Sovereignty of the People in America

Chapter Summary

The Principle of the Sovereignty of the People in America

Whenever the political laws of the United States are to be discussed, it is with the doctrine of the sovereignty of the people that we must begin. The principle of the sovereignty of the people, which is to be found, more or less, at the bottom of almost all human institutions, generally remains concealed from view. It is obeyed without being recognized, or if for a moment it be brought to light, it is hastily cast back

into the gloom of the sanctuary. “The will of the nation” is one of those expressions which have been most profusely abused by the wily and the despotic of every age. To the eyes of some it has been represented by the venal suffrages of a few of the satellites of power; to others by the votes of a timid or an interested minority; and some have even discovered it in the silence of a people, on the supposition that the fact of submission established the right of command.

In America the principle of the sovereignty of the people is not either barren or concealed, as it is with some other nations; it is recognized by the customs and proclaimed by the laws; it spreads freely, and arrives without impediment at its most remote consequences. If there be a country in the world where the doctrine of the sovereignty of the people can be fairly appreciated, where it can be studied in its application to the affairs of society, and where its dangers and its advantages may be foreseen, that country is assuredly America.

I have already observed that, from their origin, the sovereignty of the people was the fundamental principle of the greater number of British colonies in America. It was far, however, from then exercising as much influence on the gov-

ernment of society as it now does. Two obstacles, the one external, the other internal, checked its invasive progress. It could not ostensibly disclose itself in the laws of colonies which were still constrained to obey the mother-country: it was therefore obliged to spread secretly, and to gain ground in the provincial assemblies, and especially in the townships.

American society was not yet prepared to adopt it with all its consequences. The intelligence of New England, and the wealth of the country to the south of the Hudson (as I have shown in the preceding chapter), long exercised a sort of aristocratic influence, which tended to retain the exercise of social authority in the hands of a few. The public functionaries were not universally elected, and the citizens were not all of them electors. The electoral franchise was everywhere placed within certain limits, and made dependent on a certain qualification, which was exceedingly low in the North and more considerable in the South.

The American revolution broke out, and the doctrine of the sovereignty of the people, which had been nurtured in the townships and municipalities, took possession of the State: every class was enlisted in its cause; battles were fought, and

victories obtained for it, until it became the law of laws.

A no less rapid change was effected in the interior of society, where the law of descent completed the abolition of local influences.

At the very time when this consequence of the laws and of the revolution was apparent to every eye, victory was irrevocably pronounced in favor of the democratic cause. All power was, in fact, in its hands, and resistance was no longer possible. The higher orders submitted without a murmur and without a struggle to an evil which was thenceforth inevitable. The ordinary fate of falling powers awaited them; each of their several members followed his own interests; and as it was impossible to wring the power from the hands of a people which they did not detest sufficiently to brave, their only aim was to secure its good-will at any price. The most democratic laws were consequently voted by the very men whose interests they impaired; and thus, although the higher classes did not excite the passions of the people against their order, they accelerated the triumph of the new state of things; so that by a singular change the democratic impulse was found to be most irresistible in the very States where the aristocracy

had the firmest hold. The State of Maryland, which had been founded by men of rank, was the first to proclaim universal suffrage, and to introduce the most democratic forms into the conduct of its government.

When a nation modifies the elective qualification, it may easily be foreseen that sooner or later that qualification will be entirely abolished. There is no more invariable rule in the history of society: the further electoral rights are extended, the greater is the need of extending them; for after each concession the strength of the democracy increases, and its demands increase with its strength. The ambition of those who are below the appointed rate is irritated in exact proportion to the great number of those who are above it. The exception at last becomes the rule, concession follows concession, and no stop can be made short of universal suffrage.

At the present day the principle of the sovereignty of the people has acquired, in the United States, all the practical development which the imagination can conceive. It is unencumbered by those fictions which have been thrown over it in other countries, and it appears in every possible form according to the exigency of the occasion. Sometimes the

laws are made by the people in a body, as at Athens; and sometimes its representatives, chosen by universal suffrage, transact business in its name, and almost under its immediate control.

In some countries a power exists which, though it is in a degree foreign to the social body, directs it, and forces it to pursue a certain track. In others the ruling force is divided, being partly within and partly without the ranks of the people. But nothing of the kind is to be seen in the United States; there society governs itself for itself. All power centres in its bosom; and scarcely an individual is to be met with who would venture to conceive, or, still less, to express, the idea of seeking it elsewhere. The nation participates in the making of its laws by the choice of its legislators, and in the execution of them by the choice of the agents of the executive government; it may almost be said to govern itself, so feeble and so restricted is the share left to the administration, so little do the authorities forget their popular origin and the power from which they emanate.*

*See Appendix, H.

Chapter XI: Liberty of the Press in the United States

Chapter Summary

Liberty Of The Press In The United States

The influence of the liberty of the press does not affect political opinions alone, but it extends to all the opinions of men, and it modifies customs as well as laws. In another part of this work I shall attempt to determinate the degree of influence

which the liberty of the press has exercised upon civil society in the United States, and to point out the direction which it has given to the ideas, as well as the tone which it has imparted to the character and the feelings, of the Anglo-Americans, but at present I purpose simply to examine the effects produced by the liberty of the press in the political world.

I confess that I do not entertain that firm and complete attachment to the liberty of the press which things that are supremely good in their very nature are wont to excite in the mind; and I approve of it more from a recollection of the evils it prevents than from a consideration of the advantages it ensures.

If any one could point out an intermediate and yet a tenable position between the complete independence and the entire subjection of the public expression of opinion, I should perhaps be inclined to adopt it; but the difficulty is to discover this position. If it is your intention to correct the abuses of unlicensed printing and to restore the use of orderly language, you may in the first instance try the offender by a jury; but if the jury acquits him, the opinion which was that of a single individual becomes the opinion of the country at

large. Too much and too little has therefore hitherto been done. If you proceed, you must bring the delinquent before a court of permanent judges. But even here the cause must be heard before it can be decided; and the very principles which no book would have ventured to avow are blazoned forth in the pleadings, and what was obscurely hinted at in a single composition is then repeated in a multitude of other publications. The language in which a thought is embodied is the mere carcass of the thought, and not the idea itself; tribunals may condemn the form, but the sense and spirit of the work is too subtle for their authority. Too much has still been done to recede, too little to attain your end; you must therefore proceed. If you establish a censorship of the press, the tongue of the public speaker will still make itself heard, and you have only increased the mischief. The powers of thought do not rely, like the powers of physical strength, upon the number of their mechanical agents, nor can a host of authors be reckoned like the troops which compose an army; on the contrary, the authority of a principle is often increased by the smallness of the number of men by whom it is expressed. The words of a strong-minded man, which

penetrate amidst the passions of a listening assembly, have more power than the vociferations of a thousand orators; and if it be allowed to speak freely in any public place, the consequence is the same as if free speaking was allowed in every village. The liberty of discourse must therefore be destroyed as well as the liberty of the press; this is the necessary term of your efforts; but if your object was to repress the abuses of liberty, they have brought you to the feet of a despot. You have been led from the extreme of independence to the extreme of subjection without meeting with a single tenable position for shelter or repose.

There are certain nations which have peculiar reasons for cherishing the liberty of the press, independently of the general motives which I have just pointed out. For in certain countries which profess to enjoy the privileges of freedom every individual agent of the Government may violate the laws with impunity, since those whom he oppresses cannot prosecute him before the courts of justice. In this case the liberty of the press is not merely a guarantee, but it is the only guarantee, of their liberty and their security which the citizens possess. If the rulers of these nations propose to abol-

ish the independence of the press, the people would be justified in saying: Give us the right of prosecuting your offences before the ordinary tribunals, and perhaps we may then waive our right of appeal to the tribunal of public opinion.

But in the countries in which the doctrine of the sovereignty of the people ostensibly prevails, the censorship of the press is not only dangerous, but it is absurd. When the right of every citizen to co-operate in the government of society is acknowledged, every citizen must be presumed to possess the power of discriminating between the different opinions of his contemporaries, and of appreciating the different facts from which inferences may be drawn. The sovereignty of the people and the liberty of the press may therefore be looked upon as correlative institutions; just as the censorship of the press and universal suffrage are two things which are irreconcilably opposed, and which cannot long be retained among the institutions of the same people. Not a single individual of the twelve millions who inhabit the territory of the United States has as yet dared to propose any restrictions to the liberty of the press. The first newspaper over which I cast my eyes, upon my arrival in America, con-

tained the following article:

In all this affair the language of Jackson has been that of a heartless despot, solely occupied with the preservation of his own authority. Ambition is his crime, and it will be his punishment too: intrigue is his native element, and intrigue will confound his tricks, and will deprive him of his power: he governs by means of corruption, and his immoral practices will redound to his shame and confusion. His conduct in the political arena has been that of a shameless and lawless gamester. He succeeded at the time, but the hour of retribution approaches, and he will be obliged to disgorge his winnings, to throw aside his false dice, and to end his days in some retirement, where he may curse his madness at his leisure; for repentance is a virtue with which his heart is likely to remain forever unacquainted.

It is not uncommonly imagined in France that the virulence of the press originates in the uncertain social condition, in the political excitement, and the general sense of consequent evil which prevail in that country; and it is therefore supposed that as soon as society has resumed a certain degree of composure the press will abandon its present vehe-

mence. I am inclined to think that the above causes explain the reason of the extraordinary ascendancy it has acquired over the nation, but that they do not exercise much influence upon the tone of its language. The periodical press appears to me to be actuated by passions and propensities independent of the circumstances in which it is placed, and the present position of America corroborates this opinion.

America is perhaps, at this moment, the country of the whole world which contains the fewest germs of revolution; but the press is not less destructive in its principles than in France, and it displays the same violence without the same reasons for indignation. In America, as in France, it constitutes a singular power, so strangely composed of mingled good and evil that it is at the same time indispensable to the existence of freedom, and nearly incompatible with the maintenance of public order. Its power is certainly much greater in France than in the United States; though nothing is more rare in the latter country than to hear of a prosecution having been instituted against it. The reason of this is perfectly simple: the Americans, having once admitted the doctrine of the sovereignty of the people, apply it with perfect consis-

tency. It was never their intention to found a permanent state of things with elements which undergo daily modifications; and there is consequently nothing criminal in an attack upon the existing laws, provided it be not attended with a violent infraction of them. They are moreover of opinion that courts of justice are unable to check the abuses of the press; and that as the subtilty of human language perpetually eludes the severity of judicial analysis, offences of this nature are apt to escape the hand which attempts to apprehend them. They hold that to act with efficacy upon the press it would be necessary to find a tribunal, not only devoted to the existing order of things, but capable of surmounting the influence of public opinion; a tribunal which should conduct its proceedings without publicity, which should pronounce its decrees without assigning its motives, and punish the intentions even more than the language of an author. Whosoever should have the power of creating and maintaining a tribunal of this kind would waste his time in prosecuting the liberty of the press; for he would be the supreme master of the whole community, and he would be as free to rid himself of the authors as of their writings. In this question, therefore,

there is no medium between servitude and extreme license; in order to enjoy the inestimable benefits which the liberty of the press ensures, it is necessary to submit to the inevitable evils which it engenders. To expect to acquire the former and to escape the latter is to cherish one of those illusions which commonly mislead nations in their times of sickness, when, tired with faction and exhausted by effort, they attempt to combine hostile opinions and contrary principles upon the same soil.

The small influence of the American journals is attributable to several reasons, amongst which are the following:

The liberty of writing, like all other liberty, is most formidable when it is a novelty; for a people which has never been accustomed to co-operate in the conduct of State affairs places implicit confidence in the first tribune who arouses its attention. The Anglo-Americans have enjoyed this liberty ever since the foundation of the settlements; moreover, the press cannot create human passions by its own power, however skillfully it may kindle them where they exist. In America politics are discussed with animation and a varied activity, but they rarely touch those deep passions which are excited

whenever the positive interest of a part of the community is impaired: but in the United States the interests of the community are in a most prosperous condition. A single glance upon a French and an American newspaper is sufficient to show the difference which exists between the two nations on this head. In France the space allotted to commercial advertisements is very limited, and the intelligence is not considerable, but the most essential part of the journal is that which contains the discussion of the politics of the day. In America three-quarters of the enormous sheet which is set before the reader are filled with advertisements, and the remainder is frequently occupied by political intelligence or trivial anecdotes: it is only from time to time that one finds a corner devoted to passionate discussions like those with which the journalists of France are wont to indulge their readers.

It has been demonstrated by observation, and discovered by the innate sagacity of the pettiest as well as the greatest of despots, that the influence of a power is increased in proportion as its direction is rendered more central. In France the press combines a twofold centralization; almost all its power is centred in the same spot, and vested in the same hands,

for its organs are far from numerous. The influence of a public press thus constituted, upon a sceptical nation, must be unbounded. It is an enemy with which a Government may sign an occasional truce, but which it is difficult to resist for any length of time.

Neither of these kinds of centralization exists in America. The United States have no metropolis; the intelligence as well as the power of the country are dispersed abroad, and instead of radiating from a point, they cross each other in every direction; the Americans have established no central control over the expression of opinion, any more than over the conduct of business. These are circumstances which do not depend on human foresight; but it is owing to the laws of the Union that there are no licenses to be granted to printers, no securities demanded from editors as in France, and no stamp duty as in France and formerly in England. The consequence of this is that nothing is easier than to set up a newspaper, and a small number of readers suffices to defray the expenses of the editor.

The number of periodical and occasional publications which appears in the United States actually surpasses belief.

The most enlightened Americans attribute the subordinate influence of the press to this excessive dissemination; and it is adopted as an axiom of political science in that country that the only way to neutralize the effect of public journals is to multiply them indefinitely. I cannot conceive that a truth which is so self-evident should not already have been more generally admitted in Europe; it is comprehensible that the persons who hope to bring about revolutions by means of the press should be desirous of confining its action to a few powerful organs, but it is perfectly incredible that the partisans of the existing state of things, and the natural supporters of the law, should attempt to diminish the influence of the press by concentrating its authority. The Governments of Europe seem to treat the press with the courtesy of the knights of old; they are anxious to furnish it with the same central power which they have found to be so trusty a weapon, in order to enhance the glory of their resistance to its attacks.

In America there is scarcely a hamlet which has not its own newspaper. It may readily be imagined that neither discipline nor unity of design can be communicated to so multifarious a host, and each one is consequently led to fight

under his own standard. All the political journals of the United States are indeed arrayed on the side of the administration or against it; but they attack and defend in a thousand different ways. They cannot succeed in forming those great currents of opinion which overwhelm the most solid obstacles. This division of the influence of the press produces a variety of other consequences which are scarcely less remarkable. The facility with which journals can be established induces a multitude of individuals to take a part in them; but as the extent of competition precludes the possibility of considerable profit, the most distinguished classes of society are rarely led to engage in these undertakings. But such is the number of the public prints that, even if they were a source of wealth, writers of ability could not be found to direct them all. The journalists of the United States are usually placed in a very humble position, with a scanty education and a vulgar turn of mind. The will of the majority is the most general of laws, and it establishes certain habits which form the characteristics of each peculiar class of society; thus it dictates the etiquette practised at courts and the etiquette of the bar. The characteristics of the French jour-

nalists consist in a violent, but frequently an eloquent and lofty, manner of discussing the politics of the day; and the exceptions to this habitual practice are only occasional. The characteristics of the American journalist consist in an open and coarse appeal to the passions of the populace; and he habitually abandons the principles of political science to assail the characters of individuals, to track them into private life, and disclose all their weaknesses and errors.

Nothing can be more deplorable than this abuse of the powers of thought; I shall have occasion to point out hereafter the influence of the newspapers upon the taste and the morality of the American people, but my present subject exclusively concerns the political world. It cannot be denied that the effects of this extreme license of the press tend indirectly to the maintenance of public order. The individuals who are already in the possession of a high station in the esteem of their fellow-citizens are afraid to write in the newspapers, and they are thus deprived of the most powerful instrument which they can use to excite the passions of the multitude to their own advantage.*

*They only write in the papers when they choose to address the people in their own name; as, for instance, when they are called upon to repel calumnious imputations, and to correct a misstatement of facts.

The personal opinions of the editors have no kind of weight in the eyes of the public: the only use of a journal is, that it imparts the knowledge of certain facts, and it is only by altering or distorting those facts that a journalist can contribute to the support of his own views.

But although the press is limited to these resources, its influence in America is immense. It is the power which impels the circulation of political life through all the districts of that vast territory. Its eye is constantly open to detect the secret springs of political designs, and to summon the leaders of all parties to the bar of public opinion. It rallies the interests of the community round certain principles, and it draws up the creed which factions adopt; for it affords a means of intercourse between parties which hear, and which address each other without ever having been in immediate contact. When a great number of the organs of the press adopt the same line of conduct, their influence becomes irresistible; and public opinion, when it is perpetually assailed from the same side, eventually yields to the attack. In the United States each separate journal exercises but little authority, but the power of the periodical press is only second to that of the people.*

*See Appendix, P.

The opinions established in the United States under the empire of the liberty of the press are frequently more firmly rooted than those which are formed elsewhere under the sanction of a censor.

In the United States the democracy perpetually raises fresh individuals to the conduct of public affairs; and the measures of the administration are consequently seldom regulated by the strict rules of consistency or of order. But the general principles of the Government are more stable, and the opinions most prevalent in society are generally more durable than in many other countries. When once the Americans have taken up an idea, whether it be well or ill founded, nothing is more difficult than to eradicate it from their minds. The same tenacity of opinion has been observed in England, where, for the last century, greater freedom of conscience and more invincible prejudices have existed than in all the other countries of Europe. I attribute this consequence to a cause which may at first sight appear to have a very opposite tendency, namely, to the liberty of the press. The nations amongst which this liberty exists are as apt to cling to their opinions from pride as from conviction. They cherish them

because they hold them to be just, and because they exercised their own free-will in choosing them; and they maintain them not only because they are true, but because they are their own. Several other reasons conduce to the same end.

It was remarked by a man of genius that “ignorance lies at the two ends of knowledge.” Perhaps it would have been more correct to have said, that absolute convictions are to be met with at the two extremities, and that doubt lies in the middle; for the human intellect may be considered in three distinct states, which frequently succeed one another. A man believes implicitly, because he adopts a proposition without inquiry. He doubts as soon as he is assailed by the objections which his inquiries may have aroused. But he frequently succeeds in satisfying these doubts, and then he begins to believe afresh: he no longer lays hold on a truth in its most shadowy and uncertain form, but he sees it clearly before him, and he advances onwards by the light it gives him.*

**It may, however, be doubted whether this rational and self-guiding conviction arouses as much fervor or enthusiastic devotedness in men as their first dogmatical belief.*

When the liberty of the press acts upon men who are in the first of these three states, it does not immediately disturb their habit of believing implicitly without investigation, but it constantly modifies the objects of their intuitive convictions. The human mind continues to discern but one point upon the whole intellectual horizon, and that point is in continual motion. Such are the symptoms of sudden revolutions, and of the misfortunes which are sure to befall those generations which abruptly adopt the unconditional freedom of the press.

The circle of novel ideas is, however, soon terminated; the touch of experience is upon them, and the doubt and mistrust which their uncertainty produces become universal. We may rest assured that the majority of mankind will either believe they know not wherefore, or will not know what to believe. Few are the beings who can ever hope to attain to that state of rational and independent conviction which true knowledge can beget in defiance of the attacks of doubt.

It has been remarked that in times of great religious fervor men sometimes change their religious opinions; whereas in times of general scepticism everyone clings to his own per-

suasion. The same thing takes place in politics under the liberty of the press. In countries where all the theories of social science have been contested in their turn, the citizens who have adopted one of them stick to it, not so much because they are assured of its excellence, as because they are not convinced of the superiority of any other. In the present age men are not very ready to die in defence of their opinions, but they are rarely inclined to change them; and there are fewer martyrs as well as fewer apostates.

Another still more valid reason may yet be adduced: when no abstract opinions are looked upon as certain, men cling to the mere propensities and external interests of their position, which are naturally more tangible and more permanent than any opinions in the world.

It is not a question of easy solution whether aristocracy or democracy is most fit to govern a country. But it is certain that democracy annoys one part of the community, and that aristocracy oppresses another part. When the question is reduced to the simple expression of the struggle between poverty and wealth, the tendency of each side of the dispute becomes perfectly evident without further controversy.

Chapter XII: Political Associations in the United States

Chapter Summary

Daily use which the Anglo-Americans make of the right of association – Three kinds of political associations – In what manner the Americans apply the representative system to associations – Dangers resulting to the State – Great Convention of 1831 relative to the Tariff – Legislative character of this Convention – Why the unlimited exercise of the right of association is less dangerous in the United States than elsewhere – Why it may be looked upon as necessary – Utility of associations in a democratic people.

Political Associations In The United States

In no country in the world has the principle of association been more successfully used, or more unsparingly applied to a multitude of different objects, than in America. Besides the permanent associations which are established by law under the names of townships, cities, and counties, a vast

number of others are formed and maintained by the agency of private individuals.

The citizen of the United States is taught from his earliest infancy to rely upon his own exertions in order to resist the evils and the difficulties of life; he looks upon social authority with an eye of mistrust and anxiety, and he only claims its assistance when he is quite unable to shift without it. This habit may even be traced in the schools of the rising generation, where the children in their games are wont to submit to rules which they have themselves established, and to punish misdemeanors which they have themselves defined. The same spirit pervades every act of social life. If a stoppage occurs in a thoroughfare, and the circulation of the public is hindered, the neighbors immediately constitute a deliberative body; and this extemporaneous assembly gives rise to an executive power which remedies the inconvenience before anybody has thought of recurring to an authority superior to that of the persons immediately concerned. If the public pleasures are concerned, an association is formed to provide for the splendor and the regularity of the entertainment. Societies are formed to resist enemies which are exclusively of a

moral nature, and to diminish the vice of intemperance: in the United States associations are established to promote public order, commerce, industry, morality, and religion; for there is no end which the human will, seconded by the collective exertions of individuals, despairs of attaining.

I shall hereafter have occasion to show the effects of association upon the course of society, and I must confine myself for the present to the political world. When once the right of association is recognized, the citizens may employ it in several different ways.

An association consists simply in the public assent which a number of individuals give to certain doctrines, and in the engagement which they contract to promote the spread of those doctrines by their exertions. The right of association with these views is very analogous to the liberty of unlicensed writing; but societies thus formed possess more authority than the press. When an opinion is represented by a society, it necessarily assumes a more exact and explicit form. It numbers its partisans, and compromises their welfare in its cause: they, on the other hand, become acquainted with each other, and their zeal is increased by their number. An association

unites the efforts of minds which have a tendency to diverge in one single channel, and urges them vigorously towards one single end which it points out.

The second degree in the right of association is the power of meeting. When an association is allowed to establish centres of action at certain important points in the country, its activity is increased and its influence extended. Men have the opportunity of seeing each other; means of execution are more readily combined, and opinions are maintained with a degree of warmth and energy which written language cannot approach.

Lastly, in the exercise of the right of political association, there is a third degree: the partisans of an opinion may unite in electoral bodies, and choose delegates to represent them in a central assembly. This is, properly speaking, the application of the representative system to a party.

Thus, in the first instance, a society is formed between individuals professing the same opinion, and the tie which keeps it together is of a purely intellectual nature; in the second case, small assemblies are formed which only represent a fraction of the party. Lastly, in the third case, they constitute a separate

nation in the midst of the nation, a government within the Government. Their delegates, like the real delegates of the majority, represent the entire collective force of their party; and they enjoy a certain degree of that national dignity and great influence which belong to the chosen representatives of the people. It is true that they have not the right of making the laws, but they have the power of attacking those which are in being, and of drawing up beforehand those which they may afterwards cause to be adopted.

If, in a people which is imperfectly accustomed to the exercise of freedom, or which is exposed to violent political passions, a deliberating minority, which confines itself to the contemplation of future laws, be placed in juxtaposition to the legislative majority, I cannot but believe that public tranquillity incurs very great risks in that nation. There is doubtless a very wide difference between proving that one law is in itself better than another and proving that the former ought to be substituted for the latter. But the imagination of the populace is very apt to overlook this difference, which is so apparent to the minds of thinking men. It sometimes happens that a nation is divided into two nearly equal parties,

each of which affects to represent the majority. If, in immediate contiguity to the directing power, another power be established, which exercises almost as much moral authority as the former, it is not to be believed that it will long be content to speak without acting; or that it will always be restrained by the abstract consideration of the nature of associations which are meant to direct but not to enforce opinions, to suggest but not to make the laws.

The more we consider the independence of the press in its principal consequences, the more are we convinced that it is the chief and, so to speak, the constitutive element of freedom in the modern world. A nation which is determined to remain free is therefore right in demanding the unrestrained exercise of this independence. But the unrestrained liberty of political association cannot be entirely assimilated to the liberty of the press. The one is at the same time less necessary and more dangerous than the other. A nation may confine it within certain limits without forfeiting any part of its self-control; and it may sometimes be obliged to do so in order to maintain its own authority.

In America the liberty of association for political purposes

is unbounded. An example will show in the clearest light to what an extent this privilege is tolerated.

The question of the tariff, or of free trade, produced a great manifestation of party feeling in America; the tariff was not only a subject of debate as a matter of opinion, but it exercised a favorable or a prejudicial influence upon several very powerful interests of the States. The North attributed a great portion of its prosperity, and the South all its sufferings, to this system; insomuch that for a long time the tariff was the sole source of the political animosities which agitated the Union.

In 1831, when the dispute was raging with the utmost virulence, a private citizen of Massachusetts proposed to all the enemies of the tariff, by means of the public prints, to send delegates to Philadelphia in order to consult together upon the means which were most fitted to promote freedom of trade. This proposal circulated in a few days from Maine to New Orleans by the power of the printing-press: the opponents of the tariff adopted it with enthusiasm; meetings were formed on all sides, and delegates were named. The majority of these individuals were well known, and some of them had earned a considerable degree of celebrity. South

Carolina alone, which afterwards took up arms in the same cause, sent sixty-three delegates. On October 1, 1831, this assembly, which according to the American custom had taken the name of a Convention, met at Philadelphia; it consisted of more than two hundred members. Its debates were public, and they at once assumed a legislative character; the extent of the powers of Congress, the theories of free trade, and the different clauses of the tariff, were discussed in turn. At the end of ten days' deliberation the Convention broke up, after having published an address to the American people, in which it declared:

I. That Congress had not the right of making a tariff, and that the existing tariff was unconstitutional;

II. That the prohibition of free trade was prejudicial to the interests of all nations, and to that of the American people in particular.

It must be acknowledged that the unrestrained liberty of political association has not hitherto produced, in the United

States, those fatal consequences which might perhaps be expected from it elsewhere. The right of association was imported from England, and it has always existed in America; so that the exercise of this privilege is now amalgamated with the manners and customs of the people. At the present time the liberty of association is become a necessary guarantee against the tyranny of the majority. In the United States, as soon as a party is become preponderant, all public authority passes under its control; its private supporters occupy all the places, and have all the force of the administration at their disposal. As the most distinguished partisans of the other side of the question are unable to surmount the obstacles which exclude them from power, they require some means of establishing themselves upon their own basis, and of opposing the moral authority of the minority to the physical power which domineers over it. Thus a dangerous expedient is used to obviate a still more formidable danger.

The omnipotence of the majority appears to me to present such extreme perils to the American Republics that the dangerous measure which is used to repress it seems to be more advantageous than prejudicial. And here I am about to ad-

vance a proposition which may remind the reader of what I said before in speaking of municipal freedom: There are no countries in which associations are more needed, to prevent the despotism of faction or the arbitrary power of a prince, than those which are democratically constituted. In aristocratic nations the body of the nobles and the more opulent part of the community are in themselves natural associations, which act as checks upon the abuses of power. In countries in which these associations do not exist, if private individuals are unable to create an artificial and a temporary substitute for them, I can imagine no permanent protection against the most galling tyranny; and a great people may be oppressed by a small faction, or by a single individual, with impunity.

The meeting of a great political Convention (for there are Conventions of all kinds), which may frequently become a necessary measure, is always a serious occurrence, even in America, and one which is never looked forward to, by the judicious friends of the country, without alarm. This was very perceptible in the Convention of 1831, at which the exertions of all the most distinguished members of the Assembly tended to moderate its language, and to restrain the

subjects which it treated within certain limits. It is probable, in fact, that the Convention of 1831 exercised a very great influence upon the minds of the malcontents, and prepared them for the open revolt against the commercial laws of the Union which took place in 1832.

It cannot be denied that the unrestrained liberty of association for political purposes is the privilege which a people is longest in learning how to exercise. If it does not throw the nation into anarchy, it perpetually augments the chances of that calamity. On one point, however, this perilous liberty offers a security against dangers of another kind; in countries where associations are free, secret societies are unknown. In America there are numerous factions, but no conspiracies.

Different ways in which the right of association is understood in Europe and in the United States – Different use which is made of it.

The most natural privilege of man, next to the right of acting for himself, is that of combining his exertions with those of his fellow-creatures, and of acting in common with them. I am therefore led to conclude that the right of association is almost as inalienable as the right of personal lib-

erty. No legislator can attack it without impairing the very foundations of society. Nevertheless, if the liberty of association is a fruitful source of advantages and prosperity to some nations, it may be perverted or carried to excess by others, and the element of life may be changed into an element of destruction. A comparison of the different methods which associations pursue in those countries in which they are managed with discretion, as well as in those where liberty degenerates into license, may perhaps be thought useful both to governments and to parties.

The greater part of Europeans look upon an association as a weapon which is to be hastily fashioned, and immediately tried in the conflict. A society is formed for discussion, but the idea of impending action prevails in the minds of those who constitute it: it is, in fact, an army; and the time given to parley serves to reckon up the strength and to animate the courage of the host, after which they direct their march against the enemy. Resources which lie within the bounds of the law may suggest themselves to the persons who compose it as means, but never as the only means, of success.

Such, however, is not the manner in which the right of

association is understood in the United States. In America the citizens who form the minority associate, in order, in the first place, to show their numerical strength, and so to diminish the moral authority of the majority; and, in the second place, to stimulate competition, and to discover those arguments which are most fitted to act upon the majority; for they always entertain hopes of drawing over their opponents to their own side, and of afterwards disposing of the supreme power in their name. Political associations in the United States are therefore peaceable in their intentions, and strictly legal in the means which they employ; and they assert with perfect truth that they only aim at success by lawful expedients.

The difference which exists between the Americans and ourselves depends on several causes. In Europe there are numerous parties so diametrically opposed to the majority that they can never hope to acquire its support, and at the same time they think that they are sufficiently strong in themselves to struggle and to defend their cause. When a party of this kind forms an association, its object is, not to conquer, but to fight. In America the individuals who hold opinions

very much opposed to those of the majority are no sort of impediment to its power, and all other parties hope to win it over to their own principles in the end. The exercise of the right of association becomes dangerous in proportion to the impossibility which excludes great parties from acquiring the majority. In a country like the United States, in which the differences of opinion are mere differences of hue, the right of association may remain unrestrained without evil consequences. The inexperience of many of the European nations in the enjoyment of liberty leads them only to look upon the liberty of association as a right of attacking the Government. The first notion which presents itself to a party, as well as to an individual, when it has acquired a consciousness of its own strength, is that of violence: the notion of persuasion arises at a later period and is only derived from experience. The English, who are divided into parties which differ most essentially from each other, rarely abuse the right of association, because they have long been accustomed to exercise it. In France the passion for war is so intense that there is no undertaking so mad, or so injurious to the welfare of the State, that a man does not consider himself honored in de-

fending it, at the risk of his life.

But perhaps the most powerful of the causes which tend to mitigate the excesses of political association in the United States is Universal Suffrage. In countries in which universal suffrage exists the majority is never doubtful, because neither party can pretend to represent that portion of the community which has not voted. The associations which are formed are aware, as well as the nation at large, that they do not represent the majority: this is, indeed, a condition inseparable from their existence; for if they did represent the preponderating power, they would change the law instead of soliciting its reform. The consequence of this is that the moral influence of the Government which they attack is very much increased, and their own power is very much enfeebled.

In Europe there are few associations which do not affect to represent the majority, or which do not believe that they represent it. This conviction or this pretension tends to augment their force amazingly, and contributes no less to legalize their measures. Violence may seem to be excusable in defence of the cause of oppressed right. Thus it is, in the vast labyrinth of human laws, that extreme liberty sometimes

corrects the abuses of license, and that extreme democracy obviates the dangers of democratic government. In Europe, associations consider themselves, in some degree, as the legislative and executive councils of the people, which is unable to speak for itself. In America, where they only represent a minority of the nation, they argue and they petition.

The means which the associations of Europe employ are in accordance with the end which they propose to obtain. As the principal aim of these bodies is to act, and not to debate, to fight rather than to persuade, they are naturally led to adopt a form of organization which differs from the ordinary customs of civil bodies, and which assumes the habits and the maxims of military life. They centralize the direction of their resources as much as possible, and they intrust the power of the whole party to a very small number of leaders.

The members of these associations respond to a watchword, like soldiers on duty; they profess the doctrine of passive obedience; say rather, that in uniting together they at once abjure the exercise of their own judgment and free will; and the tyrannical control which these societies exercise is often far more insupportable than the authority possessed

over society by the Government which they attack. Their moral force is much diminished by these excesses, and they lose the powerful interest which is always excited by a struggle between oppressors and the oppressed. The man who in given cases consents to obey his fellows with servility, and who submits his activity and even his opinions to their control, can have no claim to rank as a free citizen.

The Americans have also established certain forms of government which are applied to their associations, but these are invariably borrowed from the forms of the civil administration. The independence of each individual is formally recognized; the tendency of the members of the association points, as it does in the body of the community, towards the same end, but they are not obliged to follow the same track. No one abjures the exercise of his reason and his free will; but every one exerts that reason and that will for the benefit of a common undertaking.

Chapter XV

UNLIMITED POWER OF THE MAJORITY IN THE UNITED STATES, AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

NATURAL STRENGTH of the majority in democracies — Most of the American constitutions have increased this strength by artificial means — How this has been done — Pledged delegates — Moral power of the majority — Opinion as to its infallibility — Respect for its rights, how augmented in the United States.

THE very essence of democratic government consists in the absolute sovereignty of the majority; for there is nothing in democratic states that is capable of resisting it. Most of the American constitutions have sought to increase this natural strength of the majority by artificial means.¹

Of all political institutions, the legislature is the one that is most easily swayed by the will of the majority. The Americans determined that the members of the legislature should be elected by the people directly, and for a very brief term, in order to subject them, not only to the general convictions, but even to the daily passions, of their constituents. The members of both houses are taken from the same classes in society and nominated in the same manner; so that the movements of the legislative bodies are almost as rapid, and quite as irresistible, as those of a single assembly. It is to a legislature thus constituted that almost all the authority of the government has been entrusted.

At the same time that the law increased the strength of those authorities which of themselves were strong, it enfeebled more and more those which were naturally weak. It deprived the representatives of the executive power of all stability and independence; and by subjecting them completely to the caprices of the legisla-

¹ We have seen, in examining the Federal Constitution, that the efforts of the legislators of the Union were directed against this absolute power. The consequence has been that the Federal government is more independent in its sphere than that of the states. But the Federal government scarcely ever interferes in any but foreign affairs; and the governments of the states in reality direct society in America.

The Unlimited Power of the Majority

ture, it robbed them of the slender influence that the nature of a democratic government might have allowed them to exercise. In several states the judicial power was also submitted to the election of the majority; and in all of them its existence was made to depend on the pleasure of the legislative authority, since the representatives were empowered annually to regulate the stipend of the judges.

Custom has done even more than law. A proceeding is becoming more and more general in the United States which will, in the end, do away with the guarantees of representative government: it frequently happens that the voters, in electing a delegate, point out a certain line of conduct to him and impose upon him certain positive obligations that he is pledged to fulfill. With the exception of the tumult, this comes to the same thing as if the majority itself held its deliberations in the market-place.

Several particular circumstances combine to render the power of the majority in America not only preponderant, but irresistible. The moral authority of the majority is partly based upon the notion that there is more intelligence and wisdom in a number of men united than in a single individual, and that the number of the legislators is more important than their quality. The theory of equality is thus applied to the intellects of men; and human pride is thus assailed in its last retreat by a doctrine which the minority hesitate to admit, and to which they will but slowly assent. Like all other powers, and perhaps more than any other, the authority of the many requires the sanction of time in order to appear legitimate. At first it enforces obedience by constraint; and its laws are not respected until they have been long maintained.

The right of governing society, which the majority supposes itself to derive from its superior intelligence, was introduced into the United States by the first settlers; and this idea, which of itself would be sufficient to create a free nation, has now been amalgamated with the customs of the people and the minor incidents of social life.

The French under the old monarchy held it for a maxim that the king could do no wrong; and if he did do wrong, the blame was imputed to his advisers. This notion made obedience very easy; it enabled the subject to complain of the law without ceasing to love and honor the lawgiver. The Americans entertain the same opinion with respect to the majority.

Democracy in America

The moral power of the majority is founded upon yet another principle, which is that the interests of the many are to be preferred to those of the few. It will readily be perceived that the respect here professed for the rights of the greater number must naturally increase or diminish according to the state of parties. When a nation is divided into several great irreconcilable interests, the privilege of the majority is often overlooked, because it is intolerable to comply with its demands.

If there existed in America a class of citizens whom the legislating majority sought to deprive of exclusive privileges which they had possessed for ages and to bring down from an elevated station to the level of the multitude, it is probable that the minority would be less ready to submit to its laws. But as the United States was colonized by men holding equal rank, there is as yet no natural or permanent disagreement between the interests of its different inhabitants.

There are communities in which the members of the minority can never hope to draw the majority over to their side, because they must then give up the very point that is at issue between them. Thus an aristocracy can never become a majority while it retains its exclusive privileges, and it cannot cede its privileges without ceasing to be an aristocracy.

In the United States, political questions cannot be taken up in so general and absolute a manner; and all parties are willing to recognize the rights of the majority, because they all hope at some time to be able to exercise them to their own advantage. The majority in that country, therefore, exercise a prodigious actual authority, and a power of opinion which is nearly as great; no obstacles exist which can impede or even retard its progress, so as to make it heed the complaints of those whom it crushes upon its path. This state of things is harmful in itself and dangerous for the future.

The Unlimited Power of the Majority

HOW THE OMNIPOTENCE OF THE MAJORITY INCREASES, IN AMERICA, THE INSTABILITY OF LEGISLATION AND ADMINISTRATION INHERENT IN DEMOCRACY. *The Americans increase the mutability of law that is inherent in a democracy by changing the legislature every year, and investing it with almost unbounded authority — The same effect is produced upon the administration — In America the pressure for social improvements is vastly greater, but less continuous, than in Europe.*

I HAVE already spoken of the natural defects of democratic institutions; each one of them increases in the same ratio as the power of the majority. To begin with the most evident of them all, the mutability of the laws is an evil inherent in a democratic government, because it is natural to democracies to raise new men to power. But this evil is more or less perceptible in proportion to the authority and the means of action which the legislature possesses.

In America the authority exercised by the legislatures is supreme; nothing prevents them from accomplishing their wishes with celerity and with irresistible power, and they are supplied with new representatives every year. That is to say, the circumstances which contribute most powerfully to democratic instability, and which admit of the free application of caprice to the most important objects, are here in full operation. Hence America is, at the present day, the country beyond all others where laws last the shortest time. Almost all the American constitutions have been amended within thirty years; there is therefore not one American state which has not modified the principles of its legislation in that time. As for the laws themselves, a single glance at the archives of the different states of the Union suffices to convince one that in America the activity of the legislator never slackens. Not that the American democracy is naturally less stable than any other, but it is allowed to follow, in the formation of the laws, the natural instability of its desires.²

² The legislative acts promulgated by the state of Massachusetts alone from the year 1780 to the present time already fill three stout volumes; and it must not be forgotten that the collection to which I allude was revised in 1823, when many old laws which had fallen into disuse were omitted. The state of Massachusetts, which is not more populous than a department of France, may be considered as the most stable, the most consistent, and the most sagacious in its undertakings of the whole Union.

Democracy in America

The omnipotence of the majority and the rapid as well as absolute manner in which its decisions are executed in the United States not only render the law unstable, but exercise the same influence upon the execution of the law and the conduct of the administration. As the majority is the only power that it is important to court, all its projects are taken up with the greatest ardor; but no sooner is its attention distracted than all this ardor ceases; while in the free states of Europe, where the administration is at once independent and secure, the projects of the legislature continue to be executed even when its attention is directed to other objects.

In America certain improvements are prosecuted with much more zeal and activity than elsewhere; in Europe the same ends are promoted by much less social effort more continuously applied.

Some years ago several pious individuals undertook to ameliorate the condition of the prisons. The public were moved by their statements, and the reform of criminals became a popular undertaking. New prisons were built; and for the first time the idea of reforming as well as punishing the delinquent formed a part of prison discipline.

But this happy change, in which the public had taken so hearty an interest and which the simultaneous exertions of the citizens rendered irresistible, could not be completed in a moment. While the new penitentiaries were being erected and the will of the majority was hastening the work, the old prisons still existed and contained a great number of offenders. These jails became more unwholesome and corrupt in proportion as the new establishments were reformed and improved, forming a contrast that may readily be understood. The majority was so eagerly employed in founding the new prisons that those which already existed were forgotten; and as the general attention was diverted to a novel object, the care which had hitherto been bestowed upon the others ceased. The salutary regulations of discipline were first relaxed and afterwards broken; so that in the immediate neighborhood of a prison that bore witness to the mild and enlightened spirit of our times, dungeons existed that reminded one of the barbarism of the Middle Ages.

TYRANNY OF THE MAJORITY. *How the principle of the sovereignty of the people is to be understood — Impossibility of con-*

The Unlimited Power of the Majority

ceiving a mixed government — The sovereign power must exist somewhere — Precautions to be taken to control its action — These precautions have not been taken in the United States — Consequences.

I HOLD it to be an impious and detestable maxim that, politically speaking, the people have a right to do anything; and yet I have asserted that all authority originates in the will of the majority. Am I, then, in contradiction with myself?

A general law, which bears the name of justice, has been made and sanctioned, not only by a majority of this or that people, but by a majority of mankind. The rights of every people are therefore confined within the limits of what is just. A nation may be considered as a jury which is empowered to represent society at large and to apply justice, which is its law. Ought such a jury, which represents society, to have more power than the society itself whose laws it executes?

When I refuse to obey an unjust law, I do not contest the right of the majority to command, but I simply appeal from the sovereignty of the people to the sovereignty of mankind. Some have not feared to assert that a people can never outstep the boundaries of justice and reason in those affairs which are peculiarly its own; and that consequently full power may be given to the majority by which it is represented. But this is the language of a slave.

A majority taken collectively is only an individual, whose opinions, and frequently whose interests, are opposed to those of another individual, who is styled a minority. If it be admitted that a man possessing absolute power may misuse that power by wronging his adversaries, why should not a majority be liable to the same reproach? Men do not change their characters by uniting with one another; nor does their patience in the presence of obstacles increase with their strength.³ For my own part, I cannot believe it; the power to do everything, which I should refuse to one of my equals, I will never grant to any number of them.

I do not think that, for the sake of preserving liberty, it is possible to combine several principles in the same government so as

³ No one will assert that a people cannot forcibly wrong another people; but parties may be looked upon as lesser nations within a great one, and they are aliens to each other. If, therefore, one admits that a nation can act tyrannically towards another nation, can it be denied that a party may do the same towards another party?

Democracy in America

really to oppose them to one another. The form of government that is usually termed *mixed* has always appeared to me a mere chimera. Accurately speaking, there is no such thing as a *mixed government*, in the sense usually given to that word, because in all communities some one principle of action may be discovered which preponderates over the others. England in the last century, which has been especially cited as an example of this sort of government, was essentially an aristocratic state, although it comprised some great elements of democracy; for the laws and customs of the country were such that the aristocracy could not but preponderate in the long run and direct public affairs according to its own will. The error arose from seeing the interests of the nobles perpetually contending with those of the people, without considering the issue of the contest, which was really the important point. When a community actually has a mixed government — that is to say, when it is equally divided between adverse principles — it must either experience a revolution or fall into anarchy.

I am therefore of the opinion that social power superior to all others must always be placed somewhere; but I think that liberty is endangered when this power finds no obstacle which can retard its course and give it time to moderate its own vehemence.

Unlimited power is in itself a bad and dangerous thing. Human beings are not competent to exercise it with discretion. God alone can be omnipotent, because his wisdom and his justice are always equal to his power. There is no power on earth so worthy of honor in itself or clothed with rights so sacred that I would admit its uncontrolled and all-predominant authority. When I see that the right and the means of absolute command are conferred on any power whatever, be it called a people or a king, an aristocracy or a democracy, a monarchy or a republic, I say there is the germ of tyranny, and I seek to live elsewhere, under other laws.

In my opinion, the main evil of the present democratic institutions of the United States does not arise, as is often asserted in Europe, from their weakness, but from their irresistible strength. I am not so much alarmed at the excessive liberty which reigns in that country as at the inadequate securities which one finds there against tyranny.

When an individual or a party is wronged in the United States, to whom can he apply for redress? If to public opinion, public

The Unlimited Power of the Majority

opinion constitutes the majority; if to the legislature, it represents the majority and implicitly obeys it; if to the executive power, it is appointed by the majority and serves as a passive tool in its hands. The public force consists of the majority under arms; the jury is the majority invested with the right of hearing judicial cases; and in certain states even the judges are elected by the majority. However iniquitous or absurd the measure of which you complain, you must submit to it as well as you can.⁴

If, on the other hand, a legislative power could be so constituted as to represent the majority without necessarily being the slave of its passions, an executive so as to retain a proper share of authority, and a judiciary so as to remain independent of the other two powers, a government would be formed which would still be democratic while incurring scarcely any risk of tyranny.

I do not say that there is a frequent use of tyranny in America

⁴ A striking instance of the excesses that may be occasioned by the despotism of the majority occurred at Baltimore during the War of 1812. At that time the war was very popular in Baltimore. A newspaper that had taken the other side excited, by its opposition, the indignation of the inhabitants. The mob assembled, broke the printing-presses, and attacked the house of the editors. The militia was called out, but did not obey the call; and the only means of saving the wretches who were threatened by the frenzy of the mob was to throw them into prison as common malefactors. But even this precaution was ineffectual; the mob collected again during the night; the magistrates again made a vain attempt to call out the militia; the prison was forced, one of the newspaper editors was killed upon the spot, and the others were left for dead. The guilty parties, when they were brought to trial, were acquitted by the jury.

I said one day to an inhabitant of Pennsylvania: "Be so good as to explain to me how it happens that in a state founded by Quakers, and celebrated for its toleration, free blacks are not allowed to exercise civil rights. They pay taxes; is it not fair that they should vote?"

"You insult us," replied my informant, "if you imagine that our legislators could have committed so gross an act of injustice and intolerance."

"Then the blacks possess the right of voting in this country?"

"Without doubt."

"How comes it, then, that at the polling-booth this morning I did not perceive a single Negro?"

"That is not the fault of the law. The Negroes have an undisputed right of voting, but they voluntarily abstain from making their appearance."

"A very pretty piece of modesty on their part!" rejoined I.

"Why, the truth is that they are not disinclined to vote, but they are afraid of being maltreated; in this country the law is sometimes unable to maintain its authority without the support of the majority. But in this case the majority entertains very strong prejudices against the blacks, and the magistrates are unable to protect them in the exercise of their legal rights."

"Then the majority claims the right not only of making the laws, but of breaking the laws it has made?"

Democracy in America

at the present day; but I maintain that there is no sure barrier against it, and that the causes which mitigate the government there are to be found in the circumstances and the manners of the country more than in its laws.

EFFECTS OF THE OMNIPOTENCE OF THE MAJORITY UPON THE ARBITRARY AUTHORITY OF AMERICAN PUBLIC OFFICERS. *Liberty left by the American laws to public officers within a certain sphere — Their power.*

A DISTINCTION must be drawn between tyranny and arbitrary power. Tyranny may be exercised by means of the law itself, and in that case it is not arbitrary; arbitrary power may be exercised for the public good, in which case it is not tyrannical. Tyranny usually employs arbitrary means, but if necessary it can do without them.

In the United States the omnipotence of the majority, which is favorable to the legal despotism of the legislature, likewise favors the arbitrary authority of the magistrate. The majority has absolute power both to make the laws and to watch over their execution; and as it has equal authority over those who are in power and the community at large, it considers public officers as its passive agents and readily confides to them the task of carrying out its designs. The details of their office and the privileges that they are to enjoy are rarely defined beforehand. It treats them as a master does his servants, since they are always at work in his sight and he can direct or reprimand them at any instant.

In general, the American functionaries are far more independent within the sphere that is prescribed to them than the French civil officers. Sometimes, even, they are allowed by the popular authority to exceed those bounds; and as they are protected by the opinion and backed by the power of the majority, they dare do things that even a European, accustomed as he is to arbitrary power, is astonished at. By this means habits are formed in the heart of a free country which may some day prove fatal to its liberties.

The Unlimited Power of the Majority

POWER EXERCISED BY THE MAJORITY IN AMERICA UPON OPINION. *In America, when the majority has once irrevocably decided a question, all discussion ceases — Reason for this — Moral power exercised by the majority upon opinion — Democratic republics have applied despotism to the minds of men.*

It is in the examination of the exercise of thought in the United States that we clearly perceive how far the power of the majority surpasses all the powers with which we are acquainted in Europe. Thought is an invisible and subtle power that mocks all the efforts of tyranny. At the present time the most absolute monarchs in Europe cannot prevent certain opinions hostile to their authority from circulating in secret through their dominions and even in their courts. It is not so in America; as long as the majority is still undecided, discussion is carried on; but as soon as its decision is irrevocably pronounced, everyone is silent, and the friends as well as the opponents of the measure unite in assenting to its propriety. The reason for this is perfectly clear: no monarch is so absolute as to combine all the powers of society in his own hands and to conquer all opposition, as a majority is able to do, which has the right both of making and of executing the laws.

The authority of a king is physical and controls the actions of men without subduing their will. But the majority possesses a power that is physical and moral at the same time, which acts upon the will as much as upon the actions and represses not only all contest, but all controversy.

I know of no country in which there is so little independence of mind and real freedom of discussion as in America. In any constitutional state in Europe every sort of religious and political theory may be freely preached and disseminated; for there is no country in Europe so subdued by any single authority as not to protect the man who raises his voice in the cause of truth from the consequences of his hardihood. If he is unfortunate enough to live under an absolute government, the people are often on his side; if he inhabits a free country, he can, if necessary, find a shelter behind the throne. The aristocratic part of society supports him in some countries, and the democracy in others. But in a nation where democratic institutions exist, organized like those of the United States, there is but one authority, one element of strength and success, with nothing beyond it.

Democracy in America

In America the majority raises formidable barriers around the liberty of opinion; within these barriers an author may write what he pleases, but woe to him if he goes beyond them. Not that he is in danger of an auto-da-fé, but he is exposed to continued obloquy and persecution. His political career is closed forever, since he has offended the only authority that is able to open it. Every sort of compensation, even that of celebrity, is refused to him. Before making public his opinions he thought he had sympathizers; now it seems to him that he has none any more since he has revealed himself to everyone; then those who blame him criticize loudly and those who think as he does keep quiet and move away without courage. He yields at length, overcome by the daily effort which he has to make, and subsides into silence, as if he felt remorse for having spoken the truth.

Fetters and headsmen were the coarse instruments that tyranny formerly employed; but the civilization of our age has perfected despotism itself, though it seemed to have nothing to learn. Monarchs had, so to speak, materialized oppression; the democratic republics of the present day have rendered it as entirely an affair of the mind as the will which it is intended to coerce. Under the absolute sway of one man the body was attacked in order to subdue the soul; but the soul escaped the blows which were directed against it and rose proudly superior. Such is not the course adopted by tyranny in democratic republics; there the body is left free, and the soul is enslaved. The master no longer says: "You shall think as I do or you shall die"; but he says: "You are free to think differently from me and to retain your life, your property, and all that you possess; but you are henceforth a stranger among your people. You may retain your civil rights, but they will be useless to you, for you will never be chosen by your fellow citizens if you solicit their votes; and they will affect to scorn you if you ask for their esteem. You will remain among men, but you will be deprived of the rights of mankind. Your fellow creatures will shun you like an impure being; and even those who believe in your innocence will abandon you, lest they should be shunned in their turn. Go in peace! I have given you your life, but it is an existence worse than death."

Absolute monarchies had dishonored despotism; let us beware lest democratic republics should reinstate it and render it less odi-

The Unlimited Power of the Majority

ous and degrading in the eyes of the many by making it still more onerous to the few.

Works have been published in the proudest nations of the Old World expressly intended to censure the vices and the follies of the times: Labruyère inhabited the palace of Louis XIV when he composed his chapter upon the Great, and Molière criticized the courtiers in the plays that were acted before the court. But the ruling power in the United States is not to be made game of. The smallest reproach irritates its sensibility, and the slightest joke that has any foundation in truth renders it indignant; from the forms of its language up to the solid virtues of its character, everything must be made the subject of encomium. No writer, whatever be his eminence, can escape paying this tribute of adulation to his fellow citizens. The majority lives in the perpetual utterance of self-applause, and there are certain truths which the Americans can learn only from strangers or from experience.

If America has not as yet had any great writers, the reason is given in these facts; there can be no literary genius without freedom of opinion, and freedom of opinion does not exist in America. The Inquisition has never been able to prevent a vast number of anti-religious books from circulating in Spain. The empire of the majority succeeds much better in the United States, since it actually removes any wish to publish them. Unbelievers are to be met with in America, but there is no public organ of infidelity. Attempts have been made by some governments to protect morality by prohibiting licentious books. In the United States no one is punished for this sort of books, but no one is induced to write them; not because all the citizens are immaculate in conduct, but because the majority of the community is decent and orderly.

In this case the use of the power is unquestionably good; and I am discussing the nature of the power itself. This irresistible authority is a constant fact, and its judicious exercise is only an accident.

EFFECTS OF THE TYRANNY OF THE MAJORITY UPON THE NATIONAL CHARACTER OF THE AMERICANS — THE COURTIER SPIRIT IN THE UNITED STATES. *Effects of the tyranny of the majority more sensibly felt hitherto on the manners than on the conduct of society — They check the development of great characters —*

Democracy in America

Democratic republics, organized like the United States, infuse the courtier spirit into the mass of the people — Proofs of this spirit in the United States — Why there is more patriotism in the people than in those who govern in their name.

THE tendencies that I have just mentioned are as yet but slightly perceptible in political society, but they already exercise an unfavorable influence upon the national character of the Americans. I attribute the small number of distinguished men in political life to the ever increasing despotism of the majority in the United States.

When the American Revolution broke out, they arose in great numbers; for public opinion then served, not to tyrannize over, but to direct the exertions of individuals. Those celebrated men, sharing the agitation of mind common at that period, had a grandeur peculiar to themselves, which was reflected back upon the nation, but was by no means borrowed from it.

In absolute governments the great nobles who are nearest to the throne flatter the passions of the sovereign and voluntarily truckle to his caprices. But the mass of the nation does not degrade itself by servitude; it often submits from weakness, from habit, or from ignorance, and sometimes from loyalty. Some nations have been known to sacrifice their own desires to those of the sovereign with pleasure and pride, thus exhibiting a sort of independence of mind in the very act of submission. These nations are miserable, but they are not degraded. There is a great difference between doing what one does not approve, and feigning to approve what one does; the one is the weakness of a feeble person, the other befits the temper of a lackey.

In free countries, where everyone is more or less called upon to give his opinion on affairs of state, in democratic republics, where public life is incessantly mingled with domestic affairs, where the sovereign authority is accessible on every side, and where its attention can always be attracted by vociferation, more persons are to be met with who speculate upon its weaknesses and live upon ministering to its passions than in absolute monarchies. Not because men are naturally worse in these states than elsewhere, but the temptation is stronger and at the same time of easier access. The result is a more extensive debasement of character.

Democratic republics extend the practice of currying favor with

The Unlimited Power of the Majority

the many and introduce it into all classes at once; this is the most serious reproach that can be addressed to them. This is especially true in democratic states organized like the American republics, where the power of the majority is so absolute and irresistible that one must give up one's rights as a citizen and almost abjure one's qualities as a man if one intends to stray from the track which it prescribes.

In that immense crowd which throngs the avenues to power in the United States, I found very few men who displayed that manly candor and masculine independence of opinion which frequently distinguished the Americans in former times, and which constitutes the leading feature in distinguished characters wherever they may be found. It seems at first sight as if all the minds of the Americans were formed upon one model, so accurately do they follow the same route. A stranger does, indeed, sometimes meet with Americans who dissent from the rigor of these formulas, with men who deplore the defects of the laws, the mutability and the ignorance of democracy, who even go so far as to observe the evil tendencies that impair the national character, and to point out such remedies as it might be possible to apply; but no one is there to hear them except yourself, and you, to whom these secret reflections are confided, are a stranger and a bird of passage. They are very ready to communicate truths which are useless to you, but they hold a different language in public.

If these lines are ever read in America, I am well assured of two things: in the first place, that all who peruse them will raise their voices to condemn me; and, in the second place, that many of them will acquit me at the bottom of their conscience.

I have heard of patriotism in the United States, and I have found true patriotism among the people, but never among the leaders of the people. This may be explained by analogy: despotism debases the oppressed much more than the oppressor: in absolute monarchies the king often has great virtues, but the courtiers are invariably servile. It is true that American courtiers do not say "Sire," or "Your Majesty," a distinction without a difference. They are forever talking of the natural intelligence of the people whom they serve; they do not debate the question which of the virtues of their master is pre-eminently worthy of admiration, for they assure him that he possesses all the virtues without having acquired them, or without caring to acquire them; they do not

give him their daughters and their wives to be raised at his pleasure to the rank of his concubines; but by sacrificing their opinions they prostitute themselves. Moralists and philosophers in America are not obliged to conceal their opinions under the veil of allegory; but before they venture upon a harsh truth, they say: "We are aware that the people whom we are addressing are too superior to the weaknesses of human nature to lose the command of their temper for an instant. We should not hold this language if we were not speaking to men whom their virtues and their intelligence render more worthy of freedom than all the rest of the world." The sycophants of Louis XIV could not flatter more dexterously.

For my part, I am persuaded that in all governments, whatever their nature may be, servility will cower to force, and adulation will follow power. The only means of preventing men from degrading themselves is to invest no one with that unlimited authority which is the sure method of debasing them.

THE GREATEST DANGERS OF THE AMERICAN REPUBLICS PROCEED FROM THE OMNIPOTENCE OF THE MAJORITY. *Democratic republics liable to perish from a misuse of their power, and not from impotence — The governments of the American republics are more centralized and more energetic than those of the monarchies of Europe — Dangers resulting from this — Opinions of Madison and Jefferson upon this point.*

GOVERNMENTS usually perish from impotence or from tyranny. In the former case, their power escapes from them; it is wrested from their grasp in the latter. Many observers who have witnessed the anarchy of democratic states have imagined that the government of those states was naturally weak and impotent. The truth is that when war is once begun between parties, the government loses its control over society. But I do not think that a democratic power is naturally without force or resources; say, rather, that it is almost always by the abuse of its force and the misemployment of its resources that it becomes a failure. Anarchy is almost always produced by its tyranny or its mistakes, but not by its want of strength.

It is important not to confuse stability with force, or the greatness of a thing with its duration. In democratic republics the power

that directs ⁵ society is not stable, for it often changes hands and assumes a new direction. But whichever way it turns, its force is almost irresistible. The governments of the American republics appear to me to be as much centralized as those of the absolute monarchies of Europe, and more energetic than they are. I do not, therefore, imagine that they will perish from weakness.⁶

If ever the free institutions of America are destroyed, that event may be attributed to the omnipotence of the majority, which may at some future time urge the minorities to desperation and oblige them to have recourse to physical force. Anarchy will then be the result, but it will have been brought about by despotism.

Mr. Madison expresses the same opinion in *The Federalist*, No. 51. "It is of great importance in a republic, not only to guard the society against the oppression of its rulers, but to guard one part of the society against the injustice of the other part. Justice is the end of government. It is the end of civil society. It ever has been, and ever will be, pursued until it be obtained, or until liberty be lost in the pursuit. In a society, under the forms of which the stronger faction can readily unite and oppress the weaker, anarchy may as truly be said to reign as in a state of nature, where the weaker individual is not secured against the violence of the stronger: and as, in the latter state, even the stronger individuals are prompted by the uncertainty of their condition to submit to a government which may protect the weak as well as themselves, so, in the former state, will the more powerful factions be gradually induced by a like motive to wish for a government which will protect all parties, the weaker as well as the more powerful. It can be little doubted, that, if the State of Rhode Island was separated from the Confederacy and left to itself, the insecurity of right under the popular form of government within such narrow limits would be displayed by such reiterated oppressions of the factious majorities, that some power altogether independent of the people would soon be called for by the voice of the very factions whose misrule had proved the necessity of it."

⁵ This power may be centralized in an assembly, in which case it will be strong without being stable; or it may be centralized in an individual, in which case it will be less strong, but more stable.

⁶ I presume that it is scarcely necessary to remind the reader here, as well as throughout this chapter, that I am speaking, not of the Federal government, but of the governments of the individual states, which the majority controls at its pleasure.

Marx' s Anti-capitalism

Karl Marx, excerpts from the Manifesto of the Communist Party [1848],and Capital, vol. I [1867].

The Communist Manifesto

The Communist League, linking the main centres of communist activities in Paris, London, Brussels, and Cologne, was formed out of the League of the Just in June 1847, largely at the instigation of Marx and Engels. At a Congress in London in November 1847, the need was expressed for a clear formulation of the League's principles, and Marx and Engels were asked to draw up a statement. Engels had already composed a draft after the June Congress, and Marx incorporated some of this material when he wrote the *Manifesto* in Brussels in December and January. By the time it was published in February 1848, the series of revolutions that marked that year had already broken out.

The *Communist Manifesto* has four sections. The first gives a history of society as class society since the Middle Ages and ends with a prophecy of the victory of the proletariat over the present ruling class, the bourgeoisie. The second section describes the position of communists within the proletarian class, rejects bourgeois objections to communism, and then characterizes the communist revolution, the measures to be taken by the victorious proletariat, and the nature of the future communist society. The third section contains an extended criticism of other types of socialism—reactionary, bourgeois, and utopian. The final section provides a short description of communist tactics towards other opposition parties and finishes with an appeal for proletarian unity.

None of the ideas in the *Communist Manifesto* were new, and its ideas on revolution and history were obviously influenced by French socialists such as Babeuf, Saint-Simon, and Considérant; and the concept of class, with which the *Manifesto* begins, was first used by French bourgeois historians. What is new is the force of expression and the powerful synthesis afforded by the materialist conception of history. For many parts of the *Manifesto* are simply brilliant summaries of views put forward in *The German Ideology*. Marx and Engels continued to recognize this pamphlet as a classic expression of their views, though they would subsequently have wished to modify some of its ideas—particularly (in the light of the Paris Commune) those relating to the proletariat's appropriation of the state apparatus and the rather simplistic statements on immiserization and class polarization.

A spectre is haunting Europe—the spectre of Communism. All the Powers of old Europe have entered into a holy alliance to exorcise this spectre: Pope and Tsar, Metternich and Guizot, French Radicals and German police-spies.

Where is the party in opposition that has not been decried as Communistic by its opponents in power? Where the Opposition that has not hurled back the

branding reproach of Communism, against the more advanced opposition parties, as well as against its reactionary adversaries?

Two things result from this fact.

I. Communism is already acknowledged by all European Powers to be itself a Power.

II. It is high time that Communists should openly, in the face of the whole world, publish their views, their aims, their tendencies, and meet this nursery tale of the Spectre of Communism with a Manifesto of the party itself.

To this end, Communists of various nationalities have assembled in London, and sketched the following Manifesto, to be published in the English, French, German, Italian, Flemish, and Danish languages.

I

Bourgeois and Proletarians

The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles.

Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman—in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended either in a revolutionary re-constitution of society at large or in the common ruin of the contending classes.

In the earlier epochs of history, we find almost everywhere a complicated arrangement of society into various orders, a manifold gradation of social rank. In ancient Rome we have patricians, knights, plebeians, slaves; in the Middle Ages, feudal lords, vassals, guild-masters, journeymen, apprentices, serfs; in almost all of these classes, again, subordinate gradations.

The modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society has not done away with class antagonisms. It has but established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones.

Our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, possesses, however, this distinctive feature: it has simplified the class antagonisms. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other: Bourgeoisie and Proletariat.

From the serfs of the Middle Ages sprang the chartered burghers of the earliest towns. From these burgesses the first elements of the bourgeoisie were developed.

The discovery of America, the rounding of the Cape, opened up fresh ground for the rising bourgeoisie. The East Indian and Chinese markets, the colonization of America, trade with the colonies, the increase in the means of exchange and in commodities generally, gave to commerce, to navigation, to

industry, an impulse never before known, and thereby, to the revolutionary element in the tottering feudal society, a rapid development.

The feudal system of industry, under which industrial production was monopolized by closed guilds, now no longer sufficed for the growing wants of the new markets. The manufacturing system took its place. The guild-masters were pushed on one side by the manufacturing middle class; division of labour between the different corporate guilds vanished in the face of division of labour in each single workshop.

Meantime the markets kept ever growing, the demand ever rising. Even manufacture no longer sufficed. Thereupon, steam and machinery revolutionized industrial production. The place of manufacture was taken by the giant, Modern Industry, the place of the industrial middle class, by industrial millionaires, the leaders of whole industrial armies, the modern bourgeois.

Modern industry has established the world-market, for which the discovery of America paved the way. This market has given an immense development to commerce, to navigation, to communication by land. This development has, in its turn, reacted on the extension of industry; and in proportion as industry, commerce, navigation, railways extended, in the same proportion the bourgeoisie developed, increased its capital, and pushed into the background every class handed down from the Middle Ages.

We see, therefore, how the modern bourgeoisie is itself the product of a long course of development, of a series of revolutions in the modes of production and of exchange.

Each step in the development of the bourgeoisie was accompanied by a corresponding political advance of that class. An oppressed class under the sway of the feudal nobility, an armed and self-governing association in the medieval commune; here independent urban republic (as in Italy and Germany), there taxable 'third estate' of the monarchy (as in France), afterwards, in the period of manufacture proper, serving either the semi-feudal or the absolute monarchy as a counterpoise against the nobility, and, in fact, corner-stone of the great monarchies in general, the bourgeoisie has at last, since the establishment of Modern Industry and of the world-market, conquered for itself, in the modern representative State, exclusive political sway. The executive of the modern State is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie.

The bourgeoisie, historically, has played a most revolutionary part.

The bourgeoisie, wherever it has got the upper hand, has put an end to all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations. It has pitilessly torn asunder the motley feudal ties that bound man to his 'natural superiors', and has left remaining no other nexus between man and man than naked self-interest, than callous 'cash payment'. It has drowned the most heavenly ecstasies of religious fervour, of chivalrous enthusiasm, of philistine sentimentalism, in the icy water of

egotistical calculation. It has resolved personal worth into exchange value, and in place of the numberless indefeasible chartered freedoms, has set up that single, unconscionable freedom—Free Trade. In one word, for exploitation, veiled by religious and political illusions, it has substituted naked, shameless, direct, brutal exploitation.

The bourgeoisie has stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honoured and looked up to with reverent awe. It has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science into its paid wage-labourers.

The bourgeoisie has torn away from the family its sentimental veil, and has reduced the family relation to a mere money relation.

The bourgeoisie has disclosed how it came to pass that the brutal display of vigour in the Middle Ages, which Reactionists so much admire, found its fitting complement in the most slothful indolence. It has been the first to show what man's activity can bring about. It has accomplished wonders far surpassing Egyptian pyramids, Roman aqueducts, and Gothic cathedrals; it has conducted expeditions that put in the shade all former Exoduses of nations and crusades.

The bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionizing the instruments of production, and thereby the relations of production, and with them the whole relations of society. Conservation of the old modes of production in unaltered form, was, on the contrary, the first condition of existence for all earlier industrial classes. Constant revolutionizing of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones. All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses, his real conditions of life, and his relations with his kind.

The need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the whole surface of the globe. It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connections everywhere.

The bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world-market given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country. To the great chagrin of Reactionists, it has drawn from under the feet of industry the national ground on which it stood. All old-established national industries have been destroyed or are daily being destroyed. They are dislodged by new industries, whose introduction becomes a life-and-death question for all civilized nations, by industries that no longer work up indigenous raw material, but raw material drawn from the remotest zones; industries whose products are consumed, not only at home, but in every quarter of the globe. In place of the old wants, satisfied by the productions of the country, we find new wants, requiring for their satisfaction the products of distant lands and climes. In place

of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal interdependence of nations. And as in material, so also in intellectual production. The intellectual creations of individual nations become common property. National one-sidedness and narrow-mindedness become more and more impossible, and from the numerous national and local literatures, there arises a world literature.

The bourgeoisie, by the rapid improvement of all instruments of production, by the immensely facilitated means of communication, draws all, even the most barbarian, nations into civilization. The cheap prices of its commodities are the heavy artillery with which it batters down all Chinese walls, with which it forces the barbarians' intensely obstinate hatred of foreigners to capitulate. It compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to introduce what it calls civilization into their midst, i.e., to become bourgeois themselves. In one word, it creates a world after its own image.

The bourgeoisie has subjected the country to the rule of the towns. It has created enormous cities, has greatly increased the urban population as compared with the rural, and has thus rescued a considerable part of the population from the idiocy of rural life. Just as it has made the country dependent on the towns, so it has made barbarian and semi-barbarian countries dependent on the civilized ones, nations of peasants on nations of bourgeois, the East on the West.

The bourgeoisie keeps more and more doing away with the scattered state of the population, of the means of production, and of property. It has agglomerated population, centralized means of production, and has concentrated property in a few hands. The necessary consequence of this was political centralization. Independent or but loosely connected provinces, with separate interests, laws, governments, and systems of taxation, became lumped together into one nation, with one government, one code of laws, one national class-interest, one frontier, and one customs-tariff.

The bourgeoisie, during its rule of scarcely one hundred years, has created more massive and more colossal productive forces than have all preceding generations together. Subjection of Nature's forces to man, machinery, application of chemistry to industry and agriculture, steam-navigation, railways, electric telegraphs, clearing of whole continents for cultivation, canalization of rivers, whole populations conjured out of the ground—what earlier century had even a presentiment that such productive forces slumbered in the lap of social labour?

We see then that the means of production and of exchange, on whose foundation the bourgeoisie built itself up, were generated in feudal society. At a certain stage in the development of these means of production and of exchange, the conditions under which feudal society produced and exchanged, the feudal

organization of agriculture and manufacturing industry, in one word, the feudal relations of property become no longer compatible with the already developed productive forces; they become so many fetters. They had to be burst asunder; they were burst asunder.

Into their place stepped free competition, accompanied by a social and political constitution adapted to it, and by the economical and political sway of the bourgeois class.

A similar movement is going on before our own eyes. Modern bourgeois society with its relations of production, of exchange and of property, a society that has conjured up such gigantic means of production and of exchange, is like the sorcerer, who is no longer able to control the powers of the nether world which he has called up by his spells. The history of industry and commerce for many a decade past is but the history of the revolt of modern productive forces against modern conditions of production, against the property relations that are the conditions for the existence of the bourgeoisie and of its rule. It is enough to mention the commercial crises that by their periodical return put on trial, each time more threateningly, the existence of the entire bourgeois society. In these crises a great part not only of the existing products, but also of the previously created productive forces, are periodically destroyed. In these crises there breaks out an epidemic that, in all earlier epochs, would have seemed an absurdity—the epidemic of over-production. Society suddenly finds itself put back into a state of momentary barbarism; it appears as if a famine, a universal war of devastation, has cut off the supply of every means of subsistence; industry and commerce seem to be destroyed; and why? Because there is too much civilization, too much means of subsistence, too much industry, too much commerce. The productive forces at the disposal of society no longer tend to further the development of the conditions of bourgeois property; on the contrary, they have become too powerful for these conditions, by which they are fettered, and so soon as they overcome these fetters, they bring disorder into the whole of bourgeois society, endanger the existence of bourgeois property. The conditions of bourgeois society are too narrow to comprise the wealth created by them. And how does the bourgeoisie get over these crises? On the one hand by enforced destruction of a mass of productive forces; on the other, by the conquest of new markets, and by the more thorough exploitation of the old ones. That is to say, by paving the way for more extensive and more destructive crises, and by diminishing the means whereby crises are prevented.

The weapons with which the bourgeoisie felled feudalism to the ground are now turned against the bourgeoisie itself.

But not only has the bourgeoisie forged the weapons that bring death to itself; it has also called into existence the men who are to wield those weapons—the modern working class—the proletarians.

In proportion as the bourgeoisie, i.e., capital, is developed, in the same proportion is the proletariat, the modern working class, developed—a class of labourers, who live only so long as they find work, and who find work only so long as their labour increases capital. These labourers, who must sell themselves piecemeal, are a commodity, like every other article of commerce, and are consequently exposed to all the vicissitudes of competition, to all the fluctuations of the market.

Owing to the extensive use of machinery and to division of labour, the work of the proletarians has lost all individual character, and, consequently, all charm for the workman. He becomes an appendage of the machine, and it is only the most simple, most monotonous, and most easily acquired knack, that is required of him. Hence, the cost of production of a workman is restricted, almost entirely, to the means of subsistence that he requires for his maintenance, and for the propagation of his race. But the price of a commodity, and therefore also of labour, is equal to its cost of production. In proportion, therefore, as the repulsiveness of the work increases, the wage decreases. Nay more, in proportion as the use of machinery and division of labour increases, in the same proportion the burden of toil also increases, whether by prolongation of the working hours, by increase of the work exacted in a given time or by increased speed of the machinery, etc.

Modern industry has converted the little workshop of the patriarchal master into the great factory of the industrial capitalist. Masses of labourers, crowded into the factory, are organized like soldiers. As privates of the industrial army they are placed under the command of a perfect hierarchy of officers and sergeants. Not only are they slaves of the bourgeois class, and of the bourgeois State; they are daily and hourly enslaved by the machine, by the overlooker, and, above all, by the individual bourgeois manufacturer himself. The more openly this despotism proclaims gain to be its end and aim, the more petty, the more hateful, and the more embittering it is.

The less the skill and exertion of strength implied in manual labour, in other words, the more modern industry becomes developed, the more is the labour of men superseded by that of women. Differences of age and sex have no longer any distinctive social validity for the working class. All are instruments of labour, more or less expensive to use, according to their age and sex.

No sooner is the exploitation of the labourer by the manufacturer, so far, at an end, and he receives his wages in cash, than he is set upon by the other portions of the bourgeoisie, the landlord, the shopkeeper, the pawnbroker, etc.

The lower strata of the middle class—the small tradespeople, shopkeepers, and retired tradesmen generally, the handicraftsmen and peasants—all these sink gradually into the proletariat, partly because their diminutive capital does not suffice for the scale on which Modern Industry is carried on, and is swamped in the competition with the large capitalists, partly because their

specialized skill is rendered worthless by new methods of production. Thus the proletariat is recruited from all classes of the population.

The proletariat goes through various stages of development. With its birth begins its struggle with the bourgeoisie. At first the contest is carried on by individual labourers, then by the workpeople of a factory, then by the operatives of one trade, in one locality, against the individual bourgeois who directly exploits them. They direct their attacks not against the bourgeois conditions of production, but against the instruments of production themselves; they destroy imported wares that compete with their labour, they smash to pieces machinery, they set factories ablaze, they seek to restore by force the vanished status of the workman of the Middle Ages.

At this stage the labourers still form an incoherent mass scattered over the whole country, and broken up by their mutual competition. If anywhere they unite to form more compact bodies, this is not yet the consequence of their own active union, but of the union of the bourgeoisie, which class, in order to attain its own political ends, is compelled to set the whole proletariat in motion, and is moreover yet, for a time, able to do so. At this stage, therefore, the proletarians do not fight their enemies, but the enemies of their enemies, the remnants of absolute monarchy, the landowners, the non-industrial bourgeois, the petty bourgeoisie. Thus the whole historical movement is concentrated in the hands of the bourgeoisie; every victory so obtained is a victory for the bourgeoisie.

But with the development of industry the proletariat not only increases in number; it becomes concentrated in greater masses, its strength grows, and it feels that strength more. The various interests and conditions of life within the ranks of the proletariat are more and more equalized, in proportion as machinery obliterates all distinctions of labour, and nearly everywhere reduces wages to the same low level. The growing competition among the bourgeois, and the resulting commercial crises, make the wages of the workers ever more fluctuating. The unceasing improvement of machinery, ever more rapidly developing, makes their livelihood more and more precarious; the collisions between individual workmen and individual bourgeois take more and more the character of collisions between two classes. Thereupon the workers begin to form combinations (Trades' Unions) against the bourgeois; they club together in order to keep up the rate of wages; they found permanent associations in order to make provision beforehand for these occasional revolts. Here and there the contest breaks out into riots.

Now and then the workers are victorious, but only for a time. The real fruit of their battles lies, not in the immediate result, but in the ever-expanding union of the workers. This union is helped on by the improved means of communication that are created by modern industry and that place the workers of different localities in contact with one another. It was just this contact that was needed

to centralize the numerous local struggles, all of the same character, into one national struggle between classes. But every class struggle is a political struggle. And that union, to attain which the burghers of the Middle Ages, with their miserable highways, required centuries, the modern proletarians, thanks to railways, achieve in a few years.

This organization of the proletarians into a class, and consequently into a political party, is continually being upset again by the competition between the workers themselves. But it ever rises up again, stronger, firmer, mightier. It compels legislative recognition of particular interests of the workers, by taking advantage of the divisions among the bourgeoisie itself. Thus the ten-hours' bill in England was carried.

Altogether, collisions between the classes of the old society further in many ways the course of development of the proletariat. The bourgeoisie finds itself involved in a constant battle. At first with the aristocracy; later on, with those portions of the bourgeoisie itself whose interests have become antagonistic to the progress of industry; at all times, with the bourgeoisie of foreign countries. In all these battles it sees itself compelled to appeal to the proletariat, to ask for its help, and thus to drag it into the political arena. The bourgeoisie itself, therefore, supplies the proletariat with its own elements of political and general education, in other words, it furnishes the proletariat with weapons for fighting the bourgeoisie.

Further, as we have already seen, entire sections of the ruling classes are, by the advance of industry, precipitated into the proletariat, or are at least threatened in their conditions of existence. These also supply the proletariat with fresh elements of enlightenment and progress.

Finally, in times when the class struggle nears the decisive hour, the process of dissolution going on within the ruling class, in fact within the whole range of old society, assumes such a violent, glaring character, that a small section of the ruling class cuts itself adrift, and joins the revolutionary class, the class that holds the future in its hands. Just as, therefore, at an earlier period, a section of the nobility went over to the bourgeoisie, so now a portion of the bourgeoisie goes over to the proletariat, and in particular, a portion of the bourgeois ideologists, who have raised themselves to the level of comprehending theoretically the historical movement as a whole.

Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, the proletariat alone is a really revolutionary class. The other classes decay and finally disappear in the face of Modern Industry; the proletariat is its special and essential product.

The lower middle class, the small manufacturer, the shopkeeper, the artisan, the peasant, all these fight against the bourgeoisie, to save from extinction their existence as fractions of the middle class. They are therefore not revolutionary, but conservative. Nay more, they are reactionary, for they try to roll back the

wheel of history. If by chance they are revolutionary, they are so only in view of their impending transfer into the proletariat; they thus defend not their present, but their future interests, they desert their own standpoint to place themselves at that of the proletariat.

The 'dangerous class', the social scum, that passively rotting mass thrown off by the lowest layers of old society, may, here and there, be swept into the movement by a proletarian revolution; its conditions of life, however, prepare it far more for the part of a bribed tool of reactionary intrigue.

In the conditions of the proletariat, those of old society at large are already virtually swamped. The proletarian is without property; his relation to his wife and children has no longer anything in common with the bourgeois family relations; modern industrial labour, modern subjection to capital, the same in England as in France, in America as in Germany, has stripped him of every trace of national character. Law, morality, religion are to him so many bourgeois prejudices, behind which lurk in ambush just as many bourgeois interests.

All the preceding classes that got the upper hand, sought to fortify their already acquired status by subjecting society at large to their conditions of appropriation. The proletarians cannot become masters of the productive forces of society, except by abolishing their own previous mode of appropriation, and thereby also every other previous mode of appropriation. They have nothing of their own to secure and to fortify; their mission is to destroy all previous securities for, and insurances of, individual property.

All previous historical movements were movements of minorities, or in the interests of minorities. The proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, in the interests of the immense majority. The proletariat, the lowest stratum of our present society, cannot stir, cannot raise itself up, without the whole superincumbent strata of official society being sprung into the air.

Though not in substance, yet in form, the struggle of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie is at first a national struggle. The proletariat of each country must, of course, first of all settle matters with its own bourgeoisie.

In depicting the most general phases of the development of the proletariat, we traced the more or less veiled civil war, raging within existing society, up to the point where that war breaks out into open revolution, and where the violent overthrow of the bourgeoisie lays the foundation for the sway of the proletariat.

Hitherto, every form of society has been based, as we have already seen, on the antagonism of oppressing and oppressed classes. But in order to oppress a class, certain conditions must be assured to it under which it can, at least, continue its slavish existence. The serf, in the period of serfdom, raised himself to membership in the commune, just as the petty bourgeois, under the yoke of

feudal absolutism, managed to develop into a bourgeois. The modern labourer, on the contrary, instead of rising with the progress of industry, sinks deeper and deeper below the conditions of existence of his own class. He becomes a pauper, and pauperism develops more rapidly than population and wealth. And here it becomes evident, that the bourgeoisie is unfit any longer to be the ruling class in society, and to impose its conditions of existence upon society as an overriding law. It is unfit to rule because it is incompetent to assure an existence to its slave within his slavery, because it cannot help letting him sink into such a state, that it has to feed him, instead of being fed by him. Society can no longer live under this bourgeoisie, in other words, its existence is no longer compatible with society.

The essential condition for the existence, and for the sway of the bourgeois class, is the formation and augmentation of capital; the condition for capital is wage-labour. Wage-labour rests exclusively on competition between the labourers. The advance of industry, whose involuntary promoter is the bourgeoisie, replaces the isolation of the labourers, due to competition, by their revolutionary combination, due to association. The development of Modern Industry, therefore, cuts from under its feet the very foundation on which the bourgeoisie produces and appropriates products. What the bourgeoisie, therefore, produces, above all, is its own grave-diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable.

Capital

Capital represents only a part of the work on 'Economics' that Marx had mapped out in the late 1850s. Thus it is an expansion of only a section—though the most important section—of the material contained in the *Grundrisse*. And of the four volumes of this 'section', Marx only managed to complete the first. The four were drafted out in reverse order: the manuscript for the *Theories of Surplus Value* was completed in 1862–3, the third volume of *Capital* in 1864, and the first in 1865–6. It was only this first volume that Marx saw through to publication.

Volume One of *Capital* consists of two very distinct parts: the first nine chapters contain a very abstract discussion of the central concepts of value, labour, surplus value, etc. It is not only this abstraction that makes them difficult; it is also the Hegelian mode of expression and the fact that, while the concepts used by Marx were familiar to mid-nineteenth-century economists, they were abandoned by the later orthodoxy of the marginalist school. Modern economists have tended to discuss the functioning of the capitalist system as given and concentrate particularly on prices, whereas Marx wished to examine the mode of production which gave rise to the capitalist system and which would, he believed, bring about its own destruction.

Following the first nine chapters, there is a masterly account of the genesis of capitalism which makes pioneering use of the statistical material then becoming increasingly available. It is one of the best illustrations of applied historical materialism.

Volume Two of *Capital* is rather technical, and discusses the circulation of capital and the genesis of economic crises. Volume Three begins with a discussion of value and prices and the tendency of profits to fall, but trails off towards the end with the dramatically incomplete section on classes.

The following selections are intended to give the most important parts of the argument of the first volume, supplemented by a few key sections from the third volume.

From Volume One

From the Prefaces: i. 1867

'Every beginning is difficult' holds in all sciences. To understand the first chapter, especially the section that contains the analysis of commodities, will, there-

~~fallen by one-half; and it becomes 20 yards of linen = $\frac{1}{2}$ coat, either, because the value of the linen has fallen by one-half, or because the value of the coat has doubled.~~

~~III. Let the quantities of labour time respectively necessary for the production of the linen and the coat vary simultaneously in the same direction and in the same proportion. In this case 20 yards of linen continue equal to 1 coat, however much their values may have altered. Their change of value is seen as soon as they are compared with a third commodity, whose value has remained constant. If the values of all commodities rose or fell simultaneously, and in the same proportion, their relative values would remain unaltered. Their real change of value would appear from the diminished or increased quantity of commodities produced in a given time.~~

~~IV. The labour time respectively necessary for the production of the linen and the coat, and therefore the value of these commodities may simultaneously vary in the same direction, but at unequal rates, or in opposite directions, or in other ways. The effect of all these possible different variations, on the relative value of a commodity, may be deduced from the results of I, II, and III.~~

~~Thus real changes in the magnitude of value are neither unequivocally nor exhaustively reflected in their relative expression, that is, in the equation expressing the magnitude of relative value. The relative value of a commodity may vary, although its value remains constant. Its relative value may remain constant, although its value varies; and finally, simultaneous variations in the magnitude of value and in that of its relative expression by no means necessarily correspond in amount. . . .~~

The Fetishism of Commodities

A commodity appears, at first sight, a very trivial thing, and easily understood. Its analysis shows that it is, in reality, a very queer thing, abounding in metaphysical subtleties and theological niceties. So far as it is a value in use, there is nothing mysterious about it, whether we consider it from the point of view that by its properties it is capable of satisfying human wants, or from the point that those properties are the product of human labour. It is as clear as noonday, that man, by his industry, changes the forms of the materials furnished by Nature, in such a way as to make them useful to him. The form of wood, for instance, is altered, by making a table out of it. Yet, for all that, the table continues to be that common, everyday thing, wood. But, so soon as it steps forth as a commodity, it is changed into something transcendent. It not only stands with its feet on the ground, but, in relation to all other commodities, it stands on its head, and evolves out of its wooden brain grotesque ideas, far more wonderful than 'table-turning' ever was.

The mystical character of commodities does not originate, therefore, in their use-value. Just as little does it proceed from the nature of the determining factors of value. For, in the first place, however varied the useful kinds of labour, or productive activities, may be, it is a physiological fact, that they are functions of the human organism, and that each such function, whatever may be its nature or form, is essentially the expenditure of human brain, nerves, muscles, etc. Secondly, with regard to that which forms the groundwork for the quantitative determination of value, namely, the duration of that expenditure, or the quantity of labour, it is quite clear that there is a palpable difference between its quantity and the quality. In all states of society, the labour time that it costs to produce the means of subsistence must necessarily be an object of interest to mankind, though not of equal interest in different stages of development. And lastly, from the moment that men in any way work for one another, their labour assumes a social form.

Whence, then, arises the enigmatical character of the product of labour, so soon as it assumes the form of commodities? Clearly from this form itself. The equality of all sorts of human labour is expressed objectively by their products all being equally values; the measure of the expenditure of labour power by the duration of that expenditure takes the form of the quantity of value of the products of labour; and finally, the mutual relations of the producers, within which the social character of their labour affirms itself, take the form of a social relation between the products.

A commodity is therefore a mysterious thing, simply because in it the social character of men's labour appears to them as an objective character stamped upon the product of that labour; because the relation of the producers to the sum total of their own labour is presented to them as a social relation, existing not between themselves, but between the products of their labour. This is the reason why the products of labour become commodities, social things whose qualities are at the same time perceptible and imperceptible by the senses. In the same way the light from an object is perceived by us not as the subjective excitation of our optic nerve, but as the objective form of something outside the eye itself. But, in the act of seeing, there is at all events, an actual passage of light from one thing to another, from the external object to the eye. There is a physical relation between physical things. But it is different with commodities. There, the existence of the things *qua* commodities, and the value relation between the products of labour which stamps them as commodities, have absolutely no connection with their physical properties and with the material relations arising therefrom. There it is a definite social relation between men, that assumes, in their eyes, the fantastic form of a relation between things. In order, therefore, to find an analogy, we must have recourse to the mist-enveloped regions of the religious world. In that world the productions of the human brain appear as independent beings endowed with life, and entering

into relation both with one another and the human race. So it is in the world of commodities with the products of men's hands. This I call the Fetishism which attaches itself to the products of labour, so soon as they are produced as commodities, and which is therefore inseparable from the production of commodities.

This Fetishism of commodities has its origin, as the foregoing analysis has already shown, in the peculiar social character of the labour that produces them.

As a general rule, articles of utility become commodities, only because they are products of the labour of private individuals or groups of individuals who carry on their work independently of each other. The sum total of the labour of all these private individuals forms the aggregate labour of society. Since the producers do not come into social contact with each other until they exchange their products, the specific social character of each producer's labour does not show itself except in the act of exchange. In other words, the labour of the individual asserts itself as a part of the labour of society only by means of the relations which the act of exchange establishes directly between the products, and indirectly, through them, between the producers. To the latter, therefore, the relations connecting the labour of one individual with that of the rest appear, not as direct social relations between individuals at work, but as what they really are, material relations between persons and social relations between things. It is only by being exchanged that the products of labour acquire, as values, one uniform social status, distinct from their varied forms of existence as objects of utility. This division of a product into a useful thing and a value becomes practically important, only when exchange has acquired such an extension that useful articles are produced for the purpose of being exchanged, and their character as values has therefore to be taken into account, beforehand, during production. From this moment the labour of the individual producer acquires socially a twofold character. On the one hand, it must, as a definite useful kind of labour, satisfy a definite social want, and thus hold its place as part and parcel of the collective labour of all, as a branch of a social division of labour that has sprung up spontaneously. On the other hand, it can satisfy the manifold wants of the individual producer himself, only in so far as the mutual exchangeability of all kinds of useful private labour is an established social fact, and therefore the private useful labour of each producer ranks on an equality with that of all others. The equalization of the most different kinds of labour can be the result only of an abstraction from their inequalities, or of reducing them to their common denominator, viz., expenditure of human labour power or human labour in the abstract. The twofold social character of the labour of the individual appears to him, when reflected in his brain, only under those forms which are impressed upon that labour in everyday practice by the exchange of products. In this way, the character that

his own labour possesses of being socially useful takes the form of the condition that the product must be not only useful, but useful for others, and the social character that his particular labour has of being the equal of all other particular kinds of labour, takes the form that all the physically different articles that are the products of labour have one common quality, viz., that of having value.

Hence, when we bring the products of our labour into relation with each other as values, it is not because we see in these articles the material receptacles of homogeneous human labour. Quite the contrary: whenever, by an exchange, we equate as values our different products, by that very act, we also equate, as human labour, the different kinds of labour expended upon them. We are not aware of this, nevertheless we do it. Value, therefore, does not stalk about with a label describing what it is. It is value, rather, that converts every product into a social hieroglyphic. Later on, we try to decipher the hieroglyphic, to get behind the secret of our own social products; for to stamp an object of utility as a value, is just as much a social product as language. The recent scientific discovery that the products of labour, so far as they are values, are but material expressions of the human labour spent in their production marks, indeed, an epoch in the history of the development of the human race, but by no means dissipates the mist through which the social character of labour appears to us to be an objective character of the products themselves. The fact that in the particular form of production with which we are dealing, viz., the production of commodities, the specific social character of private labour carried on independently, consists in the equality of every kind of that labour, by virtue of its being human labour, which character, therefore, assumes in the product the form of value—this fact appears to the producers, notwithstanding the discovery above referred to, to be just as real and final, as the fact that, after the discovery by science of the component gases of air, the atmosphere itself remained unaltered.

What, first of all, practically concerns producers when they make an exchange, is the question, how much of some other product they get for their own? in what proportions are the products exchangeable? When these proportions have, by custom, attained a certain stability, they appear to result from the nature of the products, so that, for instance, one ton of iron and two ounces of gold appear as naturally to be of equal value as a pound of gold and a pound of iron, in spite of their different physical and chemical qualities, appear to be of equal weight. The character of having value, when once impressed upon products, obtains fixity only by reason of their acting and reacting upon each other as quantities of value. These quantities vary continually, independently of the will, foresight, and action of the producers. To them, their own social action takes the form of the action of objects, which rule the producers instead of being ruled by them. It requires a fully developed production of commodities

before, from accumulated experience alone, the scientific conviction springs up that all the different kinds of private labour, which are carried on independently of each other, and yet as spontaneously developed branches of the social division of labour, are continually being reduced to the quantitative proportions in which society requires them. And why? Because, in the midst of all the accidental and ever fluctuating exchange-relations between the products, the labour time socially necessary for their production forcibly asserts itself like an overriding law of Nature. The law of gravity thus asserts itself when a house falls about our ears. The determination of the magnitude of value by labour time is therefore a secret, hidden under the apparent fluctuations in the relative values of commodities. Its discovery, while removing all appearance of mere accidentality from the determination of the magnitude of the values of products, yet in no way alters the mode in which that determination takes place.

Man's reflections on the forms of social life, and consequently, also, his scientific analysis of those forms, take a course directly opposite to that of their actual historical development. He begins, *post festum* [after the event], with the results of the process of development ready to hand before him. The characters that stamp products as commodities, and whose establishment is a necessary preliminary to the circulation of commodities, have already acquired the stability of natural, self-understood forms of social life, before man seeks to decipher, not their historical character, for in his eyes they are immutable, but their meaning. Consequently it was the analysis of the prices of commodities that alone led to the determination of the magnitude of value, and it was the common expression of all commodities in money that alone led to the establishment of their characters as values. It is, however, just this ultimate money-form of the world of commodities that actually conceals, instead of disclosing, the social character of private labour, and the social relations between the individual producers. When I state that coats or boots stand in a relation to linen, because it is the universal incarnation of abstract human labour, the absurdity of the statement is self-evident. Nevertheless, when the producers of coats and boots compare those articles with linen, or, what is the same thing, with gold or silver, as the universal equivalent, they express the relation between their own private labour and the collective labour of society in the same absurd form.

The categories of bourgeois economy consist of such like forms. They are forms of thought expressing with social validity the conditions and relations of a definite, historically determined mode of production, viz., the production of commodities. The whole mystery of commodities, all the magic and necromancy that surrounds the products of labour as long as they take the form of commodities, vanishes therefore, as soon as we come to other forms of production.

Since Robinson Crusoe's experiences are a favourite theme with political economists, let us take a look at him on his island. Moderate though he be, yet

some few wants he has to satisfy, and must therefore do a little useful work of various sorts, such as making tools and furniture, taming goats, fishing and hunting. Of his prayers and the like we take no account, since they are a source of pleasure to him, and he looks upon them as so much recreation. In spite of the variety of his work, he knows that his labour, whatever its form, is but the activity of one and the same Robinson, and, consequently, that it consists of nothing but different modes of human labour. Necessity itself compels him to apportion his time accurately between his different kinds of work. Whether one kind occupies a greater space in his general activity than another depends on the difficulties, greater or less as the case may be, to be overcome in attaining the useful effect aimed at. This our friend Robinson soon learns by experience, and having rescued a watch, ledger, and pen and ink from the wreck, commences, like a true-born Briton, to keep a set of books. His stock-book contains a list of the objects of utility that belong to him, of the operations necessary for their production; and lastly, of the labour time that definite quantities of those objects have, on an average, cost him. All the relations between Robinson and the objects that form this wealth of his own creation, are here so simple and clear as to be intelligible without exertion, even to Mr. Sedley Taylor. And yet those relations contain all that is essential to the determination of value.

Let us now transport ourselves from Robinson's island bathed in light to the European middle ages shrouded in darkness. Here, instead of the independent man, we find everyone dependent, serfs and lords, vassals and suzerains, laymen and clergy. Personal dependence here characterizes the social relations of production just as much as it does the other spheres of life organized on the basis of that production. But for the very reason that personal dependence forms the groundwork of society, there is no necessity for labour and its products to assume a fantastic form different from their reality. They take the shape, in the transactions of society, of services in kind and payments in kind. Here the particular and natural form of labour, and not, as in a society based on production of commodities, its general abstract form is the immediate social form of labour. Compulsory labour is just as properly measured by time, as commodity-producing labour; but every serf knows that what he expends in the service of his lord is a definite quantity of his won personal labour power. The tithe to be rendered to the priest is more matter of fact than his blessing. No matter, then, what we may think of the parts played by the different classes of people themselves in this society, the social relations between individuals in the performance of their labour appear at all events as their own mutual personal relations, and are not disguised under the shape of social relations between the products of labour.

For an example of labour in common or directly associated labour, we have no occasion to go back to that spontaneously developed form which we find on the threshold of the history of all civilized races. We have one close at hand in

the patriarchal industries of a peasant family, that produces corn, cattle, yarn, linen, and clothing for home use. These different articles are, as regards the family, so many products of its labour, but as between themselves, they are not commodities. The different kinds of labour, such as tillage, cattle tending, spinning, weaving, and making clothes, which result in the various products, are in themselves, and such as they are, direct social functions, because functions of the family, which, just as much as a society based on the production of commodities, possesses a spontaneously developed system of division of labour. The distribution of the work within the family, and the regulation of the labour time of the several members, depend as well upon differences of age and sex as upon natural conditions varying with the seasons. The labour power of each individual, by its very nature, operates in this case merely as a definite portion of the whole labour power of the family, and therefore the measure of the expenditure of individual labour power by its duration, appears here by its very nature as a social character of their labour.

Let us now picture to ourselves, by way of change, a community of free individuals, carrying on their work with the means of production in common, in which the labour power of all the different individuals is consciously applied as the combined labour power of the community. All the characteristics of Robinson's labour are here repeated, but with this difference, that they are social, instead of individual. Everything produced by him was exclusively the result of his own personal labour, and therefore simply an object of use for himself. The total product of our community is a social product. One portion serves as fresh means of production and remains social. But another portion is consumed by the members as means of subsistence. A distribution of this portion among them is consequently necessary. The mode of this distribution will vary with the productive organization of the community, and the degree of historical development attained by the producers. We will assume, but merely for the sake of a parallel with the production of commodities, that the share of each individual producer in the means of subsistence is determined by his labour time. Labour time would, in that case, play a double part. Its apportionment in accordance with a definite social plan maintains the proper proportion between the different kinds of work to be done and the various wants of the community. On the other hand, it also serves as a measure of the portion of the common labour borne by each individual, and of his share in the part of the total product destined for individual consumption. The social relations of the individual producers, with regard both to their labour and to its products, are in this case perfectly simple and intelligible, and that with regard not only to production but also to distribution.

The religious world is but the reflex of the real world. And for a society based upon the production of commodities, in which the producers in general enter into social relations with one another by treating their products as commodities

and values, whereby they reduce their individual private labour to the standard of homogeneous human labour—for such a society, Christianity with its *cultus* of abstract man, more especially in its bourgeois developments, Protestantism, Deism, etc., is the most fitting form of religion. In the ancient Asiatic and other ancient modes of production, we find that the conversion of products into commodities, and therefore the conversion of men into producers of commodities, holds a subordinate place, which, however, increases in importance as the primitive communities approach nearer and nearer to their dissolution. Trading nations, properly so called, exist in the ancient world only in its interstices, like the gods of Epicurus in the Intermundia, or like Jews in the pores of Polish society. Those ancient social organisms of production are, as compared with bourgeois society, extremely simple and transparent. But they are founded either on the immature development of man individually, who has not yet severed the umbilical cord that unites him with his fellowmen in a primitive tribal community, or upon direct relations of subjection. They can arise and exist only when the development of the productive power of labour has not risen beyond a low stage, and when, therefore, the social relations within the sphere of material life, between man and man, and between man and Nature, are correspondingly narrow. This narrowness is reflected in the ancient worship of Nature, and in the other elements of the popular religions. The religious reflex of the real world can, in any case, only then finally vanish, when the practical relations of everyday life offer to man none but perfectly intelligible and reasonable relations with regard to his fellowmen and to Nature. . . .

The life-process of society, which is based on the process of material production, does not strip off its mystical veil until it is treated as production by freely associated men, and is consciously regulated by them in accordance with a settled plan. This, however, demands for society a certain material groundwork or set of conditions of existence which in their turn are the spontaneous product of a long and painful process of development.

Political Economy has indeed analysed, however incompletely, value and its magnitude, and has discovered what lies beneath these forms. But it has never once asked the question why labour is represented by the value of its product and labour-time by the magnitude of that value. These formulas, which bear stamped upon them in unmistakable letters, that they belong to a state of society in which the process of production has the mastery over man, instead of being controlled by him, such formulas appear to the bourgeois intellect to be as much a self-evident necessity imposed by Nature as productive labour itself. Hence forms of social production that preceded the bourgeois form are treated by the bourgeoisie in much the same way as the Fathers of the Church treated pre-Christian religions. . . .

To what extent some economists are misled by the Fetishism inherent in commodities, or by the objective appearance of the social characteristics of

labour, is shown, among other ways, by the dull and tedious quarrel over the part played by Nature in the formation of exchange-value. Since exchange value is a definite social manner of expressing the amount of labour bestowed upon an object, Nature has no more to do with it, than it has in fixing the course of exchange.

The mode of production in which the product takes the form of a commodity, or is produced directly for exchange, is the most general and most embryonic form of bourgeois production. It therefore makes its appearance at an early date in history, though not in the same predominating and characteristic manner as nowadays. Hence its Fetish character is comparatively easy to be seen through. But when we come to more concrete forms, even this appearance of simplicity vanishes. Whence arose the illusions of the monetary system? To it gold and silver, when serving as money, did not represent a social relation between producers, but were natural objects with strange social properties. And modern economy, which looks down with such disdain on the monetary system, does not its superstition come out as clear as noonday, whenever it treats of capital? How long is it since economy discarded the physiocratic illusion that rents grow out of the soil and not out of society?

But not to anticipate, we will content ourselves with yet another example relating to the commodity-form. Could commodities themselves speak, they would say: Our use-value may be a thing that interests men. It is no part of us as objects. What, however, does belong to us as objects is our value. Our natural intercourse as commodities proves it. In the eyes of each other we are nothing but exchange-values. Now listen how those commodities speak through the mouth of the economist. 'Value'—(i.e. exchange-value) 'is a property of things, riches'—(i.e. use-value) 'of man. Value, in this sense, necessarily implies exchanges, riches do not.' 'Riches' (use-value) 'are the attribute of men, value is the attribute of commodities. A man or a community is rich, a pearl or a diamond is valuable . . . A pearl or a diamond is valuable' as a pearl or diamond. So far no chemist has ever discovered exchange-value either in a pearl or a diamond. The economical discoverers of this chemical element, who by the by lay special claim to critical acumen, find however that the use-value of objects belongs to them independently of their material properties, while their value, on the other hand, forms a part of them as objects. What confirms them in this view is the peculiar circumstance that the use-value of objects is realized without exchange, by means of a direct relation between the objects and man, while, on the other hand, their value is realized only by exchange, that is, by means of a social process. Who fails here to call to mind our good friend, Dogberry, who informs neighbour Seacoal, that, 'To be a well-favoured man is the gift of fortune; but to read and write comes by nature.' . . .

Social Darwinism

Herbert Spencer, *The Man versus the State* [1884]
(excerpts).

these changes it is unquestionable that, whether made or not by Liberals themselves, they were made in conformity with principles professed and urged by Liberals.

But why do I enumerate facts so well known to all? Simply because, as intimated at the outset, it seems needful to remind everybody what Liberalism was in the past, that they may perceive its unlikeness to the so-called Liberalism of the present. It would be inexcusable to name these various measures for the purpose of pointing out the character common to them, were it not that in our day men have forgotten their common character. They do not remember that, in one or other way, all these truly Liberal changes diminished compulsory co-operation throughout social life and increased voluntary co-operation. They have forgotten that, in one direction or other, they diminished the range of governmental authority, and increased the area within which each citizen may act unchecked. They have lost sight of the truth that in past times Liberalism habitually stood for individual freedom *versus* State-coercion.

And now comes the inquiry—How is it that Liberals have lost sight of this? How is it that Liberalism, getting more and more into power, has grown more and more coercive in its legislation? How is it that, either directly through its own majorities or indirectly through aid given in such cases to the majorities of its opponents, Liberalism has to an increasing extent adopted the policy of dictating the actions of citizens, and, by consequence, diminishing the range throughout which their actions remain free? How are we to explain this spreading confusion of thought which has led it, in pursuit of what appears to be public good, to invert the method by which in earlier days it achieved public good?

Unaccountable as at first sight this unconscious change of policy seems, we shall find that it has arisen quite naturally. Given the unanalytical thought ordinarily brought to bear on political matters, and, under existing conditions, nothing else

was to be expected. To make this clear some parenthetical explanations are needful.

From the lowest to the highest creatures, intelligence progresses by acts of discrimination; and it continues so to progress among men, from the most ignorant to the most cultured. To class rightly—to put in the same group things which are of essentially the same natures, and in other groups things of natures essentially different—is the fundamental condition to right guidance of actions. Beginning with rudimentary vision, which gives warning that some large opaque body is passing near (just as closed eyes turned to the window, perceiving the shade caused by a hand put before them, tell us of something moving in front), the advance is to developed vision, which, by exactly-appreciated combinations of forms, colours, and motions, identifies objects at great distances as prey or enemies, and so makes it possible to improve the adjustments of conduct for securing food or evading death. That progressing perception of differences and consequent greater correctness of classing, constitutes, under one of its chief aspects, the growth of intelligence, is equally seen when we pass from the relatively simple physical vision to the relatively complex intellectual vision—the vision through the agency of which, things previously grouped by certain external resemblances or by certain extrinsic circumstances, come to be more truly grouped in conformity with their intrinsic structures or natures. Undeveloped intellectual vision is just as indiscriminating and erroneous in its classings as undeveloped physical vision. Instance the early arrangement of plants into the groups, trees, shrubs, and herbs: size, the most conspicuous trait, being the ground of distinction; and the assemblages formed being such as united many plants extremely unlike in their natures, and separated others that are near akin. Or still better, take the popular classification which puts together under the same general name, fish and shell-fish, and under

the sub-name, shell-fish, puts together crustaceans and molluscs; nay, which goes further, and regards as fish the cetacean mammals. Partly because of the likeness in their modes of life as inhabiting the water, and partly because of some general resemblance in their flavours, creatures that are in their essential natures far more widely separated than a fish is from a bird, are associated in the same class and in the same sub-class.

Now the general truth thus exemplified, holds throughout those higher ranges of intellectual vision concerned with things not presentable to the senses, and, among others, such things as political institutions and political measures. For when thinking of these, too, the results of inadequate intellectual faculty, or inadequate culture of it, or both, are erroneous classings and consequent erroneous conclusions. Indeed, the liability to error is here much greater; since the things with which the intellect is concerned do not admit of examination in the same easy way. You cannot touch or see a political institution: it can be known only by an effort of constructive imagination. Neither can you apprehend by physical perception a political measure: this no less requires a process of mental representation by which its elements are put together in thought, and the essential nature of the combination conceived. Here, therefore, still more than in the cases above named, defective intellectual vision is shown in grouping by external characters, or extrinsic circumstances. How institutions are wrongly classed from this cause, we see in the common notion that the Roman Republic was a popular form of government. Look into the early ideas of the French revolutionists who aimed at an ideal state of freedom, and you find that the political forms and deeds of the Romans were their models; and even now a historian might be named who instances the corruptions of the Roman Republic as showing us what popular government leads to. Yet the resemblance between the institutions of the Romans and free institutions properly so-called, was less than that between a

shark and a porpoise—a resemblance of general external form accompanying widely different internal structures. For the Roman Government was that of a small oligarchy within a larger oligarchy: the members of each being unchecked autocrats. A society in which the relatively few men who had political power, and were in a qualified sense free, were so many petty despots, holding not only slaves and dependents but even children in a bondage no less absolute than that in which they held their cattle, was, by its intrinsic nature, more nearly allied to an ordinary despotism than to a society of citizens politically equal.

Passing now to our special question, we may understand the kind of confusion in which Liberalism has lost itself: and the origin of those mistaken classings of political measures which have misled it—classings, as we shall see, by conspicuous external traits instead of by internal natures. For what, in the popular apprehension and in the apprehension of those who effected them, were the changes made by Liberals in the past? They were abolitions of grievances suffered by the people, or by portions of them: this was the common trait they had which most impressed itself on men's minds. They were mitigations of evils which had directly or indirectly been felt by large classes of citizens, as causes to misery or as hindrances to happiness. And since, in the minds of most, a rectified evil is equivalent to an achieved good, these measures came to be thought of as so many positive benefits; and the welfare of the many came to be conceived alike by Liberal statesmen and Liberal voters as the aim of Liberalism. Hence the confusion. The gaining of a popular good, being the external conspicuous trait common to Liberal measures in earlier days (then in each case gained by a relaxation of restraints), it has happened that popular good has come to be sought by Liberals, not as an end to be indirectly gained by relaxations of restraints, but as the end to be directly gained. And seeking to gain it directly, they have used methods intrinsically opposed to those originally used.

And now, having seen how this reversal of policy has arisen (or partial reversal, I should say, for the recent Burials Act and the efforts to remove all remaining religious inequalities, show continuance of the original policy in certain directions), let us proceed to contemplate the extent to which it has been carried during recent times, and the still greater extent to which the future will see it carried if current ideas and feelings continue to predominate.

Before proceeding, it may be well to say that no reflections are intended on the motives which prompted one after another of these various restraints and dictations. These motives were doubtless in nearly all cases good. It must be admitted that the restrictions placed by an Act of 1870, on the employment of women and children in Turkey-red dyeing works, were, in intention, no less philanthropic than those of Edward VI., which prescribed the minimum time for which a journeymen should be retained. Without question, the Seed Supply (Ireland) Act of 1880, which empowered guardians to buy seed for poor tenants, and then to see it properly planted, was moved by a desire for public welfare no less great than that which in 1533 prescribed the number of sheep a tenant might keep, or that of 1597, which commanded that decayed houses of husbandry should be rebuilt. Nobody will dispute that the various measures of late years taken for restricting the sale of intoxicating liquors, have been taken as much with a view to public morals as were the measures taken of old for checking the evils of luxury; as, for instance, in the fourteenth century, when diet as well as dress was restricted. Everyone must see that the edicts issued by Henry VIII. to prevent the lower classes from playing dice, cards, bowls, &c., were not more prompted by desire for popular welfare than were the acts passed of late to check gambling.

Further, I do not intend here to question the wisdom of these modern interferences, which Conservatives and Liberals

vie with one and other in multiplying, any more than to question the wisdom of those ancient ones which they in many cases resemble. We will not now consider whether the plans of late adopted for preserving the lives of sailors, are or are not more judicious than that sweeping Scotch measure which, in the middle of the fifteenth century, prohibited captains from leaving harbor during the winter. For the present, it shall remain undebated whether there is a better warrant for giving sanitary officers powers to search certain premises for unfit food, than there was for the law of Edward III., under which innkeepers at seaports were sworn to search their guests to prevent the exportation of money or plate. We will assume that there is no less sense in that clause of the Canal-boat Act, which forbids an owner to board gratuitously the children of the boatmen, than there was in the Spitalfields Acts, which, up to 1824, for the benefit of the artisans, forbade the manufacturers to fix their factories more than ten miles from the Royal Exchange.

We exclude, then, these questions of philanthropic motive and wise judgment, taking both of them for granted; and have here to concern ourselves solely with the compulsory nature of the measures which, for good or evil as the case may be, have been put in force during periods of Liberal ascendancy.

To bring the illustrations within compass, let us commence with 1860, under the second administration of Lord Palmerston. In that year, the restrictions of the Factories Act were extended to bleaching and dyeing works; authority was given to provide analysts of food and drink, to be paid out of local rates; there was an Act providing for inspection of gas-works, as well as for fixing quality of gas and limiting price; there was the Act which, in addition to further mine-inspection, made it penal to employ boys under twelve not attending school and unable to read and write. In 1861 occurred an extension of the compulsory provisions of the Factories Act to lace-works; power was given to poor-

law guardians, &c., to enforce vaccination; local boards were authorized to fix rates of hire for horses, ponies, mules, asses, and boats; and certain locally-formed bodies had given to them powers of taxing the locality for rural drainage and irrigation works, and for supplying water to cattle. In 1862 an Act was passed for restricting the employment of women and children in open-air bleaching; and an Act for making illegal a coal-mine with a single shaft, or with shafts separated by less than a specified space; as well as an Act giving the Council of Medical Education the exclusive right to publish a Pharmacopœia, the price of which is to be fixed by the Treasury. In 1863 came the extension of compulsory vaccination to Scotland, and also to Ireland; there came the empowering of certain boards to borrow money repayable from the local rates, to employ and pay those out of work; there came the authorizing of town-authorities to take possession of neglected ornamental spaces, and rate the inhabitants for their support; there came the Bakehouses Regulation Act, which, besides specifying minimum age of employés occupied between certain hours, prescribed periodical lime-washing, three coats of paint when painted, and cleaning with hot water and soap at least once in six months; and there came also an Act giving a magistrate authority to decide on the wholesomeness or unwholesomeness of food brought before him by an inspector. Of compulsory legislation dating from 1864, may be named an extension of the Factories Act to various additional trades, including regulations for cleansing and ventilation, and specifying of certain employés in match-works, that they might not take meals on the premises except in the wood-cutting places. Also there were passed a Chimney-Sweepers Act, an Act for further regulating the sale of beer in Ireland, an Act for compulsory testing of cables and anchors, an Act extending the Public Works Act of 1863, and the Contagious Diseases Act: which last gave the police, in specified places, powers which, in respect of certain classes of women, abolished sundry of those safeguards to individual

freedom established in past times. The year 1865 witnessed further provision for the reception and temporary relief of wanderers at the cost of ratepayers; another public-house closing Act; and an Act making compulsory regulations for extinguishing fires in London. Then, under the Ministry of Lord John Russell, in 1866, have to be named an Act to regulate cattle-sheds, &c., in Scotland, giving local authorities powers to inspect sanitary conditions and fix the numbers of cattle; an Act forcing hop-growers to label their bags with the year and place of growth and the true weight, and giving police powers of search; an Act to facilitate the building of lodging-houses in Ireland, and providing for regulation of the inmates; a Public Health Act, under which there is registration of lodging-houses and limitation of occupants, with inspection and directions for lime-washing, &c., and a Public Libraries Act, giving local powers by which a majority can tax a minority for their books.

Passing now to the legislation under the first Ministry of Mr. Gladstone, we have, in 1869, the establishment of State-telegraphy, with the accompanying interdict on telegraphing through any other agency; we have the empowering a Secretary of State to regulate hired conveyances in London; we have further and more stringent regulations to prevent cattle-diseases from spreading, another Beerhouse Regulation Act, and a Sea-birds Preservation Act (ensuring greater mortality of fish). In 1870 we have a law authorizing the Board of Public Works to make advances for landlords' improvements and for purchase by tenants; we have the Act which enables the Education Department to form school-boards which shall purchase sites for schools, and may provide free schools supported by local rates, and enabling school-boards to pay a child's fees, to compel parents to send their children, &c., &c.; we have a further Factories and Workshops Act, making, among other restrictions, some on the employment of women and children in fruit-preserving and fish-curing works. In 1871 we met with an amended Merchant Shipping Act,

directing officers of the Board of Trade to record the draught of sea-going vessels leaving port; there is another Factory and Workshops Act, making further restrictions; there is a Pedlars Act, inflicting penalties for hawking without a certificate, and limiting the district within which the certificate holds as well as giving the police power to search pedlars' packs; and there are further measures for enforcing vaccination. The year 1872 had, among other Acts, one which makes it illegal to take for hire more than one child to nurse, unless in a house registered by the authorities, who prescribe the number of infants to be received; it had a Licensing Act, interdicting sale of spirits to those apparently under sixteen; and it had another Merchant Shipping Act, establishing an annual survey of passenger steamers. Then in 1873 was passed the Agricultural Children's Act, which makes it penal for a farmer to employ a child who has neither certificate of elementary education nor of certain prescribed school-attendances; and there was passed a Merchant Shipping Act, requiring on each vessel a scale showing draught and giving the Board of Trade power to fix the numbers of boats and life-saving appliances to be carried.

Turn now to Liberal law-making under the present Ministry. We have, in 1880, a law which forbids conditional advance-notes in payment of sailors' wages; also a law which dictates certain arrangements for the safe carriage of grain-cargoes; also a law increasing local coercion over parents to send their children to school. In 1881 comes legislation to prevent trawling over clam-beds and bait-beds, and an interdict making it impossible to buy a glass of beer on Sunday in Wales. In 1882 the Board of Trade was authorized to grant licences to generate and sell electricity, and municipal bodies were enabled to levy rates for electric-lighting: further exactions from ratepayers were authorized for facilitating more accessible baths and washhouses; and local authorities were empowered to make bye-laws for securing the decent lodging of persons engaged in picking fruit and vegetables. Of such

legislation during 1883 may be named the Cheap Trains Act, which, partly by taxing the nation to the extent of £400,000 a year (in the shape of relinquished passenger duty), and partly at the cost of railway-proprietors, still further cheapens travelling for workmen: the Board of Trade, through the Railway Commissioners, being empowered to ensure sufficiently good and frequent accommodation. Again, there is the Act which, under penalty of £10 for disobedience, forbids the payment of wages to workmen at or within public-houses; there is another Factory and Workshops Act, commanding inspection of white lead works (to see that there are provided overalls, respirators, baths, acidulated drinks, &c.) and of bakehouses, regulating times of employment in both, and prescribing in detail some constructions for the last, which are to be kept in a condition satisfactory to the inspectors.

But we are far from forming an adequate conception if we look only at the compulsory legislation which has actually been established of late years. We must look also at that which is advocated, and which threatens to be far more sweeping in range and stringent in character. We have lately had a Cabinet Minister, one of the most advanced Liberals, so-called, who pooh-poohs the plans of the late Government for improving industrial dwellings as so much "tinkering;" and contends for effectual coercion to be exercised over owners of small houses, over land-owners, and over ratepayers. Here is another Cabinet Minister who, addressing his constituents, speaks slightly of the doings of philanthropic societies and religious bodies to help the poor, and says that "the whole of the people of this country ought to look upon this work as being their own work:" that is to say, some extensive Government measure is called for. Again, we have a Radical member of Parliament who leads a large and powerful body, aiming with annually-increasing promise of success, to enforce sobriety by giving to local majorities powers to prevent freedom of exchange in respect of certain commodities. Regulation of the hours of

labour for certain classes, which has been made more and more general by successive extensions of the Factories Acts, is likely now to be made still more general: a measure is to be proposed bringing the employés in all shops under such regulation. There is a rising demand, too, that education shall be made gratis (*i. e.*, tax-supported), for all. The payment of school-fees is beginning to be denounced as a wrong: the State must take the whole burden. Moreover, it is proposed by many that the State, regarded as an undoubtedly competent judge of what constitutes good education for the poor, shall undertake also to prescribe good education for the middle classes—shall stamp the children of these, too, after a State pattern, concerning the goodness of which they have no more doubt than the Chinese had when they fixed theirs. Then there is the “endowment of research,” of late energetically urged. Already the Government gives every year the sum of £4,000 for this purpose, to be distributed through the Royal Society; and, in the absence of those who have strong motives for resisting the pressure of the interested, backed by those they easily persuade, it may by-and-by establish that paid “priesthood of science” long ago advocated by Sir David Brewster. Once more, plausible proposals are made that there should be organized a system of compulsory insurance, by which men during their early lives shall be forced to provide for the time when they will be incapacitated.

Nor does enumeration of these further measures of coercive rule, looming on us near at hand or in the distance, complete the account. Nothing more than cursory allusion has yet been made to that accompanying compulsion which takes the form of increased taxation, general and local. Partly for defraying the costs of carrying out these ever-multiplying sets of regulations, each of which requires an additional staff of officers, and partly to meet the outlay for new public institutions, such as board-schools, free libraries, public museums, baths and washhouses, recreation grounds, &c., &c., local rates

are year after year increased ; as the general taxation is increased by grants for education and to the departments of science and art, &c. Every one of these involves further coercion—restricts still more the freedom of the citizen. For the implied address accompanying every additional exaction is—"Hitherto you have been free to spend this portion of your earnings in any way which pleased you ; hereafter you shall not be free so to spend it, but we will spend it for the general benefit." Thus, either directly or indirectly, and in most cases both at once, the citizen is at each further stage in the growth of this compulsory legislation, deprived of some liberty which he previously had.

Such, then, are the doings of the party which claims the name of Liberal ; and which calls itself Liberal as being the advocate of extended freedom !

I doubt not that many a member of the party has read the preceding section with impatience : wanting, as he does, to point out an immense oversight which he thinks destroys the validity of the argument. "You forget," he wishes to say, "the fundamental difference between the power which, in the past, established those restraints that Liberalism abolished, and the power which, in the present, establishes the restraints you call anti-Liberal. You forget that the one was an irresponsible power, while the other is a responsible power. You forget that if by the recent legislation of Liberals, people are variously regulated, the body which regulates them is of their own creating, and has their warrant for its acts."

My answer is, that I have not forgotten this difference, but am prepared to contend that the difference is in large measure irrelevant to the issue.

In the first place, the real issue is whether the lives of citizens are more interfered with than they were ; not the nature of the agency which interferes with them. Take a simpler case. A member of a trades' union has joined others in establishing an organization of a purely representative

character. By it he is compelled to strike if a majority so decide; he is forbidden to accept work save under the conditions they dictate; he is prevented from profiting by his superior ability or energy to the extent he might do were it not for their interdict. He cannot disobey without abandoning those pecuniary benefits of the organization for which he has subscribed, and bringing on himself the persecution, and perhaps violence, of his fellows. Is he any the less coerced because the body coercing him is one which he had an equal voice with the rest in forming?

In the second place, if it be objected that the analogy is faulty, since the governing body of a nation, to which, as protector of the national life and interests, all must submit under penalty of social disorganization, has a far higher authority over citizens than the government of any private organization can have over its members; then the reply is that, granting the difference, the answer made continues valid. If men use their liberty in such a way as to surrender their liberty, are they thereafter any the less slaves? If people by a *plebiscite* elect a man despot over them, do they remain free because the despotism was of their own making? Are the coercive edicts issued by him to be regarded as legitimate because they are the ultimate outcome of their own votes? As well might it be argued that the East African, who breaks a spear in another's presence that he may so become bondsman to him, still retains his liberty because he freely chose his master.

Finally if any, not without marks of irritation as I can imagine, repudiate this reasoning, and say that there is no true parallelism between the relation of people to government where an irresponsible single ruler has been permanently elected, and the relation where a responsible representative body is maintained, and from time to time re-elected; then there comes the ultimate reply—an altogether heterodox reply—by which most will be greatly astonished. This reply is, that these multitudinous restraining acts are

not defensible on the ground that they proceed from a popularly-chosen body; for that the authority of a popularly-chosen body is no more to be regarded as an unlimited authority than the authority of a monarch; and that as true Liberalism in the past disputed the assumption of a monarch's unlimited authority, so true Liberalism in the present will dispute the assumption of unlimited parliamentary authority. Of this, however, more anon. Here I merely indicate it as an ultimate answer.

Meanwhile it suffices to point out that until recently, just as of old, true Liberalism was shown by its acts to be moving in towards the theory of a limited parliamentary authority. All these abolitions of restraints over religious beliefs and observances, over exchange and transit, over trade-combinations and the travelling of artisans, over the publication of opinions, theological or political, &c., &c., were tacit assertions of the desirableness of limitation. In the same way that the abandonment of sumptuary laws, of laws forbidding this or that kind of amusement, of laws dictating modes of farming, and many others of like meddling nature, which took place in early days, was an implied admission that the State ought not to interfere in such matters; so those removals of hindrances to individual activities of one or other kind, which the Liberalism of the last generation effected, were practical confessions that in these directions, too, the sphere of governmental action should be narrowed. And this recognition of the propriety of restricting governmental action was a preparation for restricting it in theory. One of the most familiar political truths is that, in the course of social evolution, usage precedes law; and that when usage has been well established it becomes law by receiving authoritative endorsement and defined form. Manifestly then, Liberalism in the past, by its practice of limitation, was preparing the way for the principle of limitation.

But returning from these more general considerations to the special question, I emphasize the reply that the liberty

which a citizen enjoys is to be measured, not by the nature of the governmental machinery he lives under, whether representative or other, but by the relative paucity of the restraints it imposes on him; and that, whether this machinery is or is not one he shared in making, its actions are not of the kind proper to Liberalism if they increase such restraints beyond those which are needful for preventing him from directly or indirectly aggressing on his fellows—needful, that is, for maintaining the liberties of his fellows against his invasions of them: restraints which are, therefore, to be distinguished as negatively coercive, not positively coercive.

Probably, however, the Liberal, and still more the sub-species Radical, who more than any other in these latter days seems under the impression that so long as he has a good end in view he is warranted in exercising over men all the coercion he is able, will continue to protest. Knowing that his aim is popular benefit of some kind, to be achieved in some way, and believing that the Tory is, contrariwise, prompted by class-interest and the desire to maintain class-power, he will regard it as palpably absurd to group him as one of the same genus, and will scorn the reasoning used to prove that he belongs to it.

Perhaps an analogy will help him to see its validity. If, away in the far East, where personal government is the only form of government known, he heard from the inhabitants an account of a struggle by which they had deposed a cruel and vicious despot, and put in his place one whose acts proved his desire for their welfare—if, after listening to their self-gratulations, he told them that they had not essentially changed the nature of their government, he would greatly astonish them; and probably he would have difficulty in making them understand that the substitution of a benevolent despot for a malevolent despot, still left the government a despotism. Similarly with Toryism as rightly conceived. Standing as it does for coercion by the State *versus* the

freedom of the individual, Toryism remains Toryism, whether it extends this coercion for selfish or unselfish reasons. As certainly as the despot is still a despot, whether his motives for arbitrary rule are good or bad; so certainly is the Tory still a Tory, whether he has egoistic or altruistic motives for using State-power to restrict the liberty of the citizen, beyond the degree required for maintaining the liberties of other citizens. The altruistic Tory as well as the egoistic Tory belongs to the genus Tory; though he forms a new species of the genus. And both stand in distinct contrast with the Liberal as defined in the days when Liberals were rightly so called, and when the definition was—"one who advocates greater freedom from restraint, especially in political institutions."

Thus, then, is justified the paradox I set out with. As we have seen, Toryism and Liberalism originally emerged, the one from militancy and the other from industrialism. The one stood for the *régime* of status and the other for the *régime* of contract—the one for that system of compulsory co-operation which accompanies the legal inequality of classes, and the other for that voluntary co-operation which accompanies their legal equality; and beyond all question the early acts of the two parties were respectively for the maintenance of agencies which effect this compulsory co-operation, and for the weakening or curbing of them. Manifestly the implication is that, in so far as it has been extending the system of compulsion, what is now called Liberalism is a new form of Toryism.

How truly this is so, we shall see still more clearly on looking at the facts the other side upwards, which we will presently do.

NOTE.—By sundry newspapers which noticed this article when it was originally published, the meaning of the above paragraphs was supposed to be that Liberals and Tories have

changed places. This, however, is by no means the implication. A new species of Tory may arise without disappearance of the original species. When saying, as on page 289, that in our days "Conservatives and Liberals vie with one another in multiplying" interferences, I clearly implied the belief that while Liberals have taken to coercive legislation, Conservatives have not abandoned it. Nevertheless, it is true that the laws made by Liberals are so greatly increasing the compulsions and restraints exercised over citizens, that among Conservatives who suffer from this aggressiveness there is growing up a tendency to resist it. Proof is furnished by the fact that the "Liberty and Property Defense League," largely consisting of Conservatives, has taken for its motto "Individualism *versus* Socialism." So that if the present drift of things continues, it may by and by really happen that the Tories will be defenders of liberties which the Liberals, in pursuit of what they think popular welfare, trample under foot.

THE COMING SLAVERY.

THE kinship of pity to love is shown among other ways in this, that it idealizes its object. Sympathy with one in suffering suppresses, for the time being, remembrance of his transgressions. The feeling which vents itself in "poor fellow!" on seeing one in agony, excludes the thought of "bad fellow," which might at another time arise. Naturally, then, if the wretched are unknown or but vaguely known, all the demerits they may have are ignored; and thus it happens that when the miseries of the poor are dilated upon, they are thought of as the miseries of the deserving poor, instead of being thought of as the miseries of the undeserving poor, which in large measure they should be. Those whose hardships are set forth in pamphlets and proclaimed in sermons and speeches which echo throughout society, are assumed to be all worthy souls, grievously wronged; and none of them are thought of as bearing the penalties of their misdeeds.

On hailing a cab in a London street, it is surprising how frequently the door is officiously opened by one who expects to get something for his trouble. The surprise lessens after counting the many loungers about tavern-doors, or after observing the quickness with which a street-performance, or procession, draws from neighbouring slums and stable-yards a group of idlers. Seeing how numerous they are in every small area, it becomes manifest that tens of thousands of such swarm through London. "They have no work," you

say. Say rather that they either refuse work or quickly turn themselves out of it. They are simply good-for-nothings, who in one way or other live on the good-for-somethings—vagrants and sots, criminals and those on the way to crime, youths who are burdens on hard-worked parents, men who appropriate the wages of their wives, fellows who share the gains of prostitutes; and then, less visible and less numerous, there is a corresponding class of women.

Is it natural that happiness should be the lot of such? or is it natural that they should bring unhappiness on themselves and those connected with them? Is it not manifest that there must exist in our midst an immense amount of misery which is a normal result of misconduct, and ought not to be dissociated from it? There is a notion, always more or less prevalent and just now vociferously expressed, that all social suffering is removable, and that it is the duty of somebody or other to remove it. Both these beliefs are false. To separate pain from ill-doing is to fight against the constitution of things, and will be followed by far more pain. Saving men from the natural penalties of dissolute living, eventually necessitates the infliction of artificial penalties in solitary cells, on tread-wheels, and by the lash. I suppose a dictum on which the current creed and the creed of science are at one, may be considered to have as high an authority as can be found. Well, the command "if any would not work neither should he eat," is simply a Christian enunciation of that universal law of Nature under which life has reached its present height—the law that a creature not energetic enough to maintain itself must die: the sole difference being that the law which in the one case is to be artificially enforced, is, in the other case, a natural necessity. And yet this particular tenet of their religion which science so manifestly justifies, is the one which Christians seem least inclined to accept. The current assumption is that there should be no suffering, and that society is to blame for that which exists.

“But surely we are not without responsibilities, even when the suffering is that of the unworthy?”

If the meaning of the word “we” be so expanded as to include with ourselves our ancestors, and especially our ancestral legislators, I agree. I admit that those who made, and modified, and administered, the old Poor Law, were responsible for producing an appalling amount of demoralization, which it will take more than one generation to remove. I admit, too, the partial responsibility of recent and present law-makers for regulations which have brought into being a permanent body of tramps, who ramble from union to union; and also their responsibility for maintaining a constant supply of felons by sending back convicts into society under such conditions that they are almost compelled again to commit crimes. Moreover, I admit that the philanthropic are not without their share of responsibility; since, that they may aid the offspring of the unworthy, they disadvantage the offspring of the worthy through burdening their parents by increased local rates. Nay, I even admit that these swarms of good-for-nothings, fostered and multiplied by public and private agencies, have, by sundry mischievous meddlings, been made to suffer more than they would otherwise have suffered. Are these the responsibilities meant? I suspect not.

But now, leaving the question of responsibilities, however conceived, and considering only the evil itself, what shall we say of its treatment? Let me begin with a fact.

A late uncle of mine, the Rev. Thomas Spencer, for some twenty years incumbent of Hinton Charterhouse, near Bath, no sooner entered on his parish duties than he proved himself anxious for the welfare of the poor, by establishing a school, a library, a clothing club, and land-allotments, besides building some model cottages. Moreover, up to 1833 he was a pauper's friend—always for the pauper against the overseer.

There presently came, however, the debates on the Poor

approval of gratuitous aids. Another is the desire to show that benefit may result, not from multiplication of artificial appliances to mitigate distress, but, contrariwise, from diminution of them. And a further purpose I have in view is that of preparing the way for an analogy.

Under another form and in a different sphere, we are now yearly extending a system which is identical in nature with the system of "make-wages" under the old Poor Law. Little as politicians recognize the fact, it is nevertheless demonstrable that these various public appliances for working-class comfort, which they are supplying at the cost of ratepayers, are intrinsically of the same nature as those which, in past times, treated the farmer's man as half-labourer and half-pauper. In either case the worker receives in return for what he does, money wherewith to buy certain of the things he wants; while, to procure the rest of them for him, money is furnished out of a common fund raised by taxes. What matters it whether the things supplied by ratepayers for nothing, instead of by the employer in payment, are of this kind or that kind? the principle is the same. For sums received let us substitute the commodities and benefits purchased; and then see how the matter stands. In old Poor-Law times, the farmer gave for work done the equivalent, say of house-rent, bread, clothes, and fire; while the ratepayers practically supplied the man and his family with their shoes, tea, sugar, candles, a little bacon, &c. The division is, of course, arbitrary; but unquestionably the farmer and the ratepayers furnished these things between them. At the present time the artisan receives from his employer in wages, the equivalent of the consumable commodities he wants; while from the public comes satisfaction for others of his needs and desires. At the cost of ratepayers he has in some cases, and will presently have in more, a house at less than its commercial value; for of course when, as in Liverpool, a municipality spends nearly £200,000 in pulling down and reconstructing low-class dwellings, and is about to spend as

much again, the implication is that in some way the ratepayers supply the poor with more accommodation than the rents they pay would otherwise have brought. The artisan further receives from them, in schooling for his children, much more than he pays for; and there is every probability that he will presently receive it from them gratis. The ratepayers also satisfy what desire he may have for books and newspapers, and comfortable places to read them in. In some cases too, as in Manchester, gymnasia for his children of both sexes, as well as recreation grounds, are provided. That is to say, he obtains from a fund raised by local taxes, certain benefits beyond those which the sum received for his labour enables him to purchase. The sole difference, then, between this system and the old system of "make-wages," is between the kinds of satisfactions obtained; and this difference does not in the least affect the nature of the arrangement.

Moreover, the two are pervaded by substantially the same illusion. In the one case, as in the other, what looks like a gratis benefit is not a gratis benefit. The amount which, under the old Poor Law, the half-pauperized labourer received from the parish to eke out his weekly income, was not really, as it appeared, a bonus; for it was accompanied by a substantially-equivalent decrease of his wages, as was quickly proved when the system was abolished and the wages rose. Just so is it with these seeming boons received by working people in towns. I do not refer only to the fact that they unawares pay in part through the raised rents of their dwellings (when they are not actual ratepayers); but I refer to the fact that the wages received by them are, like the wages of the farm-labourer, diminished by these public burdens falling on employers. Read the accounts coming of late from Lancashire concerning the cotton-strike, containing proofs, given by artisans themselves, that the margin of profit is so narrow that the less skilful manufacturers, as well as those with deficient capital, fail, and that the companies of co-

operators who compete with them can rarely hold their own; and then consider what is the implication respecting wages. Among the costs of production have to be reckoned taxes, general and local. If, as in our large towns, the local rates now amount to one-third of the rental or more—if the employer has to pay this, not on his private dwelling only, but on his business-premises, factories, warehouses, or the like; it results that the interest on his capital must be diminished by that amount, or the amount must be taken from the wages-fund, or partly one and partly the other. And if competition among capitalists in the same business, and in other businesses, has the effect of so keeping down interest that while some gain others lose, and not a few are ruined—if capital, not getting adequate interest, flows elsewhere and leaves labour unemployed; then it is manifest that the choice for the artisan under such conditions, lies between diminished amount of work and diminished rate of payment for it. Moreover, for kindred reasons these local burdens raise the costs of the things he consumes. The charges made by distributors are, on the average, determined by the current rates of interest on capital used in distributing businesses; and the extra costs of carrying on such businesses have to be paid for by extra prices. So that as in the past the rural worker lost in one way what he gained in another, so in the present does the urban worker: there being, too, in both cases, the loss entailed on him by the cost of administration and the waste accompanying it.

“But what has all this to do with ‘the coming slavery’?” will perhaps be asked. Nothing directly, but a good deal indirectly, as we shall see after yet another preliminary section.

~~effects of his particular stream of legislation, and not observing how such other streams already existing, and still other streams which will follow his initiative, pursue the same average course, it never occurs to him that they may presently unite into a voluminous flood utterly changing the face of things. Or to leave figures for a more literal statement, he is unconscious of the truth that he is helping to form a certain type of social organization, and that kindred measures, effecting kindred changes of organization, tend with ever-increasing force to make that type general; until, passing a certain point, the proclivity towards it becomes irresistible. Just as each society aims when possible to produce in other societies a structure akin to its own—just as among the Greeks, the Spartans and the Athenians struggled to spread their respective political institutions, or as, at the time of the French Revolution, the European absolute monarchies aimed to re-establish absolute monarchy in France while the Republic encouraged the formation of other republics; so within every society, each species of structure tends to propagate itself. Just as the system of voluntary co-operation by companies, associations, unions, to achieve business ends and other ends, spreads throughout a community; so does the antagonistic system of compulsory co-operation under State agencies spread; and the larger becomes its extension the more power of spreading it gets. The question of questions for the politician should ever be—“What type of social structure am I tending to produce?” But this is a question he never entertains.~~

~~Here we will entertain it for him. Let us now observe the general course of recent changes, with the accompanying current of ideas, and see whither they are carrying us.~~

The blank form of an inquiry daily made is—“We have already done this; why should we not do that?” And the regard for precedent suggested by it, is ever pushing on regulative legislation. Having had brought within their sphere

of operation more and more numerous businesses, the Acts restricting hours of employment and dictating the treatment of workers are now to be made applicable to shops. From inspecting lodging-houses to limit the numbers of occupants and enforce sanitary conditions, we have passed to inspecting all houses below a certain rent in which there are members of more than one family, and are now passing to a kindred inspection of all small houses.* The buying and working of telegraphs by the State is made a reason for urging that the State should buy and work the railways. Supplying children with food for their minds by public agency is being followed in some cases by supplying food for their bodies; and after the practice has been made gradually more general, we may anticipate that the supply, now proposed to be made gratis in the one case, will eventually be proposed to be made gratis in the other: the argument that good bodies as well as good minds are needful to make good citizens, being logically urged as a reason for the extension.† And then, avowedly proceeding on the precedents furnished by the church, the school, and the reading-room, all publicly provided, it is contended that "pleasure, in the sense it is now generally admitted, needs legislating for and organizing at least as much as work." ‡

Not precedent only prompts this spread, but also the necessity which arises for supplementing ineffective measures, and for dealing with the artificial evils continually caused. Failure does not destroy faith in the agencies employed, but merely suggests more stringent use of such agencies or wider

* See letter of Local Government Board, *Times*, January 2, 1884.

† Verification comes more promptly than I expected. This article has been standing in type since January 30, and in the interval, namely on March 13 [the article was published on April 1], the London School Board resolved to apply for authority to use local charitable funds for supplying gratis meals and clothing to indigent children. Presently the definition of "indigent" will be widened; more children will be included, and more funds asked for.

‡ *Fortnightly Review*, January, 1884, p. 21.

ramifications of them. Laws to check intemperance, beginning in early times and coming down to our own times, not having done what was expected, there come demands for more thorough-going laws, locally preventing the sale altogether; and here, as in America, these will doubtless be followed by demands that prevention shall be made universal. All the many appliances for "stamping out" epidemic diseases not having succeeded in preventing outbreaks of small-pox, fevers, and the like, a further remedy is applied for in the shape of police-power to search houses for diseased persons, and authority for medical officers to examine any one they think fit, to see whether he or she is suffering from an infectious or contagious malady. Habits of improvidence having for generations been cultivated by the Poor-Law, and the improvident enabled to multiply, the evils produced by compulsory charity are now proposed to be met by compulsory insurance.

The extension of this policy, causing extension of corresponding ideas, fosters everywhere the tacit assumption that Government should step in whenever anything is not going right. "Surely you would not have this misery continue!" exclaims some one, if you hint a demurrer to much that is now being said and done. Observe what is implied by this exclamation. It takes for granted, first, that all suffering ought to be prevented, which is not true: much of the suffering is curative, and prevention of it is prevention of a remedy. In the second place, it takes for granted that every evil can be removed: the truth being that, with the existing defects of human nature, many evils can only be thrust out of one place or form into another place or form—often being increased by the change. The exclamation also implies the unhesitating belief, here especially concerning us, that evils of all kinds should be dealt with by the State. There does not occur the inquiry whether there are at work other agencies capable of dealing with evils, and whether the evils in question may not be among those which are best dealt with

by these other agencies. And obviously, the more numerous governmental interventions become, the more confirmed does this habit of thought grow, and the more loud and perpetual the demands for intervention.

~~Every extension of the regulative policy involves an addition to the regulative agents—a further growth of officialism and an increasing power of the organization formed of officials. Take a pair of scales with many shot in the one and a few in the other. Lift shot after shot out of the loaded scale and put it into the unloaded scale. Presently you will produce a balance; and if you go on, the position of the scales will be reversed. Suppose the beam to be unequally divided, and let the lightly loaded scale be at the end of a very long arm; then the transfer of each shot, producing a much greater effect, will far sooner bring about a change of position. I use the figure to illustrate what results from transferring one individual after another from the regulated mass of the community to the regulating structures. The transfer weakens the one and strengthens the other in a far greater degree than is implied by the relative change of numbers. A comparatively small body of officials, coherent, having common interests, and acting under central authority, has an immense advantage over an incoherent public which has no settled policy, and can be brought to act unitedly only under strong provocation. Hence an organization of officials, once passing a certain stage of growth, becomes less and less resistible; as we see in the bureaucracies of the Continent.~~

~~Not only does the power of resistance of the regulated part decrease in a geometrical ratio as the regulating part increases, but the private interests of many in the regulated part itself, make the change of ratio still more rapid. In every circle conversations show that now, when the passing of competitive examinations renders them eligible for the public service, youths are being educated in such ways that they may pass them and get employment under Government.~~

principle, because party-needs and regard for the next election demand it. And thus a vicious policy is strengthened even by those who see its viciousness.

Meanwhile there goes on out-of-doors an active propaganda to which all these influences are ancillary. Communist theories, partially indorsed by one Act of Parliament after another, and tacitly if not avowedly favoured by numerous public men seeking supporters, are being advocated more and more vociferously by popular leaders, and urged on by organized societies. There is the movement for land-nationalization which, aiming at a system of land-tenure equitable in the abstract, is, as all the world knows, pressed by Mr. George and his friends with avowed disregard for the just claims of existing owners, and as the basis of a scheme going more than half-way to State-socialism. And then there is the thorough-going Democratic Federation of Mr. Hyndman and his adherents. We are told by them that "the handful of marauders who now hold possession [of the land] have and can have no right save brute force against the tens of millions whom they wrong." They exclaim against "the shareholders who have been allowed to lay hands upon (!) our great railway communications." They condemn "above all, the active capitalist class, the loan-mongers, the farmers, the mine exploiters, the contractors, the middlemen, the factory-lords—these, the modern slave drivers" who exact "more and yet more surplus value out of the wage-slaves whom they employ." And they think it "high time" that trade should be "removed from the control of individual greed." *

It remains to point out that the tendencies thus variously displayed, are being strengthened by press advocacy, daily more pronounced. Journalists, always chary of saying that which is distasteful to their readers, are some of them going with the stream and adding to its force. Legislative med-

* *Socialism made Plain.* Reeves, 185, Fleet Street.

things which they would once have condemned they now pass in silence, if they do not advocate them; and they speak of *laissez-faire* as an exploded doctrine. "People are no longer frightened at the thought of socialism," is the statement which meets us one day. On another day, a town which does not adopt the Free Libraries Act is sneered at as being alarmed by a measure so moderately communistic. And then, along with editorial assertions that this economic evolution is coming and must be accepted, there is prominence given to the contributions of its advocates. Meanwhile those who regard the recent course of legislation as disastrous, and see that its future course is likely to be still more disastrous, are being reduced to silence by the belief that it is useless to reason with people in a state of political intoxication.

See, then, the many concurrent causes which threaten continually to accelerate the transformation now going on. There is that spread of regulation caused by following precedents, which become the more authoritative the further the policy is carried. There is that increasing need for administrative compulsions and restraints, which results from the unforeseen evils and shortcomings of preceding compulsions and restraints. Moreover, every additional State-interference strengthens the tacit assumption that it is the duty of the State to deal with all evils and secure all benefits. Increasing power of a growing administrative organization is accompanied by decreasing power of the rest of the society to resist its further growth and control. The multiplication of careers opened by a developing bureaucracy, tempts members of the classes regulated by it to favour its extension, as adding to the chances of safe and respectable places for their relatives. The people at large, led to look on benefits received through public agencies as gratis benefits, have their hopes continually excited by the prospects of more. A spreading education, furthering the diffusion of pleasing errors rather than of stern truths, renders such hopes both

stronger and more general. Worse still, such hopes are ministered to by candidates for public choice, to augment their chances of success; and leading statesmen, in pursuit of party ends, bid for popular favour by countenancing them. Getting repeated justifications from new laws harmonizing with their doctrines, political enthusiasts and unwise philanthropists push their agitations with growing confidence and success. Journalism, ever responsive to popular opinion, daily strengthens it by giving it voice; while counter-opinion, more and more discouraged, finds little utterance.

Thus influences of various kinds conspire to increase corporate action and decrease individual action. And the change is being on all sides aided by schemers, each of whom thinks only of his pet plan and not at all of the general reorganization which his plan, joined with others such, are working out. It is said that the French Revolution devoured its own children. Here, an analogous catastrophe seems not unlikely. The numerous socialistic changes made by Act of Parliament, joined with the numerous others presently to be made, will by-and-by be all merged in State-socialism—swallowed in the vast wave which they have little by little raised.

“But why is this change described as ‘the coming slavery’?” is a question which many will still ask. The reply is simple. All socialism involves slavery.

What is essential to the idea of a slave? We primarily think of him as one who is owned by another. To be more than nominal, however, the ownership must be shown by control of the slave’s actions—a control which is habitually for the benefit of the controller. That which fundamentally distinguishes the slave is that he labours under coercion to satisfy another’s desires. The relation admits of sundry gradations. Remembering that originally the slave is a prisoner whose life is at the mercy of his captor, it suffices here to note that there is a harsh form of slavery in which,

treated as an animal, he has to expend his entire effort for his owner's advantage. Under a system less harsh, though occupied chiefly in working for his owner, he is allowed a short time in which to work for himself, and some ground on which to grow extra food. A further amelioration gives him power to sell the produce of his plot and keep the proceeds. Then we come to the still more moderated form which commonly arises where, having been a free man working on his own land, conquest turns him into what we distinguish as a serf; and he has to give to his owner each year a fixed amount of labour or produce, or both: retaining the rest himself. Finally, in some cases, as in Russia before serfdom was abolished, he is allowed to leave his owner's estate and work or trade for himself elsewhere, under the condition that he shall pay an annual sum. What is it which, in these cases, leads us to qualify our conception of the slavery as more or less severe? Evidently the greater or smaller extent to which effort is compulsorily expended for the benefit of another instead of for self-benefit. If all the slave's labour is for his owner the slavery is heavy, and if but little it is light. Take now a further step. Suppose an owner dies, and his estate with its slaves comes into the hands of trustees; or suppose the estate and everything on it to be bought by a company; is the condition of the slave any the better if the amount of his compulsory labour remains the same? Suppose that for a company we substitute the community; does it make any difference to the slave if the time he has to work for others is as great, and the time left for himself is as small, as before? The essential question is—How much is he compelled to labour for other benefit than his own, and how much can he labour for his own benefit? The degree of his slavery varies according to the ratio between that which he is forced to yield up and that which he is allowed to retain; and it matters not whether his master is a single person or a society. If, without option, he has to labour for the society, and receives from

the general stock such portion as the society awards him, he becomes a slave to the society. Socialistic arrangements necessitate an enslavement of this kind; and towards such an enslavement many recent measures, and still more the measures advocated, are carrying us. Let us observe, first, their proximate effects, and then their ultimate effects.

~~The policy initiated by the Industrial Dwellings Acts admits of development, and will develop. Where municipal bodies turn house-builders, they inevitably lower the values of houses otherwise built, and check the supply of more. Every dictation respecting modes of building and conveniences to be provided, diminishes the builder's profit, and prompts him to use his capital where the profit is not thus diminished. So, too, the owner, already finding that small houses entail much labour and many losses—already subject to troubles of inspection and interference, and to consequent costs, and having his property daily rendered a more undesirable investment, is prompted to sell; and as buyers are for like reasons deterred, he has to sell at a loss. And now these still multiplying regulations, ending, it may be, as Lord Grey proposes, in one requiring the owner to maintain the salubrity of his houses by evicting dirty tenants, and thus adding to his other responsibilities that of inspector of nuisances, must further prompt sales and further deter purchasers: so necessitating greater depreciation. What must happen? The multiplication of houses, and especially small houses, being increasingly checked, there must come an increasing demand upon the local authority to make up for the deficient supply. More and more the municipal or kindred body will have to build houses, or to purchase houses rendered unsaleable to private persons in the way shown—houses which, greatly lowered in value as they must become, it will, in many cases, pay to buy rather than to build new ones. Nay, this process must work in a double way; since every entailed increase of local taxation still further depre-~~

Durkheim

Emile Durkheim, excerpts from *The Division of Labour in Society* [1893] and other minor writings.

Excerpts taken from the following edition:
Emile Durkheim, *Selected Writings*, (ed. by Giddens), Cambridge University Press, 1972.

**EMILE DURKHEIM:
SELECTED WRITINGS**

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**CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS**

1. The field of sociology

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

A science which has only just come into existence necessarily has at the outset only an uncertain and ill-defined sense of the area of reality that it is about to approach, of its extent and its limits. It can gain a clearer picture only to the degree that it acquires a procedure to guide its research; and the heightened awareness of its subject matter that it obtains in this way is of the greatest importance. For the task of the scientist is the more secure the more orderly it becomes; and the more methodical it is, the more accurate is the account that he can render of the territory he is penetrating.

Sociology has reached the stage at which it is opportune to make every effort to bring about such an advance. If some reactionary critics, inadvertently influenced by the prejudice which always hinders the formation of a new science, reproach sociology for not knowing the precise subject-matter with which it intends to deal, they can be told that such ignorance is inevitable in the early phases of research, and that our science came into being only very recently. It must not be forgotten, especially in view of the popularity of sociology today, that fifteen years ago it would scarcely have been possible to enumerate as many as ten individuals who could, properly speaking, be called 'sociologists'. We must add to this that it is asking too much of a science to define its subject-matter with excessive precision, for the part of reality that it intends to study is never precisely separated from others. In fact, in nature everything is so closely interconnected that there can be neither a complete division, nor too precise boundaries, between the various sciences. Nevertheless, it is important that we should obtain as clear an idea as possible of what constitutes the domain of sociology, where this domain is to be found, and what indices allow us to recognise the complex of phenomena with which we must deal. However, we must refrain

from establishing boundaries in those areas which are necessarily indeterminate. This problem is all the more urgent for our science, because unless we are careful, its province may become infinitely extended: for there is no phenomenon – from physicochemical ones to properly social facts – which does not take place *in* society. Thus we must accurately distinguish social facts, and show what it is that gives them their identity, if we are to avoid reducing sociology to nothing but a conventional label applied to an incoherent collection of disparate disciplines.

RIS, 1900, pp. 127–8

Whether he proceeds by deduction or by induction, Montesquieu follows a methodological rule that modern science must not overlook.

Social phenomena are usually classified according to considerations which might appear at first sight to be wholly unconnected. Religion, law, morality, trade, and administration seem, indeed, to differ in nature. This explains why each class of phenomena was for a long time treated separately – and sometimes still is: as though it could be examined and explained by itself, without reference to the others, just as physicists do not take colour into consideration when dealing with weight. It is not denied that one class of phenomena is related to the others; but the relationships are regarded as merely incidental, so that, as the inner nature of the phenomena cannot be ascertained, it seems safe to disregard the relations between them. For example, most moralists deal with morality and rules of conduct as though they existed in isolation, and do not bother to consider the economic character of the societies in question. Those who deal with the subject of wealth maintain, in a similar way, that their science, namely political economy, is completely autonomous and can be carried on without paying any attention to the system of rules that we call morality. One could give many such examples.

Montesquieu, however, saw quite clearly that all these elements form a whole and that if each is considered separately, without reference to the others, they cannot be understood. He does not separate law from morality, trade, religion, etc., and above all he does not detach them from the form of society, which affects all other social phenomena. However widely they differ, all of these phenomena express the life of a given society. They are the elements or organs of the social organism. Unless we try to understand how they harmonise and interact, it is impossible to know their functions. We shall fail even to identify their nature, for

they will seem to be distinct realities, each with its independent existence; whereas they are actually parts of a whole. This attitude accounts for certain errors that are still made by many authors. It explains why many political economists have regarded personal interest as the only principle of society and why they have denied that the legislator has the right to intervene in activities related to trade and industry. Conversely, though for the same reason, moralists have generally regarded property rights as fixed and immutable, whereas they actually depend upon extremely varied and changing economic factors.

This error had to be dispelled before social science could develop or even come into existence. The various disciplines dealing separately with different forms of social phenomena did indeed prepare the way for social science; it was from them that it originated. But social science, in the strict sense, came into being only when it was clearly perceived that the branches mentioned above were bound together by strict necessity and were parts of a whole. Such a conception, however, could not arise until it was realised that all events in society are related. In pointing to the interrelatedness of social phenomena, Montesquieu foreshadowed the unity of our science – although his view of the matter was still confused. Nowhere does he say that the problems he deals with might form the subject-matter of a definite science, embracing all social phenomena and having a method and a name of its own. And yet, without being aware of the implication of his efforts, he gave posterity the first sample of such a science. Although he did not consciously draw the conclusions implicit in his principles, he paved the way for his successors who, in instituting sociology, did little more than give a name to the field of study which he inaugurated.

MR, pp. 102–5

...sociology could only become conscious of itself within philosophical thought, far from the specialised disciplines and their influence. Even this characteristic depended upon causes of too profound a nature for it to have lost all *raison d'être* by the time at which the first beginnings of organisation of the science appeared. This is why we should not be surprised to meet with it in Comte's immediate successor, Spencer. It is obvious that Spencer wrote sociology as a philosopher, because he set out, not to study social facts in themselves and for themselves, but to show how the evolutionary hypothesis can be verified in the social realm. But, by that very token, he found himself in a position to

complete or to correct the general conceptions of Comtean sociology upon important points. Although Comte had definitely integrated societies in nature, the exaggerated intellectualism which permeated his doctrine accorded poorly with this rule, which is fundamental to all sociology. If scientific evolution determines political, economic, moral and aesthetic evolution, there is a great distance between sociological explanation, and that which is applied in the other natural sciences, and it is difficult to avoid slipping into ideology. In showing that, in different forms, a single law dominates the social and the physical world, Spencer linked societies more directly with the rest of the universe. He made us aware that, below the phenomena which occur on the surface of the *conscience collective*, and which express the products of deliberated thought, there operate obscure forces which do not move men through the sort of logical necessity which connect the successive phases of scientific development to one-another. From another aspect, Comte did not accept that there were a diversity of social types. According to him there existed only one society, human association in its entirety; and particular states represented only different moments in the history of this single society. Sociology thus found itself in a situation unique among the sciences since it had as its object an entity which was the only one of its type. Spencer cleared up this anomaly by showing that societies, like organisms, can be classed into forms and types and, whatever the value of the classification which he offered, the principle, at least, deserved to be maintained and has survived. Although they were formulated philosophically, these two reforms hence constituted invaluable acquisitions for the science.

But if this mode of conceiving and of doing sociology was certainly, at a given moment, necessary and useful, this necessity and usefulness was only temporary. In order to come into being, and even to make progress initially, sociology needed to lean upon philosophy; but in order to really become itself, it was absolutely necessary for it to assume another character.

The very example of Comte himself can serve to prove this: for, because of its philosophical character, the sociology which he constructed did not at all satisfy the conditions which he himself demanded of every positive science.

In fact, of the two parts of the science which he distinguished, statics and dynamics, he really only treated the second. Moreover, from his point of view, this was the more important, since if there were, according to him, social facts distinct from purely individual phenomena, this is above all because there is a pro-

gressive evolution of humanity; that is to say because the work of each generation survives it, and comes to be joined to that of the generations which follow it. Progress is the social fact *par excellence*. Now social dynamics, in his exposition, shows none of 'that continuity and that fruitfulness' which, according to Comte's own remark, constitute 'the most definite criteria of all truly scientific conceptions': for Comte himself considered it to be virtually completed by his own work. Indeed, it is contained entirely in the law of the three stages, and, once this law has been discovered, one cannot see how it would be possible to add to it, to extend it and, even less, what different laws could be discovered. Hardly having been founded, the science would already be closed. In fact, those of Comte's disciples who were strictly attached to the content of the doctrine were able to do nothing more than to reproduce the propositions of the master, sometimes illustrating them by new examples, but without these purely formal variations ever having constituted real discoveries. This is what explains the lack of development of the properly Comtist school after Comte; the same formulas were ritually repeated without any progress being realised. The fact is that a science cannot live and develop when it is reduced to a single and unique problem upon which a great mind now and then makes its mark. In order for it to progress, it must be resolved into a progressively expanding number of special questions, in such a way as to make possible the co-operation of different minds and of successive generations. It is only on this condition that it will acquire the collective and impersonal character without which there is no scientific research. Now the philosophical and unitary conception which Comte made of sociology is opposed to this division of labour. Moreover, his social dynamics is at bottom only a philosophy of history, remarkable for its novelty and profundity, but not different in type from that of previous philosophies. It is a matter of perceiving the law which governs 'the necessary and continuous movement of humanity', and which alone makes it possible to introduce into the succession of historical events the unity and continuity which they lack.

RP, 1903, pp. 469-71

There still exist a number of thinkers who do not believe in the future of sociology. Their favourite argument is that they do not perceive that it has any clear objective, divisions, or programme. They mistrust a science which is announced to the world as a newcomer without historical antecedent. And in this they are

quite right – if it were really true, as has sometimes been said; that sociology dated from Auguste Comte. If it was born out of nothing, at that instant, we would share this justifiable mistrust. Revolutions and immediate creations no more exist in the world of science than they do in the world of things. Every being which is born capable of life is the product of a long evolution. But it is an illusion to believe that sociology dates from yesterday and is the fruit of brilliant improvisation. It existed at all times, in a latent and diffuse state. The great service which was rendered by Comte and his school was simply to show the unity of these apparently incoherent researches, to give to social science a name and an individuality, and to integrate it within the system of positive sciences. At all times, economic phenomena, the state, law, morality and religion have been studied scientifically, thus giving birth to five sciences which can rightly be called sociological.

However, it is necessary for them to remain worthy of this designation, which all too frequently they forget. Social science, states Maurice Block, 'only sees *men*, in abstraction from that external tie which is called the state'. In other words, so-called 'social' science should study men by supposing that they do not live in society. It would be better, in fact, to give it another name. We are told that state and society are two different things. Yes, but on one condition: that the state is seen as a wholly external tie, an artificial system which is superimposed upon society, but does not derive from it. This is the simplistic conception of Rousseau, which the economic school stubbornly adhere to, even after a century of experience which has hardly been favourable to the theory of the *Social Contract*. Things are far more complex. A society is not a collection of individuals which an enormous and monstrous machine keeps united and compressed against each other by the use of force. No, solidarity comes from the inside and not from the outside. Men are attached to one another as naturally as the atoms of a mineral and the cells of an organism. The affinity which they hold for each other is based upon sympathy, a feeling the germs of which can be discerned in animal societies; this expands, diversifies, and becomes transformed with progress, but it is no less natural to man than egoism, to which, in the interests of simplicity, the economists would reduce the human mind. Now, at each moment in its development, this solidarity is expressed externally by an appropriate structure. The state is one of these structures. The state is the external and visible form of sociability. To abstract from it is thus certainly, as we have said, to suppose that men do not live in societies. It is to take as an

axiom that there is not and cannot be more than external contacts and transient relationships between men, determined by the necessarily fortuitous connections of interest. It might be objected that abstraction is a legitimate procedure of science. Certainly. But to abstract is to take out of reality a part which one isolates: it is not to create a mental construction out of nothing. Now, the man and society which are conceived of by the economists are purely imaginary, and correspond to nothing in reality. The sociologist will therefore consider economic facts, the state, morality, law and religion as so many functions of the social organism, and will study them as phenomena which occur in the context of a definite, bounded society. From this point of view, things immediately take on a different aspect. By the same token, as we have already seen, political economy loses its autonomy, because one cannot study one social function wholly in isolation from others.

RP, 1886, pp. 78-9

SOCIAL AND NATURAL PHENOMENA

A discipline may be called a 'science' only if it has a definite field to explore. Science is concerned with things, realities. If it does not have a datum to describe and interpret, it exists in a vacuum. Separated from the description and interpretation of reality it can have no real function. Arithmetic is concerned with numbers, geometry with space and figures, the natural sciences with animate and inanimate bodies, and psychology with the human mind. Before social science could begin to exist, it had first of all to be assigned a definite subject-matter.

At first sight, this problem presents no difficulty: the subject-matter of social science is social things: that is, laws, customs, religions, etc. Looking back in history, however, we find that no philosophers ever viewed matters in this way until quite recently. They thought that all such phenomena depended upon the human will and consequently failed to realise that they are actual things, like all other things in nature; they have their own specific properties, and these call for sciences which can describe and explain them. It seemed to them sufficient to ascertain what the human will should strive for and what it should avoid in established societies. Hence what they strove to discover was not the nature and origin of social phenomena, not what they actually are, but what they ought to be; their aim was not to offer us as valid a description of nature as possible, but to present us with the idea of a perfect society, a model to be imitated. Even Aristotle,

who was far more concerned with empirical observation than Plato was, aimed at discovering, not the laws of social existence, but the best form of society. He begins by assuming that the sole objective of society should be to make its members happy through the practice of virtue, and that virtue lies in contemplation. He does not establish this principle as a law which societies actually follow, but as one which they should act upon in order that human beings may fulfil their specific nature. Certainly he does turn later to historical facts, but with little purpose other than to pass judgement upon them, and to show how his own principles could be adapted to various situations. The political thinkers who came after him on the whole followed his example. Whether they wholly disregard reality or pay a certain amount of attention to it, they all have a single purpose: to correct or transform it completely, rather than to know it. They take virtually no interest in the past and the present, but look to the future.

MR, pp. 29–31

The proposition according to which social facts are to be treated as things – which is the very foundation of our method – is one which has stimulated great opposition. It has been considered paradoxical and scandalous for us to assimilate the realities of the social world to those of the external world. Such criticism involves a singular misunderstanding of the meaning and application of this assimilation: the object of this was not to reduce the higher to the lower forms of being, but on the contrary to claim for the higher forms a degree of reality at least equal to that which is readily granted to the lower. We do not say that social facts are material things, but that they are things by the same right as material things, although they differ from them in type.

Just what is a ‘thing’? A thing differs from an idea in the same way as that which we know from without differs from that which we know from within. A thing is any object of knowledge which is not naturally controlled by the intellect, which cannot be adequately grasped by a simple process of mental activity. It can only be understood by the mind on condition that the mind goes outside itself by means of observations and experiments, which move progressively from the more external and immediately accessible characteristics to the less visible and more deep-lying. To treat the facts of a certain order as things thus is not to place them in a particular category of reality, but to assume a certain mental attitude toward them; it is to approach the study of them on the principle that we are absolutely ignorant of their nature,

and that their characteristic properties, like the unknown causes on which they depend, cannot be discovered by even the most careful introspection.

With the terms thus defined, our proposition, far from being a paradox, could almost pass for a truism if it were not too often misunderstood in the human sciences and especially in sociology. Indeed, one might say in this sense that, with the possible exception of the case of mathematics, every object of science is a thing. In mathematics, since we proceed from simple to more complex concepts it is sufficient to depend upon mental processes which are purely internal in character. But in the case of 'facts' properly so called, these are, at the moment when we undertake to study them scientifically, necessarily unknown *things* of which we are ignorant; for the representations which we have been able to make of them in the course of our life, having been made uncritically and unmethodically, are devoid of scientific value, and must be discarded. The facts of individual psychology themselves have this character and must be seen in this way. For although they are by definition purely mental, our consciousness of them reveals to us neither their real nature nor their genesis. It allows us to know them up to a certain point, just as our sensory knowledge gives us a certain familiarity with heat or light, sound or electricity; it gives us confused, fleeting, subjective impressions of them, but no clear and scientific notions or explanatory concepts. It is precisely for this reason that there has been founded in the course of this century an objective psychology whose fundamental purpose is to study mental facts from the outside, that is to say as things.

This is all the more necessary in the case of social facts, for consciousness is even more helpless in knowing them than in knowing its own life. It might be objected that since social facts are our own creations, we have only to look into our own mind in order to know what we put into them and how we formed them. But, in the first place, the greater part of our social institutions was bequeathed to us already formed by previous generations. We ourselves took no part in their formation, and consequently we cannot by introspection discover the causes which brought them into being. Furthermore, when we have in fact collaborated in their genesis, we can only with difficulty obtain even a very confused and a very distorted perception of the true nature of our action and the causes which determined it. When it is merely a matter of our private acts we know very imperfectly the relatively simple motives that guide us. We believe ourselves disinterested

when we act egoistically; we think we are motivated by hate when we are yielding to love, that we obey reason when we are the slaves of irrational prejudices, etc. How, then, should we be able to discern with greater clarity the much more complex causes from which collective acts proceed? For, at the very least, each one of us participate in them only as an infinitesimal unit; a huge number of others collaborate with us, and what takes place in these other minds escapes us.

Thus our principle implies no metaphysical conception, no speculation about the fundamental nature of being. What it demands is that the sociologist put himself in the same state of mind as physicists, chemists, or physiologists, when they enquire into a hitherto unexplored region of the scientific domain. When he penetrates the social world, he must be aware that he is penetrating the unknown. He must feel himself in the presence of facts whose laws are as unsuspected as were those of life before the development of biology; he must be prepared for discoveries which will surprise and disconcert him.

RMS, pp. xii–xiv

[Written in review of a work by Jankélévitch concerned with the philosophy of social science.]

Here is yet another book of philosophical generalities on the nature of society – generalities in which it is difficult to discern a close and familiar acquaintance with social reality. Nowhere does the author give the impression that he has entered into direct contact with the facts which he discusses; for we do not believe that the general ideas which he develops are illustrated by a single concrete example, nor applied to a single precise and defined sociological problem. Whatever the skill in argument, or the literary talent, of an author, one cannot denounce too strongly the scandal of a method which flouts in this way all our customary scientific procedures but which, nonetheless, is becoming a very frequent practice. We no longer accept today that one can speculate upon the nature of life without having first been initiated in biological technique; by what privilege should it be permissible for the philosopher to speculate about society, without taking account of the detail of social facts?

The object of the book is to demonstrate that the social sciences are not ‘sciences in the true sense of the word, that is to say, assimilable to the natural sciences’, and that the phenomena with which they are concerned with are not part of the framework of

natural phenomena, but constitute 'something, if not opposed, at least, different'. The author does not mean to understand by this, however, that society is outside of nature, 'not recognising any law, any rule, never repeating itself, and only making itself manifest through a series of hazards and accidents'. He readily sees that such a society is impossible; but he considers nevertheless, that man, as a social being, has the power to resist nature, to escape from laws, to modify them, and to add to them in pursuit of the realisation of certain ends. It is, therefore, the very principle of Comtean sociology and, more generally, of all scientific sociology, which is placed in contention.

As to the demonstration of the thesis, it is contained completely in the two following arguments, which the author reiterates in different forms, but without essential variation. In his exposition, these are often confused; but, although they are of a kind such as to lend themselves to mutual support, we believe that there is some point in distinguishing them and considering them separately.

All the things in nature derive from the category of being; all that can be said of them is that they are, and that they are what they are. This is why the natural sciences have no other objective than to allow us to know *what is*; they do no more than express the real, such as it is manifest to us. But when man appears on the scene, and consequently the society which man is inseparable from, there also appears a new category, which is that of *value*. We do not confine ourselves to knowing what things are; we declare them to be good, bad, indifferent, etc., according to whether they accord or do not accord with our desires, or do not affect them in any way. Here we thus add to nature a property which is not intrinsic to it. We superimpose upon the natural point of view, which is that of science, a new point of view, which is the human point of view. The natural sciences are hence unable to know things from this second aspect. Now social life is solely made up of values; religious, moral, juridical, economic, and artistic values. Everything, in society, is considered in relation to man. Objects which are materially, as regards their physical properties, of the poorest sort, can have an incomparable social prestige and price, if human judgement attributes it to them. From which it follows that the social sciences cannot be assimilated to the natural sciences.

In the second place, social phenomena can only be explained *historically*; they are all the result of an evolution. Now, what does the idea of evolution imply? That things do not remain identical with themselves: that something new, which did not exist before,

comes into being, appears at a given moment; and social evolution is an uninterrupted succession of new phenomena of this kind. Nature, on the contrary, is, by definition, that which does not change, that which is ever immutable. The subject-matter of the natural sciences is that which repeats itself identically; their role is to discover the laws which are always and everywhere the same, to efface differences, and to show the uniformity beneath the apparent diversity. On this point again, consequently, it does not seem as though they can serve as a model for the social sciences; for history never repeats itself.

From these considerations, it follows that the teleological point of view must predominate in the disciplines which deal with society. If we properly understand the author, they must above all take as their object the construction of ideal ends, to determine what must be valued, and what are – or rather how it is appropriate to consider – the different human values. As to the method which has to be followed in order to proceed to this consideration, no indication is given us.

We are very much afraid that this whole fabric of argument simply rests upon a confused notion.

The author seems to accept as obvious that there only exists one nature, that is to say, physical nature, and that to refuse to admit a radical heterogeneity between the social and the natural sciences is to admit *ipso facto* that the social fact is completely reducible to the properties of matter. For him, nature is the totality of cosmic forces, and it is for that reason that nature and humanity are always presented in his book in antithetical form. Thus understood, the naturalist thesis is easy to refute. The only thing is, that it has never been held, in this form, by any sociologists of any authority: and it would be quite extraordinary that it should have received much credence, because it has as its corollary the very negation of sociology. In any case, since Jankélévitch accords us the honour of choosing us as the principle contemporary representative of the thesis which he opposes, we may be permitted to say that the whole of our work protests against this Eleatic monism. If we have said that societies are in nature, we have sought with no lesser determination to show that social nature is *sui generis*, that it is irreducible, not only to physical nature, but even to the psychic nature of the individual. To declare that societies are natural things, that collective events submit to necessary laws, is thus not to hold that there is nothing new or different in the world. No-one has made greater efforts than us to show that the characteristic changes in social life are quite real

and that, in a general way, the diversity of things is no mere appearance. In this, moreover, we do no more than to follow the path opened up by the founder of positive sociology, by Auguste Comte, who even went so far as to point to a radical discrepancy between the different realms of nature, and even between the different animal species. If, therefore, as every indications shows, it is indeed our method which Jankélévitch intended to oppose in his book, either he is poorly acquainted with it, or he has misunderstood it. It is possible that we are in error, and that one cannot, without contradiction, reconcile the naturalist thesis and the principle of the specificity of social things; but, on the other hand, in order to establish the contrary thesis, one must not forget or ignore the fact that this reconciliation has been attempted by the very doctrine which is claimed to be refuted.

And moreover, one cannot readily see how the character by which our author distinguishes social facts prevents us from treating them according to methods comparable to those employed by the natural sciences. Undoubtedly social life is composed of values, and values are properties added to reality by human consciousness; they are wholly the product of psychic mechanisms. But these mechanisms are natural facts, which can be studied scientifically; these evaluations which human judgement makes of things depend upon causes and conditions which can be discovered inductively. There is thus here the subject-matter of a whole group of sciences which, as with the sciences of physical nature, move from given effects to the causes upon which those effects are dependent: such is the object of the social sciences. And it is only when we know better, in fact, in what these creations and these classifications of values have consisted in the past, what are the mental processes which they result from, the agencies of these processes, etc., that it will be possible to substitute for these empirical, instinctive, evaluations, which are made in an unreflective fashion, more considered and rational methods.

AS, 1906(b), pp. 171-4

THE SUBJECT-MATTER OF SOCIOLOGY

When I carry out my obligations as brother, husband, or citizen, when I comply with contracts, I perform duties which are defined, externally to myself and my acts, in law and in custom. Even if they conform to my own sentiments and I feel their reality subjectively, this reality is still objective, for I did not

create them, I merely received them through my education. How many times it happens, moreover, that we are ignorant of the details of the obligations incumbent upon us, and that in order to get to know them we must consult the law and its authorised interpreters! Similarly, the church-member found the beliefs and practices of his religious life ready-made at birth; if they existed before him, they existed externally to him. The system of signs I use to express my thought, the system of currency I employ to pay my debts, the instruments of credit I utilise in my commercial relations, the practices followed in my profession, etc., function independently of whatever use I make of them. If one were to take, one after the other, all of the individuals who compose society, the preceding statement could be repeated of all of them. Here, then, are ways of acting, thinking, and feeling that present the remarkable property of existing outside the individual consciousness.

These types of conduct or thought are not only external to the individual but are, moreover, endowed with an imperative and coercive power, by virtue of which they impose themselves upon him, independent of his individual will. Of course, when I conform to them wholeheartedly, this coercion is felt only slightly, if at all, as it is unnecessary. But it is nevertheless an intrinsic characteristic of these facts; this is shown by the way in which it asserts itself as soon as I attempt to resist it. If I attempt to violate legal rules they react against me so as to prevent my act if possible, or to nullify my violation by restoring the damage, if it has been carried out but can be rectified; or to demand expiation if it cannot be compensated for otherwise.

Thus we are able to conceptualise in a precise way the field of sociology. It comprises only a limited group of phenomena. A social fact is to be recognised by the power of external coercion which it exercises or is capable of exercising over individuals; and the presence of this power can be recognised in turn either by the existence of some definite sanction or by the resistance offered against every individual act that tends to contravene it. However one can also define it in terms of its diffusion within the group, provided that, in following our previous remarks, one takes care to add as a second and essential characteristic that it exists independently of the individual forms it assumes in its diffusion. This last criterion is actually, in certain cases, easier to apply than the preceding one. In fact, the constraint is easy to identify when it expresses itself externally by some direct reaction of society, as is the case in law, morals, beliefs, customs, and even

fashions. But when it is only indirect, like the constraint which is exercised by an economic organisation, it cannot always be so easily detected. Generality combined with externality may, then, be easier to establish. Moreover, this second definition is but another form of the first; for if a mode of conduct whose existence is external to individual minds becomes general, this can only be brought about by its being imposed upon them.

Every scientific investigation is directed towards a well-defined group of phenomena, which fall within a single category. The first step of the sociologist, therefore, must be to define the things he treats, in order that his subject-matter may be clearly known. This is the first and most indispensable condition of all proof and verification. A theory can really be tested only if we are able to recognise the facts of which it is intended to give an account. Moreover, since this initial definition determines the very subject-matter of science, this subject-matter will or will not be a thing, depending on the way in which the definition is constructed.

In order to be objective, the definition must obviously deal with phenomena not as mental ideas but in terms of their inherent properties. It must characterise them by an element integral to their nature, not by their conformity to some sort of intellectual ideal. Now, at the very beginning of research, when the facts have not yet been analysed, the only ascertainable characteristics are those external enough to be immediately visible. Those that are more deep-lying are no doubt more significant, and their explanatory value is greater; but they are unknown to science at this stage, and they can be anticipated only by substituting some hypothetical conception in the place of reality. The material included under this fundamental definition must be sought among the external characteristics of phenomena. Moreover, it is clear that this definition must include, without exception or distinction, all phenomena which manifest the same characteristics; for we have no reason nor any means of choosing between them. These properties are our only clue to reality: consequently, they must be given complete sovereignty over the way in which facts are grouped. We possess no other criterion which could even partially justify any exception to this rule.

We may lay down as a principle that social facts are capable of objective representation to the degree that they are completely detached from the individual facts expressing them. In effect, the degree of objectivity of a sensation is proportionate to the degree of stability of its object; for objectivity depends upon the existence of a constant and identical point of reference to which the

representation can be referred, and which makes it possible to eliminate everything which is variable and subjective. But if the points of reference themselves are variable, if they constantly differ in relation to each other, there is no common standard, and we have no way of distinguishing between those impressions which are external and those that are subjective. So long as social life is not separated from the particular events of which it is comprised, and has no separate existence, it will present this dilemma. As these events differ among themselves and change in time, and as social life is inseparable from them, they communicate their changeability to it. Social life then consists of free currents which are constantly in the process of transformation, and cannot be fixed by the observer. The scholar cannot approach the study of social reality from this aspect. But we know that it possesses the power of crystallisation without ceasing to be itself. Apart from the individual acts to which they give rise, collective habits find expression in definite forms: legal rules, moral regulations, popular proverbs, social conventions, etc. As these forms have a permanent existence and do not change with the different applications made of them, they constitute a fixed object, a constant standard of reference for the observer, which excludes subjective impressions and purely personal observations. A legal regulation has an intrinsic identity, and there are no two ways of looking at it. Since these practices are merely social life consolidated, it is legitimate, except where there are contradictory indications, to study the latter through the former.

When, then, the sociologist undertakes the investigation of a given order of social facts, he must endeavour to consider them from an aspect that is isolated from their individual manifestations. It is this principle that we have applied in studying the diverse forms of social solidarity and their evolution, through the medium of the legal structure which expresses them. In the same way, an attempt to distinguish and classify the different types of family on the basis of literary descriptions given us by travellers and sometimes by historians, is exposed to the danger of confusing the most diverse forms and of relating together the most dissimilar types. If, by contrast, the legal structure of the family and, more specifically, the right of succession, are taken as the basis of classification, these are objective criteria which, while not infallible, will prevent many errors. Let us suppose we wish to classify the different sorts of crime. We would have to try to reconstruct the modes of life and the occupational practices that are followed in the different worlds of crime. One would then

recognise as many criminological types as there are different forms of this organisation. To come to grips with customs and popular beliefs, one must take account of the proverbs and epigrams that express them. No doubt, in proceeding thus, we leave the concrete substance of collective life temporarily outside the realm of science; and yet, however changeable and unstable it may be, its unintelligibility cannot be assumed *a priori*. But in order to follow a methodical course, we must establish the initial bases of science on solid ground and not on shifting sand. We must approach the social realm at those points at which it offers the best access to scientific investigation. Only later will it be possible to push research further and, by successive approximations, to encompass, little by little, this fleeting reality, which the human mind will perhaps never be able to grasp completely.

RMS, pp. 3-4, 11-12, 33-5 and 44-6

For the Manchester school, political economy consists in the satisfaction of the needs of the individual, particularly his material needs. In this conception, therefore, the individual is the sole end of economic relationships; it is through him and also for him that everything is accomplished. As for society, this is a mental construct, a metaphysical entity which the scholar can and must neglect. What is called by that name is simply the coming into contact of all the individual activities; it is a composite in which there is nothing more than the sum of its components. In other words, the major laws of economics would be exactly the same even if there had never been either nations or states in existence; they presuppose only the presence of individuals who exchange their products. One sees that the liberal economists are, at bottom, unconscious disciples of Rousseau, whom they reject as in error. They recognise, it is true, that the condition of isolation is not the ideal; but, like Rousseau, they see in the social tie nothing more than a superficial connection, determined by the convergence of interests. They conceive of the nation only as an immense society, through the action of which everyone receives exactly as much as he gives, and in which one remains only as long as one profits from it. It also seems to them good that things should be thus: for too intense a collective life would quickly become a threat to that individual independence which to them is the most precious thing in the world. Moreover, the more consistent among them have not hesitated to declare that national sentiments are only the residue of prejudices which one day are destined to disappear. In these conditions, economic activity can

have no other origin than egoism, and as a consequence political economy becomes radically separated from morality – if indeed humanity retains any moral ideals, once one has dissolved every social bond.

RP, 1887(b), p. 37

5. Forms of social solidarity

REPRESSIVE SANCTIONS AND MECHANICAL SOLIDARITY

The link of social solidarity to which repressive law corresponds is one whose break constitutes a crime; we give this name to every act which, in any degree whatever, evokes against its author the characteristic reaction which we term 'punishment'. To seek the nature of this link is thus to ask what is the cause of punishment, or, more precisely what crime essentially consists in. . .

. . . an act is criminal when it offends strong and defined states of the *conscience collective*. The statement of this proposition is rarely disputed, but it is ordinarily given a sense very different from that which it ought to have. We take it as if it expressed, not the essential property of crime, but one of its repercussions. We well know that crime violates very general and intense sentiments; but we believe that this generality and intensity derive from the criminal character of the act, which consequently remains to be defined. We do not deny that every delict is universally condemned, but we take as agreed that the condemnation to which it is subjected results from its delinquent character. Then, however, we are hard put to say in what its delinquent character consists. Is it to be found in an especially serious transgression? Perhaps so; but that is simply to restate the question by putting one word in place of another, for it is precisely the problem to understand what this transgression is, and particularly this specific transgression which society reproves by means of organised punishment and which constitutes criminality. It can evidently come only from one or several characteristics common to all criminological types. The only one which satisfies this condition is the very opposition between a crime, whatever it may be, and certain collective sentiments. It is, accordingly, this opposition which forms the crime, rather than being a derivation of crime. In other words, we must not say that an action shocks the *conscience collective* because it is criminal, but rather that it is criminal

because it shocks the *conscience collective*. We do not condemn it because it is a crime, but it is a crime because we condemn it. As for the intrinsic nature of these sentiments, it is impossible to specify them; they have the most diverse objects and cannot be encompassed in a single formula. We cannot say that they relate to the vital interests of society, or to a minimum of justice: all such definitions are inadequate. By this alone can we recognise it: a sentiment, whatever its origin and end, is found in all minds with a certain degree of strength and clarity, and every action which violates it is a crime. . .

Punishment is, first and foremost, an emotional reaction. This character is especially apparent in less developed societies. Primitive peoples punish for the sake of punishing, making the guilty party suffer solely for the sake of making him suffer and without seeking any advantage for themselves from the suffering which they impose. The proof of this is that they seek neither to strike back justly nor to strike back usefully, but merely to strike back. Thus they punish animals which have committed a wrongdoing and even inanimate objects which were its passive instrument. When punishment is applied only to people, it often extends further than the guilty party and reaches the innocent, his wife, his children, his neighbours, etc. That is because the passion which is the spirit of punishment ceases only when it is exhausted. If, therefore, after it has destroyed the one who immediately called it forth, it still remains strong, it expands in a quite mechanical fashion. Even when it is fairly mild, and relates only to the guilty party, it makes its presence felt by the tendency to surpass in severity the action against which it is reacting. That is the origin of the refinements of suffering added to capital punishment. Even in Rome the thief not only had to return the stolen object, but also pay retribution of double and quadruple the amount. Moreover, is not the very common punishment of the *lex talionis* a mode of satisfying the passion for vengeance?

But today, it is said, punishment has changed its character; it is no longer to avenge itself that society punishes, it is to defend itself. The suffering which it inflicts is in its hands no longer anything but a methodical means of protection. It punishes, not because chastisement offers it any intrinsic satisfaction, but so that the fear of punishment may paralyse those who contemplate evil. It is no longer anger, but a well thought-out precaution which determines repression. The preceding observations could not then be generalised; they would refer only to the primitive form of punishment and would not extend to the modern form.

But to justify such a radical distinction between these two sorts of punishment, it is not enough to state that they are employed with different ends in view. The nature of a practice does not necessarily change because the conscious intentions of those who apply it are modified. It might, in fact, still play the same role as before, but without this being perceived. In this case, why should it only become changed in that we are more aware of the effects which it produces? It adapts itself to new conditions of existence without any essential changes. This is the case with punishment. In fact, it is a mistake to believe that vengeance is simply useless cruelty. It is very possible that, in itself, it consists of a mechanical and aimless reaction, an emotional and unthinking action, an irrational need to destroy; but, in reality, it does tend to destroy that which is a threat to us. It consists, then, in a true act of defence, although an instinctive and unreflective one. We avenge ourselves only upon what has harmed us, and what has harmed us is always a threat. The instinct of vengeance is, in sum, only the instinct of conservation heightened by peril. Thus, vengeance is far from having had the negative and sterile role in the history of mankind which is attributed to it. It is a defensive weapon which has a definite value, although it is a crude weapon. Since it is not informed with an awareness of the end it serves, but functions automatically, it cannot, consequently, regulate itself, but responds rather haphazardly to the blind causes which urge it on, without anything moderating its responses. Today, as we understand more clearly the end to be attained, we know better how to utilise the means at our disposal; we protect ourselves more systematically and, accordingly, more efficiently. But this result was also obtained previously, although in a rather imperfect manner. There is no radical division between the punishment of today and yesterday, and consequently it was not necessary for the latter to change its nature in order to accommodate itself to the role that it plays in our civilised societies. The whole difference derives from the fact that it now produces its effects with a heightened awareness of what it does. But, although the individual or social consciousness may not be without influence upon the reality that it clarifies, it has not the power to change its nature. The internal structure of the phenomenon remains the same, whether men be conscious of it or not. We may thus conclude that the essential elements of punishment are the same as of old.

And in fact, punishment has remained, at least in part, a work of vengeance. It is said that we do not make the guilty party suffer

for the sake of suffering; it is nonetheless true that we find it right that he should suffer. Perhaps we are wrong, but that is not the question. We seek, at the moment, to define punishment as it is or has been, not as it ought to be. It is certain that this expression of public prosecution which finds its way again and again into the language of the courts is not a mere expression. In supposing that punishment can really serve to protect us in the future, we think that it must be above all an *expiation* of the past. This is shown by the minute precautions we take to allot punishment as exactly as possible in relation to the severity of the crime; this would be inexplicable if we did not believe that the guilty party ought to suffer because of his wrongdoing, and in the same degree. This gradation is not necessary if punishment is only a means of defence. No doubt, there would be danger for society if the most serious offences were treated as simple transgressions; but it would be greater, in the majority of cases, if the latter were treated in the same way as the former. Against an enemy, we cannot take too much precaution. Shall we say that the authors of the smallest misdeeds have less perverse natures, and that to neutralise their criminal instincts less stringent punishments will suffice? But if their inclinations are less vicious they are not on that account less intense. Robbers are as strongly inclined to rob as murderers are to murder; the resistance offered by the former is not less than that of the latter, and consequently, to control it, we would have recourse to the same means. If, as has been said, it was solely a question of putting down a noxious force by an opposing force, the intensity of the second would be measured solely by the intensity of the first, without the quality of the latter entering into the consideration. The penal scale would then encompass only a small number of gradations. Punishment would vary only as the criminal is more or less hardened, and not according to the nature of the criminal act. An incorrigible robber would be treated in the same way as an incorrigible murderer. But, in fact, if it were shown that a misdoer was completely incurable, we would still not feel bound to punish him excessively. This is proof that we are faithful to the talion principle, although we apply it in a more refined sense than previously. We no longer measure in so material and gross a manner either the extent of the deed or of the punishment; but we still think that there ought to be an equation between the two terms, whether or not we benefit from this balance. Punishment thus remains for us what it was for our forefathers. It is still an act of vengeance since it is an expiation. What we avenge, what the criminal expiates, is the outrage to morality. . .

As for the social character of this reaction, it comes from the social nature of the offended sentiments. Because they are found in the consciousness of every individual, the infraction which has been committed arouses the same indignation in those who witness it or who learn of its existence. Everybody is attacked; consequently, everybody opposes the attack. Not only is the reaction general, but it is collective, which is not the same thing. It is not produced in an isolated manner in each individual, but is a total, unified response, even if this varies according to the case. In fact, in the same way as contrary sentiments repel each other, similar sentiments attract each other, and they attract as strongly as they themselves are intense. As contradiction is a threat which stirs them, it adds to their force of attraction. Never do we feel the need of the company of our compatriots so greatly as when we are in a foreign country; never does the believer feel so strongly attracted to his fellow believers as during periods of persecution. Of course, we always love the company of those who feel and think as we do, but it is with passion, and no longer solely with pleasure, that we seek it immediately after discussions where our common beliefs have been directly attacked. Crime brings together honest men and concentrates them. We have only to notice what happens, particularly in a small town, when some moral scandal has just occurred. Men stop each other on the street, they visit each other, they seek to come together to talk of the event and to wax indignant in common. From all the similar impressions which are exchanged, and the anger that is expressed, there emerges a unique emotion, more or less determinate according to the circumstances, which emanates from no specific person, but from everyone. This is the public wrath.

Moreover, this is what gives it its functions: the sentiments in question derive all their force from the fact that they are common to everyone. They are strong because they are unquestioned. It is the fact that they are universally respected which gives them the specific respect which they are accorded. Now, crime is possible only if this respect is not truly universal; consequently, it implies that they are not absolutely collective, and thus damages this unanimity which is the source of their authority. If, then, when a crime takes place, the individuals whom it offends do not unite to manifest what they share in common, and to affirm that the case is anomalous, they would be permanently shaken. They must fortify themselves by the mutual assurance that they are still in unison. The only means for this is action in common. In short, since it is the *conscience collective* which is attacked, it must be

that which resists, and accordingly the resistance must be collective. . . .

Thus, the analysis of punishment has confirmed our definition of crime. We began by establishing inductively that crime consisted essentially in an act contrary to strong and defined states of the *conscience collective*. We have just seen that all the qualities of punishment ultimately derive from this nature of crime. That is because the rules that it sanctions express the most essential social likenesses.

Thus we see what type of solidarity penal law symbolises. It is well known, indeed, that there is a form of social cohesion whose cause lies in a certain conformity of all specific individuals to a common type which is none other than the mental type of the society. In these conditions, not only are all the members of the group individually attracted to one-another because they resemble one-another, but also because they are joined to that which is the condition of existence of this collective type: that is to say, to the society that they form by their union. Not only do citizens love each other and seek each other out in preference to strangers but they love their country. They want for it what they want for themselves, and wish it to prosper and endure, because without it, a great part of their psychological life would be hampered in its functioning. Conversely, society demands that they present these fundamental resemblances, because that is a condition of its cohesion. There are in us two forms of consciousness: one contains states which are personal to the character of each of us, while the states which comprise the other are common to the whole society. The first represent only our individual personality and constitute it; the second represent the collective type and, consequently, society, without which it would not exist. When it is one of the elements of this latter which determines our conduct, we do not act in our personal interest; we pursue collective ends. Although distinct, these two forms of consciousness are linked one to the other, since in the end they are only one, having one and the same organic substratum. They are thus interdependent. From this results a solidarity *sui generis*, based upon mutual resemblance, and directly linking individual to society.

DTS, pp. 35, 47-8, 52-6, 70-1 and 73-4

VARIATIONS IN THE CHARACTER OF PENAL SANCTIONS

The variations which punishment has undergone during the course of history are of two sorts: some quantitative, others quali-

punishment should become weaker. This weakening does not stem from the fact that morals become less harsh, but from the fact that religiosity, which penal law and the sentiments underlying it were originally pervaded with, steadily declines. No doubt sentiments of human sympathy become stronger at the same time; but their increasing strength cannot explain this progressive reduction in punishment since, by itself, this would tend rather to make us more severe towards every crime in which a man is the victim, and would thus increase the punishment for such crimes. The true reason is that the compassion which is felt for the condemned man is no longer obviated by opposite sentiments which do not allow it to make itself felt.

AS, 1900, pp. 65–8, 77–8, 80–1, 84–5, 87–9 and 90–1

RESTITUTIVE SANCTIONS AND THE RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN MECHANICAL AND ORGANIC SOLIDARITY

What distinguishes [the restitutive] sanction is that it is not expiatory but consists of a simple return in state. The person who violates or disregards the law is not made to suffer in relation to his wrongdoing; he is simply sentenced to comply. If certain things have already been done, the judge reinstates them as they should have been. He speaks of law; he says nothing of punishment. Damage payments have no penal character; they are only a means of reviewing the past in order to reinstate it, as far as possible, in its normal form. . .

Neglect of these rules is not even punished diffusely. The defendant who has lost in litigation is not disgraced, his honour is not smirched. We can even imagine these rules differing from how they are now without any feeling of distaste. The idea of tolerating murder makes us indignant, but we quite easily accept modification of the law of inheritance, and can even conceive of its possible abolition. It is at least a question which we do not refuse to discuss. In the same way, we readily accept that the law of easements or that of usufructs may be organised differently, that the obligations of vendor and purchaser may be determined in another way, or that administrative functions may be distributed according to different principles. As these prescriptions do not correspond to any sentiment in us, and as we generally do not know scientifically the reasons for their existence, since this science does not exist, they have no roots in the majority of us. Of course, there are exceptions. We do not tolerate the idea that a contract, contrary to custom or obtained either through force or

fraud, can bind the contracting parties. Thus, when public opinion finds itself in the presence of a case of this sort, it shows itself less indifferent than we have previously said, and it increases the legal sanction by its censure. The different domains of moral life are not radically separated one from another; on the contrary, they are continuous, and accordingly they contain marginal regions where these different characteristics are found at the same time. However, the preceding proposition remains true in the great majority of cases. It is proof that rules with a restitutive sanction either do not at all derive from the *conscience collective*, or are only feeble states of it. Repressive law corresponds to the heart, the centre of the common conscience; purely moral rules are already a less central part; finally, restitutive law originates in very marginal regions, spreading well beyond. The more it becomes truly itself, the more removed it becomes.

This characteristic is, moreover, manifest in the manner of its functioning. While repressive law tends to remain diffuse within society, restitutive law creates organs which are increasingly specialised: commercial courts, councils of arbitration, administrative courts of many kinds. Even in its most general part, that which pertains to civil law, it is exercised only through particular functionaries: magistrates, lawyers, etc., who are able to fill this role in virtue of very specialised training.

But, although these rules are to some degree outside the *conscience collective*, they do not refer only to individuals. If this were so, restitutive law would have nothing in common with social solidarity, for the relations that it regulates would bind individuals to one-another without binding them to society. These would simply be happenings in private life, as friendly relations are. But it is necessarily the case that society is far from being absent in this sphere of legal life. It is true that, generally, it does not intervene directly and actively; it must be solicited by the interested parties. But in being called forth, its intervention is nonetheless the essential cog in the machine, since it alone makes it function. It propounds the law through the organ of its representatives.

It has been contended, however, that this role has nothing properly social about it, but reduces itself to that of a conciliator of private interests; that, consequently, any individual can fill it, and that, if society is in charge of it, it is only for reasons of convenience. But nothing is more incorrect than to consider society as a sort of third-party arbitrator. When it is led to intervene, it is not to rectify individual interests. It does not seek

to discover what may be the most advantageous solution for the adversaries and does not propose a compromise for them. Rather it applies to the particular case which is submitted to its general and traditional rules of law. Now law is, above all, a social thing, the objective of which is something other than the interest of the litigants. The judge who examines a request for divorce is not concerned with knowing whether this separation is truly desirable for the married parties, but rather whether the causes which are adduced come under one of the categories embodied in the law. . .

Since rules with restitutive sanctions are foreign to the *conscience collective*, the ties that they determine are not those which relate indiscriminately to everyone. That is to say, they are established, not between the individual and society, but between restricted, specific parts of society, whom they link to one-another. But, on the other hand, since society is not absent, it must be more or less directly interested, and it must feel the repercussions. Thus, according to the force with which society feels them, it intervenes more or less directly and actively, through the intermediary of special organs charged with representing it. These relations are, then, quite different from those which repressive law regulates, for the latter attach the particular individual to the *conscience collective* directly and without mediation: that is, the individual to society. . .

To sum up: the relations governed by co-operative law with restitutive sanctions, and the solidarity which they express, result from the division of social labour. We have explained, moreover, that, in general, co-operative relations do not convey other sanctions. In fact, it is in the nature of specialised tasks to escape the action of the *conscience collective*, for, in order for a thing to be the object of common sentiments, it must necessarily be shared: that is to say, it must be present in all minds such that everyone can represent it in one and the same manner. To be sure, in so far as functions have a certain generality, everybody can have some idea of them. But the more specialised they are, the more restricted the number of individuals who know each of them; consequently, the more marginal they are to the *conscience collective*. The rules which determine them cannot have that dominating force and transcendent authority which, when offended, demands expiation. It is also from public opinion that their authority derives, as with penal rules, but from such opinion localised in restricted regions of society.

Moreover, even in the special circles where they apply and where, consequently, they are represented in men's minds, they

do not correspond to very active sentiments, nor even very often to any type of emotional state. For, as they fix the manner in which the different functions ought to concur in diverse combinations of circumstances which can arise, the objects to which they are connected are not always present in consciousness. We are not constantly called upon to administer guardianship, trusteeship, or exercise the rights of creditor or buyer, etc., or, more important, to exercise them in such and such a situation. Now, states of consciousness are strong only in so far as they are permanent. The violation of these rules reaches neither the common spirit of society, nor even, generally speaking, that of special groups, and consequently it can stimulate only a very moderate reaction. All that is necessary is that the functions concur in a regular manner. If this regularity is disrupted, it is sufficient for us to re-establish it. Assuredly, this is not to say that the development of the division of labour cannot influence penal law. There are, as we already know, administrative and governmental functions in which certain relations are regulated by repressive law, because of the particular character of this agency of the *conscience collective* and everything connected with it. In still other cases, the links of solidarity which unite certain social functions can be such that their breach stimulates repercussions which are sufficiently extensive to provoke a penal reaction. But, for the reason we have given, these reactions are exceptional. . . [thus] we recognise only two kinds of positive solidarity, which are distinguishable by the following qualities:

1. The first ties the individual directly to society without any intermediary. In the second, he depends upon society, because he depends upon the parts which compose it.

2. Society is not seen in the same aspect in the two cases. In the first, what we call 'society' is a more or less closely organised totality of beliefs and sentiments common to all the members of the group: it is the collective type. By contrast, the society to which we are bound in the second instance is a system of differentiated and specialised functions which are united in definite relationships. These two societies really make up only one. They are two aspects of one and the same reality, but nonetheless they must be distinguished.

3. From this second difference there arises another which helps us to characterise and name the two kinds of solidarity.

The first can be strong only to the degree that the ideas and tendencies common to all the members of the society are greater in number and intensity than those which pertain to each indi-

vidual member. Its strength is determined by the degree to which this is the case. But what makes our personality is how many particular characteristics we possess which distinguish us from others. This solidarity thus can grow only in inverse ratio to personality. There are in each of us, as we have said, two forms of consciousness: one which is common to our group as a whole, which, consequently, is not *ourselves*, but society living and acting within us; the other, on the other hand, represents that in us which is personal and distinct, that which makes us an individual. Solidarity which comes from resemblance is at its *maximum* when the *conscience collective* completely envelops our whole consciousness and coincides in all points with it. But, at that moment, our individuality is nil. It can develop only if the community takes a lesser part of us. There are, here, two contrary forces, one centripetal, the other centrifugal, which cannot flourish at the same time. We cannot, at one and the same time, develop ourselves in two opposite senses. If we have a strong inclination to think and act for ourselves, we cannot be as strongly inclined to think and act as others do. If our ideal is to present a unique and personal appearance, we cannot resemble everybody else. Moreover, at the moment when this latter solidarity exercises its force, our personality vanishes, by definition, one might say, for we are no longer ourselves, but the collective being.

The social molecules which cohere in this way can act together only in so far as they have no action of their own, as with the molecules of inorganic bodies. That is why we propose to call this form of solidarity 'mechanical'. The term does not signify that it is produced by mechanical and artificial means. We call it that only by analogy to the cohesion which unites the elements of an inorganic body, as contrasted to that which forms a unity out of the elements of a living body. What finally justifies this term is that the link which thus unites the individual to society is wholly comparable to that which attaches a thing to a person. The individual consciousness, considered in this light, is a simple appendage of the collective type and follows all of its actions, as the possessed object follows those of its owner. In societies where this type of solidarity is highly developed, the individual is not his own master, as we shall see later; solidarity is, literally something which the society possesses. Thus, in these types of society, personal rights are not yet distinguished from real rights.

It is quite different with the solidarity which the division of labour produces. Whereas the previous type implies that individuals resemble each other, this latter presumes that they differ.

The former is possible only in so far as the individual personality is absorbed into the collective personality; the latter is possible only if each one has a sphere of action which is peculiar to him – that is, if he possesses a personality. It is necessary, then, that the *conscience collective* leave open a part of the individual consciousness in order that special functions may be established there, functions which it cannot regulate. The more this region is extended, the stronger is the cohesion which results from this solidarity. In fact, on the one hand, every individual depends more directly on society as labour becomes more divided; and, on the other, the activity of every individual becomes more personalised to the degree that it is more specialised. No doubt, as circumscribed as it is, it is never completely original; even in the exercise of our occupation, we conform to conventions and practices which are common to our whole occupational group. But, in this instance, the yoke that we submit to is much less heavy than when society completely controls us, and it leaves much more place open for the free play of our initiative. Here, then, the individuality of all grows at the same time as that of its parts. Society becomes more capable of collective action, at the same time that each of its elements has more freedom of action. This solidarity resembles that which we observe among the higher animals. Each organ, in effect, has its special character and autonomy; and yet the unity of the organism is as great as the individuation of the parts is more marked. Because of this analogy, we propose to call the solidarity which is due to the division of labour, ‘organic’.

DTS, pp. 79, 80–2, 83, 96–101

6. The division of labour and social differentiation

THE GROWTH OF STRUCTURAL DIFFERENTIATION IN SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Thus, it is an historical law that mechanical solidarity, which first stands alone, or nearly so, progressively loses ground, and that organic solidarity gradually becomes preponderant. But when the mode of solidarity becomes changed, the structure of societies cannot but change. The form of a body is necessarily transformed when the molecular relationships are no longer the same. Consequently, if the preceding proposition is correct, there must be two social types which correspond to these two types of solidarity.

If we try to construct hypothetically the ideal type of a society whose cohesion were exclusively the result of resemblance, we should have to conceive it as an absolutely homogeneous mass whose parts were not distinguished from one another, and which consequently had no structure. In short, it would be devoid of all definite form and all organisation. It would be the actual social protoplasm, the germ out of which all social types would develop. We propose to call the aggregate thus characterised, a *horde*.

It is true that we have not yet, in any completely authenticated fashion, observed societies which complied in all respects with this definition. What gives us the right to postulate their existence, however, is that the lower societies, those which are closest to this primitive stage, are formed by a simple repetition of aggregates of this kind. We find an almost perfectly pure example of this social organisation among the Indians of North America. Each Iroquois tribe, for example, is composed of a certain number of partial societies (the largest ones comprise eight) which present all the characteristics we have just mentioned. The adults of both sexes are equal to each other. The *sachems* and chiefs, who are at the head of each of these groups and by whose council the common affairs of the tribe are administered, do not enjoy any superiority. Kinship itself is not organised, for we cannot give this

name to the distribution of the population in layers of generations. In the late epoch in which these peoples have been studied, there were, indeed, some special obligations which bound the child to its maternal relatives, but these are of little consequence, and are not perceptibly distinct from those which link the child to other members of society. . .

We give the name *clan* to the horde which has ceased to be independent by becoming an element in a more extensive group, and that of *segmental societies with a clan-base* to societies which are formed by an association of clans. We call societies 'segmental' in order to indicate that they are characterised by the repetition of similar groupings, rather like the rings of an earthworm, and we call this fundamental element a 'clan', because this word well expresses its mixed nature, at once familial and political. It is a family in the sense that all the members who compose it consider themselves relatives, and they are, in fact, for the most part consanguineous. The affinities that are created by these blood-ties are those which principally keep them united. In addition, they sustain relationships which we can term domestic, since we also find them in societies whose familial character is indisputable: I am referring to collective punishment, collective responsibility, and, as soon as private property makes its appearance, common inheritance. But, on the other hand, it is not a family in the proper sense of the word, for in order to belong to it, it is not necessary to have any definite relations of consanguinity with other members of the clan. It is enough to possess an external quality, which generally consists in having the same name. Although this sign is thought to denote a common origin, such a civil status really constitutes very inconclusive proof, and is very easy to copy. Thus, the clan contains a great many strangers, and this permits it to attain dimensions such as a family, properly speaking, never has. It often comprises several thousand persons. Moreover, it is the fundamental political unit; the heads of clans are the only social authorities.

We can thus label this organisation 'politico-familial'. Not only has the clan consanguinity as its basis, but different clans within the same society are often considered as kin to one-another. . .

This organisation, just like the horde, of which it is only an extension, evidently carries with it no other solidarity than that derived from resemblance, since the society is formed of similar segments and these in their turn enclose only homogeneous elements. No doubt, each clan has its own character and is thereby distinguished from others; but the solidarity is proportionally

weaker as they are more heterogeneous, and vice versa. For segmental organisation to be possible, the segments must resemble one another: without that, they would not be united. And they must differ; without this, they would lose themselves in each other and be effaced. These two contrasting prerequisites are found in varying ratio in different societies, but the type of society remains the same. . .

The structure of societies where organic solidarity is preponderant is quite different.

These are formed, not by the repetition of similar, homogeneous segments, but by a system of different organs each of which has a special role, and which are themselves formed of differentiated parts. Not only are social elements not of the same nature, but they are not distributed in the same way. They are not juxtaposed in a linear fashion as the rings of an earthworm, nor entwined one with another, but co-ordinated and subordinated one to another around the same central organ which exercises a moderating action over the rest of the organism. This organ itself no longer has the same character as in the preceding case, for, if the others depend upon it, it, in its turn, depends upon them. No doubt, it still enjoys a special situation, a privileged position, but that is due to the nature of the role that it fills and not to some cause foreign to its functions, to some force communicated to it externally. Thus, there is no longer anything about it that is not temporal and human; between it and other organs, there is no longer anything but differences in degree. This is comparable to the way in which, in the animal, the dominance of the nervous system over other systems is reduced to the right, if one may speak thus, of obtaining the best food and of having its fill before the others. But it needs them, just as they have need of it.

This social type rests on principles so different from the preceding that it can develop only in proportion to the effacement of that type. In this type, individuals are no longer grouped according to their relations of lineage, but according to the particular nature of the social activity to which they devote themselves. Their natural and necessary milieu is no longer that given by birth, but that given by occupation. It is no longer real or fictitious blood-ties which mark the place of each one, but the function which he fills. No doubt, when this new form of organisation begins to appear, it tries to utilise and to take over the existing one. The way in which functions are divided thus follows, as faithfully as possible, the way in which society is already divided. The segments, or at least the groups of segments united by special affinities, become organs.

It is thus that the clans which together formed the tribe of the Levites appropriated priestly functions for themselves among the Hebrew people. In a general way, classes and castes probably derive their origin and their character in this way; they arise from the numerous occupational organisations which spring up within the pre-existing familial organisation. But this mixed arrangement cannot endure, for between the two conditions that it attempts to reconcile, there is an antagonism which necessarily ends in a break. It is only a very rudimentary division of labour which can adapt itself to those rigid, defined moulds which were not made for it. It can grow only by freeing itself from the framework which encloses it. As soon as it has passed a certain stage of development, there is no longer any connection either between the given number of segments and the steady growth of functions which are becoming specialised, or between the hereditarily fixed properties of the first and the new aptitudes that the second calls forth. The substance of social life must enter into entirely new combinations in order to organise itself upon completely different foundations. But the old structure, so far as it persists, is opposed to this. That is why it must disappear.

DTS, pp. 148–51, 152 and 157–9

THE DECLINE OF MECHANICAL SOLIDARITY AND EMERGENCE OF MORAL INDIVIDUALISM

Not only, in a general way, does mechanical solidarity link men less strongly than organic solidarity, but also, as we advance in the scale of social evolution, it becomes increasingly weak.

The strength of the social ties which have this origin differ in relation to the three following conditions:

1. The relation between the volume of the *conscience collective* and that of the individual mind. The links are stronger the more the first completely envelops the second.

2. The average intensity of the states of the *conscience collective*. The relation between volumes being equal, it has as much power over the individual as it has vitality. If, on the other hand, it consists of only weak forces, it can move the individual only weakly in the collective direction. He will the more easily be able to pursue his own course, and solidarity will thus be less.

3. The greater or lesser the fixity of these same states the more defined are beliefs and practices which exist, and the less place they leave for individual differences. They are uniform moulds within which all our ideas and actions are formed. Consensus is

then as perfect as possible; all minds move in unison. Conversely, the more abstract and indeterminate the rules of conduct and thought, the more conscious direction must intervene to apply them to particular cases. But the latter cannot awaken without dissensions occurring, for as it varies from one man to another in quality and quantity, it inevitably leads to this result. Centrifugal tendencies thus multiply at the expense of social cohesion and the harmony of actions.

On the other hand, strong and defined states of the *conscience collective* are the basis of penal law. But we shall see that the number of these is less today than previously, and that it diminishes progressively as societies approach our social type. Thus it is the case that the average intensity and degree of fixity of collective states have themselves diminished. From this fact, it is true, we cannot conclude that the total extent of the *conscience collective* has narrowed, for it may be that the region to which penal law corresponds has contracted, and that the remainder, by contrast, has expanded. It may manifest fewer strong and defined states, but compensate with a greater number of others. But this growth, if it is real, is at most equivalent to that which is produced in the individual mind, for the latter has, at least, grown in the same proportions. If there are more things common to all, there are far more that are personal to each. There is, indeed, every reason to believe that the latter have increased more than the former, for the differences between men become more pronounced in so far as they are more educated. We have just seen that specialised activities have developed more than the *conscience collective*. It is, therefore, at least probable that, in each individual mind, the personal sphere has grown more than the other. In any case, the relation between them has at most remained the same. Consequently, from this point of view, mechanical solidarity has gained nothing, even if it has not lost anything. If therefore, from another aspect, we discover that the *conscience collective* has become weaker and more ill-defined, we can rest assured that there has been a weakening of this solidarity, since, in respect of the three conditions upon which its power of action rests, two, at least, are losing their intensity, while the third remains unchanged. . .

This is not to say, however, that the *conscience collective* is likely to disappear completely. Rather it increasingly comes to consist of very general and indeterminate ways of thought and sentiment, which leaves room open for a growing variety of individual differences. There is even a place where it is strengthened

and made precise: this is, in the way in which it regards the individual. As all the other beliefs and all the other practices take on a less and less religious character, the individual becomes the object of a sort of religion. We have a cult of personal dignity which, as with every strong cult, already has its superstitions. It is, thus, we may say, a common faith but it is possible only by the ruin of all others and, consequently, cannot produce the same effects as this mass of extinguished beliefs. There is no compensation for these. Moreover, if it is common in so far as it is shared by the community, it is individual in its object. If it turns all wills towards the same end, this end is not social. It thus occupies a completely exceptional place in the *conscience collective*. It is still from society that it takes all its force, but it is not to society that it attaches us; it is to ourselves. Hence, it does not constitute a true social bond. That is why we have been justly able to criticise the theorists who have made this sentiment the only fundamental element in their moral doctrine with the ensuing dissolution of society. We can then conclude by saying that all social links which result from likeness progressively slacken.

DTS, 124-6 and 146-7

[Written in review of Tönnies' *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft*.]

Like the author I believe that there are two major types of society, and the words which he uses to designate them indicate their nature fairly well; it is a pity that they are untranslatable. I accept, in common with him, that *Gemeinschaft* is the original phenomenon, and *Gesellschaft* the end result which derives from it. Lastly I agree with the general lines of analysis and the description of *Gemeinschaft* which he has given us.

The point over which I diverge from him, however, concerns the theory of *Gesellschaft*. If I have properly understood his thought, *Gesellschaft* is supposed to be characterised by a progressive development of individualism, the dispersive effects of which can only be prevented for a time, and by artificial means, by the action of the state. It is seen essentially as a mechanical aggregate; what there is that remains of truly collective life is presumed to result, not from an internal spontaneity, but from the wholly external stimulus of the state. In short. . . it is society such as Bentham conceived of it. Now I believe that the life of large social agglomerations is just as natural as that of small groupings. It is no less organic and no less internal. Outside of these purely individual actions there is a collective activity in our contemporary

societies which is just as natural as that of the smaller societies of previous ages. It is certainly different; it constitutes a distinct type, but however different they may be, there is no difference in nature between these two varieties of the same genus. In order to prove this, it would need a book; I can do no more than state the proposition. Is it likely, moreover, that the evolution of a single entity, society, begins by being organic only to subsequently become purely mechanical? There is such a chasm between these two modes of existence that it is impossible to see how they could form part of the same development. To reconcile the theory of Aristotle with that of Bentham in this way is simply to juxtapose opposites. We have to choose: if society is originally a natural phenomenon, it stays such until the end of its life.

But what does this collective life of *Gesellschaft* consist in? The procedure followed by the author does not allow an answer to this question, because it is completely ideological. In the second part of his work, Tönnies devotes more time to the systematic analysis of concepts than to the observation of facts. He proceeds by conceptual argument; we find in his writing the distinctions and symmetrical classifications which are so beloved of German logicians. The only way to avoid this would have been to proceed inductively, that is, to study *Gesellschaft* through the law and the mores which correspond to it, and which reveal its structure.

RP, 1889, pp. 421-2

The condemnation of individualism has been facilitated by its confusion with the narrow utilitarianism and utilitarian egoism of Spencer and the economists. But this is very facile. It is not hard, to be sure, to denounce as a shallow ideal that narrow commercialism which reduces society to nothing more than a vast apparatus of production and exchange; and it is perfectly clear that all social life would be impossible if there did not exist interests superior to the interests of individuals. It is wholly correct that such doctrines should be treated as anarchical, and we fully agree with this view. But what is unacceptable is that this individualism should be presented as the only one that there is, or even could be. Quite the contrary; it is becoming increasingly rare and exceptional. The practical philosophy of Spencer is of such moral poverty that it now has hardly any supporters. As for the economists, even if they once allowed themselves to be seduced by the simplicity of this theory, they have for a long time now felt the need to modify the severity of their primitive orthodoxy and to open their minds to more generous sentiments. M. de Molinari is

almost alone, in France, in remaining intractable and I am not aware that he has exercised a significant influence on the ideas of our time. Indeed, if individualism had not other representatives, it would be quite pointless to move heaven and earth in this way to combat an enemy who is in the process of quietly dying a natural death.

However, there exists another individualism over which it is less easy to triumph. It has been upheld for a century by the great majority of thinkers: it is the individualism of Kant and Rousseau and the spiritualists, that which the Declaration of the Rights of Man sought, more or less successfully, to translate into formulae, which is now taught in our schools and which has become the basis of our moral catechism. It is true that it has been thought possible to attack this individualism by reference to the first type; but the two are fundamentally different, and the criticisms which apply to the one could not be appropriate to the other. It is so far from making personal interest the aim of human conduct that it sees personal motives as the very source of evil. According to Kant, I am only certain of acting properly if the motives that influence me relate, not to the particular circumstances in which I am placed, but to my equality as a man *in abstracto*. Conversely, my action is wrong when it cannot be justified logically except by reference to the situation I happen to be in and my social condition, class or caste interests, my emotions, etc. Hence immoral conduct is to be recognised by the sign that it is closely linked to the individuality of the agent and cannot be universalised without manifest absurdity. Similarly, if Rousseau sees the general will, which is the basis of the social contract, as infallible, as the authentic expression of perfect justice, this is because it is a resultant of the totality of particular wills; consequently it constitutes a kind of impersonal average from which all individual considerations have been eliminated, since, being distinct from and even antagonistic to one-another, they are neutralised and cancel each other out. Thus, for both these thinkers, the only modes of conduct that are moral are those which are applicable to all men equally: that is to say, which are implied in the notion of man in general.

This is indeed far removed from that apotheosis of pleasure and private interest, the egoistic cult of the self for which utilitarian individualism has validly been criticised. Quite the contrary: according to these moralists, duty consists in turning our attention from what concerns us personally, from all that relates to our empirical individuality, so as to pursue solely that which is de-

manded by our human condition, that which we hold in common with all our fellow men. This ideal goes so far beyond the limit of utilitarian ends that it appears to those who aspire to it as having a religious character. The human person, by reference to the definition of which good must be distinguished from evil, is considered as sacred, in what can be called the ritual sense of the word. It has something of that transcendental majesty which the churches of all times have accorded to their gods. It is conceived as being invested with that mysterious property which creates a vacuum about holy objects, which keeps them away from profane contacts and which separates them from ordinary life. And it is exactly this characteristic which confers the respect of which it is the object. Whoever makes an attempt on a man's life, on a man's liberty, on a man's honour, inspires us with a feeling of revulsion, in every way comparable to that which the believer experiences when he sees his idol profaned. Such a morality is therefore not simply a hygienic discipline or a wise principle of economy. It is a religion of which man is, at the same time, both believer and god.

But this religion is individualistic, since it has man as its object; man is, by definition, an individual. Indeed there is no system whose individualism is more uncompromising. Nowhere are the rights of man affirmed more energetically, since the individual is here placed on the level of sacrosanct objects; nowhere is he more jealously protected from external encroachments, whatever their source.

A verbal similarity has made possible the belief that *individualism* necessarily resulted from *individual*, and thus egoistic, sentiments. In reality, the religion of the individual is a social institution like all known religions. It is society which provides us with this ideal as the only common end which is today able to offer a focus for men's wills. To remove this ideal, without replacing it with any other, is therefore to plunge us into that very moral anarchy which it is sought to avoid.

Nonetheless we must not consider as perfect and definitive the formula with which the eighteenth century gave expression to individualism, a formula which we have made the mistake of maintaining in an almost unchanged form. Although it was adequate a century ago, it today needs to be enlarged and completed. It presented individualism only in its most negative aspect. Our forerunners were concerned solely with freeing the individual from the political shackles which hampered his development. Thus they regarded freedom of thought, freedom to write, and freedom to vote as the primary values that it was necessary to

achieve – and this emancipation was indeed the precondition of all subsequent progress. However, carried away by the enthusiasm of the struggle, and concerned only with the objective they pursued, in the end they no longer saw beyond it, and made into something of an ultimate goal what was merely the next stage in their efforts. Now, political freedom is a means, not an end. It is worth no more than the manner in which it is put to use. If it does not serve something which exists beyond it, it is not merely fruitless, it becomes dangerous. If those who handle this weapon do not know how to use it in productive struggles, they will not be slow in turning it against themselves.

It is precisely for this reason that it has fallen today into a certain discredit. Men of my generation recall how great our enthusiasm was when, twenty years ago, we finally succeeded in toppling the last barriers which we impatiently confronted. But alas! disenchantment came quickly; for we soon had to admit that no one knew what use should be made of this freedom that had been so laboriously achieved. Those to whom we owed it only made use of it in internecine conflicts. And it was from that moment that one felt the growth in the country of this current of gloom and despondency, which became stronger with each day that passed, the ultimate result of which must inevitably be to break the spirit of those least able to resist.

Thus, we can no longer subscribe to this negative ideal. We must go beyond what has been achieved, if only to preserve it. Indeed, if we do not learn to put to use the means of action that we have in our hands, it is inevitable that they will become less effective. Let us therefore use our freedoms to discover what must be done and in order to do it. Let us use them in order to soften the functioning of the social machine, still so harsh to individuals, so as to put at their disposal all possible means for the free development of their faculties in order finally to progress towards making a reality of the famous precept: to each according to his works!

RB, 1898, pp. 7–8 and 12–13

THE CAUSES OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DIVISION OF LABOUR

We have seen that the organised structure, and thus the division of labour, develop correspondingly as the segmental structure disappears. Thus either this disappearance is the cause of the development, or the development is the cause of the disappear-

ance. The latter hypothesis is unacceptable, for we know that the segmental arrangement is an unsurmountable obstacle to the division of labour, and must at least partially have become dissolved for the division of labour to emerge. The latter can only develop in so far as the former ceases to exist. To be sure, once the division of labour appears, it can contribute towards the hastening of the other's regression, but it only comes into being once this regression has begun. The effect reacts upon the cause, but never loses its quality of effect; its action, consequently, is secondary. The growth of the division of labour is thus brought about by the social segments losing their individuality, as the boundaries between them become less marked. In short, a merging takes place which makes it possible for social life to enter into new combinations.

But the disappearance of this type can have this consequence for only one reason. That is because it produces a coming together between individuals who were separated – or, at least, a closer relationship than existed previously. Consequently, there is an interchange of action between parts of the social mass which, until then, had no effect upon one another. The more pronounced the segmental system, the more are our relations enclosed within the limits of the segment to which we belong. There are, as it were, moral gaps between the different segments. By contrast, these gaps are filled in as the system becomes levelled out. Social life, instead of being concentrated in a large number of separate, small centres, each of which resembles the other, is generalised. Social relations – or more correctly, intra-social relations – consequently become more numerous, since they extend, on all sides, beyond their original limits. The division of labour develops, therefore, as there are more individuals sufficiently in contact to be able to act and react upon one-another. If we agree to call this coming together, and the active commerce resulting from it, 'dynamic' or 'formal' density, we can say that the progress of the division of labour is in direct ratio to the moral or dynamic density of society.

But this moral relationship can only produce its effect if the real distance between individuals has itself diminished in some way. Moral density cannot grow unless material density grows at the same time, and the latter can be used to measure the former. It is useless, moreover, to try to find out which has determined the other; it is enough to state that they are inseparable.

The progressive condensation of societies in the course of historical development is produced in three principal ways:

1. Whereas lower societies are spread over immense areas relative to the size of their populations, among more advanced peoples population tends to become more and more concentrated. . . The changes brought about in the industrial life of nations prove the universality of this transformation. The productive activity of nomads, hunters, or shepherds implies the absence of all concentration, dispersion over the largest possible surface. Agriculture, since it necessitates a life in a fixed territory, presupposes a certain tightening of the social tissues, but is still incomplete, for there are stretches of land between each family. In the city, although the condensation was greater, the houses were not contiguous, for joint property was no part of the Roman law. It grew up on our soil, and demonstrates that the social web has become tighter. On the other hand, from their origins, the European societies have witnessed a continuous growth in their density, short-lived regressions notwithstanding.

2. The formation of towns and their development is an even more characteristic symptom of the same phenomenon. The increase in average density may be due to the material increase of the birth-rate, and, consequently, can be reconciled with a very weak concentration, whereby the segmental type remains prevalent. But towns always result from the need of individuals to put themselves constantly in the closest possible contact with each other. There are so many points where the social mass is contracted more strongly than elsewhere. Thus when they multiply and expand the moral density must become raised. We shall see, moreover, that they receive a source of recruitment from immigration, something which is only possible when the fusion of social segments is advanced.

As long as social organisation is essentially segmental, towns do not exist. There are none in lower societies. They did not exist among the Iroquois, nor among the ancient Germans. It was the same with the primitive populations of Italy. . . But towns did not take long to appear. Athens and Rome are or become towns, and the same transformation occurred throughout Italy. In our Christian societies, the town is in evidence from the beginning, for those left by the Roman empire did not disappear with it. Since then, they have increased and multiplied. The tendency of the country to stream into the town, so general in the civilised world, is only a consequence of this movement. It is not of recent origin; from the seventeenth century, statesmen have been pre-occupied with it.

Because societies generally begin with an agricultural period,

there has sometimes been the temptation to regard the development of urban centres as a sign of old age and decadence. But we must not lose sight of the fact that the length of this agricultural phase is shorter the more advanced the society. Whereas in Germany, among the Indians of America, and with all primitive peoples, it lasts for the duration of their existence, in Rome and Athens, it ends fairly quickly; and, with us, we can say that it never existed in pure form. On the other hand, urban life begins earlier and consequently expands further. The constantly increasing acceleration of this development proves that, far from constituting a sort of pathological phenomenon, it comes from the very nature of higher social types. The supposition that this movement has attained alarming proportions in our societies today, which perhaps are no longer flexible enough to adapt themselves to it, will not prevent this movement from continuing either within our societies, or after them; and the social types which will be formed after ours will probably be distinguished by a still more complete and rapid contraction of rural life.

3. Finally, there are the number and rapidity of the means of communication and transportation. By suppressing or diminishing the gaps which separate social segments, they increase the density of society. It is not necessary, however, to prove that they become more numerous and perfected in societies of a more developed type.

Since this visible and measurable symbol reflects the variations of what we have called 'moral density' we can substitute it for this latter in the formula we have proposed. Moreover, we must repeat here what we said before. If society, in concentrating, determines the development of the division of labour, the latter, in its turn, increases the concentration of society. But this is not important, for the division of labour remains the derived fact, and, consequently, the advances which it has made are due to parallel advances of social density, whatever may be the causes of the latter. That is all we wished to prove. . .

If work becomes progressively divided as societies become more voluminous and dense, it is not because external circumstances are more varied, but because struggle for existence is more acute.

Darwin quite correctly observed that the struggle between two organisms is as active as they are similar. Having the same needs and pursuing the same aims, they are in rivalry everywhere. So long as they have more resources than they need, they can still live side by side, but if their number increases to such

proportions that their needs can no longer all be adequately satisfied, war breaks out, and it is the more violent the more marked this scarcity; that is to say, as the number of participants increase. It is quite otherwise if the co-existing individuals are of different species or varieties. As they do not feed in the same manner, and do not lead the same kind of life, they do not disturb each other. What is advantageous to one is without value to the others. The occasions for conflict thus diminish with occasions of confrontation, and this happens increasingly as the species or varieties become more distant from one-another. . .

Men obey the same law. In the same city, different occupations can co-exist without being obliged mutually to destroy one another, for they pursue different objectives. The soldier seeks military glory, the priest moral authority, the statesman power, the businessman riches, and the scholar scientific renown. Each of them can attain his end without preventing the others from attaining theirs. It is still the same even when the functions are less separated from one another. The oculist does not compete with the psychiatrist, the shoemaker with the hatter, the mason with the cabinet maker, the physicist with the chemist, etc. Since they perform different services, they can perform them together.

The closer functions approach one-another, however, the more points of contact they have; the more, consequently, they are exposed to conflict. As in this case they satisfy similar needs by different means, they inevitably seek to curtail the other's development. The judge never is in competition with the businessman, but the brewer and the wine-grower, the clothier and the manufacturer of silks, the poet and the musician, often try to supplant each other. As for those who have exactly the same function, each can prosper only to the detriment of the others. If, then, these different functions are pictured as a series of branches issuing from a common trunk, the struggle is at its minimum between the extreme points, whereas it increases steadily as we approach the centre. It is so, not only inside each city, but in all society. Similar occupations located at different points are as competitive as they are alike, provided the difficulty of communication and transport does not restrict the circle of their action.

This having been said, it is easy to understand that any condensation of the social mass, especially if it is accompanied by an increase in population, necessarily stimulates an advance in the division of labour.

Veblen' s Institutionalism

Thorstein Veblen, Theory of the Leisure Class
[1899] (excerpts)

OXFORD WORLD'S CLASSICS



THORSTEIN VEBLEN

*The Theory of the
Leisure Class*



Edited with an Introduction and Notes by

MARTHA BANTA

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

THE institution of a leisure class is found in its best development at the higher stages of the barbarian culture; as, for instance, in feudal Europe or feudal Japan. In such communities the distinction between classes is very rigorously observed; and the feature of most striking economic significance in these class differences is the distinction maintained between the employments proper to the several classes. The upper classes are by custom exempt or excluded from industrial occupations, and are reserved for certain employments to which a degree of honour attaches. Chief among the honourable employments in any feudal community is warfare; and priestly service is commonly second to warfare. If the barbarian community is not notably warlike, the priestly office may take the precedence, with that of the warrior second. But the rule holds with but slight exceptions that, whether warriors or priests, the upper classes are exempt from industrial employments, and this exemption is the economic expression of their superior rank. Brahmin India affords a fair illustration of the industrial exemption of both these classes. In the communities belonging to the higher barbarian culture there is a considerable differentiation of sub-classes within what may be comprehensively called the leisure class; and there is a corresponding differentiation of employments between these sub-classes. The leisure class as a whole comprises the noble and the priestly classes, together with much of their retinue. The occupations of the class are correspondingly diversified; but they have the common economic characteristic of being non-industrial. These non-industrial upper-class occupations may be roughly comprised under government, warfare, religious observances, and sports.

At an earlier, but not the earliest, stage of barbarism, the leisure class is found in a less differentiated form. Neither the class distinctions nor the distinctions between leisure-class occupations are so minute and intricate. The Polynesian islanders generally show this stage of the development in good form, with the exception that, owing to the absence of large game, hunting does not hold the usual place of honour in their scheme of life. The Icelandic community in the time of the Sagas also affords a fair instance. In such a community

there is a rigorous distinction between classes and between the occupations peculiar to each class. Manual labour, industry, whatever has to do directly with the everyday work of getting a livelihood, is the exclusive occupation of the inferior class. This inferior class includes slaves and other dependents, and ordinarily also all the women. If there are several grades of aristocracy, the women of high rank are commonly exempt from industrial employment, or at least from the more vulgar kinds of manual labour. The men of the upper classes are not only exempt, but by prescriptive custom they are debarred, from all industrial occupations. The range of employments open to them is rigidly defined. As on the higher plane already spoken of, these employments are government, warfare, religious observances, and sports. These four lines of activity govern the scheme of life of the upper classes, and for the highest rank—the kings or chieftains—these are the only kinds of activity that custom or the common sense of the community will allow. Indeed, where the scheme is well developed even sports are accounted doubtfully legitimate for the members of the highest rank. To the lower grades of the leisure class certain other employments are open, but they are employments that are subsidiary to one or another of these typical leisure-class occupations. Such are, for instance, the manufacture and care of arms and accoutrements and of war canoes, the dressing and handling of horses, dogs, and hawks, the preparation of sacred apparatus, etc. The lower classes are excluded from these secondary honourable employments, except from such as are plainly of an industrial character and are only remotely related to the typical leisure-class occupations.

If we go a step back of this exemplary barbarian culture, into the lower stages of barbarism, we no longer find the leisure class in fully developed form. But this lower barbarism shows the usages, motives, and circumstances out of which the institution of a leisure class has arisen, and indicates the steps of its early growth. Nomadic hunting tribes in various parts of the world illustrate these more primitive phases of the differentiation. Any one of the North American hunting tribes may be taken as a convenient illustration. These tribes can scarcely be said to have a defined leisure class. There is a differentiation of function, and there is a distinction between classes on the basis of this difference of function, but the exemption of the superior class from work has not gone far enough to make the designation “leisure class” altogether applicable. The tribes belonging on this economic

level have carried the economic differentiation to the point at which a marked distinction is made between the occupations of men and women, and this distinction is of an invidious character. In nearly all these tribes the women are, by prescriptive custom, held to those employments out of which the industrial occupations proper develop at the next advance. The men are exempt from these vulgar employments and are reserved for war, hunting, sports, and devout observances. A very nice discrimination is ordinarily shown in this matter.

This division of labour coincides with the distinction between the working and the leisure class as it appears in the higher barbarian culture. As the diversification and specialisation of employments proceed, the line of demarcation so drawn comes to divide the industrial from the non-industrial employments. The man's occupation as it stands at the earlier barbarian stage is not the original out of which any appreciable portion of later industry has developed. In the later development it survives only in employments that are not classed as industrial,—war, politics, sports, learning, and the priestly office. The only notable exceptions are a portion of the fishery industry and certain slight employments that are doubtfully to be classed as industry; such as the manufacture of arms, toys, and sporting goods. Virtually the whole range of industrial employments is an outgrowth of what is classed as woman's work in the primitive barbarian community.

The work of the men in the lower barbarian culture is no less indispensable to the life of the group than the work done by the women. It may even be that the men's work contributes as much to the food supply and the other necessary consumption of the group. Indeed, so obvious is this "productive" character of the men's work that in the conventional economic writings the hunter's work is taken as the type of primitive industry. But such is not the barbarian's sense of the matter. In his own eyes he is not a labourer, and he is not to be classed with the women in this respect; nor is his effort to be classed with the women's drudgery, as labour or industry, in such a sense as to admit of its being confounded with the latter. There is in all barbarian communities a profound sense of the disparity between man's and woman's work. His work may conduce to the maintenance of the group, but it is felt that it does so through an excellence and an efficacy of a kind that cannot without derogation be compared with the uneventful diligence of the women.

At a farther step backward in the cultural scale—among savage groups—the differentiation of employments is still less elaborate and the invidious distinction between classes and employments is less consistent and less rigorous. Unequivocal instances of a primitive savage culture are hard to find. Few of these groups or communities that are classed as “savage” show no traces of regression from a more advanced cultural stage. But there are groups—some of them apparently not the result of retrogression—which show the traits of primitive savagery with some fidelity. Their culture differs from that of the barbarian communities in the absence of a leisure class and the absence, in great measure, of the animus or spiritual attitude on which the institution of a leisure class rests. These communities of primitive savages in which there is no hierarchy of economic classes make up but a small and inconspicuous fraction of the human race. As good an instance of this phase of culture as may be had is afforded by the tribes of the Andamans, or by the Todas of the Nilgiri Hills. The scheme of life of these groups at the time of their earliest contact with Europeans seems to have been nearly typical, so far as regards the absence of a leisure class. As a further instance might be cited the Ainu of Yezo, and, more doubtfully, also some Bushman and Eskimo groups. Some Pueblo communities are less confidently to be included in the same class.* Most, if not all, of the communities here cited may well be cases of degeneration from a higher barbarism, rather than bearers of a culture that has never risen above its present level. If so, they are for the present purpose to be taken with the allowance, but they may serve none the less as evidence to the same effect as if they were really “primitive” populations.

These communities that are without a defined leisure class resemble one another also in certain other features of their social structure and manner of life. They are small groups and of a simple (archaic) structure; they are commonly peaceable and sedentary; they are poor; and individual ownership is not a dominant feature of their economic system. At the same time it does not follow that these are the smallest of existing communities, or that their social structure is in all respects the least differentiated; nor does the class necessarily include all primitive communities which have no defined system of individual ownership. But it is to be noted that the class seems to include the most peaceable—perhaps all the characteristically peaceable—primitive groups of men. Indeed, the most notable trait common to members

of such communities is a certain amiable inefficiency when confronted with force or fraud.

The evidence afforded by the usages and cultural traits of communities at a low stage of development indicates that the institution of a leisure class has emerged gradually during the transition from primitive savagery to barbarism; or more precisely, during the transition from a peaceable to a consistently warlike habit of life. The conditions apparently necessary to its emergence in a consistent form are: (1) the community must be of a predatory habit of life (war or the hunting of large game or both); that is to say, the men, who constitute the inchoate leisure class in these cases, must be habituated to the infliction of injury by force and stratagem; (2) subsistence must be obtainable on sufficiently easy terms to admit of the exemption of a considerable portion of the community from steady application to a routine of labour. The institution of a leisure class is the outgrowth of an early discrimination between employments, according to which some employments are worthy and others unworthy. Under this ancient distinction the worthy employments are those which may be classed as exploit; unworthy are those necessary everyday employments into which no appreciable element of exploit enters.

This distinction has but little obvious significance in a modern industrial community, and it has, therefore, received but slight attention at the hands of economic writers. When viewed in the light of that modern common sense which has guided economic discussion, it seems formal and insubstantial. But it persists with great tenacity as a commonplace preconception even in modern life, as is shown, for instance, by our habitual aversion to menial employments. It is a distinction of a personal kind—of superiority and inferiority. In the earlier stages of culture, when the personal force of the individual counted more immediately and obviously in shaping the course of events, the element of exploit counted for more in the everyday scheme of life. Interest centred about this fact to a greater degree. Consequently a distinction proceeding on this ground seemed more imperative and more definitive than is the case to-day. As a fact in the sequence of development, therefore, the distinction is a substantial one and rests on sufficiently valid and cogent grounds.

The ground on which a discrimination between facts is habitually made changes as the interest from which the facts are habitually viewed changes. Those features of the facts at hand are salient and

substantial upon which the dominant interest of the time throws its light. Any given ground of distinction will seem insubstantial to any one who habitually apprehends the facts in question from a different point of view and values them for a different purpose. The habit of distinguishing and classifying the various purposes and directions of activity prevails of necessity always and everywhere; for it is indispensable in reaching a working theory or scheme of life. The particular point of view, or the particular characteristic that is pitched upon as definitive in the classification of the facts of life depends upon the interest from which a discrimination of the facts is sought. The grounds of discrimination, and the norm of procedure in classifying the facts, therefore, progressively change as the growth of culture proceeds; for the end for which the facts of life are apprehended changes, and the point of view consequently changes also. So that what are recognised as the salient and decisive features of a class of activities or of a social class at one stage of culture will not retain the same relative importance for the purposes of classification at any subsequent stage.

But the change of standards and points of view is gradual only, and it seldom results in the subversion or entire suppression of a standpoint once accepted. A distinction is still habitually made between industrial and non-industrial occupations; and this modern distinction is a transmuted form of the barbarian distinction between exploit and drudgery. Such employments as warfare, politics, public worship, and public merry-making, are felt, in the popular apprehension, to differ intrinsically from the labour that has to do with elaborating the material means of life. The precise line of demarcation is not the same as it was in the early barbarian scheme, but the broad distinction has not fallen into disuse.

The tacit, common-sense distinction to-day is, in effect, that any effort is to be accounted industrial only so far as its ultimate purpose is the utilisation of non-human things. The coercive utilisation of man by man is not felt to be an industrial function; but all effort directed to enhance human life by taking advantage of the non-human environment is classed together as industrial activity. By the economists who have best retained and adapted the classical tradition, man's "power over nature" is currently postulated as the characteristic fact of industrial productivity. This industrial power over nature is taken to include man's power over the life of the beasts and over all the

elemental forces. A line is in this way drawn between mankind and brute creation.

In other times and among men imbued with a different body of preconceptions this line is not drawn precisely as we draw it to-day. In the savage or the barbarian scheme of life it is drawn in a different place and in another way. In all communities under the barbarian culture there is an alert and pervading sense of antithesis between two comprehensive groups of phenomena, in one of which barbarian man includes himself, and in the other, his victual. There is a felt antithesis between economic and non-economic phenomena, but it is not conceived in the modern fashion; it lies not between man and brute creation, but between animate and inert things.

It may be an excess of caution at this day to explain that the barbarian notion which it is here intended to convey by the term "animate" is not the same as would be conveyed by the word "living". The term does not cover all living things, and it does cover a great many others. Such a striking natural phenomenon as a storm, a disease, a waterfall, are recognised as "animate"; while fruits and herbs, and even inconspicuous animals, such as house-flies, maggots, lemmings, sheep, are not ordinarily apprehended as "animate" except when taken collectively. As here used the term does not necessarily imply an indwelling soul or spirit. The concept includes such things as in the apprehension of the animistic savage or barbarian are formidable by virtue of a real or imputed habit of initiating action. This category comprises a large number and range of natural objects and phenomena. Such a distinction between the inert and the active is still present in the habits of thought of unreflecting persons, and it still profoundly affects the prevalent theory of human life and of natural processes; but it does not pervade our daily life to the extent or with the far-reaching practical consequences that are apparent at earlier stages of culture and belief.

To the mind of the barbarian, the elaboration and utilisation of what is afforded by inert nature is activity on quite a different plane from his dealings with "animate" things and forces. The line of demarcation may be vague and shifting, but the broad distinction is sufficiently real and cogent to influence the barbarian scheme of life. To the class of things apprehended as animate, the barbarian fancy imputes an unfolding of activity directed to some end. It is this teleological unfolding of activity that constitutes any object or phenomenon

an “animate” fact. Wherever the unsophisticated savage or barbarian meets with activity that is at all obtrusive, he construes it in the only terms that are ready to hand—the terms immediately given in his consciousness of his own actions. Activity is, therefore, assimilated to human action, and active objects are in so far assimilated to the human agent. Phenomena of this character—especially those whose behaviour is notably formidable or baffling—have to be met in a different spirit and with proficiency of a different kind from what is required in dealing with inert things. To deal successfully with such phenomena is a work of exploit rather than of industry. It is an assertion of prowess, not of diligence.

Under the guidance of this naïve discrimination between the inert and the animate, the activities of the primitive social group tend to fall into two classes, which would in modern phrase be called exploit and industry. Industry is effort that goes to create a new thing, with a new purpose given it by the fashioning hand of its maker out of passive (“brute”) material; while exploit, so far as it results in an outcome useful to the agent, is the conversion to his own ends of energies previously directed to some other end by another agent. We still speak of “brute matter” with something of the barbarian’s realisation of a profound significance in the term.

The distinction between exploit and drudgery coincides with a difference between the sexes. The sexes differ, not only in stature and muscular force, but perhaps even more decisively in temperament, and this must early have given rise to a corresponding division of labour. The general range of activities that come under the head of exploit falls to the males as being the stouter, more massive, better capable of a sudden and violent strain, and more readily inclined to self-assertion, active emulation, and aggression. The difference in mass, in physiological character, and in temperament may be slight among the members of the primitive group; it appears, in fact, to be relatively slight and inconsequential in some of the more archaic communities with which we are acquainted—as for instance the tribes of the Andamans. But so soon as a differentiation of function has well begun on the lines marked out by this difference in physique and animus, the original difference between the sexes will itself widen. A cumulative process of selective adaptation to the new distribution of employments will set in, especially if the habitat or the fauna with which the group is in contact is such as to call for a considerable exercise of the sturdier virtues.

The habitual pursuit of large game requires more of the manly qualities of massiveness, agility, and ferocity, and it can therefore scarcely fail to hasten and widen the differentiation of functions between the sexes. And so soon as the group comes into hostile contact with other groups, the divergence of function will take on the developed form of a distinction between exploit and industry.

In such a predatory group of hunters it comes to be the able-bodied men's office to fight and hunt. The women do what other work there is to do—other members who are unfit for man's work being for this purpose classed with women. But the men's hunting and fighting are both of the same general character. Both are of a predatory nature; the warrior and the hunter alike reap where they have not strewn. Their aggressive assertion of force and sagacity differs obviously from the women's assiduous and uneventful shaping of materials; it is not to be accounted productive labour, but rather an acquisition of substance by seizure. Such being the barbarian man's work, in its best development and widest divergence from women's work, any effort that does not involve an assertion of prowess comes to be unworthy of the man. As the tradition gains consistency, the common sense of the community erects it into a canon of conduct; so that no employment and no acquisition is morally possible to the self-respecting man at this cultural stage, except such as proceeds on the basis of prowess—force or fraud. When the predatory habit of life has been settled upon the group by long habituation, it becomes the able-bodied man's accredited office in the social economy to kill, to destroy such competitors in the struggle for existence as attempt to resist or elude him, to overcome and reduce to subservience those alien forces that assert themselves refractorily in the environment. So tenaciously and with such nicety is this theoretical distinction between exploit and drudgery adhered to that in many hunting tribes the man must not bring home the game which he has killed, but must send his woman to perform that baser office.

As has already been indicated, the distinction between exploit and drudgery is an invidious distinction between employments. Those employments which are to be classed as exploit are worthy, honourable, noble; other employments, which do not contain this element of exploit, and especially those which imply subservience or submission, are unworthy, debasing, ignoble. The concept of dignity, worth,

or honour, as applied either to persons or conduct, is of first-rate consequence in the development of classes and of class distinctions, and it is therefore necessary to say something of its derivation and meaning. Its psychological ground may be indicated in outline as follows.

As a matter of selective necessity, man is an agent. He is, in his own apprehension, a centre of unfolding impulsive activity—"teleological" activity. He is an agent seeking in every act the accomplishment of some concrete, objective, impersonal end. By force of his being such an agent he is possessed of a taste for effective work, and a distaste for futile effort. He has a sense of the merit of serviceability or efficiency and of the demerit of futility, waste, or incapacity. This aptitude or propensity may be called the instinct of workmanship. Wherever the circumstances or traditions of life lead to an habitual comparison of one person with another in point of efficiency, the instinct of workmanship works out in an emulative or invidious comparison of persons. The extent to which this result follows depends in some considerable degree on the temperament of the population. In any community where such an invidious comparison of persons is habitually made, visible success becomes an end sought for its own utility as a basis of esteem. Esteem is gained and dispraise is avoided by putting one's efficiency in evidence. The result is that the instinct of workmanship works out in an emulative demonstration of force.

During that primitive phase of social development, when the community is still habitually peaceable, perhaps sedentary, and without a developed system of individual ownership, the efficiency of the individual can be shown chiefly and most consistently in some employment that goes to further the life of the group. What emulation of an economic kind there is between the members of such a group will be chiefly emulation in industrial serviceability. At the same time the incentive to emulation is not strong, nor is the scope for emulation large.

When the community passes from peaceable savagery to a predatory phase of life, the conditions of emulation change. The opportunity and the incentive to emulation increase greatly in scope and urgency. The activity of the men more and more takes on the character of exploit; and an invidious comparison of one hunter or warrior with another grows continually easier and more habitual. Tangible evidences of prowess—trophies—find a place in men's habits of thought as an

essential feature of the paraphernalia of life. Booty, trophies of the chase or of the raid, come to be prized as evidence of preëminent force. Aggression becomes the accredited form of action, and booty serves as *prima facie** evidence of successful aggression. As accepted at this cultural stage, the accredited, worthy form of self-assertion is contest; and useful articles or services obtained by seizure or compulsion, serve as a conventional evidence of successful contest. Therefore, by contrast, the obtaining of goods by other methods than seizure comes to be accounted unworthy of man in his best estate. The performance of productive work, or employment in personal service, falls under the same odium for the same reason. An invidious distinction in this way arises between exploit and acquisition by seizure on the one hand and industrial employment on the other hand. Labour acquires a character of irksomeness by virtue of the indignity imputed to it.

With the primitive barbarian, before the simple content of the notion has been obscured by its own ramifications and by a secondary growth of cognate ideas, "honourable" seems to connote nothing else than assertion of superior force. "Honourable" is "formidable"; "worthy" is "prepotent". A honorific act is in the last analysis little if anything else than a recognised successful act of aggression; and where aggression means conflict with men and beasts, the activity which comes to be especially and primarily honourable is the assertion of the strong hand. The naïve, archaic habit of construing all manifestations of force in terms of personality or "will power" greatly fortifies this conventional exaltation of the strong hand. Honorific epithets, in vogue among barbarian tribes as well as among peoples of a more advanced culture, commonly bear the stamp of this unsophisticated sense of honour. Epithets and titles used in addressing chieftains, and in the propitiation of kings and gods, very commonly impute a propensity for overbearing violence and an irresistible devastating force to the person who is to be propitiated. This holds true to an extent also in the more civilised communities of the present day. The predilection shown in heraldic devices for the more rapacious beasts and birds of prey goes to enforce the same view.

Under this common-sense barbarian appreciation of worth or honour, the taking of life—the killing of formidable competitors, whether brute or human—is honourable in the highest degree. And this high office of slaughter, as an expression of the slayer's prepotence,

casts a glamour of worth over every act of slaughter and over all the tools and accessories of the act. Arms are honourable, and the use of them, even in seeking the life of the meanest creatures of the fields, becomes a honorific employment. At the same time, employment in industry becomes correspondingly odious, and, in the common-sense apprehension, the handling of the tools and implements of industry falls beneath the dignity of able-bodied men. Labour becomes irksome.

It is here assumed that in the sequence of cultural evolution primitive groups of men have passed from an initial peaceable stage to a subsequent stage at which fighting is the avowed and characteristic employment of the group. But it is not implied that there has been an abrupt transition from unbroken peace and good-will to a later or higher phase of life in which the fact of combat occurs for the first time. Neither is it implied that all peaceful industry disappears on the transition to the predatory phase of culture. Some fighting, it is safe to say, would be met with at any early stage of social development. Fights would occur with more or less frequency through sexual competition. The known habits of primitive groups, as well as the habits of the anthropoid apes, argue to that effect, and the evidence from the well-known promptings of human nature enforces the same view.

It may therefore be objected that there can have been no such initial stage of peaceable life as is here assumed. There is no point in cultural evolution prior to which fighting does not occur. But the point in question is not as to the occurrence of combat, occasional or sporadic, or even more or less frequent and habitual; it is a question as to the occurrence of an habitual bellicose frame of mind—a prevalent habit of judging facts and events from the point of view of the fight. The predatory phase of culture is attained only when the predatory attitude has become the habitual and accredited spiritual attitude for the members of the group; when the fight has become the dominant note in the current theory of life; when the common-sense appreciation of men and things has come to be an appreciation with a view to combat.

The substantial difference between the peaceable and the predatory phase of culture, therefore, is a spiritual difference, not a mechanical one. The change in spiritual attitude is the outgrowth of a change in the material facts of the life of the group, and it comes on gradually as the material circumstances favourable to a predatory attitude supervene.

The inferior limit of the predatory culture is an industrial limit. Predation cannot become the habitual, conventional resource of any group or any class until industrial methods have been developed to such a degree of efficiency as to leave a margin worth fighting for, above the subsistence of those engaged in getting a living. The transition from peace to predation therefore depends on the growth of technical knowledge and the use of tools. A predatory culture is similarly impracticable in early times, until weapons have been developed to such a point as to make man a formidable animal. The early development of tools and of weapons is of course the same fact seen from two different points of view.

The life of a given group would be characterised as peaceable so long as habitual recourse to combat has not brought the fight into the foreground in men's everyday thoughts, as a dominant feature of the life of man. A group may evidently attain such a predatory attitude with a greater or less degree of completeness, so that its scheme of life and canons of conduct may be controlled to a greater or less extent by the predatory animus. The predatory phase of culture is therefore conceived to come on gradually, through a cumulative growth of predatory aptitudes, habits, and traditions, this growth being due to a change in the circumstances of the group's life, of such a kind as to develop and conserve those traits of human nature and those traditions and norms of conduct that make for a predatory rather than a peaceable life.

The evidence for the hypothesis that there has been such a peaceable stage of primitive culture is in great part drawn from psychology rather than from ethnology, and cannot be detailed here. It will be recited in part in a later chapter, in discussing the survival of archaic traits of human nature under the modern culture.

CHAPTER III

CONSPICUOUS LEISURE

IF its working were not disturbed by other economic forces or other features of the emulative process, the immediate effect of such a pecuniary struggle as has just been described in outline would be to make men industrious and frugal. This result actually follows, in some measure, so far as regards the lower classes, whose ordinary means of acquiring goods is productive labour. This is more especially true of the labouring classes in a sedentary community which is at an agricultural stage of industry, in which there is a considerable subdivision of property, and whose laws and customs secure to these classes a more or less definite share of the product of their industry. These lower classes can in any case not avoid labour, and the imputation of labour is therefore not greatly derogatory to them, at least not within their class. Rather, since labour is their recognised and accepted mode of life, they take some emulative pride in a reputation for efficiency in their work, this being often the only line of emulation that is open to them. For those for whom acquisition and emulation is possible only within the field of productive efficiency and thrift, the struggle for pecuniary reputability will in some measure work out in an increase of diligence and parsimony. But certain secondary features of the emulative process, yet to be spoken of, come in to very materially circumscribe and modify emulation in these directions among the pecuniarily inferior classes as well as among the superior class.

But it is otherwise with the superior pecuniary class, with which we are here immediately concerned. For this class also the incentive to diligence and thrift is not absent; but its action is so greatly qualified by the secondary demands of pecuniary emulation, that any inclination in this direction is practically overborne and any incentive to diligence tends to be of no effect. The most imperative of these secondary demands of emulation, as well as the one of widest scope, is the requirement of abstention from productive work. This is true in an especial degree for the barbarian stage of culture. During the predatory culture labour comes to be associated in men's habits of thought with weakness and subjection to a master. It is therefore

a mark of inferiority, and therefore comes to be accounted unworthy of man in his best estate. By virtue of this tradition labour is felt to be debasing, and this tradition has never died out. On the contrary, with the advance of social differentiation it has acquired the axiomatic force due to ancient and unquestioned prescription.

In order to gain and to hold the esteem of men it is not sufficient merely to possess wealth or power. The wealth or power must be put in evidence, for esteem is awarded only on evidence. And not only does the evidence of wealth serve to impress one's importance on others and to keep their sense of his importance alive and alert, but it is of scarcely less use in building up and preserving one's self-complacency. In all but the lowest stages of culture the normally constituted man is comforted and upheld in his self-respect by "decent surroundings" and by exemption from "menial offices." Enforced departure from his habitual standard of decency, either in the paraphernalia of life or in the kind and amount of his everyday activity, is felt to be a slight upon his human dignity, even apart from all conscious consideration of the approval or disapproval of his fellows.

The archaic theoretical distinction between the base and the honourable in the manner of a man's life retains very much of its ancient force even to-day. So much so that there are few of the better class who are not possessed of an instinctive repugnance for the vulgar forms of labour. We have a realising sense of ceremonial uncleanness attaching in an especial degree to the occupations which are associated in our habits of thought with menial service. It is felt by all persons of refined taste that a spiritual contamination is inseparable from certain offices that are conventionally required of servants. Vulgar surroundings, mean (that is to say, inexpensive) habitations, and vulgarly productive occupations are unhesitatingly condemned and avoided. They are incompatible with life on a satisfactory spiritual plane—with "high thinking." From the days of the Greek philosophers to the present, a degree of leisure and of exemption from contact with such industrial processes as serve the immediate everyday purposes of human life has ever been recognised by thoughtful men as a prerequisite to a worthy or beautiful, or even a blameless, human life. In itself and in its consequences the life of leisure is beautiful and ennobling in all civilised men's eyes.

This direct, subjective value of leisure and of other evidences of wealth is no doubt in great part secondary and derivative. It is in part

a reflex of the utility of leisure as a means of gaining the respect of others, and in part it is the result of a mental substitution. The performance of labour has been accepted as a conventional evidence of inferior force; therefore it comes itself, by a mental short-cut, to be regarded as intrinsically base.

During the predatory stage proper, and especially during the earlier stages of the quasi-peaceable development of industry that follows the predatory stage, a life of leisure is the readiest and most conclusive evidence of pecuniary strength, and therefore of superior force; provided always that the gentleman of leisure can live in manifest ease and comfort. At this stage wealth consists chiefly of slaves, and the benefits accruing from the possession of riches and power take the form chiefly of personal service and the immediate products of personal service. Conspicuous abstention from labour therefore becomes the conventional mark of superior pecuniary achievement and the conventional index of respectability; and conversely, since application to productive labour is a mark of poverty and subjection, it becomes inconsistent with a reputable standing in the community. Habits of industry and thrift, therefore, are not uniformly furthered by a prevailing pecuniary emulation. On the contrary, this kind of emulation indirectly discourages participation in productive labour. Labour would unavoidably become dishonourable, as being an evidence of poverty, even if it were not already accounted indecorous under the ancient tradition handed down from an earlier cultural stage. The ancient tradition of the predatory culture is that productive effort is to be shunned as being unworthy of able-bodied men, and this tradition is reinforced rather than set aside in the passage from the predatory to the quasi-peaceable manner of life.

Even if the institution of a leisure class had not come in with the first emergence of individual ownership, by force of the dishonour attaching to productive employment, it would in any case have come in as one of the early consequences of ownership. And it is to be remarked that while the leisure class existed in theory from the beginning of predatory culture, the institution takes on a new and fuller meaning with the transition from the predatory to the next succeeding pecuniary stage of culture. It is from this time forth a "leisure class" in fact as well as in theory. From this point dates the institution of the leisure class in its consummate form.

During the predatory stage proper the distinction between the leisure and the labouring class is in some degree a ceremonial distinction only. The able-bodied men jealously stand aloof from whatever is, in their apprehension, menial drudgery; but their activity in fact contributes appreciably to the sustenance of the group. The subsequent stage of quasi-peaceable industry is usually characterised by an established chattel slavery, herds of cattle, and a servile class of herdsmen and shepherds; industry has advanced so far that the community is no longer dependent for its livelihood on the chase or on any other form of activity that can fairly be classed as exploit. From this point on, the characteristic feature of leisure-class life is a conspicuous exemption from all useful employment.

The normal and characteristic occupations of the class in this mature phase of its life history are in form very much the same as in its earlier days. These occupations are government, war, sports, and devout observances. Persons unduly given to difficult theoretical niceties may hold that these occupations are still incidentally and indirectly "productive"; but it is to be noted as decisive of the question in hand that the ordinary and ostensible motive of the leisure class in engaging in these occupations is assuredly not an increase of wealth by productive effort. At this as at any other cultural stage, government and war are, at least in part, carried on for the pecuniary gain of those who engage in them; but it is gain obtained by the honourable method of seizure and conversion. These occupations are of the nature of predatory, not of productive, employment. Something similar may be said of the chase, but with a difference. As the community passes out of the hunting stage proper, hunting gradually becomes differentiated into two distinct employments. On the one hand it is a trade, carried on chiefly for gain; and from this the element of exploit is virtually absent, or it is at any rate not present in a sufficient degree to clear the pursuit of the imputation of gainful industry. On the other hand, the chase is also a sport—an exercise of the predatory impulse simply. As such it does not afford any appreciable pecuniary incentive, but it contains a more or less obvious element of exploit. It is this latter development of the chase—purged of all imputation of handicraft—that alone is meritorious and fairly belongs in the scheme of life of the developed leisure class.

Abstention from labour is not only a honorific or meritorious act, but it presently comes to be a requisite of decency. The insistence on

property as the basis of reputability is very naïve and very imperious during the early stages of the accumulation of wealth. Abstention from labour is the conventional evidence of wealth and is therefore the conventional mark of social standing; and this insistence on the meritoriousness of wealth leads to a more strenuous insistence on leisure. *Nota notæ est nota rei ipsius*.* According to well-established laws of human nature, prescription presently seizes upon this conventional evidence of wealth and fixes it in men's habits of thought as something that is in itself substantially meritorious and ennobling; while productive labour at the same time and by a like process becomes in a double sense intrinsically unworthy. Prescription ends by making labour not only disreputable in the eyes of the community, but morally impossible to the noble, freeborn man, and incompatible with a worthy life.

This tabu on labour has a further consequence in the industrial differentiation of classes. As the population increases in density and the predatory group grows into a settled industrial community, the constituted authorities and the customs governing ownership gain in scope and consistency. It then presently becomes impracticable to accumulate wealth by simple seizure, and, in logical consistency, acquisition by industry is equally impossible for high-minded and impecunious men. The alternative open to them is beggary or privation. Wherever the canon of conspicuous leisure has a chance undisturbed to work out its tendency, there will therefore emerge a secondary, and in a sense spurious, leisure class—abjectly poor and living a precarious life of want and discomfort, but morally unable to stoop to gainful pursuits. The decayed gentleman and the lady who has seen better days are by no means unfamiliar phenomena even now. This pervading sense of the indignity of the slightest manual labour is familiar to all civilised peoples, as well as to peoples of a less advanced pecuniary culture. In persons of delicate sensibility, who have long been habituated to gentle manners, the sense of the shamefulness of manual labour may become so strong that, at a critical juncture, it will even set aside the instinct of self-preservation. So, for instance, we are told of certain Polynesian chiefs, who, under the stress of good form, preferred to starve rather than carry their food to their mouths with their own hands. It is true, this conduct may have been due, at least in part, to an excessive sanctity or tabu attaching to the chief's person. The tabu would have been communicated by the

contact of his hands, and so would have made anything touched by him unfit for human food. But the tabu is itself a derivative of the unworthiness or moral incompatibility of labour; so that even when construed in this sense the conduct of the Polynesian chiefs is truer to the canon of honorific leisure than would at first appear. A better illustration, or at least a more unmistakable one, is afforded by a certain king of France, who is said to have lost his life through an excess of moral stamina in the observance of good form. In the absence of the functionary whose office it was to shift his master's seat, the king sat uncomplaining before the fire and suffered his royal person to be toasted beyond recovery. But in so doing he saved his Most Christian Majesty from menial contamination.

Summum crede nefas animam præferre pudori,
Et propter vitam vivendi perdere causas.*

It has already been remarked that the term "leisure," as here used, does not connote indolence or quiescence. What it connotes is non-productive consumption of time. Time is consumed non-productively (1) from a sense of the unworthiness of productive work, and (2) as an evidence of pecuniary ability to afford a life of idleness. But the whole of the life of the gentleman of leisure is not spent before the eyes of the spectators who are to be impressed with that spectacle of honorific leisure which in the ideal scheme makes up his life. For some part of the time his life is perforce withdrawn from the public eye, and of this portion which is spent in private the gentleman of leisure should, for the sake of his good name, be able to give a convincing account. He should find some means of putting in evidence the leisure that is not spent in the sight of the spectators. This can be done only indirectly, through the exhibition of some tangible, lasting results of the leisure so spent—in a manner analogous to the familiar exhibition of tangible, lasting products of the labour performed for the gentleman of leisure by handicraftsmen and servants in his employ.

The lasting evidence of productive labour is its material product—commonly some article of consumption. In the case of exploit it is similarly possible and usual to procure some tangible result that may serve for exhibition in the way of trophy or booty. At a later phase of the development it is customary to assume some badge or insignia of honour that will serve as a conventionally accepted mark of exploit, and which at the same time indicates the quantity or degree of exploit

of which it is the symbol. As the population increases in density, and as human relations grow more complex and numerous, all the details of life undergo a process of elaboration and selection; and in this process of elaboration the use of trophies develops into a system of rank, titles, degrees and insignia, typical examples of which are heraldic devices, medals, and honorary decorations.

As seen from the economic point of view, leisure, considered as an employment, is closely allied in kind with the life of exploit; and the achievements which characterise a life of leisure, and which remain as its decorous criteria, have much in common with the trophies of exploit. But leisure in the narrower sense, as distinct from exploit and from any ostensibly productive employment of effort on objects which are of no intrinsic use, does not commonly leave a material product. The criteria of a past performance of leisure therefore commonly take the form of "immaterial" goods. Such immaterial evidences of past leisure are quasi-scholarly or quasi-artistic accomplishments and a knowledge of processes and incidents which do not conduce directly to the furtherance of human life. So, for instance, in our time there is the knowledge of the dead languages and the occult sciences; of correct spelling; of syntax and prosody; of the various forms of domestic music and other household art; of the latest proprieties of dress, furniture, and equipage; of games, sports, and fancy-bred animals, such as dogs and race-horses. In all these branches of knowledge the initial motive from which their acquisition proceeded at the outset, and through which they first came into vogue, may have been something quite different from the wish to show that one's time had not been spent in industrial employment; but unless these accomplishments had approved themselves as serviceable evidence of an unproductive expenditure of time, they would not have survived and held their place as conventional accomplishments of the leisure class.

These accomplishments may, in some sense, be classed as branches of learning. Beside and beyond these there is a further range of social facts which shade off from the region of learning into that of physical habit and dexterity. Such are what is known as manners and breeding, polite usage, decorum, and formal and ceremonial observances generally. This class of facts are even more immediately and obtrusively presented to the observation, and they are therefore widely and more imperatively insisted on as required evidences of a

reputable degree of leisure. It is worth while to remark that all that class of ceremonial observances which are classed under the general head of manners hold a more important place in the esteem of men during the stage of culture at which conspicuous leisure has the greatest vogue as a mark of respectability, than at later stages of the cultural development. The barbarian of the quasi-peaceable stage of industry is notoriously a more high-bred gentleman, in all that concerns decorum, than any but the very exquisite among the men of a later age. Indeed, it is well known, or at least it is currently believed, that manners have progressively deteriorated as society has receded from the patriarchal stage. Many a gentleman of the old school has been provoked to remark regretfully upon the under-bred manners and bearing of even the better classes in the modern industrial communities; and the decay of the ceremonial code—or as it is otherwise called, the vulgarisation of life—among the industrial classes proper has become one of the chief enormities of latter-day civilisation in the eyes of all persons of delicate sensibilities. The decay which the code has suffered at the hands of a busy people testifies—all deprecation apart—to the fact that decorum is a product and an exponent of leisure-class life and thrives in full measure only under a régime of status.

The origin, or better the derivation, of manners is, no doubt, to be sought elsewhere than in a conscious effort on the part of the well-mannered to show that much time has been spent in acquiring them. The proximate end of innovation and elaboration has been the higher effectiveness of the new departure in point of beauty or of expressiveness. In great part the ceremonial code of decorous usages owes its beginning and its growth to the desire to conciliate or to show goodwill, as anthropologists and sociologists are in the habit of assuming, and this initial motive is rarely if ever absent from the conduct of well-mannered persons at any stage of the later development. Manners, we are told, are in part an elaboration of gesture, and in part they are symbolical and conventionalised survivals representing former acts of dominance or of personal service or of personal contact. In large part they are an expression of the relation of status,—a symbolic pantomime of mastery on the one hand and of subservience on the other. Wherever at the present time the predatory habit of mind, and the consequent attitude of mastery and of subservience, gives its character to the accredited scheme of life, there the importance of all

punctilios of conduct is extreme, and the assiduity with which the ceremonial observance of rank and titles is attended to approaches closely to the ideal set by the barbarian of the quasi-peaceable nomadic culture. Some of the Continental countries afford good illustrations of this spiritual survival. In these communities the archaic ideal is similarly approached as regards the esteem accorded to manners as a fact of intrinsic worth.

Decorum set out with being symbol and pantomime and with having utility only as an exponent of the facts and qualities symbolised; but it presently suffered the transmutation which commonly passes over symbolical facts in human intercourse. Manners presently came, in popular apprehension, to be possessed of a substantial utility in themselves; they acquired a sacramental character, in great measure independent of the facts which they originally prefigured. Deviations from the code of decorum have become intrinsically odious to all men, and good breeding is, in everyday apprehension, not simply an adventitious mark of human excellence, but an integral feature of the worthy human soul. There are few things that so touch us with instinctive revulsion as a breach of decorum; and so far have we progressed in the direction of imputing intrinsic utility to the ceremonial observances of etiquette that few of us, if any, can dissociate an offence against etiquette from a sense of the substantial unworthiness of the offender. A breach of faith may be condoned, but a breach of decorum can not. "Manners maketh man."

None the less, while manners have this intrinsic utility, in the apprehension of the performer and the beholder alike, this sense of the intrinsic rightness of decorum is only the proximate ground of the vogue of manners and breeding. Their ulterior, economic ground is to be sought in the honorific character of that leisure or non-productive employment of time and effort without which good manners are not acquired. The knowledge and habit of good form come only by long-continued use. Refined tastes, manners, and habits of life are a useful evidence of gentility, because good breeding requires time, application, and expense, and can therefore not be compassed by those whose time and energy are taken up with work. A knowledge of good form is *prima facie* evidence that that portion of the well-bred person's life which is not spent under the observation of the spectator has been worthily spent in acquiring accomplishments that are of no lucrative effect. In the last analysis the value of manners lies in the

fact that they are the voucher of a life of leisure. Therefore, conversely, since leisure is the conventional means of pecuniary repute, the acquisition of some proficiency in decorum is incumbent on all who aspire to a modicum of pecuniary decency.

So much of the honourable life of leisure as is not spent in the sight of spectators can serve the purposes of reputability only in so far as it leaves a tangible, visible result that can be put in evidence and can be measured and compared with products of the same class exhibited by competing aspirants for repute. Some such effect, in the way of leisurely manners and carriage, etc., follows from simple persistent abstention from work, even where the subject does not take thought of the matter and studiously acquires an air of leisurely opulence and mastery. Especially does it seem to be true that a life of leisure in this way persisted in through several generations will leave a persistent, ascertainable effect in the conformation of the person, and still more in his habitual bearing and demeanour. But all the suggestions of a cumulative life of leisure, and all the proficiency in decorum that comes by the way of passive habituation, may be further improved upon by taking thought and assiduously acquiring the marks of honourable leisure, and then carrying the exhibition of these adventitious marks of exemption from employment out in a strenuous and systematic discipline. Plainly, this is a point at which a diligent application of effort and expenditure may materially further the attainment of a decent proficiency in the leisure-class proprieties. Conversely, the greater the degree of proficiency and the more patent the evidence of a high degree of habituation to observances, which serve no lucrative or other directly useful purpose, the greater the consumption of time and substance impliedly involved in their acquisition, and the greater the resultant good repute. Hence, under the competitive struggle for proficiency in good manners, it comes about that much pains is taken with the cultivation of habits of decorum; and hence the details of decorum develop into a comprehensive discipline, conformity to which is required of all who would be held blameless in point of repute. And hence, on the other hand, this conspicuous leisure of which decorum is a ramification grows gradually into a laborious drill in deportment and an education in taste and discrimination as to what articles of consumption are decorous and what are the decorous methods of consuming them.

In this connection it is worthy of notice that the possibility of producing pathological and other idiosyncrasies of person and manner by shrewd mimicry and a systematic drill have been turned to account in the deliberate production of a cultured class—often with a very happy effect. In this way, by the process vulgarly known as snobbery, a syncopated evolution of gentle birth and breeding is achieved in the case of a goodly number of families and lines of descent. This syncopated gentle birth gives results which, in point of serviceability as a leisure-class factor in the population, are in no wise substantially inferior to others who may have had a longer but less arduous training in the pecuniary proprieties.

There are, moreover, measureable degrees of conformity to the latest accredited code of the punctilios as regards decorous means and methods of consumption. Differences between one person and another in the degree of conformity to the ideal in these respects can be compared, and persons may be graded and scheduled with some accuracy and effect according to a progressive scale of manners and breeding. The award of reputability in this regard is commonly made in good faith, on the ground of conformity to accepted canons of taste in the matters concerned, and without conscious regard to the pecuniary standing or the degree of leisure practised by any given candidate for reputability; but the canons of taste according to which the award is made are constantly under the surveillance of the law of conspicuous leisure, and are indeed constantly undergoing change and revision to bring them into closer conformity with its requirements. So that while the proximate ground of discrimination may be of another kind, still the pervading principle and abiding test of good breeding is the requirement of a substantial and patent waste of time. There may be some considerable range of variation in detail within the scope of this principle, but they are variations of form and expression, not of substance.

Much of the courtesy of everyday intercourse is of course a direct expression of consideration and kindly good-will, and this element of conduct has for the most part no need of being traced back to any underlying ground of reputability to explain either its presence or the approval with which it is regarded; but the same is not true of the code of proprieties. These latter are expressions of status. It is of course sufficiently plain, to any one who cares to see, that our bearing towards menials and other pecuniarily dependent inferiors is the

bearing of the superior member in a relation of status, though its manifestation is often greatly modified and softened from the original expression of crude dominance. Similarly, our bearing towards superiors, and in great measure towards equals, expresses a more or less conventionalised attitude of subservience. Witness the masterful presence of the high-minded gentleman or lady, which testifies to so much of dominance and independence of economic circumstances, and which at the same time appeals with such convincing force to our sense of what is right and gracious. It is among this highest leisure class, who have no superiors and few peers, that decorum finds its fullest and maturest expression; and it is this highest class also that gives decorum that definitive formulation which serves as a canon of conduct for the classes beneath. And here also the code is most obviously a code of status and shows most plainly its incompatibility with all vulgarly productive work. A divine assurance and an imperious complaisance, as of one habituated to require subservience and to take no thought for the morrow, is the birthright and the criterion of the gentleman at his best; and it is in popular apprehension even more than that, for this demeanour is accepted as an intrinsic attribute of superior worth, before which the base-born commoner delights to stoop and yield.

As has been indicated in an earlier chapter, there is reason to believe that the institution of ownership has begun with the ownership of persons, primarily women. The incentives to acquiring such property have apparently been: (1) a propensity for dominance and coercion; (2) the utility of these persons as evidence of the prowess of their owner; (3) the utility of their services.

Personal service holds a peculiar place in the economic development. During the stage of quasi-peaceable industry, and especially during the earlier development of industry within the limits of this general stage, the utility of their services seems commonly to be the dominant motive to the acquisition of property in persons. Servants are valued for their services. But the dominance of this motive is not due to a decline in the absolute importance of the other two utilities possessed by servants. It is rather that the altered circumstances of life accentuate the utility of servants for this last-named purpose. Women and other slaves are highly valued, both as an evidence of wealth and as a means of accumulating wealth. Together with cattle, if the tribe

is a pastoral one, they are the usual form of investment for a profit. To such an extent may female slavery give its character to the economic life under the quasi-peaceable culture that the woman even comes to serve as a unit of value among peoples occupying this cultural stage—as for instance in Homeric times. Where this is the case there need be little question but that the basis of the industrial system is chattel slavery and that the women are commonly slaves. The great, pervading human relation in such a system is that of master and servant. The accepted evidence of wealth is the possession of many women, and presently also of other slaves engaged in attendance on their master's person, and in producing goods for him.

A division of labour presently sets in, whereby personal service and attendance on the master becomes the special office of a portion of the servants, while those who are wholly employed in industrial occupations proper are removed more and more from all immediate relation to the person of their owner. At the same time those servants whose office is personal service, including domestic duties, come gradually to be exempted from productive industry carried on for gain.

This process of progressive exemption from the common run of industrial employment will commonly begin with the exemption of the wife, or the chief wife. After the community has advanced to settled habits of life, wife-capture from hostile tribes becomes impracticable as a customary source of supply. Where this cultural advance has been achieved, the chief wife is ordinarily of gentle blood, and the fact of her being so will hasten her exemption from vulgar employment. The manner in which the concept of gentle blood originates, as well as the place which it occupies in the development of marriage, cannot be discussed in this place. For the purpose in hand it will be sufficient to say that gentle blood is blood which has been ennobled by protracted contact with accumulated wealth or unbroken prerogative. The woman with these antecedents is preferred in marriage, both for the sake of a resulting alliance with her powerful relatives and because a superior worth is felt to inhere in blood which has been associated with many goods and great power. She will still be her husband's chattel, as she was her father's chattel before her purchase, but she is at the same time of her father's gentle blood; and hence there is a moral incongruity in her occupying herself with the debasing employments of her fellow-servants. However completely she may be subject to her master, and however inferior to the male members

of the social stratum in which her birth has placed her, the principle that gentility is transmissible will act to place her above the common slave; and so soon as this principle has acquired a prescriptive authority it will act to invest her in some measure with that prerogative of leisure which is the chief mark of gentility. Furthered by this principle of transmissible gentility the wife's exemption gains in scope, if the wealth of her owner permits it, until it includes exemption from debasing menial service as well as from handicraft. As the industrial development goes on and property becomes massed in relatively fewer hands, the conventional standard of wealth of the upper class rises. The same tendency to exemption from handicraft, and in the course of time from menial domestic employments, will then assert itself as regards the other wives, if such there are, and also as regards other servants in immediate attendance upon the person of their master. The exemption comes more tardily the remoter the relation in which the servant stands to the person of the master.

If the pecuniary situation of the master permits it, the development of a special class of personal or body servants is also furthered by the very grave importance which comes to attach to this personal service. The master's person, being the embodiment of worth and honour, is of the most serious consequence. Both for his reputable standing in the community and for his self-respect, it is a matter of moment that he should have at his call efficient specialised servants, whose attendance upon his person is not diverted from this their chief office by any by-occupation. These specialised servants are useful more for show than for service actually performed. In so far as they are not kept for exhibition simply, they afford gratification to their master chiefly in allowing scope to his propensity for dominance. It is true, the care of the continually increasing household apparatus may require added labour; but since the apparatus is commonly increased in order to serve as a means of good repute rather than as a means of comfort, this qualification is not of great weight. All these lines of utility are better served by a larger number of more highly specialised servants. There results, therefore, a constantly increasing differentiation and multiplication of domestic and body servants, along with a concomitant progressive exemption of such servants from productive labour. By virtue of their serving as evidence of ability to pay, the office of such domestics regularly tends to include continually fewer duties, and their service tends in the end to become nominal only. This is

especially true of those servants who are in most immediate and obvious attendance upon their master. So that the utility of these comes to consist in great part, in their conspicuous exemption from productive labour and in the evidence which this exemption affords of their master's wealth and power.

After some considerable advance has been made in the practice of employing a special corps of servants for the performance of a conspicuous leisure in this manner, men begin to be preferred above women for services that bring them obtrusively into view. Men, especially lusty, personable fellows, such as footmen and other menials should be, are obviously more powerful and more expensive than women. They are better fitted for this work, as showing a larger waste of time and of human energy. Hence it comes about that in the economy of the leisure class the busy housewife of the early patriarchal days, with her retinue of hard-working handmaidens, presently gives place to the lady and the lackey.

In all grades and walks of life, and at any stage of the economic development, the leisure of the lady and of the lackey differs from the leisure of the gentleman in his own right in that it is an occupation of an ostensibly laborious kind. It takes the form, in large measure, of a painstaking attention to the service of the master, or to the maintenance and elaboration of the household paraphernalia; so that it is leisure only in the sense that little or no productive work is performed by this class, not in the sense that all appearance of labour is avoided by them. The duties performed by the lady, or by the household or domestic servants, are frequently arduous enough, and they are also frequently directed to ends which are considered extremely necessary to the comfort of the entire household. So far as these services conduce to the physical efficiency or comfort of the master or the rest of the household, they are to be accounted productive work. Only the residue of employment left after deduction of this effective work is to be classed as a performance of leisure.

But much of the services classed as household cares in modern everyday life, and many of the "utilities" required for a comfortable existence by civilised man, are of a ceremonial character. They are, therefore, properly to be classed as a performance of leisure in the sense in which the term is here used. They may be none the less imperatively necessary from the point of view of decent existence; they may be none the less requisite for personal comfort even, although

they may be chiefly or wholly of a ceremonial character. But in so far as they partake of this character they are imperative and requisite because we have been taught to require them under pain of ceremonial uncleanness or unworthiness. We feel discomfort in their absence, but not because their absence results directly in physical discomfort; nor would a taste not trained to discriminate between the conventionally good and the conventionally bad take offence at their omission. In so far as this is true the labour spent in these services is to be classed as leisure; and when performed by others than the economically free and self-directing head of the establishment, they are to be classed as vicarious leisure.

The vicarious leisure performed by housewives and menials, under the head of household cares, may frequently develop into drudgery, especially where the competition for reputability is close and strenuous. This is frequently the case in modern life. Where this happens, the domestic service which comprises the duties of this servant class might aptly be designated as wasted effort, rather than as vicarious leisure. But the latter term has the advantage of indicating the line of derivation of these domestic offices, as well as of neatly suggesting the substantial economic ground of their utility; for these occupations are chiefly useful as a method of imputing pecuniary reputability to the master or to the household on the ground that a given amount of time and effort is conspicuously wasted in that behalf.

In this way, then, there arises a subsidiary or derivative leisure class, whose office is the performance of a vicarious leisure for the behoof of the reputability of the primary or legitimate leisure class. This vicarious leisure class is distinguished from the leisure class proper by a characteristic feature of its habitual mode of life. The leisure of the master class is, at least ostensibly, an indulgence of a proclivity for the avoidance of labour and is presumed to enhance the master's own well-being and fulness of life; but the leisure of the servant class exempt from productive labour is in some sort a performance exacted from them, and is not normally or primarily directed to their own comfort. The leisure of the servant is not his own leisure. So far as he is a servant in the full sense, and not at the same time a member of a lower order of the leisure class proper, his leisure normally passes under the guise of specialised service directed to the furtherance of his master's fulness of life. Evidence of this

relation of subservience is obviously present in the servant's carriage and manner of life. The like is often true of the wife throughout the protracted economic stage during which she is still primarily a servant—that is to say, so long as the household with a male head remains in force. In order to satisfy the requirements of the leisure-class scheme of life, the servant should show not only an attitude of subservience, but also the effects of special training and practice in subservience. The servant or wife should not only perform certain offices and show a servile disposition, but it is quite as imperative that they should show an acquired facility in the tactics of subservience—a trained conformity to the canons of effectual and conspicuous subservience. Even to-day it is this aptitude and acquired skill in the formal manifestation of the servile relation that constitutes the chief element of utility in our highly paid servants, as well as one of the chief ornaments of the well-bred housewife.

The first requisite of a good servant is that he should conspicuously know his place. It is not enough that he knows how to effect certain desired mechanical results; he must, above all, know how to effect these results in due form. Domestic service might be said to be a spiritual rather than a mechanical function. Gradually there grows up an elaborate system of good form, specifically regulating the manner in which this vicarious leisure of the servant class is to be performed. Any departure from these canons of form is to be deprecated, not so much because it evinces a shortcoming in mechanical efficiency, or even that it shows an absence of the service attitude and temperament, but because, in the last analysis, it shows the absence of special training. Special training in personal service costs time and effort, and where it is obviously present in a high degree, it argues that the servant who possesses it, neither is nor has been habitually engaged in any productive occupation. It is *prima facie* evidence of a vicarious leisure extending far back in the past. So that trained service has utility, not only as gratifying the master's instinctive liking for good and skilful workmanship and his propensity for conspicuous dominance over those whose lives are subservient to his own, but it has utility also as putting in evidence a much larger consumption of human service than would be shown by the mere present conspicuous leisure performed by an untrained person. It is a serious grievance if a gentleman's butler or footman performs his duties about his master's table or carriage in such unformed style as to suggest that his habitual

occupation may be ploughing or sheep-herding. Such bungling work would imply inability on the master's part to procure the service of specially trained servants; that is to say, it would imply inability to pay for the consumption of time, effort, and instruction required to fit a trained servant for special service under an exacting code of forms. If the performance of the servant argues lack of means on the part of his master, it defeats its chief substantial end; for the chief use of servants is the evidence they afford of the master's ability to pay.

What has just been said might be taken to imply that the offence of an under-trained servant lies in a direct suggestion of inexpensiveness or of usefulness. Such, of course, is not the case. The connection is much less immediate. What happens here is what happens generally. Whatever approves itself to us on any ground at the outset, presently comes to appeal to us as a gratifying thing in itself; it comes to rest in our habits of thought as substantially right. But in order that any specific canon of deportment shall maintain itself in favour, it must continue to have the support of, or at least not be incompatible with, the habit or aptitude which constitutes the norm of its development. The need of vicarious leisure, or conspicuous consumption of service, is a dominant incentive to the keeping of servants. So long as this remains true it may be set down without much discussion that any such departure from accepted usage as would suggest an abridged apprenticeship in service would presently be found insufferable. The requirement of an expensive vicarious leisure acts indirectly, selectively, by guiding the formation of our taste,—of our sense of what is right in these matters,—and so weeds out unconformable departures by withholding approval of them.

As the standard of wealth recognized by common consent advances, the possession and exploitation of servants as a means of showing superfluity undergoes a refinement. The possession and maintenance of slaves employed in the production of goods argues wealth and prowess, but the maintenance of servants who produce nothing argues still higher wealth and position. Under this principle there arises a class of servants, the more numerous the better, whose sole office is fatuously to wait upon the person of their owner, and so to put in evidence his ability unproductively to consume a large amount of service. There supervenes a division of labour among the servants or dependents whose life is spent in maintaining the honour of the gentleman of leisure. So that, while one group produces goods for him,

another group, usually headed by the wife, or chief wife, consumes for him in conspicuous leisure; thereby putting in evidence his ability to sustain large pecuniary damage without impairing his superior opulence.

This somewhat idealized and diagrammatic outline of the development and nature of domestic service comes nearest being true for that cultural stage which has here been named the "quasi-peaceable" stage of industry. At this stage personal service first rises to the position of an economic institution, and it is at this stage that it occupies the largest place in the community's scheme of life. In the cultural sequence, the quasi-peaceable stage follows the predatory stage proper, the two being successive phases of barbarian life. Its characteristic feature is a formal observance of peace and order, at the same time that life at this stage still has too much of coercion and class antagonism to be called peaceable in the full sense of the word. For many purposes, and from another point of view than the economic one, it might as well be named the stage of status. The method of human relation during this stage, and the spiritual attitude of men at this level of culture, is well summed up under that term. But as a descriptive term to characterise the prevailing methods of industry, as well as to indicate the trend of industrial development at this point in economic evolution, the term "quasi-peaceable" seems preferable. So far as concerns the communities of the Western culture, this phase of economic development probably lies in the past; except for a numerically small though very conspicuous fraction of the community in whom the habits of thought peculiar to the barbarian culture have suffered but a relatively slight disintegration.

Personal service is still an element of great economic importance, especially as regards the distribution and consumption of goods; but its relative importance even in this direction is no doubt less than it once was. The best development of this vicarious leisure lies in the past rather than in the present; and its best expression in the present is to be found in the scheme of life of the upper leisure class. To this class the modern culture owes much in the way of the conservation of traditions, usages, and habits of thought which belong on a more archaic cultural plane, so far as regards their widest acceptance and their most effective development.

In the modern industrial communities the mechanical contrivances available for the comfort and convenience of everyday life are highly

developed. So much so that body servants, or, indeed, domestic servants of any kind, would now scarcely be employed by anybody except on the ground of a canon of reputability carried over by tradition from earlier usage. The only exception would be servants employed to attend on the persons of the infirm and the feeble-minded. But such servants properly come under the head of trained nurses rather than under that of domestic servants, and they are, therefore, an apparent rather than a real exception to the rule.

The proximate reason for keeping domestic servants, for instance, in the moderately well-to-do household of to-day, is (ostensibly) that the members of the household are unable without discomfort to compass the work required by such a modern establishment. And the reason for their being unable to accomplish it is (1) that they have too many "social duties," and (2) that the work to be done is too severe and that there is too much of it. These two reasons may be restated as follows: (1) Under a mandatory code of decency, the time and effort of the members of such a household are required to be ostensibly all spent in a performance of conspicuous leisure, in the way of calls, drives, clubs, sewing-circles, sports, charity organisations, and other like social functions. Those persons whose time and energy are employed in these matters privately avow that all these observances, as well as the incidental attention to dress and other conspicuous consumption, are very irksome but altogether unavoidable. (2) Under the requirement of conspicuous consumption of goods, the apparatus of living has grown so elaborate and cumbrous, in the way of dwellings, furniture, bric-a-brac, wardrobe and meals, that the consumers of these things cannot make way with them in the required manner without help. Personal contact with the hired persons whose aid is called in to fulfil the routine of decency is commonly distasteful to the occupants of the house, but their presence is endured and paid for, in order to delegate to them a share in this onerous consumption of household goods. The presence of domestic servants, and of the special class of body servants in an eminent degree, is a concession of physical comfort to the moral need of pecuniary decency.

The largest manifestation of vicarious leisure in modern life is made up of what are called domestic duties. These duties are fast becoming a species of services performed, not so much for the individual behoof of the head of the household as for the reputability of the household taken as a corporate unit—a group of which the

housewife is a member on a footing of ostensible equality. As fast as the household for which they are performed departs from its archaic basis of ownership-marriage, these household duties of course tend to fall out of the category of vicarious leisure in the original sense; except so far as they are performed by hired servants. That is to say, since vicarious leisure is possible only on a basis of status or of hired service, the disappearance of the relation of status from human intercourse at any point carries with it the disappearance of vicarious leisure so far as regards that much of life. But it is to be added, in qualification of this qualification, that so long as the household subsists, even with a divided head, this class of non-productive labour performed for the sake of household reputability must still be classed as vicarious leisure, although in a slightly altered sense. It is now leisure performed for the quasi-personal corporate household, instead of, as formerly, for the proprietary head of the household.

Weber

Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and
the Spirit of Capitalism [1904-05]
(excerpts).

AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

A product of modern European civilization, studying any problem of universal history, is bound to ask himself to what combination of circumstances the fact should be attributed that in Western civilization, and in Western civilization only, cultural phenomena have appeared which (as we like to think) lie in a line of development having universal significance and value.

Only in the West does science exist at a stage of development which we recognize to-day as valid. Empirical knowledge, reflection on problems of the cosmos and of life, philosophical and theological wisdom of the most profound sort, are not confined to it, though in the case of the last the full development of a systematic theology must be credited to Christianity under the influence of Hellenism, since there were only fragments in Islam and in a few Indian sects. In short, knowledge and observation of great refinement have existed elsewhere, above all in India, China, Babylonia, Egypt. But in Babylonia and elsewhere astronomy lacked—which makes its development all the more astounding—the mathematical foundation which it first received from the Greeks. The Indian geometry had no rational proof; that was another product of the Greek intellect, also the

creator of mechanics and physics. The Indian natural sciences, though well developed in observation, lacked the method of experiment, which was, apart from beginnings in antiquity, essentially a product of the Renaissance, as was the modern laboratory. Hence medicine, especially in India, though highly developed in empirical technique, lacked a biological and particularly a biochemical foundation. A rational chemistry has been absent from all areas of culture except the West.

The highly developed historical scholarship of China did not have the method of Thucydides. Machiavelli, it is true, had predecessors in India; but all Indian political thought was lacking in a systematic method comparable to that of Aristotle, and, indeed, in the possession of rational concepts. Not all the anticipations in India (School of Mimamsa), nor the extensive codification especially in the Near East, nor all the Indian and other books of law, had the strictly systematic forms of thought, so essential to a rational jurisprudence, of the Roman law and of the Western law under its influence. A structure like the canon law is known only to the West.

A similar statement is true of art. The musical ear of other peoples has probably been even more sensitively developed than our own, certainly not less so. Polyphonic music of various kinds has been widely distributed over the earth. The co-operation of a number of instruments and also the singing of parts have existed elsewhere. All our rational tone intervals have been known and calculated. But rational harmonious music, both counterpoint and harmony, formation of the tone material on the basis of three triads with the harmonic third; our chromatics and enharmonics, not interpreted in terms of space, but, since the Renaissance, of harmony; our orchestra, with its string quartet as a nucleus, and the organization of ensembles of wind instruments; our bass accompaniment; our system of notation, which has made possible the composition and production of modern musical works, and thus their very survival; our sonatas,

symphonies, operas; and finally, as means to all these, our fundamental instruments, the organ, piano, violin, etc.; all these things are known only in the Occident, although programme music, tone poetry, alteration of tones and chromatics, have existed in various musical traditions as means of expression.

In architecture, pointed arches have been used elsewhere as a means of decoration, in antiquity and in Asia; presumably the combination of pointed arch and cross-arched vault was not unknown in the Orient. But the rational use of the Gothic vault as a means of distributing pressure and of roofing spaces of all forms, and above all as the constructive principle of great monumental buildings and the foundation of a style extending to sculpture and painting, such as that created by our Middle Ages, does not occur elsewhere. The technical basis of our architecture came from the Orient. But the Orient lacked that solution of the problem of the dome and that type of classic rationalization of all art—in painting by the rational utilization of lines and spatial perspective—which the Renaissance created for us. There was printing in China. But a printed literature, designed *only* for print and only possible through it, and, above all, the Press and periodicals, have appeared only in the Occident. Institutions of higher education of all possible types, even some superficially similar to our universities, or at least academies, have existed (China, Islam). But a rational, systematic, and specialized pursuit of science, with trained and specialized personnel, has only existed in the West in a sense at all approaching its present dominant place in our culture. Above all is this true of the trained official, the pillar of both the modern State and of the economic life of the West. He forms a type of which there have heretofore only been suggestions, which have never remotely approached its present importance for the social order. Of course the official, even the specialized official, is a very old constituent of the most various societies. But no country and no age has ever experienced, in the same sense as the modern Occident, the absolute and complete

dependence of its whole existence, of the political, technical, and economic conditions of its life, on a specially trained *organization* of officials. The most important functions of the everyday life of society have come to be in the hands of technically, commercially, and above all legally trained government officials.

Organization of political and social groups in feudal classes has been common. But even the feudal¹ state of *rex et regnum* in the Western sense has only been known to our culture. Even more are parliaments of periodically elected representatives, with government by demagogues and party leaders as ministers responsible to the parliaments, peculiar to us, although there have, of course, been parties, in the sense of organizations for exerting influence and gaining control of political power, all over the world. In fact, the State itself, in the sense of a political association with a rational, written constitution, rationally ordained law, and an administration bound to rational rules or laws, administered by trained officials, is known, in this combination of characteristics, only in the Occident, despite all other approaches to it.

And the same is true of the most fateful force in our modern life, capitalism. The impulse to acquisition, pursuit of gain, of money, of the greatest possible amount of money, has in itself nothing to do with capitalism. This impulse exists and has existed among waiters, physicians, coachmen, artists, prostitutes, dishonest officials, soldiers, nobles, crusaders, gamblers, and beggars. One may say that it has been common to all sorts and conditions of men at all times and in all countries of the earth, wherever the objective possibility of it is or has been given. It should be taught in the kindergarten of cultural history that this naïve idea of capitalism must be given up once and for all. Unlimited greed for gain is not in the least identical with capitalism, and is still less its spirit. Capitalism may even be identical with the restraint, or at least a rational tempering, of this irrational impulse. But capitalism is identical with the pursuit of

profit, and forever renewed profit, by means of continuous, rational, capitalistic enterprise. For it must be so: in a wholly capitalistic order of society, an individual capitalistic enterprise which did not take advantage of its opportunities for profit-making would be doomed to extinction.

Let us now define our terms somewhat more carefully than is generally done. We will define a capitalistic economic action as one which rests on the expectation of profit by the utilization of opportunities for exchange, that is on (formally) peaceful chances of profit. Acquisition by force (formally and actually) follows its own particular laws, and it is not expedient, however little one can forbid this, to place it in the same category with action which is, in the last analysis, oriented to profits from exchange.² Where capitalistic acquisition is rationally pursued, the corresponding action is adjusted to calculations in terms of capital. This means that the action is adapted to a systematic utilization of goods or personal services as means of acquisition in such a way that, at the close of a business period, the balance of the enterprise in money assets (or, in the case of a continuous enterprise, the periodically estimated money value of assets) exceeds the capital, i.e. the estimated value of the material means of production used for acquisition in exchange. It makes no difference whether it involves a quantity of goods entrusted in *natura* to a travelling merchant, the proceeds of which may consist in other goods in *natura* acquired by trade, or whether it involves a manufacturing enterprise, the assets of which consist of buildings, machinery, cash, raw materials, partly and wholly manufactured goods, which are balanced against liabilities. The important fact is always that a calculation of capital in terms of money is made, whether by modern book-keeping methods or in any other way, however primitive and crude. Everything is done in terms of balances: at the beginning of the enterprise an initial balance, before every individual decision a calculation to ascertain its probable profitableness, and at the end a final bal-

ance to ascertain how much profit has been made. For instance, the initial balance of a *commenda*³ transaction would determine an agreed money value of the assets put into it (so far as they were not in money form already), and a final balance would form the estimate on which to base the distribution of profit and loss at the end. So far as the transactions are rational, calculation underlies every single action of the partners. That a really accurate calculation or estimate may not exist, that the procedure is pure guess-work, or simply traditional and conventional, happens even to-day in every form of capitalistic enterprise where the circumstances do not demand strict accuracy. But these are points affecting only the *degree* of rationality of capitalistic acquisition.

For the purpose of this conception all that matters is that an actual adaptation of economic action to a comparison of money income with money expenses takes place, no matter how primitive the form. Now in this sense capitalism and capitalistic enterprises, even with a considerable rationalization of capitalistic calculation, have existed in all civilized countries of the earth, so far as economic documents permit us to judge. In China, India, Babylon, Egypt, Mediterranean antiquity, and the Middle Ages, as well as in modern times. These were not merely isolated ventures, but economic enterprises which were entirely dependent on the continual renewal of capitalistic undertakings, and even continuous operations. However, trade especially was for a long time not continuous like our own, but consisted essentially in a series of individual undertakings. Only gradually did the activities of even the large merchants acquire an inner cohesion (with branch organizations, etc.). In any case, the capitalistic enterprise and the capitalistic entrepreneur, not only as occasional but as regular entrepreneurs, are very old and were very widespread.

Now, however, the Occident has developed capitalism both to a quantitative extent, and (carrying this quantitative development) in types, forms, and directions which have never existed

elsewhere. All over the world there have been merchants, wholesale and retail, local and engaged in foreign trade. Loans of all kinds have been made, and there have been banks with the most various functions, at least comparable to ours of, say, the sixteenth century. Sea loans,⁴ *commenda*, and transactions and associations similar to the *Kommanditgesellschaft*,⁵ have all been widespread, even as continuous businesses. Whenever money finances of public bodies have existed, money-lenders have appeared, as in Babylon, Hellas, India, China, Rome. They have financed wars and piracy, contracts and building operations of all sorts. In overseas policy they have functioned as colonial entrepreneurs, as planters with slaves, or directly or indirectly forced labour, and have farmed domains, offices, and, above all, taxes. They have financed party leaders in elections and *condottieri* in civil wars. And, finally, they have been speculators in chances for pecuniary gain of all kinds. This kind of entrepreneur, the capitalistic adventurer, has existed everywhere. With the exception of trade and credit and banking transactions, their activities were predominantly of an irrational and speculative character, or directed to acquisition by force, above all the acquisition of booty, whether directly in war or in the form of continuous fiscal booty by exploitation of subjects.

The capitalism of promoters, large-scale speculators, concession hunters, and much modern financial capitalism even in peace time, but, above all, the capitalism especially concerned with exploiting wars, bears this stamp even in modern Western countries, and some, but only some, parts of large-scale international trade are closely related to it, to-day as always.

But in modern times the Occident has developed, in addition to this, a very different form of capitalism which has appeared nowhere else: the rational capitalistic organization of (formally) free labour. Only suggestions of it are found elsewhere. Even the organization of unfree labour reached a considerable degree of rationality only on plantations and to a very limited extent in the

Ergasteria of antiquity. In the manors, manorial workshops, and domestic industries on estates with serf labour it was probably somewhat less developed. Even real domestic industries with free labour have definitely been proved to have existed in only a few isolated cases outside the Occident. The frequent use of day labourers led in a very few cases—especially State monopolies, which are, however, very different from modern industrial organization—to manufacturing organizations, but never to a rational organization of apprenticeship in the handicrafts like that of our Middle Ages.

Rational industrial organization, attuned to a regular market, and neither to political nor irrationally speculative opportunities for profit, is not, however, the only peculiarity of Western capitalism. The modern rational organization of the capitalistic enterprise would not have been possible without two other important factors in its development: the separation of business from the household, which completely dominates modern economic life, and closely connected with it, rational book-keeping. A spatial separation of places of work from those of residence exists elsewhere, as in the Oriental bazaar and in the *ergasteria* of other cultures. The development of capitalistic associations with their own accounts is also found in the Far East, the Near East, and in antiquity. But compared to the modern independence of business enterprises, those are only small beginnings. The reason for this was particularly that the indispensable requisites for this independence, our rational business book-keeping and our legal separation of corporate from personal property, were entirely lacking, or had only begun to develop.⁶ The tendency everywhere else was for acquisitive enterprises to arise as parts of a royal or manorial household (of the *oikos*), which is, as Rodbertus has perceived, with all its superficial similarity, a fundamentally different, even opposite, development.

However, all these peculiarities of Western capitalism have derived their significance in the last analysis only from their

association with the capitalistic organization of labour. Even what is generally called commercialization, the development of negotiable securities and the rationalization of speculation, the exchanges, etc., is connected with it. For without the rational capitalistic organization of labour, all this, so far as it was possible at all, would have nothing like the same significance, above all for the social structure and all the specific problems of the modern Occident connected with it. Exact calculation—the basis of everything else—is only possible on a basis of free labour.⁷

And just as, or rather because, the world has known no rational organization of labour outside the modern Occident, it has known no rational socialism. Of course, there has been civic economy, a civic food-supply policy, mercantilism and welfare policies of princes, rationing, regulation of economic life, protectionism, and *laissez-faire* theories (as in China). The world has also known socialistic and communistic experiments of various sorts: family, religious, or military communism, State socialism (in Egypt), monopolistic cartels, and consumers' organizations. But although there have everywhere been civic market privileges, companies, guilds, and all sorts of legal differences between town and country, the concept of the citizen has not existed outside the Occident, and that of the bourgeoisie outside the modern Occident. Similarly, the proletariat as a class could not exist, because there was no rational organization of free labour under regular discipline. Class struggles between creditor and debtor classes; landowners and the landless, serfs, or tenants; trading interests and consumers or landlords, have existed everywhere in various combinations. But even the Western mediæval struggles between putters-out and their workers exist elsewhere only in beginnings. The modern conflict of the large-scale industrial entrepreneur and free-wage labourers was entirely lacking. And thus there could be no such problems as those of socialism.

Hence in a universal history of culture the central problem for

us is not, in the last analysis, even from a purely economic viewpoint, the development of capitalistic activity as such, differing in different cultures only in form: the adventurer type, or capitalism in trade, war, politics, or administration as sources of gain. It is rather the origin of this sober bourgeois capitalism with its rational organization of free labour. Or in terms of cultural history, the problem is that of the origin of the Western bourgeois class and of its peculiarities, a problem which is certainly closely connected with that of the origin of the capitalistic organization of labour, but is not quite the same thing. For the bourgeois as a class existed prior to the development of the peculiar modern form of capitalism, though, it is true, only in the Western hemisphere.

Now the peculiar modern Western form of capitalism has been, at first sight, strongly influenced by the development of technical possibilities. Its rationality is to-day essentially dependent on the calculability of the most important technical factors. But this means fundamentally that it is dependent on the peculiarities of modern science, especially the natural sciences based on mathematics and exact and rational experiment. On the other hand, the development of these sciences and of the technique resting upon them now receives important stimulation from these capitalistic interests in its practical economic application. It is true that the origin of Western science cannot be attributed to such interests. Calculation, even with decimals, and algebra have been carried on in India, where the decimal system was invented. But it was only made use of by developing capitalism in the West, while in India it led to no modern arithmetic or book-keeping. Neither was the origin of mathematics and mechanics determined by capitalistic interests. But the technical utilization of scientific knowledge, so important for the living conditions of the mass of people, was certainly encouraged by economic considerations, which were extremely favourable to it in the Occident. But this encouragement was derived from the peculiarities of the social structure of the Occident. We must

hence ask, from what parts of that structure was it derived, since not all of them have been of equal importance?

Among those of undoubted importance are the rational structures of law and of administration. For modern rational capitalism has need, not only of the technical means of production, but of a calculable legal system and of administration in terms of formal rules. Without it adventurous and speculative trading capitalism and all sorts of politically determined capitalisms are possible, but no rational enterprise under individual initiative, with fixed capital and certainty of calculations. Such a legal system and such administration have been available for economic activity in a comparative state of legal and formalistic perfection only in the Occident. We must hence inquire where that law came from. Among other circumstances, capitalistic interests have in turn undoubtedly also helped, but by no means alone nor even principally, to prepare the way for the predominance in law and administration of a class of jurists specially trained in rational law. But these interests did not themselves create that law. Quite different forces were at work in this development. And why did not the capitalistic interests do the same in China or India? Why did not the scientific, the artistic, the political, or the economic development there enter upon that path of rationalization which is peculiar to the Occident?

For in all the above cases it is a question of the specific and peculiar rationalism of Western culture. Now by this term very different things may be understood, as the following discussion will repeatedly show. There is, for example, rationalization of mystical contemplation, that is of an attitude which, viewed from other departments of life, is specifically irrational, just as much as there are rationalizations of economic life, of technique, of scientific research, of military training, of law and administration. Furthermore, each one of these fields may be rationalized in terms of very different ultimate values and ends, and what is rational from one point of view may well be irrational from

another. Hence rationalizations of the most varied character have existed in various departments of life and in all areas of culture. To characterize their differences from the view-point of cultural history it is necessary to know what departments are rationalized, and in what direction. It is hence our first concern to work out and to explain genetically the special peculiarity of Occidental rationalism, and within this field that of the modern Occidental form. Every such attempt at explanation must, recognizing the fundamental importance of the economic factor, above all take account of the economic conditions. But at the same time the opposite correlation must not be left out of consideration. For though the development of economic rationalism is partly dependent on rational technique and law, it is at the same time determined by the ability and disposition of men to adopt certain types of practical rational conduct. When these types have been obstructed by spiritual obstacles, the development of rational economic conduct has also met serious inner resistance. The magical and religious forces, and the ethical ideas of duty based upon them, have in the past always been among the most important formative influences on conduct. In the studies collected here we shall be concerned with these forces.⁸

Two older essays have been placed at the beginning which attempt, at one important point, to approach the side of the problem which is generally most difficult to grasp: the influence of certain religious ideas on the development of an economic spirit, or the *ethos* of an economic system. In this case we are dealing with the connection of the spirit of modern economic life with the rational ethics of ascetic Protestantism. Thus we treat here only one side of the causal chain. The later studies on the Economic Ethics of the World Religions attempt, in the form of a survey of the relations of the most important religions to economic life and to the social stratification of their environment, to follow out both causal relationships, so far as it is necessary in order to find points of comparison with the

Occidental development. For only in this way is it possible to attempt a causal evaluation of those elements of the economic ethics of the Western religions which differentiate them from others, with a hope of attaining even a tolerable degree of approximation. Hence these studies do not claim to be complete analyses of cultures, however brief. On the contrary, in every culture they quite deliberately emphasize the elements in which it differs from Western civilization. They are, hence, definitely oriented to the problems which seem important for the understanding of Western culture from this view-point. With our object in view, any other procedure did not seem possible. But to avoid misunderstanding we must here lay special emphasis on the limitation of our purpose.

In another respect the uninitiated at least must be warned against exaggerating the importance of these investigations. The Sinologist, the Indologist, the Semitist, or the Egyptologist, will of course find no facts unknown to him. We only hope that he will find nothing definitely wrong in points that are essential. How far it has been possible to come as near this ideal as a non-specialist is able to do, the author cannot know. It is quite evident that anyone who is forced to rely on translations, and furthermore on the use and evaluation of monumental, documentary, or literary sources, has to rely himself on a specialist literature which is often highly controversial, and the merits of which he is unable to judge accurately. Such a writer must make modest claims for the value of his work. All the more so since the number of available translations of real sources (that is, inscriptions and documents) is, especially for China, still very small in comparison with what exists and is important. From all this follows the definitely provisional character of these studies, and especially of the parts dealing with Asia.⁹ Only the specialist is entitled to a final judgment. And, naturally, it is only because expert studies with this special purpose and from this particular view-point have not hitherto been made, that the present ones

have been written at all. They are destined to be superseded in a much more important sense than this can be said, as it can be, of all scientific work. But however objectionable it may be, such trespassing on other special fields cannot be avoided in comparative work. But one must take the consequences by resigning oneself to considerable doubts regarding the degree of one's success.

Fashion and the zeal of the *literati* would have us think that the specialist can to-day be spared, or degraded to a position subordinate to that of the seer. Almost all sciences owe something to dilettantes, often very valuable view-points. But dilettantism as a leading principle would be the end of science. He who yearns for seeing should go to the cinema, though it will be offered to him copiously to-day in literary form in the present field of investigation also.¹⁰ Nothing is farther from the intent of these thoroughly serious studies than such an attitude. And, I might add, whoever wants a sermon should go to a conventicle. The question of the relative value of the cultures which are compared here will not receive a single word. It is true that the path of human destiny cannot but appal him who surveys a section of it. But he will do well to keep his small personal commentarie to himself, as one does at the sight of the sea or of majestic mountains, unless he knows himself to be called and gifted to give them expression in artistic or prophetic form. In most other cases the voluminous talk about intuition does nothing but conceal a lack of perspective toward the object, which merits the same judgment as a similar lack of perspective toward men.

Some justification is needed for the fact that ethnographical material has not been utilized to anything like the extent which the value of its contributions naturally demands in any really thorough investigation, especially of Asiatic religions. This limitation has not only been imposed because human powers of work are restricted. This omission has also seemed to be permissible because we are here necessarily dealing with the religious ethics of the classes which were the culture-bearers of

their respective countries. We are concerned with the influence which *their* conduct has had. Now it is quite true that this can only be completely known in all its details when the facts from ethnography and folk-lore have been compared with it. Hence we must expressly admit and emphasize that this is a gap to which the ethnographer will legitimately object. I hope to contribute something to the closing of this gap in a systematic study of the Sociology of Religion.¹¹ But such an undertaking would have transcended the limits of this investigation with its closely circumscribed purpose. It has been necessary to be content with bringing out the points of comparison with our Occidental religions as well as possible.

Finally, we may make a reference to the *anthropological* side of the problem. When we find again and again that, even in departments of life apparently mutually independent, certain types of rationalization have developed in the Occident, and only there, it would be natural to suspect that the most important reason lay in differences of heredity. The author admits that he is inclined to think the importance of biological heredity very great. But in spite of the notable achievements of anthropological research, I see up to the present no way of exactly or even approximately measuring either the extent or, above all, the form of its influence on the development investigated here. It must be one of the tasks of sociological and historical investigation first to analyse all the influences and causal relationships which can satisfactorily be explained in terms of reactions to environmental conditions. Only then, and when comparative racial neurology and psychology shall have progressed beyond their present and in many ways very promising beginnings, can we hope for even the probability of a satisfactory answer to that problem.¹² In the meantime that condition seems to me not to exist, and an appeal to heredity would therefore involve a premature renunciation of the possibility of knowledge attainable now, and would shift the problem to factors (at present) still unknown.

Part I

The Problem

1

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION AND SOCIAL STRATIFICATION¹

A glance at the occupational statistics of any country of mixed religious composition brings to light with remarkable frequency² a situation which has several times provoked discussion in the Catholic press and literature,³ and in Catholic congresses in Germany, namely, the fact that business leaders and owners of capital, as well as the higher grades of skilled labour, and even more the higher technically and commercially trained personnel of modern enterprises, are overwhelmingly Protestant.⁴ This is true not only in cases where the difference in religion coincides with one of nationality, and thus of cultural development, as in Eastern Germany between Germans and Poles. The same thing is shown in the figures of religious affiliation almost wherever capitalism, at the time of its great expansion, has had a free hand to alter the social distribution of the population in accordance with its needs, and to determine its occupational structure. The more freedom it has had, the more clearly is the effect shown. It is true that the greater relative participation of Protestants in the

ownership of capital,⁵ in management, and the upper ranks of labour in great modern industrial and commercial enterprises,⁶ may in part be explained in terms of historical circumstances⁷ which extend far back into the past, and in which religious affiliation is not a cause of the economic conditions, but to a certain extent appears to be a result of them. Participation in the above economic functions usually involves some previous ownership of capital, and generally an expensive education; often both. These are to-day largely dependent on the possession of inherited wealth, or at least on a certain degree of material well-being. A number of those sections of the old Empire which were most highly developed economically and most favoured by natural resources and situation, in particular a majority of the wealthy towns, went over to Protestantism in the sixteenth century. The results of that circumstance favour the Protestants even to-day in their struggle for economic existence. There arises thus the historical question: why were the districts of highest economic development at the same time particularly favourable to a revolution in the Church? The answer is by no means so simple as one might think.

The emancipation from economic traditionalism appears, no doubt, to be a factor which would greatly strengthen the tendency to doubt the sanctity of the religious tradition, as of all traditional authorities. But it is necessary to note, what has often been forgotten, that the Reformation meant not the elimination of the Church's control over everyday life, but rather the substitution of a new form of control for the previous one. It meant the repudiation of a control which was very lax, at that time scarcely perceptible in practice, and hardly more than formal, in favour of a regulation of the whole of conduct which, penetrating to all departments of private and public life, was infinitely burdensome and earnestly enforced. The rule of the Catholic Church, "punishing the heretic, but indulgent to the sinner", as it was in the past even more than to-day, is now tolerated by

peoples of thoroughly modern economic character, and was borne by the richest and economically most advanced peoples on earth at about the turn of the fifteenth century. The rule of Calvinism, on the other hand, as it was enforced in the sixteenth century in Geneva and in Scotland, at the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in large parts of the Netherlands, in the seventeenth in New England, and for a time in England itself, would be for us the most absolutely unbearable form of ecclesiastical control of the individual which could possibly exist. That was exactly what large numbers of the old commercial aristocracy of those times, in Geneva as well as in Holland and England, felt about it. And what the reformers complained of in those areas of high economic development was not too much supervision of life on the part of the Church, but too little. Now how does it happen that at that time those countries which were most advanced economically, and within them the rising bourgeois middle classes, not only failed to resist this unexampled tyranny of Puritanism, but even developed a heroism in its defence? For bourgeois classes as such have seldom before and never since displayed heroism. It was "the last of our heroisms", as Carlyle, not without reason, has said.

But further, and especially important: it may be, as has been claimed, that the greater participation of Protestants in the positions of ownership and management in modern economic life may to-day be understood, in part at least, simply as a result of the greater material wealth they have inherited. But there are certain other phenomena which cannot be explained in the same way. Thus, to mention only a few facts: there is a great difference discoverable in Baden, in Bavaria, in Hungary, in the type of higher education which Catholic parents, as opposed to Protestant, give their children. That the percentage of Catholics among the students and graduates of higher educational institutions in general lags behind their proportion of the total population,⁸ may, to be sure, be largely explicable in terms of inherited

differences of wealth. But among the Catholic graduates themselves the percentage of those graduating from the institutions preparing, in particular, for technical studies and industrial and commercial occupations, but in general from those preparing for middle-class business life, lags still farther behind the percentage of Protestants.⁹ On the other hand, Catholics prefer the sort of training which the humanistic Gymnasium affords. That is a circumstance to which the above explanation does not apply, but which, on the contrary, is one reason why so few Catholics are engaged in capitalistic enterprise.

Even more striking is a fact which partly explains the smaller proportion of Catholics among the skilled labourers of modern industry. It is well known that the factory has taken its skilled labour to a large extent from young men in the handicrafts; but this is much more true of Protestant than of Catholic journeymen. Among journeymen, in other words, the Catholics show a stronger propensity to remain in their crafts, that is they more often become master craftsmen, whereas the Protestants are attracted to a larger extent into the factories in order to fill the upper ranks of skilled labour and administrative positions.¹⁰ The explanation of these cases is undoubtedly that the mental and spiritual peculiarities acquired from the environment, here the type of education favoured by the religious atmosphere of the home community and the parental home, have determined the choice of occupation, and through it the professional career.

The smaller participation of Catholics in the modern business life of Germany is all the more striking because it runs counter to a tendency which has been observed at all times¹¹ including the present. National or religious minorities which are in a position of subordination to a group of rulers are likely, through their voluntary or involuntary exclusion from positions of political influence, to be driven with peculiar force into economic activity. Their ablest members seek to satisfy the desire for recognition of their abilities in this field, since there is no opportunity in

the service of the State. This has undoubtedly been true of the Poles in Russia and Eastern Prussia, who have without question been undergoing a more rapid economic advance than in Galicia, where they have been in the ascendant. It has in earlier times been true of the Huguenots in France under Louis XIV, the Non-conformists and Quakers in England, and, last but not least, the Jew for two thousand years. But the Catholics in Germany have shown no striking evidence of such a result of their position. In the past they have, unlike the Protestants, undergone no particularly prominent economic development in the times when they were persecuted or only tolerated, either in Holland or in England. On the other hand, it is a fact that the Protestants (especially certain branches of the movement to be fully discussed later) both as ruling classes and as ruled, both as majority and as minority, have shown a special tendency to develop economic rationalism which cannot be observed to the same extent among Catholics either in the one situation or in the other.¹² Thus the principal explanation of this difference must be sought in the permanent intrinsic character of their religious beliefs, and not only in their temporary external historico-political situations.¹³

It will be our task to investigate these religions with a view to finding out what peculiarities they have or have had which might have resulted in the behaviour we have described. On superficial analysis, and on the basis of certain current impressions, one might be tempted to express the difference by saying that the greater other-worldliness of Catholicism, the ascetic character of its highest ideals, must have brought up its adherents to a greater indifference toward the good things of this world. Such an explanation fits the popular tendency in the judgment of both religions. On the Protestant side it is used as a basis of criticism of those (real or imagined) ascetic ideals of the Catholic way of life, while the Catholics answer with the accusation that materialism results from the secularization of all ideals through Protestantism. One recent writer has attempted to

formulate the difference of their attitudes toward economic life in the following manner: "The Catholic is quieter, having less of the acquisitive impulse; he prefers a life of the greatest possible security, even with a smaller income, to a life of risk and excitement, even though it may bring the chance of gaining honour and riches. The proverb says jokingly, 'either eat well or sleep well'. In the present case the Protestant prefers to eat well, the Catholic to sleep undisturbed."¹⁴

In fact, this desire to eat well may be a correct though incomplete characterization of the motives of many nominal Protestants in Germany at the present time. But things were very different in the past: the English, Dutch, and American Puritans were characterized by the exact opposite of the joy of living, a fact which is indeed, as we shall see, most important for our present study. Moreover, the French Protestants, among others, long retained, and retain to a certain extent up to the present, the characteristics which were impressed upon the Calvinistic Churches everywhere, especially under the cross in the time of the religious struggles. Nevertheless (or was it, perhaps, as we shall ask later, precisely on that account?) it is well known that these characteristics were one of the most important factors in the industrial and capitalistic development of France, and on the small scale permitted them by their persecution remained so. If we may call this seriousness and the strong predominance of religious interests in the whole conduct of life otherworldliness, then the French Calvinists were and still are at least as otherworldly as, for instance, the North German Catholics, to whom their Catholicism is undoubtedly as vital a matter as religion is to any other people in the world. Both differ from the predominant religious trends in their respective countries in much the same way. The Catholics of France are, in their lower ranks, greatly interested in the enjoyment of life, in the upper directly hostile to religion. Similarly, the Protestants of Germany are to-day absorbed in worldly economic life, and their upper ranks are

most indifferent to religion.¹⁵ Hardly anything shows so clearly as this parallel that, with such vague ideas as that of the alleged otherworldliness of Catholicism, and the alleged materialistic joy of living of Protestantism, and others like them, nothing can be accomplished for our purpose. In such general terms the distinction does not even adequately fit the facts of to-day, and certainly not of the past. If, however, one wishes to make use of it at all, several other observations present themselves at once which, combined with the above remarks, suggest that the supposed conflict between other-worldliness, asceticism, and ecclesiastical piety on the one side, and participation in capitalistic acquisition on the other, might actually turn out to be an intimate relationship.

As a matter of fact it is surely remarkable, to begin with quite a superficial observation, how large is the number of representatives of the most spiritual forms of Christian piety who have sprung from commercial circles. In particular, very many of the most zealous adherents of Pietism are of this origin. It might be explained as a sort of reaction against mammonism on the part of sensitive natures not adapted to commercial life, and, as in the case of Francis of Assisi, many Pietists have themselves interpreted the process of their conversion in these terms. Similarly, the remarkable circumstance that so many of the greatest capitalistic entrepreneurs—down to Cecil Rhodes—have come from clergymen's families might be explained as a reaction against their ascetic upbringing. But this form of explanation fails where an extraordinary capitalistic business sense is combined in the same persons and groups with the most intensive forms of a piety which penetrates and dominates their whole lives. Such cases are not isolated, but these traits are characteristic of many of the most important Churches and sects in the history of Protestantism. Especially Calvinism, wherever it has appeared,¹⁶ has shown this combination. However little, in the time of the expansion of the Reformation, it (or any other Protestant belief)

was bound up with any particular social class, it is characteristic and in a certain sense typical that in French Huguenot Churches monks and business men (merchants, craftsmen) were particularly numerous among the proselytes, especially at the time of the persecution.¹⁷ Even the Spaniards knew that heresy (i.e. the Calvinism of the Dutch) promoted trade, and this coincides with the opinions which Sir William Petty expressed in his discussion of the reasons for the capitalistic development of the Netherlands. Gothein¹⁸ rightly calls the Calvinistic diaspora the seed-bed of capitalistic economy.¹⁹ Even in this case one might consider the decisive factor to be the superiority of the French and Dutch economic cultures from which these communities sprang, or perhaps the immense influence of exile in the breakdown of traditional relationships.²⁰ But in France the situation was, as we know from Colbert's struggles, the same even in the seventeenth century. Even Austria, not to speak of other countries, directly imported Protestant craftsmen.

But not all the Protestant denominations seem to have had an equally strong influence in this direction. That of Calvinism, even in Germany, was among the strongest, it seems, and the reformed faith²¹ more than the others seems to have promoted the development of the spirit of capitalism, in the Wupperthal as well as elsewhere. Much more so than Lutheranism, as comparison both in general and in particular instances, especially in the Wupperthal, seems to prove.²² For Scotland, Buckle, and among English poets, Keats, have emphasized these same relationships.²³ Even more striking, as it is only necessary to mention, is the connection of a religious way of life with the most intensive development of business acumen among those sects whose otherworldliness is as proverbial as their wealth, especially the Quakers and the Mennonites. The part which the former have played in England and North America fell to the latter in Germany and the Netherlands. That in East Prussia Frederick William I tolerated the Mennonites as indispensable to industry,

in spite of their absolute refusal to perform military service, is only one of the numerous well-known cases which illustrates the fact, though, considering the character of that monarch, it is one of the most striking. Finally, that this combination of intense piety with just as strong a development of business acumen, was also characteristic of the Pietists, is common knowledge.²⁴

It is only necessary to think of the Rhine country and of Calw. In this purely introductory discussion it is unnecessary to pile up more examples. For these few already all show one thing: that the spirit of hard work, of progress, or whatever else it may be called, the awakening of which one is inclined to ascribe to Protestantism, must not be understood, as there is a tendency to do, as joy of living nor in any other sense as connected with the Enlightenment. The old Protestantism of Luther, Calvin, Knox, Voet, had precious little to do with what to-day is called progress. To whole aspects of modern life which the most extreme religionist would not wish to suppress to-day, it was directly hostile. If any inner relationship between certain expressions of the old Protestant spirit and modern capitalistic culture is to be found, we must attempt to find it, for better or worse not in its alleged more or less materialistic or at least anti-ascetic joy of living, but in its purely religious characteristics. Montesquieu says (*Esprit des Lois*, Book XX, chap. 7) of the English that they "had progressed the farthest of all peoples of the world in three important things: in piety, in commerce, and in freedom". Is it not possible that their commercial superiority and their adaptation to free political institutions are connected in some way with that record of piety which Montesquieu ascribes to them?

A large number of possible relationships, vaguely perceived, occur to us when we put the question in this way. It will now be our task to formulate what occurs to us confusedly as clearly as is possible, considering the inexhaustible diversity to be found in all historical material. But in order to do this it is necessary to leave behind the vague and general concepts with which we have

dealt up to this point, and attempt to penetrate into the peculiar characteristics of and the differences between those great worlds of religious thought which have existed historically in the various branches of Christianity.

Before we can proceed to that, however, a few remarks are necessary, first on the peculiarities of the phenomenon of which we are seeking an historical explanation, then concerning the sense in which such an explanation is possible at all within the limits of these investigations.

2

THE SPIRIT OF CAPITALISM

In the title of this study is used the somewhat pretentious phrase, the *spirit* of capitalism. What is to be understood by it? The attempt to give anything like a definition of it brings out certain difficulties which are in the very nature of this type of investigation.

If any object can be found to which this term can be applied with any understandable meaning, it can only be an historical individual, i.e. a complex of elements associated in historical reality which we unite into a conceptual whole from the standpoint of their cultural significance.

Such an historical concept, however, since it refers in its content to a phenomenon significant for its unique individuality, cannot be defined according to the formula *genus proximum, differentia specifica*, but it must be gradually put together out of the individual parts which are taken from historical reality to make it up. Thus the final and definitive concept cannot stand at the beginning of the investigation, but must come at the end. We must, in other words, work out in the course of the discussion,

as its most important result, the best conceptual formulation of what we here understand by the spirit of capitalism, that is the best from the point of view which interests us here. This point of view (the one of which we shall speak later) is, further, by no means the only possible one from which the historical phenomena we are investigating can be analysed. Other standpoints would, for this as for every historical phenomenon, yield other characteristics as the essential ones. The result is that it is by no means necessary to understand by the spirit of capitalism only what it will come to mean to us for the purposes of our analysis. This is a necessary result of the nature of historical concepts which attempt for their methodological purposes not to grasp historical reality in abstract general formulæ, but in concrete genetic sets of relations which are inevitably of a specifically unique and individual character.¹

Thus, if we try to determine the object, the analysis and historical explanation of which we are attempting, it cannot be in the form of a conceptual definition, but at least in the beginning only a provisional description of what is here meant by the spirit of capitalism. Such a description is, however, indispensable in order clearly to understand the object of the investigation. For this purpose we turn to a document of that spirit which contains what we are looking for in almost classical purity, and at the same time has the advantage of being free from all direct relationship to religion, being thus, for our purposes, free of preconceptions.

Remember, that *time* is money. He that can earn ten shillings a day by his labour, and goes abroad, or sits idle, one half of that day, though he spends but sixpence during his diversion or idleness, ought not to reckon *that* the only expense; he has really spent, or rather thrown away, five shillings besides.

Remember, that *credit* is money. If a man lets his money lie in my hands after it is due, he gives me the interest, or so much

as I can make of it during that time. This amounts to a considerable sum where a man has good and large credit, and makes good use of it.

Remember, that money is of the prolific, generating nature. Money can beget money, and its offspring can beget more, and so on. Five shillings turned is six, turned again it is seven and threepence, and so on, till it becomes a hundred pounds. The more there is of it, the more it produces every turning, so that the profits rise quicker and quicker. He that kills a breeding-sow, destroys all her offspring to the thousandth generation. He that murders a crown, destroys all that it might have produced, even scores of pounds.

Remember this saying, *The good paymaster is lord of another man's purse*. He that is known to pay punctually and exactly to the time he promises, may at any time, and on any occasion, raise all the money his friends can spare. This is sometimes of great use. After industry and frugality, nothing contributes more to the raising of a young man in the world than punctuality and justice in all his dealings; therefore never keep borrowed money an hour beyond the time you promised, lest a disappointment shut up your friend's purse for ever.

The most trifling actions that affect a man's credit are to be regarded. The sound of your hammer at five in the morning, or eight at night, heard by a creditor, makes him easy six months longer; but if he sees you at a billiard-table, or hears your voice at a tavern, when you should be at work, he sends for his money the next day; demands it, before he can receive it, in a lump.

It shows, besides, that you are mindful of what you owe; it makes you appear a careful as well as an honest man, and that still increases your credit.

Beware of thinking all your own that you possess, and of living accordingly. It is a mistake that many people who have

credit fall into. To prevent this, keep an exact account for some time both of your expenses and your income. If you take the pains at first to mention particulars, it will have this good effect: you will discover how wonderfully small, trifling expenses mount up to large sums; and will discern what might have been, and may for the future be saved, without occasioning any great inconvenience.

For six pounds a year you may have the use of one hundred pounds, provided you are a man of known prudence and honesty.

He that spends a groat a day idly, spends idly above six pounds a year, which is the price for the use of one hundred pounds.

He that wastes idly a groat's worth of his time per day, one day with another, wastes the privilege of using one hundred pounds each day.

He that idly loses five shillings' worth of time; loses five shillings, and might as prudently throw five shillings into the sea.

He that loses five shillings, not only loses that sum, but all the advantage that might be made by turning it in dealing, which by the time that a young man becomes old, will amount to a considerable sum of money.²

It is Benjamin Franklin who preaches to us in these sentences, the same which Ferdinand Kürnberger satirizes in his clever and malicious *Picture of American Culture*³ as the supposed confession of faith of the Yankee. That it is the spirit of capitalism which here speaks in characteristic fashion, no one will doubt, however little we may wish to claim that everything which could be understood as pertaining to that spirit is contained in it. Let us pause a moment to consider this passage, the philosophy of which Kürnberger sums up in the words, "They make tallow out of cattle and money out of men". The peculiarity of this

philosophy of avarice appears to be the ideal of the honest man of recognized credit, and above all the idea of a duty of the individual toward the increase of his capital, which is assumed as an end in itself. Truly what is here preached is not simply a means of making one's way in the world, but a peculiar ethic. The infraction of its rules is treated not as foolishness but as forgetfulness of duty. That is the essence of the matter. It is not mere business astuteness, that sort of thing is common enough, it is an ethos. This is the quality which interests us.

When Jacob Fugger, in speaking to a business associate who had retired and who wanted to persuade him to do the same, since he had made enough money and should let others have a chance, rejected that as pusillanimity and answered that "he (Fugger) thought otherwise, he wanted to make money as long as he could",⁴ the spirit of his statement is evidently quite different from that of Franklin. What in the former case was an expression of commercial daring and a personal inclination morally neutral,⁵ in the latter takes on the character of an ethically coloured maxim for the conduct of life. The concept spirit of capitalism is here used in this specific sense,⁶ it is the spirit of modern capitalism. For that we are here dealing only with Western European and American capitalism is obvious from the way in which the problem was stated. Capitalism existed in China, India, Babylon, in the classic world, and in the Middle Ages. But in all these cases, as we shall see, this particular ethos was lacking.

Now, all Franklin's moral attitudes are coloured with utilitarianism. Honesty is useful, because it assures credit; so are punctuality, industry, frugality, and that is the reason they are virtues. A logical deduction from this would be that where, for instance, the appearance of honesty serves the same purpose, that would suffice, and an unnecessary surplus of this virtue would evidently appear to Franklin's eyes as unproductive waste. And as a matter of fact, the story in his autobiography of his

conversion to those virtues,⁷ or the discussion of the value of a strict maintenance of the appearance of modesty, the assiduous belittlement of one's own deserts in order to gain general recognition later,⁸ confirms this impression. According to Franklin, those virtues, like all others, are only in so far virtues as they are actually useful to the individual, and the surrogate of mere appearance is always sufficient when it accomplishes the end in view. It is a conclusion which is inevitable for strict utilitarianism. The impression of many Germans that the virtues professed by Americanism are pure hypocrisy seems to have been confirmed by this striking case. But in fact the matter is not by any means so simple. Benjamin Franklin's own character, as it appears in the really unusual candidness of his autobiography, belies that suspicion. The circumstance that he ascribes his recognition of the utility of virtue to a divine revelation which was intended to lead him in the path of righteousness, shows that something more than mere garnishing for purely egocentric motives is involved.

In fact, the *summum bonum* of this ethic, the earning of more and more money, combined with the strict avoidance of all spontaneous enjoyment of life, is above all completely devoid of any eudæmonistic, not to say hedonistic, admixture. It is thought of so purely as an end in itself, that from the point of view of the happiness of, or utility to, the single individual, it appears entirely transcendental and absolutely irrational.⁹ Man is dominated by the making of money, by acquisition as the ultimate purpose of his life. Economic acquisition is no longer subordinated to man as the means for the satisfaction of his material needs. This reversal of what we should call the natural relationship, so irrational from a naïve point of view, is evidently as definitely a leading principle of capitalism as it is foreign to all peoples not under capitalistic influence. At the same time it expresses a type of feeling which is closely connected with certain religious ideas. If we thus ask, why should "money be made

out of men”, Benjamin Franklin himself, although he was a colourless deist, answers in his autobiography with a quotation from the Bible, which his strict Calvinistic father drummed into him again and again in his youth: “Seest thou a man diligent in his business? He shall stand before kings” (Prov. xxii. 29). The earning of money within the modern economic order is, so long as it is done legally, the result and the expression of virtue and proficiency in a calling; and this virtue and proficiency are, as it is now not difficult to see, the real Alpha and Omega of Franklin’s ethic, as expressed in the passages we have quoted, as well as in all his works without exception.¹⁰

And in truth this peculiar idea, so familiar to us to-day, but in reality so little a matter of course, of one’s duty in a calling, is what is most characteristic of the social ethic of capitalistic culture, and is in a sense the fundamental basis of it. It is an obligation which the individual is supposed to feel and does feel towards the content of his professional¹¹ activity, no matter in what it consists, in particular no matter whether it appears on the surface as a utilization of his personal powers, or only of his material possessions (as capital).

Of course, this conception has not appeared only under capitalistic conditions. On the contrary, we shall later trace its origins back to a time previous to the advent of capitalism. Still less, naturally, do we maintain that a conscious acceptance of these ethical maxims on the part of the individuals, entrepreneurs or labourers, in modern capitalistic enterprises, is a condition of the further existence of present-day capitalism. The capitalistic economy of the present day is an immense cosmos into which the individual is born, and which presents itself to him, at least as an individual, as an unalterable order of things in which he must live. It forces the individual, in so far as he is involved in the system of market relationships, to conform to capitalistic rules of action. The manufacturer who in the long run acts counter to these norms, will just as inevitably be eliminated from the

economic scene as the worker who cannot or will not adapt himself to them will be thrown into the streets without a job.

Thus the capitalism of to-day, which has come to dominate economic life, educates and selects the economic subjects which it needs through a process of economic survival of the fittest. But here one can easily see the limits of the concept of selection as a means of historical explanation. In order that a manner of life so well adapted to the peculiarities of capitalism could be selected at all, i.e. should come to dominate others, it had to originate somewhere, and not in isolated individuals alone, but as a way of life common to whole groups of men. This origin is what really needs explanation. Concerning the doctrine of the more naïve historical materialism, that such ideas originate as a reflection or superstructure of economic situations, we shall speak more in detail below. At this point it will suffice for our purpose to call attention to the fact that without doubt, in the country of Benjamin Franklin's birth (Massachusetts), the spirit of capitalism (in the sense we have attached to it) was present before the capitalistic order. There were complaints of a peculiarly calculating sort of profit-seeking in New England, as distinguished from other parts of America, as early as 1632. It is further undoubted that capitalism remained far less developed in some of the neighbouring colonies, the later Southern States of the United States of America, in spite of the fact that these latter were founded by large capitalists for business motives, while the New England colonies were founded by preachers and seminary graduates with the help of small bourgeois, craftsmen and yomen, for religious reasons. In this case the causal relation is certainly the reverse of that suggested by the materialistic standpoint.

But the origin and history of such ideas is much more complex than the theorists of the superstructure suppose. The spirit of capitalism, in the sense in which we are using the term, had to fight its way to supremacy against a whole world of hostile

forces. A state of mind such as that expressed in the passages we have quoted from Franklin, and which called forth the applause of a whole people, would both in ancient times and in the Middle Ages¹² have been proscribed as the lowest sort of avarice and as an attitude entirely lacking in self-respect. It is, in fact, still regularly thus looked upon by all those social groups which are least involved in or adapted to modern capitalistic conditions. This is not wholly because the instinct of acquisition was in those times unknown or undeveloped, as has often been said. Nor because the *auri sacra fames*, the greed for gold, was then, or now, less powerful outside of bourgeois capitalism than within its peculiar sphere, as the illusions of modern romanticists are wont to believe. The difference between the capitalistic and pre-capitalistic spirits is not to be found at this point. The greed of the Chinese Mandarin, the old Roman aristocrat, or the modern peasant, can stand up to any comparison. And the *auri sacra fames* of a Neapolitan cab-driver or *barcaiuolo*, and certainly of Asiatic representatives of similar trades, as well as of the craftsmen of southern European or Asiatic countries, is, as anyone can find out for himself, very much more intense, and especially more unscrupulous than that of, say, an Englishman in similar circumstances.¹³

The universal reign of absolute unscrupulousness in the pursuit of selfish interests by the making of money has been a specific characteristic of precisely those countries whose bourgeois-capitalistic development, measured according to Occidental standards, has remained backward. As every employer knows, the lack of *coscienziosità* of the labourers¹⁴ of such countries, for instance Italy as compared with Germany, has been, and to a certain extent still is, one of the principal obstacles to their capitalistic development. Capitalism cannot make use of the labour of those who practise the doctrine of undisciplined *liberum arbitrium*, any more than it can make use of the business man who seems absolutely unscrupulous in his

dealings with others, as we can learn from Franklin. Hence the difference does not lie in the degree of development of any impulse to make money. The *auri sacra fames* is as old as the history of man. But we shall see that those who submitted to it without reserve as an uncontrolled impulse, such as the Dutch sea-captain who "would go through hell for gain, even though he scorched his sails", were by no means the representatives of that attitude of mind from which the specifically modern capitalistic spirit as a mass phenomenon is derived, and that is what matters. At all periods of history, wherever it was possible, there has been ruthless acquisition, bound to no ethical norms whatever. Like war and piracy, trade has often been unrestrained in its relations with foreigners and those outside the group. The double ethic has permitted here what was forbidden in dealings among brothers.

Capitalistic acquisition as an adventure has been at home in all types of economic society which have known trade with the use of money and which have offered it opportunities, through *com-menda*, farming of taxes, State loans, financing of wars, ducal courts and office-holders. Likewise the inner attitude of the adventurer, which laughs at all ethical limitations, has been universal. Absolute and conscious ruthlessness in acquisition has often stood in the closest connection with the strictest conformity to tradition. Moreover, with the breakdown of tradition and the more or less complete extension of free economic enterprise, even to within the social group, the new thing has not generally been ethically justified and encouraged, but only tolerated as a fact. And this fact has been treated either as ethically indifferent or as reprehensible, but unfortunately unavoidable. This has not only been the normal attitude of all ethical teachings, but, what is more important, also that expressed in the practical action of the average man of pre-capitalistic times, pre-capitalistic in the sense that the rational utilization of capital in a permanent enterprise and the rational capitalistic organization

of labour had not yet become dominant forces in the determination of economic activity. Now just this attitude was one of the strongest inner obstacles which the adaptation of men to the conditions of an ordered bourgeois-capitalistic economy has encountered everywhere.

The most important opponent with which the spirit of capitalism, in the sense of a definite standard of life claiming ethical sanction, has had to struggle, was that type of attitude and reaction to new situations which we may designate as traditionalism. In this case also every attempt at a final definition must be held in abeyance. On the other hand, we must try to make the provisional meaning clear by citing a few cases. We will begin from below, with the labourers.

One of the technical means which the modern employer uses in order to secure the greatest possible amount of work from his men is the device of piece-rates. In agriculture, for instance, the gathering of the harvest is a case where the greatest possible intensity of labour is called for, since, the weather being uncertain, the difference between high profit and heavy loss may depend on the speed with which the harvesting can be done. Hence a system of piece-rates is almost universal in this case. And since the interest of the employer in a speeding-up of harvesting increases with the increase of the results and the intensity of the work, the attempt has again and again been made, by increasing the piece-rates of the workmen, thereby giving them an opportunity to earn what is for them a very high wage, to interest them in increasing their own efficiency. But a peculiar difficulty has been met with surprising frequency: raising the piece-rates has often had the result that not more but less has been accomplished in the same time, because the worker reacted to the increase not by increasing but by decreasing the amount of his work. A man, for instance, who at the rate of 1 mark per acre mowed $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres per day and earned $2\frac{1}{2}$ marks, when the rate was raised to 1.25 marks per acre mowed, not 3 acres, as he

might easily have done, thus earning 3.75 marks, but only 2 acres, so that he could still earn the 2½ marks to which he was accustomed. The opportunity of earning more was less attractive than that of working less. He did not ask: how much can I earn in a day if I do as much work as possible? but: how much must I work in order to earn the wage, 2½ marks, which I earned before and which takes care of my traditional needs? This is an example of what is here meant by traditionalism. A man does not “by nature” wish to earn more and more money, but simply to live as he is accustomed to live and to earn as much as is necessary for that purpose. Wherever modern capitalism has begun its work of increasing the productivity of human labour by increasing its intensity, it has encountered the immensely stubborn resistance of this leading trait of pre-capitalistic labour. And to-day it encounters it the more, the more backward (from a capitalistic point of view) the labouring forces are with which it has to deal.

Another obvious possibility, to return to our example, since the appeal to the acquisitive instinct through higher wage-rates failed, would have been to try the opposite policy, to force the worker by reduction of his wage-rates to work harder to earn the same amount than he did before. Low wages and high profits seem even to-day to a superficial observer to stand in correlation; everything which is paid out in wages seems to involve a corresponding reduction of profits. That road capitalism has taken again and again since its beginning. For centuries it was an article of faith, that low wages were productive, i.e. that they increased the material results of labour so that, as Pieter de la Cour, on this point, as we shall see, quite in the spirit of the old Calvinism, said long ago, the people only work because and so long as they are poor.

But the effectiveness of this apparently so efficient method has its limits.¹⁵ Of course the presence of a surplus population which it can hire cheaply in the labour market is a necessity for the

development of capitalism. But though too large a reserve army may in certain cases favour its quantitative expansion, it checks its qualitative development, especially the transition to types of enterprise which make more intensive use of labour. Low wages are by no means identical with cheap labour.¹⁶ From a purely quantitative point of view the efficiency of labour decreases with a wage which is physiologically insufficient, which may in the long run even mean a survival of the unfit. The present-day average Silesian mows, when he exerts himself to the full, little more than two-thirds as much land as the better paid and nourished Pomeranian or Mecklenburger, and the Pole, the further East he comes from, accomplishes progressively less than the German. Low wages fail even from a purely business point of view wherever it is a question of producing goods which require any sort of skilled labour, or the use of expensive machinery which is easily damaged, or in general wherever any great amount of sharp attention or of initiative is required. Here low wages do not pay, and their effect is the opposite of what was intended. For not only is a developed sense of responsibility absolutely indispensable, but in general also an attitude which, at least during working hours, is freed from continual calculations of how the customary wage may be earned with a maximum of comfort and a minimum of exertion. Labour must, on the contrary, be performed as if it were an absolute end in itself, a calling. But such an attitude is by no means a product of nature. It cannot be evoked by low wages or high ones alone, but can only be the product of a long and arduous process of education. Today, capitalism, once in the saddle, can recruit its labouring force in all industrial countries with comparative ease. In the past this was in every case an extremely difficult problem.¹⁷ And even today it could probably not get along without the support of a powerful ally along the way, which, as we shall see below, was at hand at the time of its development.

What is meant can again best be explained by means of an

example. The type of backward traditional form of labour is today very often exemplified by women workers, especially unmarried ones. An almost universal complaint of employers of girls, for instance German girls, is that they are almost entirely unable and unwilling to give up methods of work inherited or once learned in favour of more efficient ones, to adapt themselves to new methods, to learn and to concentrate their intelligence, or even to use it at all. Explanations of the possibility of making work easier, above all more profitable to themselves, generally encounter a complete lack of understanding. Increases of piece-rates are without avail against the stone wall of habit. In general it is otherwise, and that is a point of no little importance from our view-point, only with girls having a specifically religious, especially a Pietistic, background. One often hears, and statistical investigation confirms it,¹⁸ that by far the best chances of economic education are found among this group. The ability of mental concentration, as well as the absolutely essential feeling of obligation to one's job, are here most often combined with a strict economy which calculates the possibility of high earnings, and a cool self-control and frugality which enormously increase performance. This provides the most favourable foundation for the conception of labour as an end in itself, as a calling which is necessary to capitalism: the chances of overcoming traditionalism are greatest on account of the religious upbringing. This observation of present-day capitalism¹⁹ in itself suggests that it is worth while to ask how this connection of adaptability to capitalism with religious factors may have come about in the days of the early development of capitalism. For that they were even then present in much the same form can be inferred from numerous facts. For instance, the dislike and the persecution which Methodist workmen in the eighteenth century met at the hands of their comrades were not solely nor even principally the result of their religious eccentricities, England had seen many of those and more striking ones. It rested rather,

as the destruction of their tools, repeatedly mentioned in the reports, suggests, upon their specific willingness to work as we should say to-day.

However, let us again return to the present, and this time to the entrepreneur, in order to clarify the meaning of traditionalism in his case.

Sombart, in his discussions of the genesis of capitalism,²⁰ has distinguished between the satisfaction of needs and acquisition as the two great leading principles in economic history. In the former case the attainment of the goods necessary to meet personal needs, in the latter a struggle for profit free from the limits set by needs, have been the ends controlling the form and direction of economic activity. What he calls the economy of needs seems at first glance to be identical with what is here described as economic traditionalism. That may be the case if the concept of needs is limited to traditional needs. But if that is not done, a number of economic types which must be considered capitalistic according to the definition of capital which Sombart gives in another part of his work,²¹ would be excluded from the category of acquisitive economy and put into that of needs economy. Enterprises, namely, which are carried on by private entrepreneurs by utilizing capital (money or goods with a money value) to make a profit, purchasing the means of production and selling the product, i.e. undoubted capitalistic enterprises, may at the same time have a traditionalistic character. This has, in the course even of modern economic history, not been merely an occasional case, but rather the rule, with continual interruptions from repeated and increasingly powerful conquests of the capitalistic spirit. To be sure the capitalistic form of an enterprise and the spirit in which it is run generally stand in some sort of adequate relationship to each other, but not in one of necessary interdependence. Nevertheless, we provisionally use the expression spirit of (modern) capitalism²² to describe that attitude which seeks profit rationally and systematically in the

manner which we have illustrated by the example of Benjamin Franklin. This, however, is justified by the historical fact that that attitude of mind has on the one hand found its most suitable expression in capitalistic enterprise, while on the other the enterprise has derived its most suitable motive force from the spirit of capitalism.

But the two may very well occur separately. Benjamin Franklin was filled with the spirit of capitalism at a time when his printing business did not differ in form from any handicraft enterprise. And we shall see that at the beginning of modern times it was by no means the capitalistic entrepreneurs of the commercial aristocracy, who were either the sole or the predominant bearers of the attitude we have here called the spirit of capitalism.²³ It was much more the rising strata of the lower industrial middle classes. Even in the nineteenth century its classical representatives were not the elegant gentlemen of Liverpool and Hamburg, with their commercial fortunes handed down for generations, but the self-made parvenus of Manchester and Westphalia, who often rose from very modest circumstances. As early as the sixteenth century the situation was similar; the industries which arose at that time were mostly created by parvenus.²⁴

The management, for instance, of a bank, a wholesale export business, a large retail establishment, or of a large putting-out enterprise dealing with goods produced in homes, is certainly only possible in the form of a capitalistic enterprise. Nevertheless, they may all be carried on in a traditionalistic spirit. In fact, the business of a large bank of issue cannot be carried on in any other way. The foreign trade of whole epochs has rested on the basis of monopolies and legal privileges of strictly traditional character. In retail trade—and we are not here talking of the small men without capital who are continually crying out for Government aid—the revolution which is making an end of the old traditionalism is still in full swing. It is the same development

which broke up the old putting-out system, to which modern domestic labour is related only in form. How this revolution takes place and what is its significance may, in spite of the fact these things are so familiar, be again brought out by a concrete example.

Until about the middle of the past century the life of a putter-out was, at least in many of the branches of the Continental textile industry,²⁵ what we should to-day consider very comfortable. We may imagine its routine somewhat as follows: The peasants came with their cloth, often (in the case of linen) principally or entirely made from raw material which the peasant himself had produced, to the town in which the putter-out lived, and after a careful, often official, appraisal of the quality, received the customary price for it. The putter-out's customers, for markets any appreciable distance away, were middlemen, who also came to him, generally not yet following samples, but seeking traditional qualities, and bought from his warehouse, or, long before delivery, placed orders which were probably in turn passed on to the peasants. Personal canvassing of customers took place, if at all, only at long intervals. Otherwise correspondence sufficed, though the sending of samples slowly gained ground. The number of business hours was very moderate, perhaps five to six a day, sometimes considerably less; in the rush season, where there was one, more. Earnings were moderate; enough to lead a respectable life and in good times to put away a little. On the whole, relations among competitors were relatively good, with a large degree of agreement on the fundamentals of business. A long daily visit to the tavern, with often plenty to drink, and a congenial circle of friends, made life comfortable and leisurely.

The form of organization was in every respect capitalistic; the entrepreneur's activity was of a purely business character; the use of capital, turned over in the business, was indispensable; and finally, the objective aspect of the economic process, the

book-keeping, was rational. But it was traditionalistic business, if one considers the spirit which animated the entrepreneur: the traditional manner of life, the traditional rate of profit, the traditional amount of work, the traditional manner of regulating the relationships with labour, and the essentially traditional circle of customers and the manner of attracting new ones. All these dominated the conduct of the business, were at the basis, one may say, of the *ethos* of this group of business men.

Now at some time this leisureliness was suddenly destroyed, and often entirely without any essential change in the form of organization, such as the transition to a unified factory, to mechanical weaving, etc. What happened was, on the contrary, often no more than this: some young man from one of the putting-out families went out into the country, carefully chose weavers for his employ, greatly increased the rigour of his supervision of their work, and thus turned them from peasants into labourers. On the other hand, he would begin to change his marketing methods by so far as possible going directly to the final consumer, would take the details into his own hands, would personally solicit customers, visiting them every year, and above all would adapt the quality of the product directly to their needs and wishes. At the same time he began to introduce the principle of low prices and large turnover. There was repeated what everywhere and always is the result of such a process of rationalization: those who would not follow suit had to go out of business. The idyllic state collapsed under the pressure of a bitter competitive struggle, respectable fortunes were made, and not lent out at interest, but always reinvested in the business. The old leisurely and comfortable attitude toward life gave way to a hard frugality in which some participated and came to the top, because they did not wish to consume but to earn, while others who wished to keep on with the old ways were forced to curtail their consumption.²⁶

And, what is most important in this connection, it was not

generally in such cases a stream of new money invested in the industry which brought about this revolution—in several cases known to me the whole revolutionary process was set in motion with a few thousands of capital borrowed from relations—but the new spirit, the spirit of modern capitalism, had set to work. The question of the motive forces in the expansion of modern capitalism is not in the first instance a question of the origin of the capital sums which were available for capitalistic uses, but, above all, of the development of the spirit of capitalism. Where it appears and is able to work itself out, it produces its own capital and monetary supplies as the means to its ends, but the reverse is not true.²⁷ Its entry on the scene was not generally peaceful. A flood of mistrust, sometimes of hatred, above all of moral indignation, regularly opposed itself to the first innovator. Often—I know of several cases of the sort—regular legends of mysterious shady spots in his previous life have been produced. It is very easy not to recognize that only an unusually strong character could save an entrepreneur of this new type from the loss of his temperate self-control and from both moral and economic shipwreck. Furthermore, along with clarity of vision and ability to act, it is only by virtue of very definite and highly developed ethical qualities that it has been possible for him to command the absolutely indispensable confidence of his customers and workmen. Nothing else could have given him the strength to overcome the innumerable obstacles, above all the infinitely more intensive work which is demanded of the modern entrepreneur. But these are ethical qualities of quite a different sort from those adapted to the traditionalism of the past.

And, as a rule, it has been neither dare-devil and unscrupulous speculators, economic adventurers such as we meet at all periods of economic history, nor simply great financiers who have earned through this change, outwardly so inconspicuous, but nevertheless so decisive for the penetration of economic life with the new spirit. On the contrary, they were men who had

grown up in the hard school of life, calculating and daring at the same time, above all temperate and reliable, shrewd and completely devoted to their business, with strictly bourgeois opinions and principles.

One is tempted to think that these personal moral qualities have not the slightest relation to any ethical maxims, to say nothing of religious ideas, but that the essential relation between them is negative. The ability to free oneself from the common tradition, a sort of liberal enlightenment, seems likely to be the most suitable basis for such a business man's success. And to-day that is generally precisely the case. Any relationship between religious beliefs and conduct is generally absent, and where any exists, at least in Germany, it tends to be of the negative sort. The people filled with the spirit of capitalism to-day tend to be indifferent, if not hostile, to the Church. The thought of the pious boredom of paradise has little attraction for their active natures; religion appears to them as a means of drawing people away from labour in this world. If you ask them what is the meaning of their restless activity, why they are never satisfied with what they have, thus appearing so senseless to any purely worldly view of life, they would perhaps give the answer, if they know any at all: "to provide for my children and grandchildren". But more often and, since that motive is not peculiar to them, but was just as effective for the traditionalist, more correctly, simply: that business with its continuous work has become a necessary part of their lives. That is in fact the only possible motivation, but it at the same time expresses what is, seen from the view-point of personal happiness, so irrational about this sort of life, where a man exists for the sake of his business, instead of the reverse.

Of course, the desire for the power and recognition which the mere fact of wealth brings plays its part. When the imagination of a whole people has once been turned toward purely quantitative bigness, as in the United States, this romanticism of numbers exercises an irresistible appeal to the poets among business

men. Otherwise it is in general not the real leaders, and especially not the permanently successful entrepreneurs, who are taken in by it. In particular, the resort to entailed estates and the nobility, with sons whose conduct at the university and in the officers' corps tries to cover up their social origin, as has been the typical history of German capitalistic parvenu families, is a product of later decadence. The ideal type²⁸ of the capitalistic entrepreneur, as it has been represented even in Germany by occasional outstanding examples, has no relation to such more or less refined climbers. He avoids ostentation and unnecessary expenditure, as well as conscious enjoyment of his power, and is embarrassed by the outward signs of the social recognition which he receives. His manner of life is, in other words, often, and we shall have to investigate the historical significance of just this important fact, distinguished by a certain ascetic tendency, as appears clearly enough in the sermon of Franklin which we have quoted. It is, namely, by no means exceptional, but rather the rule, for him to have a sort of modesty which is essentially more honest than the reserve which Franklin so shrewdly recommends. He gets nothing out of his wealth for himself, except the irrational sense of having done his job well.

But it is just that which seems to the pre-capitalistic man so incomprehensible and mysterious, so unworthy and contemptible. That anyone should be able to make it the sole purpose of his life-work, to sink into the grave weighed down with a great material load of money and goods, seems to him explicable only as the product of a perverse instinct, the *auri sacra fames*.

At present under our individualistic political, legal, and economic institutions, with the forms of organization and general structure which are peculiar to our economic order, this spirit of capitalism might be understandable, as has been said, purely as a result of adaptation. The capitalistic system so needs this devotion to the calling of making money, it is an attitude toward material goods which is so well suited to that system, so

intimately bound up with the conditions of survival in the economic struggle for existence, that there can to-day no longer be any question of a necessary connection of that acquisitive manner of life with any single *Weltanschauung*. In fact, it no longer needs the support of any religious forces, and feels the attempts of religion to influence economic life, in so far as they can still be felt at all, to be as much an unjustified interference as its regulation by the State. In such circumstances men's commercial and social interests do tend to determine their opinions and attitudes. Whoever does not adapt his manner of life to the conditions of capitalistic success must go under, or at least cannot rise. But these are phenomena of a time in which modern capitalism has become dominant and has become emancipated from its old supports. But as it could at one time destroy the old forms of mediæval regulation of economic life only in alliance with the growing power of the modern State, the same, we may say provisionally, may have been the case in its relations with religious forces. Whether and in what sense that was the case, it is our task to investigate. For that the conception of money-making as an end in itself to which people were bound, as a calling, was contrary to the ethical feelings of whole epochs, it is hardly necessary to prove. The dogma *Deo placere vix potest* which was incorporated into the canon law and applied to the activities of the merchant, and which at that time (like the passage in the gospel about interest)²⁹ was considered genuine, as well as St. Thomas's characterization of the desire for gain as *turpitude* (which term even included unavoidable and hence ethically justified profit-making), already contained a high degree of concession on the part of the Catholic doctrine to the financial powers with which the Church had such intimate political relations in the Italian cities,³⁰ as compared with the much more radically anti-chrematistic views of comparatively wide circles. But even where the doctrine was still better accommodated to the facts, as for instance with Anthony of Florence, the feeling was never

quite overcome, that activity directed to acquisition for its own sake was at bottom a *pudendum* which was to be tolerated only because of the unalterable necessities of life in this world.

Some moralists of that time, especially of the nominalistic school, accepted developed capitalistic business forms as inevitable, and attempted to justify them, especially commerce, as necessary. The *industria* developed in it they were able to regard, though not without contradictions, as a legitimate source of profit, and hence ethically unobjectionable. But the dominant doctrine rejected the spirit of capitalistic acquisition as *turpitude*, or at least could not give it a positive ethical sanction. An ethical attitude like that of Benjamin Franklin would have been simply unthinkable. This was, above all, the attitude of capitalistic circles themselves. Their life-work was, so long as they clung to the tradition of the Church, at best something morally indifferent. It was tolerated, but was still, even if only on account of the continual danger of collision with the Church's doctrine on usury, somewhat dangerous to salvation. Quite considerable sums, as the sources show, went at the death of rich people to religious institutions as conscience money, at times even back to former debtors as *usura* which had been unjustly taken from them. It was otherwise, along with heretical and other tendencies looked upon with disapproval, only in those parts of the commercial aristocracy which were already emancipated from the tradition. But even sceptics and people indifferent to the Church often reconciled themselves with it by gifts, because it was a sort of insurance against the uncertainties of what might come after death, or because (at least according to the very widely held latter view) an external obedience to the commands of the Church was sufficient to insure salvation.³¹ Here the either non-moral or immoral character of their action in the opinion of the participants themselves comes clearly to light.

Now, how could activity, which was at best ethically tolerated, turn into a calling in the sense of Benjamin Franklin? The fact to

be explained historically is that in the most highly capitalistic centre of that time, in Florence of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the money and capital market of all the great political Powers, this attitude was considered ethically unjustifiable, or at best to be tolerated. But in the backwoods small bourgeois circumstances of Pennsylvania in the eighteenth century, where business threatened for simple lack of money to fall back into barter, where there was hardly a sign of large enterprise, where only the earliest beginnings of banking were to be found, the same thing was considered the essence of moral conduct, even commanded in the name of duty. To speak here of a reflection of material conditions in the ideal superstructure would be patent nonsense. What was the background of ideas which could account for the sort of activity apparently directed toward profit alone as a calling toward which the individual feels himself to have an ethical obligation? For it was this idea which gave the way of life of the new entrepreneur its ethical foundation and justification.

The attempt has been made, particularly by Sombart, in what are often judicious and effective observations, to depict economic rationalism as the salient feature of modern economic life as a whole. Undoubtedly with justification, if by that is meant the extension of the productivity of labour which has, through the subordination of the process of production to scientific points of view, relieved it from its dependence upon the natural organic limitations of the human individual. Now this process of rationalization in the field of technique and economic organization undoubtedly determines an important part of the ideals of life of modern bourgeois society. Labour in the service of a rational organization for the provision of humanity with material goods has without doubt always appeared to representatives of the capitalistic spirit as one of the most important purposes of their life-work. It is only necessary, for instance, to read Franklin's account of his efforts in the service of civic improve-

ments in Philadelphia clearly to apprehend this obvious truth. And the joy and pride of having given employment to numerous people, of having had a part in the economic progress of his home town in the sense referring to figures of population and volume of trade which capitalism associated with the word, all these things obviously are part of the specific and undoubtedly idealistic satisfactions in life to modern men of business. Similarly it is one of the fundamental characteristics of an individualistic capitalistic economy that it is rationalized on the basis of rigorous calculation, directed with foresight and caution toward the economic success which is sought in sharp contrast to the hand-to-mouth existence of the peasant, and to the privileged traditionalism of the guild craftsman and of the adventurers' capitalism, oriented to the exploitation of political opportunities and irrational speculation.

It might thus seem that the development of the spirit of capitalism is best understood as part of the development of rationalism as a whole, and could be deduced from the fundamental position of rationalism on the basic problems of life. In the process Protestantism would only have to be considered in so far as it had formed a stage prior to the development of a purely rationalistic philosophy. But any serious attempt to carry this thesis through makes it evident that such a simple way of putting the question will not work, simply because of the fact that the history of rationalism shows a development which by no means follows parallel lines in the various departments of life. The rationalization of private law, for instance, if it is thought of as a logical simplification and rearrangement of the content of the law, was achieved in the highest hitherto known degree in the Roman law of late antiquity. But it remained most backward in some of the countries with the highest degree of economic rationalization, notably in England, where the Renaissance of Roman Law was overcome by the power of the great legal corporations, while it has always retained its supremacy in the

Catholic countries of Southern Europe. The worldly rational philosophy of the eighteenth century did not find favour alone or even principally in the countries of highest capitalistic development. The doctrines of Voltaire are even to-day the common property of broad upper, and what is practically more important, middle-class groups in the Romance Catholic countries. Finally, if under practical rationalism is understood the type of attitude which sees and judges the world consciously in terms of the worldly interests of the individual ego, then this view of life was and is the special peculiarity of the peoples of the *liberum arbitrium*, such as the Italians and the French are in very flesh and blood. But we have already convinced ourselves that this is by no means the soil in which that relationship of a man to his calling as a task, which is necessary to capitalism, has pre-eminently grown. In fact, one may—this simple proposition, which is often forgotten should be placed at the beginning of every study which essays to deal with rationalism—rationalize life from fundamentally different basic points of view and in very different directions. Rationalism is an historical concept which covers a whole world of different things. It will be our task to find out whose intellectual child the particular concrete form of rational thought was, from which the idea of a calling and the devotion to labour in the calling has grown, which is, as we have seen, so irrational from the standpoint of purely eudæmonistic self-interest, but which has been and still is one of the most characteristic elements of our capitalistic culture. We are here particularly interested in the origin of precisely the irrational element which lies in this, as in every conception of a calling.

Social Interactionism

Georg Simmel, *The Philosophy of Money*
[1907] (excerpts); *Sociology* [1908]
(excerpts).

THE PROBLEM OF SOCIOLOGY

1908

SOCIETY EXISTS where a number of individuals enter into interaction. This interaction always arises on the basis of certain drives or for the sake of certain purposes. Erotic, religious, or merely associative impulses; and purposes of defense, attack, play, gain, aid, or instruction—these and countless others cause man to live with other men, to act for them, with them, against them, and thus to correlate his condition with theirs. In brief, he influences and is influenced by them. The significance of these interactions among men lies in the fact that it is because of them that the individuals, in whom these driving impulses and purposes are lodged, form a unity, that is, a society. For unity in the empirical sense of the word is nothing but the interaction of elements. An organic body is a unity because its organs maintain a more intimate exchange of their energies with each other than with any other organism; a state is a unity because its citizens show similar mutual effects. In fact, the whole world could not be called one if each of its parts did not somehow influence every other part, or, if at any one point the reciprocity of effects, however indirect it may be, were cut off.

This unity, or sociation, may be of very different degrees, ac-

Reprinted from "The Problem of Sociology," translated by Kurt H. Wolff, in *Georg Simmel, 1858-1918: A Collection of Essays, with Translations and a Bibliography*, edited by Kurt H. Wolff. Copyright 1959 by the Ohio State University Press. All rights reserved. Originally published in German as "Das Problem der Soziologie," in *Soziologie* (Munich and Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1908).

ording to the kind and the intimacy of the interaction which obtains. Sociation ranges all the way from the momentary getting together for a walk to the founding of a family, from relations maintained "until further notice" to membership in a state, from the temporary aggregation of hotel guests to the intimate bond of a medieval guild. I designate as the content—the materials, so to speak—of sociation everything that is present in individuals (the immediately concrete loci of all historical reality)—drive, interest, purpose, inclination, psychic state, movement—everything that is present in them in such a way as to engender or mediate effects upon others or to receive such effects. In themselves, these materials which fill life, these motivations which propel it, are not social. Strictly speaking, neither hunger nor love, work nor religiosity, technology nor the functions and results of intelligence, are social. They are factors in sociation only when they transform the mere aggregation of isolated individuals into specific forms of being with and for one another, forms that are subsumed under the general concept of interaction. Sociation is the form (realized in innumerable different ways) in which individuals grow together into a unity and within which their interests are realized. And it is on the basis of their interests—sensuous or ideal, momentary or lasting, conscious or unconscious, causal or teleological—that individuals form such unities.

In any given social phenomenon, content and societal form constitute one reality. A social form severed from all content can no more attain existence than a spatial form can exist without a material whose form it is. Any social phenomenon or process is composed of two elements which in reality are inseparable: on the one hand, an interest, a purpose, or a motive; on the other, a form or mode of interaction among individuals through which, or in the shape of which, that content attains social reality.

It is evident that that which constitutes society in every current sense of the term is identical with the kinds of interaction discussed. A collection of human beings does not become a society because each of them has an objectively determined or subjectively impelling life-content. It becomes a society only when the vitality of these contents attains the form of reciprocal influence; only

when one individual has an effect, immediate or mediate, upon another, is mere spatial aggregation or temporal succession transformed into society. If, therefore, there is to be a science whose subject matter is society and nothing else, it must exclusively investigate these interactions, these kinds and forms of sociation. For everything else found within "society" and realized through it and within its framework is not itself society. It is merely a content that develops or is developed by this form of coexistence, and it produces the real phenomenon called "society" in the broader and more customary sense of the term only in conjunction with this form. To separate, by scientific abstraction, these two factors of form and content which are in reality inseparably united; to detach by analysis the forms of interaction or sociation from their contents (through which alone these forms become social forms); and to bring them together systematically under a consistent scientific viewpoint—this seems to me the basis for the only, as well as the entire, possibility of a special science of society as such. Only such a science can actually treat the facts that go under the name of sociohistorical reality upon the plane of the purely social.

Abstractions alone produce science out of the complexity or the unity of reality. Yet however urgently such abstractions may be demanded by the needs of cognition itself, they also require some sort of justification of their relation to the structure of the objective world. For only some functional relation to actuality can save one from sterile inquiries or from the haphazard formulation of scientific concepts. Certainly, naïve naturalism errs in assuming that the given itself contains the analytic or synthetic arrangements through which it becomes the content of a science. Nevertheless, the characteristics of the given are more or less susceptible to such arrangements. An analogy may help here. A portrait fundamentally transforms the natural human appearance, but one face is better suited than another to such a transformation into something radically alien. Remembering this helps us to appraise the greater or lesser appropriateness of various scientific problems and methods. The right to subject sociohistorical phenomena to an analysis in terms of form and content (and to synthesize the forms)

rests upon two conditions which must be verified on a factual basis. On the one hand, we must demonstrate that the same form of sociation can be observed in quite dissimilar contents and in connection with quite dissimilar purposes. On the other hand, we must show that the content is realized in using quite dissimilar forms of sociation as its medium or vehicle. A parallel is found in the fact that the same geometric forms may be observed in the most heterogeneous materials and that the same material occurs in the most heterogeneous spatial forms. Similar relations obtain between logical forms and the material contents of cognition.

Both of these conditions are undeniable facts. We do find that the same form of interaction obtains among individuals in societal groups that are the most unlike imaginable in purpose and significance. Superiority, subordination, competition, division of labor, formation of parties, representation, inner solidarity coupled with exclusiveness toward the outside, and innumerable similar features are found in the state as well as in a religious community, in a band of conspirators as in an economic association, in an art school as in a family. However diverse the interests that give rise to these sociations, the forms in which the interests are realized are identical. On the other hand, the identical interest may take on form in very different sociations. Economic interest is realized both in competition and in the planned organization of producers, in isolation from other groups and in fusion with them. Although the religious contents of life remain identical, at one time they demand an unregulated, at another time a centralized, form of community. The interests upon which the relations between the sexes are based are satisfied by an almost endless variety of family forms. The educational interest may lead to a liberal or to a despotic relation between teacher and pupil, to individualistic interaction between them, or to a more collectivistic type of interaction between the teacher and the totality of his pupils. Hence, not only may the form in which the most widely different contents are realized be identical, but a content too may persist while its medium—the interactions of the individuals—moves in a variety of forms. We see, then, that the analysis in terms of form and content transforms the facts—which in their immediacy present form

and content as an indissoluble unity of social life—in such a way as to furnish the legitimation of the sociological problem. This problem demands that the pure forms of sociation be identified, ordered systematically, explained psychologically, and studied from the standpoint of their historical development. . . .

This conception of society implies a further proposition: A given number of individuals may be a society to a greater or a smaller degree. With each formation of parties, with each joining for common tasks or in a common feeling or way of thinking, with each articulation of the distribution of positions of submission and domination, with each common meal, with each self-adornment for others—with every growth of new synthesizing phenomena such as these, the same group becomes “more society” than it was before. There is no such thing as society “as such”; that is, there is no society in the sense that it is the condition for the emergence of all these particular phenomena. For there is no such thing as interaction “as such”—there are only specific kinds of interaction. And it is with their emergence that society too emerges, for they are neither the cause nor the consequence of society but are, themselves, society. The fact that an extraordinary multitude and variety of interactions operate at any one moment has given a seemingly autonomous historical reality to the general concept of society. Perhaps it is this hypostatization of a mere abstraction that is the reason for the peculiar vagueness and uncertainty involved in the concept of society and in the customary treatises in general sociology. We are here reminded of the fact that not much headway was made in formulating a concept of “life” as long as it was conceived of as an immediately real and homogeneous phenomenon. The science of life did not establish itself on a firm basis until it investigated specific processes within organisms—processes whose sum or web life is; not until, in other words, it recognized that life consists of these particular processes.

Only if we follow the conception here outlined can we grasp what in “society” really *is* society. Similarly, it is only geometry that determines what the spatiality of things in space really is. Sociology, the discipline that deals with the purely social aspects of man (who, of course, can be an object of scientific inquiry in

innumerable other respects), is related to the other special sciences of man as geometry is related to the physicochemical sciences. Geometry studies the forms through which any material becomes an empirical body, and these forms as such exist, of course, in abstraction only, precisely like the forms of sociation. Both geometry and sociology leave to other sciences the investigation of the contents realized in the forms, that is, the total phenomena whose forms they explore.

It is hardly necessary to point out that this analogy with geometry does not go beyond the clarification of the fundamental problem of sociology. It was only in attempting this clarification that we made use of this analogy. Above all, geometry has the advantage of having at its disposal extremely simple structures into which it can resolve the more complicated figures. Geometry can construe the whole range of possible formations from a relatively few fundamental definitions. Not even a remotely similar resolution into simple elements is to be hoped for in the foreseeable future as regards the forms of sociation. Sociological forms, if they are to be even approximately definite, can apply only to a limited range of phenomena. Even if we say, for instance, that superordination and subordination are forms found in almost every human sociation, we gain very little from this general knowledge. What is needed is the study of specific kinds of superordination and subordination, and of the specific forms in which they are realized. Through such a study, of course, these forms would lose in applicability what they would gain in definiteness.

In our day, we are used to asking of every science whether it is devoted to the discovery of timelessly valid laws or to the presentation and conceptualization of real, unique historical processes. Generally, this alternative ignores innumerable intermediate phenomena dealt with in the actual practice of science. It is irrelevant to our conception of the problem of sociology because this conception renders a choice between the two answers unnecessary. For, on the one hand, in sociology the object abstracted from reality may be examined in regard to laws entirely inhering in the objective nature of the elements. These laws must be sharply distinguished from any spatiotemporal realization; they are valid

whether the historical actualities enforce them once or a thousand times. On the other hand, the forms of sociation may be examined, with equal validity, in regard to their occurrence at specific places and at specific times, and in regard to their historical development in specific groups. In this latter case, ascertaining them would be in the service of history, so to speak; in the former case, it would provide material for the induction of timeless uniformities. About competition, for instance, we learn something from a great many fields—political science, economics, history of religion, history of art, and so on. The point is to ascertain from all the facts what competition is as a pure form of human behavior; under what circumstances it emerges and develops; how it is modified by the particular character of its object; by what contemporaneous formal and material features of a society it is increased or reduced; and how competition between individuals differs from that between groups. In short, we must ascertain what competition is as a form of relation among individuals. This form may involve all sorts of contents. But in spite of the great variety of these contents, the form maintains its own identity and proves that it belongs to a sphere which is governed by its own laws and which may legitimately be abstracted from other spheres or from total reality. What we are suggesting, in brief, is that similar elements be singled out of the complex phenomena so as to secure a cross-section, whereby dissimilar elements—in our case the contents—reciprocally paralyze each other, as it were.

We have to proceed in this fashion with respect to all the great situations and interactions that form society—the formation of parties; imitation; the formation of classes and circles; secondary subdivisions; the embodiment of types of social interaction in special structures of an objective, personal, or ideal nature; the growth and the role of hierarchies; the representation of groups by individuals; the bearing of common hostility on the inner solidarity of the group. In addition to such major problems, there are others which no less regularly involve the form of the group and which are either more specialized or more complex than these. Among the more specialized questions, there are those such as the significance of the non-partisan, the role of the poor as organic

members of society, the numerical determination of group elements, and the phenomena of *primus inter pares* and *tertius gaudens*. Among more complex processes are the intersection of various social circles in the individual; the special significance of the secret for the formation of groups; the modification of the character of groups by a membership composed of individuals who belong together geographically, or by the addition of elements who do not; and innumerable other processes.

In this whole discussion, as I have already indicated, I waive the question of whether there ever occurs an *absolute* identity of forms along with a difference in content. The *approximate* identity that forms exhibit under materially dissimilar circumstances (and vice versa) is enough to conceive, in principle, of an affirmative answer to this question. The fact that absolute identity is not actually realized shows the difference between historical-psychological and geometrical phenomena. Historical-psychological processes, in their fluctuations and complexities, can never be completely rationalized. Geometry, by contrast, does have the power to isolate absolutely pure forms out of their material realizations. It should always be remembered that this identity of the kinds of interaction in the face of the simultaneously existing variety of human or objective material (and vice versa) is nothing primarily but a device to make and legitimate the scientific discrimination between form and content in the treatment of empirical phenomena. Methodologically speaking, this discrimination would be required even if the actual constellations did not call for the inductive procedure of crystallizing the like out of the unlike. In the same way, the geometrical abstraction of the spatial form of a body would be justified even if a body with such a particular form occurred only once empirically.

It cannot be denied, however, that this discussion suggests a difficulty in methodology. For instance, toward the end of the Middle Ages, extended trade relations forced certain guild masters to employ apprentices and to adopt new ways of obtaining materials and attracting customers. All of this was inconsistent with traditional guild principles, according to which every master was to have the same living as every other. Through these innova-

tions, every master sought to place himself outside this traditional narrow unity. Now, what about the purely sociological form which is abstracted from the special content of this whole process? The process seems to indicate that the expansion of the circle with which the individual is connected through his actions is accompanied by a greater articulation of individuality, an expansion of the freedom of the individual, and a greater differentiation of the members of the circle. Yet, as far as I can see, there is no sure method of distilling this sociological significance out of our complex fact which is, after all, real only along with all its contents. In other words, there is no sure method for answering the question of what purely sociological configurations and what specific interactions of individuals (irrespective of the interests and impulses residing in the individual, and of purely objective conditions) are involved in the historical process. On the contrary, all this can be interpreted in more than one way and, furthermore, the historical facts that attest to reality of the specific sociological forms must be presented in their material totality. In brief, there is no means of teaching and, under certain conditions, even of performing, the analysis of form and content into sociological elements. The case is comparable to the proof of a geometrical theorem by means of figures drawn in the unavoidably accidental and crude way of all drawings. The mathematician can feel quite safe in assuming that, in spite of the imperfect drawing, the concept of the ideal geometrical figure is known and understood, and that it is regarded as the essential significance of the chalk or ink marks. The sociologist, however, may not make the corresponding assumption; the isolation of truly pure sociation out of the complex total phenomenon cannot be forced by logical means.

Here we must take upon ourselves the odium of talking about intuitive procedures (however far these are removed from speculative, metaphysical intuition). We admit that we are discussing a particular viewpoint that helps to make the distinction between form and content. This viewpoint, for the time being, can be conveyed only by means of examples. Only much later may it be possible to grasp it by methods that are fully conceptualized and are sure guides to research. The difficulty is increased by two fac-

tors. Not only is there no perfectly clear technique for applying the fundamental sociological concept itself (that is, the concept of sociation), but, in addition, where this concept can be effectively applied, there are still many elements in the phenomena to be studied whose subsumption under the concept or form and content remains arbitrary. There will be contrary opinions, for instance, concerning the extent to which the phenomenon of the poor is a matter of form or content; the extent to which it is a result of formal relations within the group, a result which is determined by general currents and shifts that are the necessary outcome of contacts among human beings; or the extent to which poverty is to be regarded as a merely material characteristic of certain individuals, a characteristic that must be studied exclusively from the viewpoint of economic interests (that is, as regards its content)....²

To this extent, any history or description of a social situation is an exercise of psychological knowledge. But it is of extreme methodological relevance—even of decisive importance—to the principles of human studies in general to note that the scientific treatment of psychic data is not thereby automatically psychological. Even where we constantly use psychological rules and knowledge, even where the explanation of every single fact is possible only psychologically (as is true in sociology), the sense and intent of our activities do not have to be psychological. They do not have to aim, that is, at an understanding of the law of the psychic process itself (which, to be sure, has its content), but can aim rather at this content and its configurations. There is only a difference in degree between the studies of man and the sciences of external nature. After all, the natural sciences too, inasmuch as they are phenomena of the intellectual life, have their locus in the mind. The discovery of every astronomical or chemical truth, as well as the rethinking of each of them, is an event occurring in consciousness, an event which a perfect psychology could deduce without residue from physical conditions and developments alone. The procedure followed by the natural sciences in choosing the con-

² Simmel's development of the former interpretation of poverty appears as chapter 11 below.—Ed.

tents and interrelations of psychological processes—rather than the processes themselves—for their subject matter is similar to the procedure which determines the significance of a painting from its aesthetic relevance and from its place in the history of art, rather than from the physical oscillations which produce its colors and which constitute and carry its whole, actual existence. There is always one reality and we cannot grasp it scientifically in its immediacy and wholeness but must consider it from a number of different viewpoints and thereby make it into a plurality of mutually independent scientific subject matters. This applies, too, to those psychological phenomena whose contents fail to combine into an autonomous spatial world and which are not strikingly set apart from their psychic reality. Language, for instance, is certainly constructed out of psychological forces and for psychological purposes. But its forms and laws are treated by the science of linguistics with complete neglect of the realization (a realization which alone is given) that this is the object; they are treated exclusively through the presentation and analysis of the construction of the content and the forms that result from it.

The facts of sociation offer a similar picture. That people influence one another—that an individual does something, suffers something, shows his existence or his development because there are others who express themselves, act, or feel—is, of course, a psychological phenomenon. And the only way to grasp the historical emergence of each particular instance of this general phenomenon is to re-create it psychologically, to construct plausible psychological series, to interpret the externally observable by means of psychological categories. Yet from the particular scientific viewpoint conceived by the notion of sociation, this psychological phenomenon as such may be entirely ignored, and attention may be focused rather upon tracing, analyzing, and connecting its contents. Suppose, for example, that it is noted that the relation of a stronger to a weaker individual, which has the form of *primus inter pares*, tends to lead to a possession of absolute power by the stronger party and a gradual elimination of any elements of equality. This, in terms of historical reality, is certainly a psychological process. Yet from the sociological viewpoint, we are interested

only in such questions as: How do the various phases of superordination and subordination follow one another? To what extent is superordination in a given relation compatible with co-ordination in other relations? How much superordination is required in the initial phase of the relation to destroy co-ordination completely? Has combination or co-operation a greater chance to occur in an earlier or in a later stage of such a development? Or, as a further example, let us suppose it is noted that those hostilities are the bitterest that arise on the basis of a previous and somehow still felt communion or solidarity (hatred between blood relatives has been called the most burning hatred). As an occurrence, this can only be understood, or even described, psychologically. However, looking at this phenomenon as a sociological formation, we are not interested in the psychological processes that occur in each of the two individuals but in their subsumption under the categories of union and discord. We are interested in such problems as: Up to what point can the relation between two individuals or parties contain hostility and solidarity before depriving the relation of the character of solidarity or giving it that of hostility? What sort of solidarity—that which arises from remembered communion or that which is based on inextinguishable instinct—furnishes the means for more cruel, more profoundly wounding injury than is ever possible when the original relation was one of relatively great distance? In brief, how is our observation to be presented as the realization of forms of relation between people—what specific combination of social categories does it present? This is the point, and it is so in spite of the fact that the concrete description of the process, or the description of it as a typical process, can be nothing but psychological. Returning to an earlier illustration, we may (ignoring all differences) compare the procedure of sociology with the performance of a geometrical deduction using a figure drawn on a blackboard. All that is given and seen here is the physically produced chalk marks, but it is not in them that we are interested but in their significance from the viewpoint of geometry, which has nothing whatever to do with that physical figure as a deposit of chalk particles. (On the other hand, this figure, precisely as a physical structure, may be brought under scientific

categories; its physiological genesis, its chemical composition, or its optical impression may become the object of special investigations.)

In this sense, then, the givens of sociology are psychological processes whose immediate reality presents itself first of all under psychological categories. But these psychological categories, although indispensable for the description of the facts, remains outside the purpose of sociological investigation. It is to this end that we direct our study to the objective reality of sociation, a reality which, to be sure, is embodied in psychic processes and can often be described only by means of them. Similarly, a drama, from beginning to end, contains only psychological processes and can be understood only psychologically; but its purpose is not to study psychological cognitions but to examine the syntheses which result when the contents of the psychic processes are considered from the viewpoints of tragedy and artistic form, or as symbolic of certain aspects of life.

GROUP EXPANSION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDIVIDUALITY¹

1908

EACH OF THE THEMES around which the inquiries in this book have thus far been organized into chapters is a single concept from the general domain of sociology. They have made room for considerable diversity and often contrariety in the historical configurations and types of configurations that present these concepts. The assemblages of material required by the practical need for organization have had no other internal justification than the fact that the phenomena and reflection on them have involved the particular concept in question. The content in each of these chapters could not have been expressed as a central argument whose proof is gradually adduced, but only as a collection of arguments that find themselves under the title of a concept.

The following inquiry is of a different sort. It is devoted to the demonstration of a relational pattern, of a *single* pattern, even though it emerges in conjunction with many modifications, wrappings, and admixtures. What is common to the sections of the present chapter is not a concept, but a proposition. Rather than pursuing a single abstracted form in the phenomena where it happens to appear, phenomena whose contents are not constrained in any particular direction by the form, this chapter presents a particular

From "Die Erweiterung der Gruppe und die Ausbildung der Individualität," in *Soziologie*, 5th ed. (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1968 [1908]), pp. 527-45, 552-65, 568-70. Translated by Richard P. Albares.

¹ Part of this chapter is taken from my *Soziale Differenzierung*, chapter 3.

correlation, an interactionally determined pattern of development among forms of association.

Group Expansion and the Transformation of Social Bonds

Individuation of personality, on the one hand, and the influences, interests, and relationships that attach the personality to its social circle, on the other hand, show a pattern of interdependent development that appears in the most diverse historical and institutional setting as a typical form. *Individuality in being and action generally increases to the degree that the social circle encompassing the individual expands.*

Of the diverse modalities in which group expansion occurs and gives rise to the correlation just underscored, I will first mention the one that occurs when circles that are isolated from one another become approximately alike. Imagine that there are two social groups, M and N, that are sharply distinguished from one another both in characteristic attributes and in opposing systems of shared belief; and imagine further that each of these groups is composed of homogeneous and tightly cohesive elements. This being so, quantitative expansion will produce an increase in social differentiation. What were once minimal differences in inner predilection, external resources, and actualizations of these will be accentuated by the necessity of competing for a livelihood with more and more people using more and more specialized means. Competition will develop the speciality of the individual in direct ratio to the number of participants.

Different as its points of origin in M and N may have been, this process will inevitably produce a gradually increasing likeness between the two groups. After all, the number of fundamental human formations upon which a group can build is relatively limited, and it can only slowly be increased. The more of these formations that are present in a group—that is, the greater the dissimilarity of constituent elements in M and N respectively—the greater is the likelihood that an ever increasing number of structures will develop in one group that have equivalents in the other. Deviation

in all directions from what had thus far been the prevailing norm in each group complex must necessarily result in a likening—at first a qualitative or ideal equivalence—between parts of the two complexes.

This likening will come about if for no other reason than because even within very diverse groups, the forms of social differentiation are identical or approximately the same. What I have in mind here are such forms as the relational pattern of simple competition, the alliance of many who are weak against one who is strong, the pleonexy of lone individuals, the progression in which relationships among individuals, once initiated, become stabilized, the attraction or repulsion that arises between individuals by virtue of their qualitative differentiation, and so on.

This process, quite apart from all bonds based on shared substantive interests, will often lead to actual relations between the elements of any two—or of many—groups that have been made alike in this way. One observes this, for example, in the international sympathy that aristocrats hold for one another. To an astonishing degree, these feelings of solidarity are independent of the specific character of the individuals concerned, a matter that is otherwise decisive in determining personal attraction and repulsion. In the same way, by specialization within groups that were originally independent of one another, solidarities also develop at the other end of the social scale, as in the internationalism of social democrats and in the sentiments underlying the earlier journey-men's unions.

After the process of social differentiation has led to a separation between high and low, the mere formal fact of occupying a particular social position creates among the similarly characterized members of the most diverse groups a sense of solidarity and, frequently, actual relationships. Accompanying such a differentiation of social groups, there arise a need and an inclination to reach out beyond the original spatial, economic, and mental boundaries of the group and, in connection with the increase in individualization and concomitant mutual repulsion of group elements, to supplement the original centripetal forces of the lone group with a centrifugal tendency that forms bridges with other groups.

For example, the guilds were once ruled by the spirit of strict equality. On the one hand, the individual's production was limited to the level of quality and quantity that all other guild members attained; on the other hand, the guild's norms of sale and exchange sought to protect the individual from being outdone by other members. In the long run, it was impossible to maintain this condition of undifferentiation. The master who became rich under whatever circumstances was not inclined to submit further to regulations stipulating that he might sell only his own products, might maintain no more than one salesplace, might have no more than a very limited number of apprentices, and so forth.

Once the affluent masters had won the right—partly after intense struggle—to ignore these restrictions, a certain duality began to appear. The once homogeneous mass of guild members became differentiated with increasing decisiveness into rich and poor, capitalists and laborers. Once the principle of equality had been broken through to the extent that one member could have another labor for him and that he could select his sales market on the basis of his own personal capacity and energy, his knowledge of the market, and his assessment of its prospects, it was inevitable that just these personal attributes, once given the opportunity to unfold, would continue to develop, leading to an ever increasing specialization and individualization within the fellowship of the guild and, finally, to the dissolution of that fellowship. On the other hand, however, structural change made possible an extension far beyond the confines of previous sales regions. Formerly, producer and merchant had been united in *one* person; once they had been differentiated from one another, the merchant won an incomparable freedom of movement, and previously unattainable commercial relations were established.

Individual freedom and the expansion of commercial enterprise are interdependent. Thus, in the case of the coexistence of guild restrictions and large, factory-style workshops around the beginning of the nineteenth century in Germany, it always proved necessary to let the factories have freedoms of production and trade that could or would have been collectivistically restricted in the circles of smaller and more modest enterprises. In this manner, the development away from narrow, homogeneous guild circles pre-

pared their dissolution along two lines: one led to individualizing differentiation, the other to expansion involving ties across great distances. For this reason, the differentiation of English guild members into merchants and actual workers was exhibited most strikingly by those, such as tanners and textile manufacturers, who produced articles of foreign demand.

A fissioning is inherent in this correlation with group expansion that involves not only the content of labor but also its sociological dimension. Even given a certain technical division of labor, as long as the small, primitive group is self-sufficient, a pervasive equality exists in that each member of the group works for the group itself; every achievement is sociologically centripetal. However, as soon as the boundaries of the group are ruptured and it enters into trade in special products with another group, internal differentiation develops between those who produce for export and those who produce for domestic consumption—two wholly opposed inner modes of being.

The history of the emancipation of the serfs, as for example in Prussia, demonstrates a process that is similar in this regard. As he existed in Prussia until about 1810, the enserfed peasant found himself in a peculiar intermediate position regarding both his lord and his land. The land belonged to the lord, to be sure, but not in such a way that the peasant himself could have no right at all to it. Likewise, the peasant was of course bound to work the lord's fields for him, but close by he also worked the land that had been allotted to him for his own benefit. With the abolition of serfdom, a certain part of the land that the peasant had formerly owned in a limited sense was converted into true, free property. The lord was left to seek wage laborers, whom he recruited for the most part from among the owners of smaller parcels that he had purchased. Thus, whereas the peasant had had within himself the partial attributes of owner and of laborer for another's benefit, a sharp differentiation of these attributes followed the abolition of serfdom: one part became pure owner, the other part pure laborer.

It is obvious how free movement of the person and his involvement in spatially more distant relations emerged from this situation. Not only the eradication of the external bond to the soil was involved, but also the very condition of the laborer as one who

receives work first in one place, then in another. On the other hand, alienable property was involved, since it made possible sale and hence commercial relations, resettlement, and so on.

So it is that the observation made at the beginning of this section has its justification: differentiation and individualization loosen the bond of the individual with those who are most near in order to weave in its place a new one—both real and ideal—with those who are more distant. . . .²

An Englishman who had lived for many years in India once told me that it was impossible for a European to get at all close to the natives where castes existed; but that where caste divisions did not prevail this was very easy. The insularity of the caste—maintained by an internal uniformity no less strict than its exclusion of outsiders—seems to inhibit the development of what one has to call a more universal humanity, which is what makes relationships between racial aliens possible.

Consistent with the above, the broad uneducated masses of one civilized people are more homogeneous internally, and they are separated from the masses of a second people by more distinct characteristics, than is the case either within or between the educated strata of these populations. This same pattern of synthesis and antithesis repeats itself intraculturally. The older German corporate system set out to unite guild *members* tightly in order to keep guild *memberships* strictly separated. The modern voluntary association, on the other hand, restricts its members and imposes uniformity upon them only so far as the strictly circumscribed organizational goal requires. In all other matters, it allows members complete freedom and tolerates every individuality and heterogeneity of their full personalities. But for all that, the modern association gravitates toward an all-embracing union of organizations by virtue of interpenetrating division of labor, leveling that results from equal justice and the cash economy, and solidarity of interests in the national economy.

These examples hint at a relation that will be found everywhere in the course of this inquiry. The nonindividuation of ele-

² Simmel digresses here briefly to speculate on analogies with the plant and animal kingdoms.—Ed.

ments in the narrower circle and their differentiation in the wider one are phenomena that are found, synchronically, among coexistent groups and group elements, just as they appear, diachronically, in the sequence of stages through which a single group develops.

The Relation between Personal and Collective Individuality

This basic idea can be generalized to the proposition that in each person, other things being equal, there is, as it were, an unalterable ratio between individual and social factors that changes only its form. The narrower the circle to which we commit ourselves, the less freedom of individuality we possess; however, this narrower circle is itself something individual, and it cuts itself off sharply from all other circles precisely because it is small. Correspondingly, if the circle in which we are active and in which our interests hold sway enlarges, there is more room in it for the development of our individuality; but *as parts of this whole*, we have less uniqueness: the larger whole is less individual as a social group. Thus, the leveling of individual differences corresponds not only to the relative smallness and narrowness of the collectivity, but also—or above all—to its own individualistic coloring.

Expressed in a very terse schema, the elements of a distinctive social circle are undifferentiated, and the elements of a circle that is not distinctive are differentiated. Of course this is not a sociological “natural law,” but rather what might be called a phenomenological formula that seeks to conceptualize the regular outcome of regularly coexisting sequences of events. It designates no cause of phenomena; instead, it designates a single phenomenon whose underlying, general structure is represented in each individual case as the effect of very diverse causes, but causes whose combined effect is always to release identical formative energies.

Illustrations of the Formula in Religious and Political Settings

The first aspect of this relationship—lack of differentiation among the members of a differentiated group—is exhibited by

the social order of the Quakers, in a form that is based on the deepest motives of its members. As a whole, as a religious principle of the most extreme individualism and subjectivism, Quakerism binds members of the congregation to a style of life and a mode of being that are highly uniform and democratic, seeking to exclude, as far as possible, all individual differences. And in turn, Quakerism lacks all understanding for the higher political union and its goals so that the individuality of the smaller group not only precludes the individuality of the person, but also his commitment to the large group. The specific manifestation of this is as follows: in the affairs of the congregation, in the assemblies of worship, each person may act as preacher and may say whatever he likes whenever he likes. On the other hand, the congregation watches over personal affairs such as marriage, and these cannot occur without the permission of a committee that is appointed to investigate each case. Thus, the Quakers are individual only in collective matters, and in individual matters, they are socially regulated.

Both aspects of the formula are exemplified in the differences between the political structures in the Northern and Southern states in the United States, most clearly so during the period before the Civil War. The New England states in North America had a pronounced local orientation from the very beginning. They developed townships in which the individual was tightly bound by his obligations to the whole, and although this whole was relatively small, it was also self-sufficient. The Southern states, by contrast, were populated to a greater extent by lone adventurers who were not particularly predisposed to local self-government. The South very early developed extensive counties as units of administration. Indeed, for the Southerner, the state as a whole is the site of true political significance, whereas in New England, the state is more a combination of towns. The more abstract, less colorful general political structure corresponds to the more independent—to the point of anarchistic inclinations—Southern personalities that were included in it, whereas the more strictly regulated Northern personalities were inclined toward narrower municipal structures that each, as wholes, possessed strongly individual coloring and autonomous characters.

The Basic Relation as a Dualistic Drive

With all the above qualifications in mind, one could speak of a particular quantum of the tendency toward individualization and of the tendency toward nondifferentiation. This quantum is determined by personal, historical, and social circumstances; and it remains constant, whether it applies to purely psychological configurations or to the social community to which the personality belongs.

We lead, as it were, a doubled, or if one will, a halved existence. We live as an individual within a social circle, with tangible separation from its other members, but also as a member of this circle, with separation from everything that does not belong to it. If now there is a need within us both for individuation and for its opposite, then this need can be realized on either side of our existence. The differentiation drive receives satisfaction from the contrast of one's particular personality with one's fellow members, but this plus corresponds to a minus in the satisfaction that the same person, as a purely social being, derives from oneness with his fellows. That is to say: intensified individualization within the group is accompanied by decreased individualization of the group itself, and vice versa, whenever a certain portion of the drive is satiated.

A Frenchman has made the following observation about the mania for clubs in Germany: "It is this that accustoms the German, on the one hand, not to count solely on the state; on the other hand, not to count solely on himself. It keeps him from locking himself up in his particular interests, and from relying on the state in all matters of general interest." Thus, in this negative mode of expression it is argued that a tendency to the most individual and one to the most general are present, but that they cannot both be satisfied in radically separated special structures; rather, the club is said to constitute an intermediate structure that satiates the dualistic drive quantum in a certain fusion.

The Differentiation Drive as a Heuristic Principle

If one uses this notion as a heuristic principle (i.e., not as designating the actual causality of phenomena, but merely as main-

taining that phenomena occur *as if* they were governed by such a dual drive whose manifestations on the two sides of our existence balance one another), then what we have here is a most universal norm that is particularly salient when differences in group size are involved, but one that also applies to other arrangements. For example, in certain circles, and perhaps even in certain peoples, where extravagance, nervous enthusiasm, and moody impulsiveness predominate, we notice nonetheless a decidedly slavish preoccupation with fashion. One person perpetrates some madness, and it is aped by all the others as though they were automatons. In contrast, there are other circles whose life style is of a more sober and soldierly cut, hardly as colorful as the former, but whose members have a far stronger individuality drive, and distinguish themselves much more sharply and concisely within their uniform and simple life style than do those others in their bright and transitory way. So in one case, the totality has a very individual character, but its parts are very much alike; in the other, the totality is less colorful and less modeled on an extreme, but its parts are strikingly differentiated from one another.

Fashion, in and of itself, as a form of social life, is a preeminent case of this correlation. The adornment and accentuation that it lends to the personality is accorded to it only as the member of a class that is collectively distinguishing itself from other classes by adopting the new fashion. (As soon as a fashion has diffused into the other classes, it is abandoned and replaced with another.) The adoption of a fashion represents an internal leveling of the class and its self-exaltation above all other classes.

For the moment, however, our principal concern is with the correlation that involves the *extent* of social circles, the one that generally relates the freedom of the group to the restriction of the individual. A good example of this is the coexistence of communal restrictions and political freedom as found in the Russian governmental system during the preczarist period. Especially in the period of the Mongol wars, Russia had a large number of territorial units, principalities, cities, and village communes that were not held together by any kind of unifying political bond; and thus on the whole they enjoyed great political freedom. For all that,

however, the restriction of the individual in commune society was the narrowest imaginable, so much so that there was absolutely no private ownership of land, which only the commune possessed. This narrow confinement in the circle of the commune, which deprived the individual of personal property and often of freedom of movement as well, is the counterpart of the lack of all binding relations with a wider political circle.

Bismarck once said that there was a much more narrow-minded small-town provincialism in a French city of 200,000 than in a German city of 10,000, and he explained this by the fact that Germany was composed of a large number of smaller states. Apparently the very large state allows the local community to have a certain mental self-sufficiency and insularity; and if even a relatively small community views itself as a whole, it will exhibit that cherishing of minutiae which constitutes small-town provincialism. In a smaller state, the community can view itself more as a part of the whole; it is not so much thrown back upon itself. Because the community does not have so much individuality, it can dispense with that internal, coercive leveling of individuals which, because of our psychological sensitivity to differences, must produce a heightened awareness of the smallest and most petty events and interests.

In a narrow circle, one can preserve one's individuality, as a rule, in only two ways. Either one leads the circle (it is for this reason that strong personalities sometimes like to be "number one in the village"), or one exists in it only externally, being independent of it in all essential matters. The latter alternative is possible only through great stability of character or through eccentricity—both traits that are conspicuous most often in small towns.

Stages of Social Commitment

We are surrounded by concentric circles of special interests. The more narrowly they enclose us, the smaller they must be. However, a person is never merely a collective being, just as he is never merely an individual being. For that reason we are naturally speaking here only in terms of more or less, of single aspects and determinants of human existence in which we can see the develop-

ment away from an excess of one and into an excess of the other.

This development can go through stages in which memberships in both the small and the larger social circle coincide in characteristic sequences. Thus, although commitment to a narrower circle is generally less conducive to the strength of individuality as such than it is in the most general realm possible, it is still psychologically significant that in a very large cultural community, belonging to a family promotes individuation. The lone individual cannot save himself from the totality: only by surrendering a part of his absolute ego to a few others, joining himself in with them, can he preserve his sense of individuality and still avoid excessive isolation, bitterness, and idiosyncrasy. And by extending his personality and his interests around those of a set of other persons, the individual opposes himself in the broader mass, as it were, to the remaining whole. To be sure, individuality in the sense of eccentricity and every kind of abnormality is given broader scope by life without a family in a wider social circle; but for the differentiation that also benefits the greatest whole, for the sort that derives from strength, not from succumbing to one-sided drives—for this, belonging to a narrower circle within the widest is often useful, frequently, to be sure, only as preparation or transition.

The family's significance is at first political and real; then with the growth of culture, it is more and more psychological and ideal. The family as a collective individual offers its members a preliminary differentiation that at least prepares them for differentiation in the sense of absolute individuality; on the other hand, the family offers members a shelter behind which that absolute individuality can develop until it has the strength to stand up against the greatest universality. Belonging to a family in a more advanced culture, where the rights of individuality and of the widest circle developed simultaneously, represents a mixture of the characteristic significance of the narrow and of the expanded circle.

The same observation has been made with respect to the animal kingdom. The tendencies to the creation of families and to the creation of large groups are inversely related. Monogamous and even polygamous relations have something so exclusive about them, and concern for the progeny demands so much from the par-

ents, that a more extensive socialization suffers among such animals. Hence, organized groups are relatively rare among birds, whereas among wild dogs, to name an example in which complete sexual promiscuity and mutual indifference after the act are the rule, the animals live mostly in tightly cohesive packs.

Among the mammals that have both familial and social drives, we invariably notice that during those periods in which the former predominate, that is, during the period of pairing off and mating, the latter decline significantly. The union of parents and offspring is also tighter if the number of young is smaller. I will cite only one distinctive example: within the class of fishes, those whose offspring are left entirely on their own lay countless millions of eggs, whereas among the brooding and nesting fish, where the beginnings of a familial cohesion are found, few eggs are produced.

It is in this sense that it has been argued that social relations among the animals originated not in conjugal or filial ties, but rather in sibling ties alone, since the latter allow much greater freedom to the individual than do the former; hence, they make the individual more inclined to attach itself closely to the larger circle, which certainly first proffers itself in the individual's siblings. Being confined in an animal family has thus been viewed as the greatest hindrance to becoming involved in a larger animal society.

The Sociological Duality of the Family

The family has a peculiar sociological double role. On the one hand, it is an extension of one's own personality; it is a unit through which one feels one's own blood coursing, one which arises in being closed to all other social units and in enclosing us as a part of itself. On the other hand, the family also constitutes a complex within which the individual distinguishes himself from all others and in which, in opposition to other members, he develops a selfhood and an antithesis. This double role unavoidably results in the sociological ambiguity of the family: it appears sometimes as a unitary structure that acts as an individual, thereby assuming a characteristic position in larger and in the largest circles; and sometimes it appears as an intermediate circle that intervenes

between the individual and the larger circle that encloses both family and individual.

The developmental history of the family, at least as it still seems to be recognizable from a series of points, recapitulates this schema. The family appears first as the embracing circle that entirely encloses the life horizons of the individual, while it is itself largely independent and exclusive. Then it contracts into a narrower structure and thereby becomes adapted to playing the role of an individual in a social circle that has expanded considerably beyond the boundaries of the previous one. After the matriarchal family had been displaced by the rise of masculine force, at first it was much less the fact of procreation by the father that established a family as *one* than it was the domination that he exercised over a particular number of people. Under his unitary authority, he held together not only his offspring, but also his followers, those whom he had bought, those whom he had married and their entire families, and so on. From this primal patriarchal family, the more recent family of mere blood relationship differentiated itself, a family in which parents and their children constitute an autonomous household. This one was naturally far smaller and more individual in character than the embracing patriarchal family had been. That older group had been self-sufficient in all matters, in gaining a livelihood as in carrying out warlike activity; but once it had individualized itself into small families, it became possible and necessary for these to be amalgamated into a newly expanded group, the superfamilial community of the state. The Platonic Ideal State merely extended this line of development by dissolving the family altogether, setting in place of this intermediate structure only individuals, on the one hand, and the state, on the other.

Methodological Implications

Incidentally, there is a typical epistemological difficulty in sociology that finds its clearest example in the double role of the family: when instead of having simply a larger and a smaller group standing opposed to one another so that the position of the individual in them can readily be compared, one has several continu-

ously expanding, superimposed circles, this relation can seem to shift, since a circle can be the narrower one in relation to a second, but it can be the wider one in relation to a third. Short of the largest circle around us that is still effective, all circles included therein have a double meaning: on the one hand, they function as entities with an individual character, often directly as sociological individualities; while on the other hand, depending on their makeup, they function as higher-order complexes that may also include complexes of lower order in addition to their individual members.

It is always precisely the *intermediate* structure that exhibits the pattern in question—internal cohesion, external repulsion—when contrasted with a more general higher structure and a more individual lower structure. The latter is a *relative individual* in relation to the former, regardless of whether in relation to still others it is a collective structure. Thus, wherever one seeks, as we do here, the normal correlation between three levels that are distinguished by their magnitudes—between the primarily individual element, and the narrower and the wider circle—there one will find that under different circumstances one and the same complex can play all three roles, depending on the relationships into which it enters. This hardly diminishes the theoretical value of the statement of this correlation; on the contrary, it proves that the correlation has a formal character that is open to every determinate content.

The Individuation of Collectivities

There are naturally more than enough sociological constellations in which the value of individuality and the need for it focus exclusively on the individual person, where in comparison to him, every complex of several persons emerges under all circumstances as the essentially other level. But on the other hand, it has already been demonstrated that the meaning and the motive power of individuality do not always stop at the boundaries of individual personality, that this is something more general and more formal that can affect the group as a whole and the individual as its element as

soon as something is present that is more inclusive, antithetical; over against this something, the (now relatively individual) collective structure can gain its conscious particularity, its character of uniqueness or indivisibility.

Given this formulation, we can explain phenomena that would seem to disconfirm the correlation at issue here, one of which is the following from the history of the United States. The Anti-Federalist party, which first called itself the Republicans, then the Whigs, then the Democrats, defended the autonomy and the sovereignty of the states at the expense of centralization and of national authority—but always with an appeal to the principle of individual freedom, of noninterference by the totality in the affairs of the individual. On no account does this contradict the relationship of individual freedom to just the relatively *large* circle, for here the sense of individuality has permeated the *narrower* circle enclosing many individual persons, and thus the narrower circle serves here the same sociological function as the discrete individual would otherwise.

The Indeterminacy of Collective Individuality

The boundary between those spheres that the individuality drive infuses and those that it requires as its antithesis is indeterminate in principle because the drive can spread from the locus of personality over an indefinite number of concentric structures around the personality. The power of the drive manifests itself, on the one hand, in the fact that any sphere infused by it immediately defines all neighboring spheres as antithetical and anti-individualistic, and on the other hand, by the fact that the need for diversity does not arise so quickly there, so that these neighboring spheres also become individualistically colored.

The political disposition of the Italians, for example, is regionalistic on the whole: every province, and often as not every city, is extraordinarily jealous of its idiosyncrasies and its rights, frequently in complete opposition to all others and with complete indifference toward the values and rights of the whole. One would seemingly have to conclude, in keeping with our general formula,

that the elements in these single individuated divisions had a collectivistic, egalitarian disposition. But this is not at all true; rather, among families, and then again among individuals, there is a most extreme craving for autonomy and distinction. Just as in the American case, all three levels of our correlation—single individuals, smaller circles composed of them, and a large group embracing everyone—are clearly present here. But there is no impetus for the characteristic relation between the first and third strata as they orient themselves in common opposition to the second, since in practical awareness, the second is subsumed under the aspect of the first. The sense of individuality has overstepped the boundary of the individual, as it were, and has absorbed the social aspect of the person that normally constitutes the antithesis to his individual aspect.

Attachments between the First and Third Levels

Now, in general, the first and third parts of this three-part structure are oriented toward one another and create a common antithesis—in all the different meanings of that word—against the middle part; and this is manifested, no less than in objective relational patterns, by the subjective relations of the person with these levels. A personal, passionate commitment by the individual human being usually involves the narrowest and the widest circles, but not the intermediate ones. Whoever will sacrifice himself for his family will perhaps do the same for his homeland, perhaps also for an abstract idea such as “mankind” and the demands implicit in the concept, perhaps also for his city and its honor in those eras when “the city” constitutes the widest practical circle of life. For intermediate structures, however, he will scarcely do it, neither for his province nor for a voluntary association. One might sacrifice oneself for a *single* human being or for the very few who make up a family circle; and then again, for an incomprehensible multitude; but for a hundred people, hardly anyone brings himself to martyrdom.

The psychological significance of purely spatial “near and far” thoroughly corresponds to the figurative meaning in which it sub-

sumes the quite "near" and the quite "far" under what is practically speaking a single category. The deepest sentimental interest attaches itself, on the one hand, to the person whom we constantly have before our eyes, with whom we are involved in our daily lives, and, on the other hand, to the person from whom we are separated by vast, unbridgeable distance with as much agitation as unappeased yearning. But a relative coolness, a lesser stimulation of consciousness, befits the person who is neither quite near to us nor unreachably far from us.

This same form squares exactly with a fact that has been noted by a prominent expert on North America. He observes that the county has very little significance there: "It is too large for the personal interest of the citizens: that goes to the township. It is too small to have traditions which command the respect or touch the affections of its inhabitants: these belong to the state."

This "touching of extremes" holds just as good when its sign is reversed to the negative. The Indian caste is endogamous, but in it there is another very narrow circle within which marriage is forbidden. Marriage prospects are thus confined to the narrower circle, a state of affairs that is also found elsewhere; and indeed, in a certain sense, it may be universal, at least for the behavioral reality of marital arrangements. In the Indian case, both the widest and the ultimately narrowest circles are proscribed. This mode of the correlation is exhibited yet again in historically sequential stages: the strength and extent of control with which the guild formerly grasped the individual is no longer exercised by this type of circle at all, but rather by the family, on the one hand, and by the state, on the other.

Freedom and Individuality

THE MEANINGS OF FREEDOM The relatively most individual and the relatively most extensive configurations relate to one another over the head of the intermediate one, as it were. And at this point we have arrived at the basis of a fact that figures prominently in the foregoing discussion as well as in what now

follows: the larger circle encourages individual freedom, the smaller one restricts it.

As it is used here, the concept of individual freedom covers various meanings that are differentiated according to the diversity of our provinces of interest. They range, say, from freedom in choosing a spouse to freedom in economic initiative. I will cite one example each for just these two.

During periods of strict group separation by clans, families, occupational and hereditary estates, castes, and so on, the circle within which a man or woman can marry tends to be a relatively narrow one—narrow, that is, relative to advanced or liberal conditions. But so far as we can survey this state of affairs, and so far as we can judge by certain contemporary analogies, selecting a partner from among the available individuals was not at all difficult. The lesser differentiation of persons and of marital relations had its counterpart in the fact that the individual male could take almost any girl from the appropriate circle, choosing on the basis of external attractiveness, since there were no highly specific internal impulses or aloof reservations to be considered by either side.

Culture as it has matured has now displaced this earlier condition in two directions. The circle of possible marriage partners has been vastly expanded by the mixing of status groups, the elimination of religious barriers, the decline of parental authority, free mobility in both the geographic and the social sense, and so forth. But for all that, individual selection is far more stern, a fact and a right of wholly personal inclination. The conviction that out of all mankind, two and only two people are "meant" for each other has now reached a stage of development that was still unheard of by the bourgeoisie of the eighteenth century.

A more profound meaning of freedom emerges here: individual freedom is freedom that is limited by individuality. Out of the uniqueness of the individual's being, there arises a corresponding uniqueness of that which can complement and free him, a specificity of needs whose correlate is the availability of the largest possible circle of possible selections, since as one's wishes

and inner drives become more individual, it becomes that much less likely that they will find satisfaction in a narrowly bounded domain. In the earlier condition, conversely, there was far less restriction by the rigidity of personalities: *from the standpoint of his own concerns*, the individual was much more free in making a choice, since instead of a compelling differentiation of choice objects, there was an approximate equivalence of all those that might come under consideration. For this reason, there was no need for the circle of choice objects to be significantly more extensive. So the relatively undeveloped condition certainly imposed a social constraint on the individual; however, this was linked to the negative freedom of nondifferentiation, to the *liberum arbitrium* that was provided by the mere identical worth of objects. In the more advanced state, on the other hand, social possibilities are much enlarged, but now they are restricted by the positive meaning of freedom in which every choice is—or at least ideally should be—the unambiguously determined expression of an unalterable kind of personality.

Now in the general, societal meaning of freedom, I would say that feudalism generated nothing but narrow circles that bound individual to individual and restricted each by his obligation to the other. For this reason, within the feudal system there was room neither for national enthusiasm or public spirit, nor for the spirit of individual enterprise and private energy. The same restrictions that prevented the emergence of conceptions of a higher social union also prevented, at the lower level, the actualization of individual freedom. For just this reason, it is especially pertinent and profound that during the feudal period, the “freeman” is defined as a man who is subject to the law of the realm; bound and unfree is the man who is party to a feudal tie, that is, whose law derives from this narrower circle to the exclusion of the wider one.

If freedom swings to extremes; if the largest group, as I indicated above, affords greater play to extreme formations and malformations of individualism, to misanthropic detachment, to baroque and moody life styles, to crass egoism—then all this is merely the consequence of the wider group’s requiring less of us,

of its being less concerned with us, and thus of its lesser hindering of the full development even of perverse impulses. The size of the circle has a negative influence here, and it is more a matter, so to speak, of developments outside rather than inside the group, developments in which the larger circle gives its members more opportunity to get involved than does the smaller one.

THE MEANINGS OF INDIVIDUALITY The meaning of individuality in general can be separated into two more specific meanings. One has been emphasized in the above, namely, individuality in the sense of the freedom and the responsibility for oneself that comes from a broad and fluid social environment, whereas the smaller group is "narrower" in a dual sense: not only with regard to its extent, but also with regard to the restraints it imposes upon the individual, the control it exercises over him, the trifling radius of the prospects and the kinds of impetus it allows him. The other meaning of individuality is qualitative: it means that the single human being distinguishes himself from all others; that his being and conduct—in form, content, or both—suit him alone; and that being different has a positive meaning and value for his life.

The elaborations that the principle or ideal of individualism has undergone in the modern era differ according to the accentuation given to the first or the second of these meanings. On the whole, the eighteenth century sought individuality in the form of freedom, the lack of every kind of restraint on personal powers, regardless whether this restraint came from the estates or from the church, whether it was political or economic. But at the same time, the assumption prevailed that once men had been freed from all sociohistorical fetters, they would show themselves to be essentially equal; that "man in general," along with all the goodness and perfection of his nature, was inherent in every personality, needing only to be emancipated from those distorting and diverting bonds. That once men had freedom, they would use it to differentiate themselves; to rule or to become enslaved; to be better or worse than others; in short, to unfold the full diversity of their individual

powers—this fact escaped the kind of individualism for which “freedom and equality” were two peacefully coexisting—indeed, two mutually necessary—values.

It should be obvious how this kind of individualism was involved in blowing apart every narrow and narrowing accommodation; partly, this was its historical, real effect, and at least partly, it was involved as a yearning and a demand. In the French Revolution, even the workers were forbidden to join into unions for better working conditions: such a federation would limit the freedom of individual members! So it is that the correlate of this kind of individualism is a wholly “cosmopolitan” disposition; even national integration recedes behind the idea of “mankind.” The particularistic rights of status groups and of circles are replaced in principle by the rights of the individual, and these, quite significantly, are called “human rights”; that is, they are the rights that derive from belonging to the widest conceivable circle.

It was the other meaning of individuality that was developed by the nineteenth century, and its contradiction of the meaning just described was not seen on the whole by the eighteenth. This other meaning found its preeminent theoretical expression in Romanticism and its practical expression in the ascendancy of the division of labor. Here individualism means that the person assumes and should assume a position that he and no one else can fill; that this position awaits him, as it were, in the organization of the whole, and that he should search until he finds it; that the personal and social, the psychological and metaphysical meaning of human existence is realized in this immutability of being, this intensified differentiation of performance. This ideal image of individualism seems to have nothing at all to do with the earlier notion of “the generally human,” with the idea of a uniform human nature that is present in everyone and that only requires freedom for its emergence. Indeed, the second meaning fundamentally contradicts the first. In the first, the value emphasis is on what men have in common; in the second, it is on what separates them. But with regard to the correlation I am seeking to verify, they coincide.

The enlargement of the circle that is associated with the first conception of individuality also promotes the emergence of the

second. Although the second conception does not look to the totality of mankind; although it makes individuals mutually complementary and dependent instead of atomizing society into uniform and absolutely "free" individuals; although historically it promotes nationalism and a certain illiberalism instead of free cosmopolitanism—nevertheless, it too requires a group of relatively considerable size for its origination and survival. One need only refer to the manner in which the mere expansion of the economic circle, the increase in population, or the geographic boundlessness of competition has directly compelled a specialization of performance.

It is no different for mental differentiation, especially since this usually originates in the meeting of latent mental abilities with objectively preexisting mental products. The unmediated interaction of subjectivities or the purely inner energy of a human being rarely elicits all the mental distinctiveness that one possesses; rather, this seems to be associated with the extent of what has been called "objective mind," that is, the traditions and the experiences of one's group, set down in thousands of forms; the art and learning that are present in tangible structures; all the cultural materials that the historical group possesses as something super-subjective and yet available to everyone. The peculiarity of this generally accessible Mind that crystallizes itself in objective structures is that it provides both the material and the impetus for the development of a distinct personal mental type. It is the essence of "being cultured" that our purely personal dispositions are sometimes realized as the *form* of what is given as a content of objective culture [*Geist*], sometimes as the *content* of what is given as a form in objective culture. Only in this synthesis does our mental life attain its full idiom and personality; only thereby do its unique and wholly individual attributes become tangibly incarnated.

This, then, is the connection that links mental differentiation to the size of the circle in which objective mind originates. The circle may be a social, real one, or it may be of a more abstract, literary, historical sort: as that circle enlarges, so too do the possibilities of developing our inner lives; as its cultural offerings increase, regardless of how objective or abstract they may be, so too

do the chances of developing the distinctiveness, the uniqueness, the sufficiency of existence of our inner lives and their intellectual, aesthetic, and practical productivity.

The individualism of equality is not, from the very beginning, a *contradictio in adjecto* only if one takes it to mean the freedom and self-sufficiency that are not limited by narrower social bonds. The individualism of inequality is a consequence of that freedom, given the infinite variability of human capacities, and therefore it is incompatible with equality. In the fundamental antithesis of these two forms of individualism, there is one point at which they coincide: each of them has a potential for development to the degree that quantitative expansion of the circle that encloses the individual provides the necessary room, impetus, and material.

INDIVIDUALISM AND COSMOPOLITANISM I

I now return to the relation that was mentioned above, the one between the strong development and high prestige of individuality, on the one hand, and a cosmopolitan disposition that leaps, as it were, over the individual's *nearest* social milieu. I would remind you first of the teachings of the Stoics.

Whereas for Aristotle the sociopolitical milieu of the individual was still the source of ethical valuation, the Stoical interest in the practical actually involved only the individual, and the elevation of the individual to the system's prescribed ideal became so exclusively the arbiter of Stoical practice that the interrelations of individuals became no more than a means to that ideal, individualistic end. This goal, of course, was defined in content by the idea of a universal Reason that infused all individual beings. Every person was thought to partake in this Reason, and its realization in the individual constituted the Stoical ideal. Transcending all barriers of nationality and social exclusiveness, Reason wove a bond of equality and brotherhood around all human creatures. Thus, the individualism of the Stoics had its complement in cosmopolitanism; the rending of narrower social bonds, which during this period was promoted no less by the political situation than by theoretical contemplation, shifted the center of gravity toward the individual, on the one hand; and on the other, toward that widest circle to which every human belongs simply by virtue of his humanity.

In countless variations, historical reality has conformed to the same pattern. The medieval knight combined his ethos of purely individual authenticity and worth with a firm, cosmopolitan bent. His self-reliance made room for the forms that produced a European knighthood transcending all national boundaries. And with this formula, one also describes the forms that came to life throughout the Holy Roman Empire and that eventually dissolved it. The empire collapsed, on the one hand, because of the particularism of its constituent parts, and on the other hand, because of binding relations with the remaining components of pan-European politics; that is, because of the contraction and expansion that shattered intermediate national structures.

That particularism was evoked essentially by an identical constellation, although one that extended in another dimension. When elements that are already differentiated or that press toward differentiation are forced into an embracing union, the outcome, more often than not, is an increased incompatibility, a more intense mutual repulsion. The large, embracing framework, which naturally requires differentiation, on the one hand, in order to exist at all, causes a friction of elements against one another, on the other hand, an actualization of antitheses that would not have come to pass except for this crowding. Unification into a great amalgam is the means—even if a transient one—to individualization and to its emergence in consciousness. Thus, the politics of world domination pursued by the medieval empire only served to release the particularisms of peoples, tribes, and princes; indeed, that policy brought them to life in the first place. The intended, partially successful fusion into a great whole contained the instrument of its own destruction, namely, the individuation of its components, which it created, intensified, and brought to awareness.

In a more intuitively obvious configuration, the culture of the Italian Renaissance has conformed to this norm. On the one hand, it developed perfect individuality; on the other hand, it developed a disposition and a morality that transcended by far the boundaries of the narrower social milieu. This is explicit, for example, in the words of Dante where he says that—with all his passionate love for Florence—the world is as much home to him and his kind as the sea to fish. Indirectly and a posteriori, as it were, this is shown

in the adoption of the life styles created by the Italian Renaissance by the entire cultured world, an adoption that came to pass precisely because these styles gave free play to individuality, whatever kind it might be, to a degree that had never before been imagined.

As a symptom of this development, I will mention only the low prestige of the nobility in this epoch. Nobility is of real significance only so long as it defines a social circle that is highly cohesive and that hence sets itself off all the more energetically from the mass of all other circles; from those below *and* from those above. To deny the worth of the nobility signifies a breakdown of both these criteria: on the one hand it signifies a recognition of the value of the personality, whatever circle of birth it belongs to; on the other hand, it signifies a leveling with regard to those above whom one would otherwise raise oneself. Both of these find unequivocal expression in the literature of the Renaissance.³

Individuation in the Economic Sphere

The preeminent historical instance of the correlation between social expansion and the individuation of life contents and forms is provided by the emergence of the cash economy. The primitive economy engenders small, relatively insular economic circles; the difficulty of transportation alone restricts their perimeters, and it accordingly prevents the technology of the primitive economy from arriving at a significant degree of the differentiation and individualization of activities.

The cash economy changes this condition along two lines. The general acceptance of money, its ease of transport, its eventual sublimation into cashless transactions in bank drafts and bills of exchange—all these allow the effects of money to extend into unboundable distances, and ultimately to engender from the whole civilized world a single economic circle with interpenetrating interests, complementary sectors of productivity, and similar prac-

³ In the original text, the lengthy "Note on the Nobility" appears between this section and the next. In this volume it appears separately as chapter 14.—Ed.

tices. In the other line of development, money causes an enormous individualization of the participant in the economy. The form of cash wages makes the worker infinitely more independent than does any kind of payment in the primitive economy. The possession of money gives a man previously unheard of freedom of movement. The liberal norms that are regularly associated with the cash economy set each individual in a free competitive struggle with every other. And finally, no less than the dilation of the economic circle, this competition compels a specialization of function that would not otherwise come into question, one whose extremes of compartmentalization are made possible only by accommodations in the framework of a very large circle.

Within the economy, money is the connection that relates maximal expansion of the economic group to maximal differentiation of its members, both in the dimension of freedom and a sense of responsibility for oneself, and in the dimension of a qualitative differentiation of labor. A more precise formulation is that money develops the smaller, more insular, internally more uniform group of the primitive economy into another whose unitary character bifurcates into the two aspects of expansion and individualization.

The Political Sphere

Political developments actualize this constellation in a great number of domains, although of course with multiple variations on the basic relationship. From the smaller, constrictingly socialized circle to the large group and the differentiation of personalities, there is no necessary *pari passu* progression; rather, there are processes of selection and alternation. The emphasis in the more evolved condition falls *either* on the creation of an embracing public realm and the enhancement of the significance of its central organs, *or* on the autonomy of individual elements. Then too, the expansion of the group may not be related to the development of personality for the members of the group themselves, but instead to the idea of an ultimate personality to whom individual will is surrendered, as it were. I will cite a few examples from the various domains of politics.

In the agrarian domain, the dissolution of the peasantry's communal property since the end of the Middle Ages has taken place in just these forms. The evolving centralist states struck down community holdings, the common pasture land. Part of this, as a public commodity, was absorbed into the property of the state and was attached to the administrative organism of the polity. The rest, to the degree that this did not occur, was distributed among enfranchised persons as private property. In this latter fact alone, the simultaneous tendencies toward both individual and general outcomes are evident once again: on the one hand, the distribution was guided by concepts of Roman law with their enthronement of individual interests; on the other hand, it was guided by the notion that the partitioning of common holdings would bring about a betterment in the state of national culture, that is, precisely in the broadest public realm.

Under very different material and overall conditions, a particular phase of the history of the common pasture, the case of the collective property of Swiss communities, exhibited the same form, and that as recently as the nineteenth century. To the degree that common pasture was annexed to the holdings of partial communities, of local and village corporations, it was dealt with in a few cantons (Zurich, Saint Gallen, and others) by legislation that tended either to distribute the pasture land among individual community members or else to let it be incorporated into larger national communities, the idea being that the smallest communities lacked the personal and territorial resources to make their holdings adequately productive for the commonwealth.

In the course of postmedieval developments in Germany, the form of agrarian policy measure that is stressed above was diffused throughout domestic politics generally. The higher authorities manipulated separate, self-segregating circles in a manner that tended to differentiate them: some into creatures of private law that would be merely the personal affairs of their members, and others into institutions of the state. The corporations that had dominated medieval society had become so hardened and constricted that public life threatened to collapse into an incoherent mass of egotistic factions. Counterposed to these, and dissolving

them as the modern era began, was the idea of an all-embracing public realm, an idea that first took the form of princely absolutism. In accordance with its inner principle, absolutism generated "equal justice for all," that is, it detached the individual, on the one hand, from the restraint placed on his practical life by the privileges of the corporations; and on the other hand, it canceled the privileges that he himself enjoyed as a member of the corporations, but which often forced him into unnatural alliance with his fellow members. Thus, it was fundamentally a matter of destroying the narrow, internally homogeneous, "intermediate" association whose hegemony had characterized the earlier condition in order to conduct development upward toward the state and downward toward the unprejudiced freedom of the individual. That the state, in turn, found its practical effectiveness in the form of an ultimate personality, the absolute ruler, is hardly a counterinstance to the fundamental pattern; indeed, the pattern is actualized in just this manner, both diachronically and synchronically, in an extraordinarily large number of cases.

This is the often-stressed relationship that history demonstrates between republicanism and tyranny, between despotism and leveling. Every system of government that derives its character from the aristocracy or the bourgeoisie—in short, all those that offer social and political consciousness to a plurality of contiguously bounded narrower circles—as soon as it attempts to go beyond itself at all, surges, on the one hand, toward consolidation in a personal, guiding power, and on the other hand, toward an anarchistically tinged socialism that seeks to establish, with the obliteration of all differences, the absolute right of the free personality. The shattering of group constraints within a whole that somehow belongs together is so intimately related to the accentuation of individuality that both the cohesion of the ruling personality and the individual freedom of all group members center upon it like two variations on a single theme.

It is noteworthy that political aristocracies, which are always constructed after the type of closed and rigorously bounded circles, are often militarily unsuccessful under conditions of social expansion. This may result from their aversion to those two forces that,

alone or in combination, appoint their disintegration: on the one hand, the aristocracies shrink from summoning the whole populace to united action; on the other, they distrust individual generals who have broad power of authority and striking success.

The correlation between the *volonté générale* and autocracy is one in which the latter has not infrequently been used as the official cloak for designs leading ultimately to the suppression of the former. When the Earl of Leicester had been called to the governor-generalship of the Netherlands (1586), he sought to establish an unlimited dominion over the heads of the narrower bodies that had ruled previously, the states general and provincial status groups. He proceeded under cover of unqualifiedly democratic principles: the will of the people, so it was said, was the absolute ruler; and it had called upon Leicester. Yet it was explicitly stressed along with this that tradesmen and lawyers, peasants and craftsmen had nothing to say in that rule and could do no more than simply obey. Thus, the—purportedly—democratic leveling was carried so far that the higher as well as the lower status groups were disfranchised, and only the ideal entity of “the people as a whole” remained. Opponents soon declared that this newly discovered concept of “the people” served only to transfer “the people’s” unlimited sovereignty to a single man.

Further elaborations of our basic relationship are found in the domain of municipal politics. As early as the Middle Ages, English cities exhibited a pattern in which the larger municipalities were ruled by single corporations or magnates, whereas in the smaller cities, the people as a whole held dominion. Corresponding to the smaller circle, there is a homogeneity of elements that underlies the unvarying rate of their political participation; but in the larger circles, this homogeneity is fragmented, allowing only for the mass of private individuals on one side, and for the single ruling personality on the other.

In a certain rudimentary form, the administrative arrangements of North American cities exhibit the same pattern. As long as cities are small, administration of each office by a majority of persons presents itself as the most suitable mode; but if they grow into metropolises, it would seem more practical to entrust each office to a

single person. Largeness of scale requires representation and guidance by an individual, fully responsible personality; the smaller circle could administer itself in a less differentiated fashion, since a greater number of its elements was always directly at the helm.

This sociological distinction fully corresponds to a line of development in which the general political tendency of the individual states of the Union conforms to the basic type at issue here: that development is said to have loosed, in recent decades, a thorough weakening of parliamentarianism, which it is replacing along two other dimensions—on the one hand, with direct plebiscite; and on the other hand, with monarchistic institutions, with the surrender of power to individual persons.

The Religious Sphere

Finally, ecclesiastical politics provides us with examples, and these have analogies even in purely religious developments. The polytheism of antiquity had many of the essential characteristics that I have subsumed here under the concept of "the narrower circle." For the most part, the cults set themselves off from one another by sharp internal and local boundaries. The circles of believers were centripetal; often they were mutually indifferent to one another, often hostile. The gods themselves were often aristocratically ranked, with complicated relationships of superordination and subordination, and with segregated spheres of potency. At the outset of the Christian era in the domain of classical culture, this condition led to monotheism, to the enthronement of a single and personal God who united in himself all the powers of those discrete and segregated deities.

A religious individual originated who had an unconditional sense of responsibility for himself. A "religiosity of the closet" developed. And there came to pass an independence from all bonds to world and man except for the one inherent in the undiverted and unmediated relation of the individual's soul to his God, to a God who was no less "his" because he was the God of all, but rather who was "his" precisely because of that universality. Individuality within the large, leveled collectivity, as it originated in the dissolu-

tion and fusion of all previous discrete gods, was the reflected image of the absolute and unitary personality of a God who had grown out of the same processes of analysis and synthesis of all earlier gods.

The developmental form exhibited by Christianity in its original purity was recapitulated in the politics of the Catholic church. Within the church, the tendency toward the generation of particularized circles rose anew, leading to sharp demarcations of rank and interest, to the rise of an aristocracy of the clergy over the status group of the laity. Yet Gregory VII early united his quest for absolute power with a decided demagoguery that pulled together the most powerful antitheses and reached over the heads of the exclusive aristocratic bishops. After celibacy had most effectively supported this endeavor—since a married priest would have had attachment to a narrower circle and thus would have engendered a closed opposition within the church, whereas as a celibate, a priest's only recourse in his individual isolation would be to the unqualified totality—the Jesuits took it up with the greatest success. They fought the status aspirations of the clergy on all fronts, and they laid stress on the universal character of the priest that permitted him to feel at one with all believers, whatever their status. In opposition to all aristocratic systems of church rule, their goals were a thorough leveling of all believers, on the one hand, and papal absolutism, on the other.

General Modes of Actualization of the Correlation

~~The entire relational pattern under discussion here takes shape in the most diverse modes of simultaneity, sequentiality, and alternation. Perhaps one could symbolically express this complex of relations by saying that the narrower circle constitutes in some measure an intermediate proportionality between individuality and the expanded group. Thus the narrower circle, closed upon itself and requiring no other factor, can be seen to result in the same outcome of life chances as results from the conjunction of individuality and the large circle.~~

~~I will now select a few examples from the realm of law, exam-~~