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**THE PSYCHOLOGY OF
SOCIAL LIFE**

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SOCIAL LIFE

A MATERIALISTIC STUDY WITH AN
IDEALISTIC CONCLUSION

BY

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PREFACE

The purpose of this book is to present some picture of society in its relations to the individual. I feel most earnestly that a diffusion of psychological knowledge is a necessary prelude to an intelligent social progress, and I believe such diffusion to be possible. Psychology is founded on common sense and has, therefore, a universal appeal; that it is useful need deter no one, for it is also entertaining—not “dry.”

No one volume can more than touch upon the great mass of material which presents, but, following the excellent example of milord of Montaigne, what I can not here find room for, “the same I point at with my finger.” My hope is, as in a former volume, to set thought going and thereby to arouse interest in this which has seemed to many the most important of all human studies.

Hillbrook,
Ardmore, Pa.

C. P.

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PART I

THE FACTS IN THE CASE

The Psychology of Social Life

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

Man's attitude toward society, as toward most things in life, has varied with his temperament, his knowledge and his condition. Some have regarded society as an accomplished fact, a finished product. They have recognized that there has been a past and a growth, but the present has been for them the flowering period for which the past was preparing. Others, with a different vision, have regarded it as but some monstrous error calling loudly for correction; while to others, again, the masses, it has held until recently no interest at all. These last have accepted society as they do grass, or the creation—there has seemed no problem in it. Thinking efforts aimed at the altering of society are comparatively recent. Efforts toward change have come, commonly, from those who knew least, from those who were anti-social, not social, in their tendencies. These being, for reasons well known to science

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but not to themselves, at the foot of the social ladder, have proposed to juggle this a bit, just to see what would happen. Ignorance and inefficiency are ever sublimely unconscious of any limitation—they are always unlucky, never unable.

From the thinkers and writers of the past have come explanations and descriptions rather than suggestions. Many, from Plato down, have played with Utopias, but it has been only play; and it was not until Rousseau gave a new twist to the old ideas that there arose a constructive criticism. Then followed socialism and Marx. Still, however, the old reactionary attitude, the contented acceptance of society, prevailed. Society was a *fait accompli*, and a glorious one; the anti-social convulsions were disturbing and unpleasant but not at all dangerous, and socialism, like prohibition, was a joke.

And then came 1914. All at once the beautiful social structure, so fondly admired, was started into ruin, or was, at least, so shaken as to make visible to all many formerly unsuspected imperfections. At first, naturally, it was the war that was blamed; but a survey made later, after the excitement had subsided, revealed the fact that the cracks and imperfec-

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tions were old ones. The war had precipitated, it had not produced, the catastrophe. But the war, too, did other things—for instance, it reoriented all thought. The situation is unique in the world's history. The war has crystallized into being a something which has been a century or more in developing. The internationalism of commerce and science and art, and the development of the avenues of communication have been preparing the way for a new social consciousness, the consciousness of the essential unity of peoples. It is now at last recognized that no matter what man's disguise, he has, everywhere, the same psychic roots; and it has been further realized that his experiments and errors, no matter where conducted, have an importance for all. It is no longer possible to be apathetic to society—there are few indeed now who are not interested. Nor is the situation an academic one. In the new thought lies a direct call to action. No intelligent man can now feel himself at liberty to sit idly by while things work themselves out—too many not intelligent are already busy. These present times are placing a mandate on the world's best, and the best have no right to ignore it.

What follows? If there is something to be

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done, and if this something is to be well done, it will be granted, I suppose, that it ought to be founded on truth. Man and society need help—let us then know something of man's needs and of society's manner of development. New adjustments are now to be made—let us make them, if we can, in accordance with the eternal verities. "Laws" we have made in the past and are now still making, hand over hand, but this is another matter, there is no difficulty in this. The hard thing to do is to make a law that is worth something, or rather, I might say, to *discover* such a law, for laws are not *made*—at least, not by man. Man's true problem is to discover the essential truths, and to formulate these—if he can accomplish this, he is fortunate. No majority in the world can make an untruth true. "Had the united posterity of Adam voted, and since the Creation done nothing but vote, that three and three were seven . . . [this would not] have altered the laws of arithmetic."¹ No, we will say not, but it has been tried often enough. Let us now try something more sensible. You may make "laws" for man, and write formulas for his guidance, but these will never hold unless they happen to be true psychologically. You can

¹ Carlyle: *Parliaments*.

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not ignore man's psychological nature, nor can you for long that of society. Society and man both run true to their natural propensities, and you must accept this fact. That these propensities, however, being known, can be used, is also true, as we shall discover later. That they *must* be used, if society is to be bettered, is psychology's contention.

Social psychology is unfortunately by no means an exact science, but there is little doubt that social errors are, in the main, psychological errors, and with the knowledge of principles even now possessed, might have been avoided. Failing experiments are dangerous. It is not only that they, by the resulting lost motion, delay the world's progress, they also endanger it. They may lead to retrogressions and diversions which shall turn the evolutionary movement into new and impossible channels. They may lead not only into blind alleys—"no thoroughfares"—but also over cliffs. Socialism, a beautiful ideal and a present absurdity, has been tried in Russia—with a result that is known. Marx to Lenin, Rousseau to Robespierre, and so it has repeatedly been—a philosopher, a formula, a revolution, and then some "sea-green incorruptible" who, seizing the relaxed reins of power, shall take to driving his

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brothers. Russia has not even taught us anything of socialism, at least nothing new. It has taught only the horrors of socialism as interpreted by the ignorant. That it was psychologically impossible we already knew.

I am not ignorant of the value of formulas, though I shall seem to depreciate them in this writing. My intention is to concentrate elsewhere; upon that, to me, more essential duty of making man more fit for society. Formulas are necessary to-day if never before, we have so evidently outgrown our old ones. Invention and population have both increased to a point which has rendered our old schemes of life peculiarly inadequate. Our social institutions are growths from our needs, but those we now have were born in the past, and man's needs are now quite different. Institutions grow so slowly, and man's needs change, nowadays, so rapidly! It would seem now, in the crisis of the present awakening, that new institutions, new formulas, must indeed be made even though they be made unnaturally. This is probably a necessary task, but it is also a formidable one, and dubious. We propose to ignore it. We propose to present but one side of the question, and that the psychological; and we do this, too, with the feeling that this is not

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only the more important, but also the more promising. Whatever the government formula adopted, whatever social institution be developed, the successful operation of the same must depend upon man's attitude toward it. It must fail if it be not true to man's nature. Right we can not always be, the problems are too complex for positive solution, but right principles we believe we can have. Psychology may be wrong in many things—it probably is—but here, fortunately, we need to be right in but one. If psychology be right in its explaining of society as a derivative from man's psychic need, if it be right in but this, then we may cherish all hope for the future—if it be wrong, then God help us!

It is the purpose of this book to prove, if possible, psychology's position, and it is hoped, too, in so doing, to indicate something of man's duty. We learn that man can not be known unless we know the society in which he lives. We learn, also, that society can not be known, nor in any way explained, and certainly not controlled, unless we know the man that made it. My whole thesis is based upon what psychology regards as a fact—that society and the individual present but two sides of the same problem.

Much has been written of the "soul of the

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group," of the "group mind," of the "spirit of the nation." The effort has been made to raise up a group something which shall transcend the individual man and lead its own life independently. I believe this to be a dangerous proceeding. Its tendency will be to relieve man of individual responsibility. In placing power and soul in the group it must place there, also, duty, and this will be fatal to practical reform. Man is only too eager to pass on responsibility—to let the group do it. A group mind, a group soul even, there may be, but this need not be emphasized except for the group's larger movements. For society's reform let us seize upon something more tangible. And this something, as I conceive it, is man. Education, it will be granted, is an individual affair; but social reform is nothing else than education. You can not educate in mass, you must reach down to each unit or your education will fail—and so with reform. "To reform a world, to reform a nation no wise man will undertake; and all but foolish men know, that the only solid . . . reformation is what each begins and perfects in himself." ²

Let us then, following this thesis, first look over our material, and then, having discovered

² Carlyle: *Signs of the Times*.

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something of man as he is, draw such deductions as may seem to us logical.

Society has been defined as a group of individuals carrying on a common life by mental interaction (Ellwood). It may be conceived of as a product of the innate tendencies of the individuals composing it; as a composite, or group of composites, but with this addition that by the mere fact of social gathering, by the interactions which occur between members of the group, new factors come into play. The mass does not act quite as would any of its parts left alone, and it has, moreover, such an influence on these parts that even when these are alone some at least of this influence persists. The individual composes and makes society, but society, too, colours all that the individual does. We have thus three phases of behaviour—one hypothetical and theoretical, that possible action of an absolutely isolated man—Adam, for instance, on that Friday morning before Eve was made—the other two both practical and real, the action of social man when alone, and his action as part of a group. With the first of these we are not concerned—Adam's experience as a bachelor was too brief to be important. The second is properly the subject of individual psychology, and it is the third only

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which is now to be considered—though with necessary, frequent reference to the second.

What are some of the individual tendencies underlying society's forms, and how are they developed and transformed as they pass into the group? But first of all, what are individual tendencies? What is their physical basis?

We have within the body two sets, or systems, as they are called, of nerves, the cerebro-spinal and the sympathetic. The *cerebro-spinal* includes the brain and spinal cord and the principal nerves connected therewith—the afferent nerves, the nerves of sensation, which carry messages from the body to the spinal nerve centres and brain; and the efferent nerves, the motor nerves, which carry out impulses resulting in movement. The *sympathetic system* consists of a fine net-work of nerve fibrils reaching most parts of the body, and having to do, chiefly, with the organic processes of life itself, the involuntary movements of the body viscera, the processes of secretion, etc.

These two systems of nerves are not independent. The sympathetic is connected with the cerebro-spinal through filaments given off from ganglia, groups of nerve cells situated near the spinal cord, and the two systems are

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intimately related in most of their actions. It is conceived that when a stimulus, something capable of affecting a receiving nerve cell, awakens a nerve impulse, this impulse passes from the periphery of the body to the nerve centre over a prepared pathway. Having reached this nerve centre, in the brain or cord, it there gives rise to a new impulse which then travels out over its own prepared pathway until it reaches the muscle or organ for which it was destined. The result, in the case of a motor nerve going to a muscle, is movement; while in the case of that part of the outgoing current which has passed to the sympathetic system, the result is an increase in or an inhibition of some organic action, some glandular, or circulatory, or digestive action. The hand is placed upon a hot plate—nerves of sensation carry in the message, and an appropriate motor order is sent out, the hand is withdrawn. One sees an approaching danger—the optic nerves carry in an impulse derived from the impression on the retina, the impulse is interpreted and orders sent out. Some of these orders go to the muscles, but others, passing to the sympathetic, reach certain glands which they throw into action. The glandular action being in turn telegraphed to the brain, and there

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sensed, we experience what we call an emotion.

The cerebro-spinal nerves are thus commonly associated with voluntary, purposive acts, while the sympathetic are associated with the unconscious acts and with the emotional interpretation of our problems. The sympathetic is the older, biologically speaking, of the two nervous systems, and, hence, the emotional reactions of man are also counted as the older and more primitive. Man's intellectual interpretations and voluntary movements are derived from his later biological acquirements.

Now the point I have been leading up to is this—in all this flow of nerve force, going and coming in the body, whether it be over the cerebro-spinal nerves or over the sympathetic, or in the brain itself, where the various lobes are connected by association fibres, in all this flow certain pathways become gradually established as pathways of choice. A path once traversed is more easily followed a second time, and each time the nerve current flows it cuts, as it were, a deeper channel. Here is the origin of habit, and here, also, is the origin of both the similarities and dissimilarities of man. Nature, in its long evolutionary development

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of our bodies, has determined that the general direction of the nerve flow shall be the same with all, but there are myraids of nerve cells and nerves, and, while the nerve current may still always follow this general direction, there are thousands of minor variations possible. It is these minor variations in the path of the nerve current that produce our personal characteristics of action and reaction, that produce our personality. It is these same that explain the differences due to sex and to race. Racial groups develop within them a certain similarity in the choice of nerve paths, and a certain similarity, therefore, in reaction; and the sexes do the same, with the addition here, too, of an emphasis obtained through their glandular differences.

One point more. Unless we are prepared to deny all the evidence of common experience, and, also, as it seems to the author, to give up all hope for the future, we must acknowledge that these acquired nerve pathways, like those of the deep-lying instincts, are in a degree inheritable. It is not that there passes to the offspring a definite, preformed, compelling nerve-path, but there does pass a *tendency* to such path. Of all the multitude of possible pathways offered, there will be some with a certain

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preference over the others, a preference that will have been determined in the child by inheritance.

The persistence of a path, or of a habit, will naturally depend largely upon when in the history of the race it was first laid down. Long formed pathways, those going back to the early life of the race, are wonderfully stable; while the more recently acquired pathways are correspondingly easily altered. It is for this reason that man is continually fluctuating with fashion and condition, and yet ever holds true to all of his deep-set, primitive tendencies. Now the past of man is incredibly long, and the most of this past, all but the last few minutes of his day on earth, has been lived under conditions very unlike those of the present. And so it is, when we come to examine man's tendencies, we find that the strong ones, the deep-lying, most firmly fixed ones, are those of the dim-distant forest life. This is man's and society's greatest difficulty—man's strongest tendencies antedate civilization. Man is now being compelled to play a part in a life to which he is by no means completely adapted. He still retains too many of his infant racial reactions to enter successfully on the intellectual struggle of the modern social adulthood. When difficulties

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come his true tendencies are revealed. Then it is that he impatiently casts off his garments of civilization and emerges a naked man-animal—and is happy in this elemental reversion. It is when difficulties come, I say, that man so abandons his social ideas—bear this in mind when interpreting criminals.

We have been describing here, in their simplest form, what are known as nerve and brain patterns. These patterns do not long remain simple. As already hinted, when a stimulus is received this sets going a force which permeates, more or less consciously, the whole of the organism. Simple sensation, with its corresponding reflex response, is possible, as a rule, only to the lowest of animals or to the youngest of infants. Experience and memory soon enrich and modify all man's perceptions. The seeing of its mother, or, in these days, of a bottle, will soon suggest dinner to a baby. And so it is through life—we go on accumulating elaborations to our patterns until they become most wonderfully complex. The picture patterns of memory will often include sensations of sight, hearing, touch and odour, and also emotion. The complete picture may include all of these, and it is interesting to note that this picture may be recalled through any

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of its parts. An odour may be sufficient, even though this may have been an insignificant and even unconscious part of the whole—and so with any of the others. But this is a matter for individual psychology.

The important thing about these patterns, both to the individual and to society, is that they are the determinants of all that we think and do. The old ones, the racial patterns, are powerful forces guiding our every action and directing our responses to every problem that presents; while the more recent ones, though less actually compelling, add conscious motive, colour and interest. Furthermore, while these patterns control man, they also, through man, control society. And if by their conflict they bring trouble to man, they bring to society even more. Normal man takes his impulses serially; society, as it were, receives them *en masse*. The situation is not, however, hopeless, difficult as it may be. Even the oldest of patterns, those that are socially most undesirable of all, are still capable, as we shall find, of being so guided as to gain social values. The emotions, even, are modifiable. From vanity and egotism, for example, we may attain, by a sort of sublimation, to honour and patriotism. And

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these "sublimed" emotions, moreover, will inherit much of the strength of their origin. They have sprung from the strong underlying primitive tendencies, and some of the force of these latter will have passed over into their derivatives. Pope has the idea. The new forces are strong because of the vitality of the old stocks upon which they are grafted.

"As fruits, ungrateful to the planter's care,
On savage stocks inserted, learn to bear;
The rarest virtues thus from passions shoot,
Wild nature's vigour working at the root.
What crops of wit and honesty appear
From spleen, from obstinacy, hate or fear!
See anger, zeal and fortitude supply;
Ev'n av'rice, prudence; sloth, philosophy;
Lust, thro' some certain strainers well refined,
Is gentle love, and charms all womankind;
Envy, to which th' ignoble mind's a slave,
Is emulation in the learn'd or brave;
Nor virtue, male or female, can we name,
But what will grow on pride, or grow on shame."

Patterns, then, determine our actions, but are themselves modifiable. Here lies education's purpose, and here the interest of psychology. We are not to consider man as an automaton, as the result of his patterns, but as

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a real and workable, though difficult, problem.

What are some of man's strongest patterns, and what happens to them, and to him, in a social way?

CHAPTER II

THE GREGARIOUS TENDENCY

There is in all men a tendency toward their kind, arising either instinctively, or from the brain patterns which have been laid down in the long experience of the race.¹ As with health, it comes into consciousness only when obstructed. It is a hunger which disappears when satisfied; but which when unsatisfied becomes evident, first as an uneasiness, and then as a pain. All of the higher animals possess it, and it is strong in some, operating always to maintain the herd and to strengthen it. With these, as with man, its emotional content is aroused only by negation. The sheep, having regained its flock, having pushed its way, probably, to the very centre, at once falls indifferently to grazing.

With man the gregarious tendency varies greatly in strength in different individuals, but all, if normal, possess it in some considerable

¹ I hold that an instinctive tendency is one that is independent of all *mental* quality. It is one that is fundamentally determined by the organic life urge itself. See Platt: *Psychology of Thought and Feeling*.

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degree. It is a principal determinant in all man's fore-gathering, whether for social satisfaction or otherwise, and it is also a chief factor in the growth of our cities. The same motive which originally, possibly, brought animals together for safety is now a part of, though not identical with, that which in man we call sociability. "Gregariousness," says Jastrow, "as a feeling of adjustment, leads to sociability as a trait."

It is a complex thing, this gregariousness. It has elements of habit, of dependency, of fear and desire for protection, and it has, too, elements of sex. But above all it has sympathy. Sympathy is at the root of all group consciousness, even though it may be sometimes obscure. We ride with others for a few miles in some public conveyance—and then some new passengers enter. Immediately we eye them askance. They are interlopers; they are aliens, entering *our group*—and they themselves know it, see how conscious they are. How shall we receive them? A moment before, we were all, seemingly, but detached strangers—our unconscious selves, however, had been quietly busy, establishing sympathetic relations, and the entrance of the outsiders crystallized these into being.

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The herd instinct depends upon a similarity of biologically developed patterns, and this is a sympathy in itself, but there is a higher sympathy determined by a resemblance in the mental and moral patterns. It is this last which is of major importance to us in our human relations. To be alone physically is painful, but to be alone psychologically is as bad or worse. To live alone in a society to which one is psychologically or mentally an alien is to know true loneliness. It is the same whether one be witless in a society of wits, or stand alone because of excelling—though maybe the latter is the harder, for in all social gathering the level of communication is commonly set by the capacity of the least. Politeness will see to it that a fool gets proper entertainment, but he who stands apart through excelling will be an object of suspicion and dislike—a realization of inferiority arousing a defence reaction against him.

Even where one is not in actual discord with the surroundings, where one, for instance, is in a mixed society containing all that is desired, if one be debarred from this by lack of acquaintance, or for “social” reasons, then this one, too, is alone, and suffers as does the most gregarious of lost sheep. There is no place like a city for down-right loneliness—and why?

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Simply because there is often there lacking the ability to satisfy the sympathetic craving. Herein lies one of the greatest dangers of city life to the young stranger. The sympathetic element of gregariousness is not there easily satisfied, people do not "look up" strangers, and one does not easily get with "one's own." But the herd tendency still remains, and this can be satisfied. Excluded from the company that is sympathetically craved, the lonesome sheep is only too apt to seek such company as is actually available. He is only too apt to bleat his lonely way into the company of wolves—who will welcome him gladly, and with the usual result.

Men seek each other, they even seek crowds. A parade attracts quite as much by the expected throng of spectators as it does by its own promised display. Places are popular because they are crowded. A well-filled theatre adds to the enjoyment of each of the audience—but here comes in sympathy again. Men and women form clubs, and cliques within clubs. Like-minded people, people of like sympathies, tend always to get together and to organize, and here it is that institutions are formed, social, political and religious groups—clubs, parties and churches. The gregarious tendency

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with its sympathetic element underlies all. It is the like-minded, the sympathetic, who tend to unite.

The practical importance of this is great. Out of the confused medley of diverse human interests, by this process of union into secondary groups, a workable number of crystallized ideas is finally obtained. The myriads of mankind are thereby reduced to a thinkable number of composite individuals, and it is largely with these that society in its more formal aspects has actually to deal. These secondary groups, these institutions, these groups of like-minded, make a society of what otherwise would be but a mob. When, therefore, through revolution or otherwise, institutions are destroyed, a mob is the inevitable result.

Institutions are the product of certain needs of the individual. Let this fact be ever kept in mind—it is a valuable fact and most illuminating. One thing it leads to is this, it leads to an opening of the mind; it leads to a better understanding of others, and, be it noted, where there is understanding there is charity. To understand all is to forgive all, say the French, and it is a very good saying. I am not referring here to toleration—that is a very different matter, not nearly so pleasant as the open mind. Tol-

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eration implies a cock-sureness as regards one's own position, and an indifference to the position of others. Toleration is purely egoistic, while the open mind is anything but that. To the latter, the other man's attitude is not a matter of indifference; it is recognized as a response to that man's needs as determined for him either by his inheritance or his condition. We not only respect his position, but we know that were we in his place we would do and think exactly as he does. This is the road to charity.

The open mind is not a vacant mind, it does not conceive of all opinions as right; it does not hold that all should be accepted, that there is no such thing as truth in this world. By no means! We each of us have limitations, both of capacity and of experience, and these must be taken well into account. A child may hold and advance a judgment that is absurd; it is right for the child, true to his experience and knowledge, but we know it to be absolutely wrong. And so with all of us—judgments must be weighed, they must be measured in the terms of experience. What the open mind really does is to enable us to weigh and measure these judgments in charity. The open mind does not teach us that all judgments are true, but merely that all are natural. They may well enough be

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true to the experience and knowledge of some individual, and yet false to the experience and knowledge of the world. No fool-action of man or of peoples but started with the idea of some good and the belief that the way was seen clearly to it. Incidentally, the futility of ordinary argument is here, partially at least, revealed. Of course prejudice is a large factor in all of our decisions, but, apart from this, the fact that our decisions are true and natural for us and seem good to us, renders them peculiarly invulnerable to the mere words of another.

Whenever we find an institution, then, no matter how grotesque and absurd it may appear, we may feel sure that it has been produced in response to some human need. We know, in short, that such institution *is* because a certain group of like-minded people have wanted it.

Why are some of us Protestants and others Roman Catholics? Well, of course, the primary reason now is that we were born into one or the other of these churches. But in the beginning what caused the split in the then, so far as Western Europe was concerned, one only Christian church? The answer would indeed be a complicated one were we to attempt to make it complete, but let us consider briefly

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just one of the factors. The original religious incentive, like all primitive life, was largely emotional. "Religion is not an emotion, but is founded on very deep emotions." The intellectual growth of man, however, gradually set new tendencies a-going, and there came a time when these became imperative and demanded expression. Man, as the phrase goes, came to crave for intellectual freedom. He wanted to think and to decide for himself. He wanted to rationalize what he felt, even his emotions, and he resented being "handed" his beliefs. In the end he rebelled, he protested, he became, in short, a Protestant. It was indeed a Reformation. The Church was purged of its contrary-minded, and became, thereby, a more uniform group—a new group had been formed to which the contrary-minded might turn. But the old Church remained; it was still far truer than was the new protestantism to the actual needs of the great mass of mankind. It was and still is truly catholic in its emotional appeal.

We cannot have such a housecleaning every year, and even if we could it would never be complete. Even at the time of the great Reformation, politics and environment interfered largely with the individual preferences. Many must now, in consequence, find themselves tem-

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peramentally and psychologically in the wrong pew. What usually happens, in such cases, is that family conventions and habit continue the nominal adherence, which, however, ever grows weaker. Those, on the other hand, who find their way to some more acceptable fold are likely to become enthusiastic in their contentment—as is the way with all true converts.

Not only was the survival of the Reformation by the Catholic Church natural, the fact is, probably, that were there to be today a new shuffle, were all religious habits and conventions and prejudices to be together wiped out, it is the Catholic Church which would be the gainer. Protestantism has not the catholic appeal. Every evangelical revival owes its success to the thousands of unsatisfied sectarians. Reason may be a good thing but it does not afford that comfortable feeling which may be obtained through yielding to the emotional appeal—and how great is this appeal when it comes with the authority, the beauty, the dignity and the mysticism of a great world-wide church. Attempts to solve individually the intricacies of the heavenward path are fatiguing—how much simpler to just climb on board this elegant chariot which, it is promised, will take us to our desired destination rejoicing. The

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only trouble is that some of us cannot. We would rather die struggling on the road. And there you are! It is all a matter of the patterns we carry, and of our sympathies. Let no man sneer at his neighbour's choice. Let each "hold his own umbrella over his head, and call it the sky," if it pleases him—it is he who must be satisfied, not we.

So with political parties, at least as they once were—these, too, were groups of like-minded. In the early days of constitutional government each individual found himself naturally either a liberal or a conservative. The division was psychologically determined. That things are different today is an interesting commentary on political and economic development. The two parties of the past have largely disappeared, and what we now find is an alignment quite other than psychological. Party lines are now drawn by political and economic understanding—they are intellectually founded. Whether one shall be a Republican or a Democrat is still important enough, but it is, too, a matter of psychological indifference. Family and habit will still be the main determinants of position, but so far as actual choice is concerned this will come from the mind, and not from any psychological compulsion. It is an

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important change and a threatening one, for parties are essential to all normal government. It is absolutely necessary that the multitude of individual ideas shall be correlated, formulated, and organized into "platforms" if they are to be ever practically realized. Apparently diverse and more or less vague individual aims through organization become reconciled and strengthened into attainable goals, and effective policies then become possible. The party is but an organized effort to which the individual adds his quota of support, instead of dissipating this indiscriminately and without profit. A thousand men may have a thousand ideas on a subject, but these, on examination, may commonly be resolved into two—the details are found to be secondary, it is the principle that counts—are we for it or against it?

No constitutional government, then, can possibly operate healthfully unless there be two fairly balanced opposing parties—and yet the new economic divisions are not proving sufficiently vital to preserve party feeling. The extension of the suffrage has added to the difficulty. The new woman vote is essentially a no-party vote. The woman is not yet interested in economic problems and principles; she is ever concrete, personal and moral. She is,

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moreover, in her new freedom, resenting all limiting suggestions, and it is in this light she regards any declaration of party allegiance. But parties, as I have said, are essential. From their dissolution can come only chaos. Majorities even now disappear over night, so slight are their foundations, and elections determine not the will of the people but only their transient and locally influenced guess.

The old parties had strength because psychologically founded. One did not, in the old days, change readily—one could not. Nor could one ignore party lines. It is the same with our preferences in governmental forms—these too are psychological. Some of us are trained to and carry patterns of aristocracy, and others of us look forward to a democratic ideal. Once kings ruled by “divine sanction”; democracy, today, does the same. It is supposed to be God’s will that all shall be democrats, and we are ready to “beat up” any who happen to think otherwise. Breaking bones only, however, will not accomplish the end—we shall have to break up contrary brain patterns, something far more resistant.

The forms of government, like parties and like churches, are products of evolution and can be altered only when they are no longer

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true to the psychological demands of the people. When a government has been long in existence it has formed for itself patterns in the minds of its subjects, or citizens, which can by no means be easily eradicated. No government can, therefore, be happily changed by violence; revolution *must* bring chaos, and, also, generally, at least a temporary reversion to some exaggerated phase of the old. If however the government has indeed become antiquated through changing needs, then the final effect of revolution may be good. It will certainly have hastened the new order. The old will have had its prestige destroyed; new ideas will at the same time have been implanted, and, the soil being favourable, these will grow. Counter revolutions may take place, but the final adjustment will be true to the psychological needs of the masses. France reached absolute monarchy with Richelieu, Mazarin, and the Bourbons. Then came revolution, a republic, and Napoleon; then the Bourbons once more, a revolution, and a Bourbons-Orleans; a revolution, a republic, a coup d'état, and another Napoleon; then war, a commune, and a third republic. Here we have the struggle of an idea which once implanted never let go until it became at last established. There is no royal road to the

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breaking up of old patterns. The impetuosity and haste of man seems always to demand that there shall be shedding of blood, but patterns, even then, die hard, and when true psychologically they die not at all. Revolution in this last case spells disaster only; there is no subsequent alleviation to excuse the original misery, and it is the nation that dies, not the pattern.

So it is that looking backward over the history of governmental changes we can determine the fitness or unfitness of the people for the changes attempted. Would that our foresight were equally clear! A brief struggle followed by peace indicates naturally a psychological preparation—witness the formation of the United States of America. Where the struggle is longer, with many reactions and counter efforts—witness France—we know that the people were not prepared.

I trust that it is unnecessary for me to add that of course revolution is never warranted under constitutional governments operating legitimately. Here the people hold in their own hands the ability to effect such changes as become necessary, and to introduce here the horrors of revolution is the basest of crimes. No stretch of the imagination can ever excuse

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revolution other than against a despotic rule, where the people, having no voice, may indeed be driven to action.

The important thing to realize in all this is that man's patterns, not his wilfulness, are the determining cause of most of his actions. Let it once be grasped that man's institutions are in accordance with the patterns he possesses, and these institutions will less often be attacked with the sword. Education will attain the same end, for if the ideas be true education will effect them, and if they be not true then education and the sword must equally fail. Institutions are born of man's necessities, and that these are not the same with all is a matter of good fortune rather than otherwise. It is in opposition of forces that mental stimulus comes; a uniformity that is absolute negatives all progress. Radicals and conservatives are alike essential. It is the radical that makes things go, who works for progress; and it is the conservative that makes the work of the radical safe. The radical is the moving part of the world's machinery; the conservative, the frame which controls and directs the movement. A world of radicals would be like a machine of all moving parts; it could do no work, it would tear itself quickly to pieces. A world of con-

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servatives would be like a model of a machine, a non-working, non-workable representation of a machine—such a world would be dead. What a pity radicals and conservatives can not adjust and consciously utilize each other's qualities? Unconsciously they do this, more or less—why can they not do it with open understanding, instead of wasting so much blood and time in contest? Kipling's story of "The Ship that Found Itself," should be read and explained, at least once a year, to every child in the land.

To sum up. The gregarious tendency brings people together, and sympathy groups them. Certain economic groups and governmental forms may indeed be the result of man's intellectual interpretation of past experience, or of his guess as to the future; but basically and generally, man's institutions—social, political and religious—are born of his sympathies and needs. They exist because they are, at least temporarily, both useful and satisfying. Let us not then make ourselves ridiculous by assuming for our own group an absolute perfection. Let us recognize that the otherwise-minded have the same reason for their attitude as we have for ours. If ours happens to be the

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better founded, so much the luckier for us; but as regards origins it should be recognized that both arise from psychological foundations, and can not be other than they are.

CHAPTER III

SEX, FEAR AND WAR

Man makes his institutions, and he does this, largely, by passing over into the social body his inherited tendencies. These there may become modified almost beyond recognition, but they persist; they pass into the group, colour all of its actions, and become, after change, group attributes. Especially is this true of our strong, underlying, biological inheritances, those which have been with us so long that no amount of civilizing has been able materially to lessen their force. Let us consider some of the strongest of these.

The Sex Instinct and Altruism

The sex instinct is, we take it, the chief of all instincts. Not only does this pass over into and influence the whole life of the group, but it is basic in character, operating along with the gregarious tendency, or as a part of it, in forming society. Through this instinct man and woman were brought together, through it the

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child came, and through it, therefore, we attained to the family group. But the family group is the epitome of all society. With it begins the social idea, the plan of division of labour; and with it, too, comes in the beginning of social altruism, the recognition of the fact that often the self must be sacrificed for the sake of others.

Long centuries were required to develop these ideas. They were not accomplished through the first marriage, but only after long evolution. The altruistic sense was doubtless weak in the beginning; the early man grabbed and devoured his children's food, and, if he was big enough, his wife's. But then, pretty soon, the children died and his wife ran away, or maybe he, in a fit of petulance killed her, and his group got reduced to but one. Now a "group" of one is not a strong group, and here it is that natural selection came into play. Those who happened to have some sense of co-operation and of altruism left healthy children to pass on these qualities—those who had not, were eliminated. Then, naturally, as the non-altruistic disappear, and as the tradition and experience of altruism grows, it enlarges, enriches, and becomes more real. Natural selection is as important in society as it is to the individual;

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good ideas, good workable traditions, tend always to persist, just as do desirable physical attributes.

It is the child that is here of prime importance—the fact of the child, and especially the fact of the child's long period of dependence. The period of childhood is one of instruction, not necessarily conscious instruction, but of instruction just the same. During this period the child becomes infused with the traditions, attitudes, beliefs and ideals of its parents. Sympathy and imitation operate daily and hourly, at close range, year after year, until the child becomes as nearly as may be a replica of its father and mother, “favouring” one or the other but containing elements of each. What does this mean? It means that through the child the past is saved and held for the future. Books may indeed, nowadays, in civilized communities, serve as repositories of attainments, but even now it is still the child that hands on living traditions, especially those we call moral. These must be acquired in childhood if they are to become real facts of personality, real working facts. We can not wait for the child to learn to read books before laying down its character. By that time all that will be possible in the formation of such patterns

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will be a sort of intellectual imitation of the same—at the best a very poor substitute for those deep emotional attitudes obtainable during the earlier, impressionable period. As a matter of fact, books have not operated to the maintenance of traditions—they have done the reverse. When the young New Englander reads Voltaire, or even Sir Walter Scott, or anything else written by one who is not like-minded with those of his own group, the teachings of this group are inevitably weakened. The world gets smaller with reading, and one's mental circle larger. It is with the isolated and with the bookless that traditional attitudes and beliefs become fixed. Tradition is far stronger in Borneo than in New York.

It is through the child only that the past is saved, and when you remember that progress is possible only when we have a past to build upon, the importance of the childhood instruction becomes evident. To start at the beginning with each successive generation would, of course, mean no progress at all, but the long immaturity of the child amply secures the preservation of the accumulated tradition.

The sex instinct, then, itself so egoistic, and still existing in its early simple form, as lust, has nevertheless, operated both in the found-

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ing of society, through its formation of the family group, and, also, in its development and continuance. Though selfish itself, being but the gratification of desire, it has helped to teach the world co-operation, and has opened the way to altruism. Furthermore, associated with it, and part of it, is that great gentle instinct of mother love, the tender emotion, nature's provision for the care of the young, that instinct which has prepared the hearts and minds of the race for pity, charity and gentleness.

It may seem forced to some, thus to derive so many social virtues from the sex call, but I have a notion that were babies to be obtained only from the stork, were the stork only responsible for them, there would be no "closed season" for storks, they would be shot on sight. It has required something more than having babies "wished on us" to make them acceptable to the race, and this something is the parental relation.

But there are two kinds of parental relation. With the woman, with the mother, there is no egoism, there is nothing but glad sacrifice; she slaves and gives of herself from the moment of her child's conception. She asks but little in return, and, during her lifetime, generally gets

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it. It is different with the man—nature makes it so. His functions are different—he must fight and provide, and for this he needs egoism. So it is that egoism comes also to colour his love. He wants something to be proud of, and if his child is “nothing to be proud of,” and if he can not delude himself into thinking it other than it is, then he commonly has small use for the child. It is the mother who silently exhibits the tender emotion to perfection, maintaining that real fire that keeps the life in human souls, and, too, often without so much as a “spark floating through her humble chimney” to reveal to the world her service.¹

Men, too, share in the tender emotion—but differently. With the woman the instinct often remains a gift for the child or for anything that may in its weakness and helplessness resemble the child, while with the man it is apt to be generalized and extended into his world of more external affairs. Women tend ever to the home—if normal and able—while men go abroad, both physically and mentally. There is no comparison here of values—such a comparison can not be made; as well try, in the body, to weigh the circulation against assimilation. The biological unit of life is a man-

¹ O. W. Holmes: *The Professor at the Breakfast Table*.

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woman. Nature has merely, for the purpose of a greater efficiency, separated this unit into two parts.² The "new woman" is making a sad mistake here. It would seem that she, viewing man's sphere from the distance, and observing that man kept religiously within it, has come to the conclusion that it must be a good sphere. She has felt that she was being *excluded* from something, and so she determined to get in.

Alas, so far as she is normal, the "new woman" has many disappointments ahead. She will learn, among other things, that man's sphere is no better than is hers, and that the only reason he has kept to it is that he could do no otherwise, that it, only, was true to his patterns. But it is not true to her patterns, and it does seem a pity that she has to make this experiment. Men and women in their own spheres are ever equal—when they enter each other's, their equality must vanish.

It is through both the male and the female elements, through these different but related interpretations of the tender emotion, that there has come into the world its altruism. In the

² Earl Barnes: *Woman in Modern Society*, and also "Aristophanes" in Plato's *Banquet*—though the latter does say that God effected the cleavage because the original unit was getting too strong!

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tendencies here rooted have originated home, asylum, and hospital, and, indeed, we may say more generally, all charity, sacrifice, and love. It is here, too, above all, that we find the psychological strength of Christianity. It was a loving Father that Christ preached to the world. His whole religion is developed within this heart-stirring emotion, and the addition by the Church of the mother idea—the adoration of Mary, the Mother of God—was but a natural and instinctive completion of the same. Unfortunately there are other elements in most religions, even in much soi-disant Christianity. Love is not sufficient; we must have, also, a hell.

Fear and Religion

Fear is one of man's most primitive emotions. It is, or *was*, his normal reaction to a superior and menacing power, and once took care of him by effecting his removal from danger. Things are different now. Man now has a better reliance on his wits, and the old emotional reaction has become, especially in its conflict with reason, a menace in itself, not a safe-guard. The safe man now is one who "keeps his head." It is the man with controlled emotion that quells the panic, and to

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whom the weaker turn in their emergencies. An appreciation of danger, be it noted, is not fear; fear is simply the old primitive emotion. The victory over fear is in its intellectual control.

But primitive instincts do not die because they are no longer useful. They persist to annoy and to complicate life, or else they become modified and adjusted. With fear, as with sex, both of these phases are familiar. Elemental fear is the curse of many today, while with others elemental fear has been so modernized that we can discover it only as caution and foresight.

Socially, fear has played a large part, and nowhere greater than in the developing of man's religion. I have written of this elsewhere³ but let me sustain this statement here with a brief explanation.

It was man's difficulties that first suggested to him an external power—not his well-being. When things went well, he knew why—he had arranged them so—but when, in spite of his care, they went wrong, then he naturally judged that there must be some outside malicious interference. There was plenty to terrify!

³ Platt: *Psychology of Thought and Feeling*.

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Many and marvellous the things of fear
Earth's breast doth bear,
And the sea's lap with many monsters teems,
And windy leven-bolts and meteor gleams
Breed many deadly things—
Unknown and flying forms, with fear upon their
wings,
And in their tread is death;
And rushing whirl-winds, of whose blasting breath
Men's tongue can tell.⁴

It is not the direct menace that arouses fear most keenly, but ever the menace that is guessed at, that which is, in a manner, unknown. We get "goose flesh" from the hearing of a creaking floor-board at night, and a horse shies at a newspaper—though this last may be but an example of the much praised "horse sense." It is the intangible, unknown, guessed-at menace that especially arouses fear. So man early erected for himself a world of mysterious forces, and it was in his difficulties they were born, not in his happy experiences. The storm and the flood, the lightning and death, these were but the open proofs of malignant spirits, and man worshipped in fear. Or, rather, first he endeavoured to propitiate and,

⁴ Aeschylus: *The Libation Bearers*, translation of E. D. A. Morshead.

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later, to flatter—it was in the flattery that the worship began—and then, becoming bolder, he added petition. Today not many have passed this point—propitiation has been dropped as inconvenient and costly, but flattery and the asking of favours still make up the bulk of most prayer. Your minister will explain that I am ignorantly substituting base motives for things that are truly noble, that I am degrading sacrifice, and praise, and humble aspiration, but I do not feel so. I feel that these things the minister speaks of so glibly are something very different, a very beautiful and desirable, but very rare, something attained to as yet by only the few.

When the sense of good gods came in, man still retained his belief in the bad, and his religion then became dualistic. The bad Ahriman struggled with Mazda, the God of Light. In India we find Vishnu and Siva, and in Egypt, Osiris and Setos; Keturah offsets Moloch, and God stands off the Devil. The Devil, slightly shorn of his powers, still lives—witness his apotheosis in Milton, the story of him who, “fearless, endangered Heaven’s perpetual King.”

So long as the gods were conceived of as concerned only with tribal affairs, as was the case

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in the beginning, it was easy to explain catastrophe through the actions of some tribal scapegoat; but when the gods' care became personal, then arose all manner of difficult theological questions, that of Job being always the most baffling. To answer this, Hell was invented. Contrasting the old ideas with the new, the change amounts to this—in the olden time man practised religion with the hope of escaping evil in this present world; now he practises it with the hope of escaping evil in the next.

Christianity, of course, has nothing to do with the fear element, but then Christianity is just beginning to be generally recognized; it is still purely nominal in many of our churches. "Christianity is the flag under which we sail, but not our rudder."⁵ It is the fear element today which still plays a large part in all actual religious incentive. As Caesar Cregeen says, in "The Manxman," "to take away Hell is to drop out the tail-board from a man's religion." The taking away of Hell has certainly helped largely to develop our Sunday country club life. Christianity is founded, as we have said, on a very different emotional tendency, a far gentler one, that of love and the parental relation, the well-named "tender emotion."

⁵ O. W. Holmes.

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War, Business and Play

The fight tendency in man, like all of his original tendencies essentially egoistic, also carries over into the group, where it continues to exist in both an original and a modified form. There is fundamentally no difference between the conduct and the emotion of a war, and the conduct and emotion of two fighting boys, and this remains true whether the fight be in the present or back in the Stone Age. There is and always has been the same sequence—a real or a fancied invasion of rights, or a determination to gain something, a pretext, a protest, a threat, and then assault, conflict, rage, and a general loss of reason. Men and nations alike revert to the purest egoistic reactions—the opponent is all that is vile and there is just one thing good, and that is self, either individual or national. And yet, even this terrible expression of the primitive urge has had its social value. Let us forget, for a moment, our hatred of it.

Union for defence is at the base of most unions. As Professor Ross has put it, “danger tightens, and security relaxes all bonds.” The necessity of defence has been the incentive for many a group formation, and a uniting for aggression the origin of others. Man learned early to hunt in packs, and, then, as he found

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often that what he wanted was in the possession of others, the hunt became a raid. Natural selection develops quickly in such cases. Non-fighting individuals and non-fighting groups were ever exposed to elimination, and their pacifist children with them. It was the fighting group that survived and passed on its fighting traditions. So Europe was made—and the process has not been altogether a bad one, for not only did the fight tend to strengthen the group consciousness, but it also developed other social values. It developed, above all, co-operation in endeavor, team play, and an appreciation of leadership. Groups that could not attain to these great social virtues, no matter how willing otherwise to fight, were eliminated by their failure, just as were the non-fighting groups. Natural selection operated here too, and the fighting groups became, in consequence, ever more and more socially able. Individual idealism and pacifism meant a short life in the old days—it is only now that others have made society strong that these things have become possible.

The above is the historical presentation. What about war now? The fact is that while war has most certainly been a valuable agent in the past, it is, today, von Bernhardt notwith-

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standing, a calamity. Conditions have changed and social culture has advanced to a point where physical strife with its reversion to the primitive can no longer be considered desirable. Co-operation and leadership have now been learned and we need no longer war's terrible instruction. War now leads not only to economic ruin, but, more importantly, also, to a loss in conventional morality and to a lowering of the whole standard of life. "No kit-bag ever was large enough to hold the ten commandments." It will not do now to emphasize its good points. "A man who sharpens a spear-head," says Xenophon, "sharpens his spirit as well"—yes, but, nowadays, at too great a price. War does still develop heroisms and love of country, and it does still remove many minor conflicts—Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Socialists and Labor Unions forget their grievances and unite in the support of the nation—but only temporarily. The war being over, there is a slump in ideals and the minor group quarrels are renewed with intensified bitterness. Groups there are, too, that are destroyed by war. There are international groups in science and art, there are groups of those who stand for common ideals—the basis for the only truly possible internationalism—and these, war de-

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stroys. The British and French drop the German foreign members from the rôles of their societies, and the German Christian pastors call loudly in hate for the destruction of their confrères in England. The spirit aroused in war is not always elevating, and it is certainly not always beautiful. Dr. Joseph Fort Newton has described it⁶ as a "blend of alarm, anger, hate, knight-errantry, hysteria, idealism, cynicism, moralistic fervor and plain bafflement." This would seem to about cover it.

But is war necessary? Here is a strong natural tendency, one of the strongest, our whole western civilization is based upon it; and we have not only inherited its patterns, we have also cultivated them. We have ever apotheosized the military hero. We give our children soldiers to play with, we make cocked hats and wooden swords for them to parade with, and we take them to see our great military monuments "erected by the grateful nation." The old instinct really needs no such cultivation, but we give it, and so successful are we in our instruction that we manage to get up a war for each generation. Once is generally enough—we emerge sadder and wiser, and there is commonly no more war until our children of the

⁶ *Atlantic Monthly*, August, 1921.

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cocked hats and wooden swords grow up. "But wars are not made by peoples," some say. Well, wars are not—they are made by politicians who imagine that they see some advantage to be gained—but the people are not difficult to persuade. "It is enough to beat a drum and wave a flag," says Anatole France, and the people enthusiastically gather.

The truth is, there is a real joy in a fight. "War may be terrible but let's enjoy it" is the attitude of many—in the beginning. And after all, what is the underlying impulse? Is it not but one of competition? It is at least here that the psychologist would place it, and it is here, too, that he looks for its solution. This great force, this primitive reaction, must be directed into other channels; the desire for competitive striving must be otherwise satisfied, if war is to end. Incidentally, too, we must stop training our children for war; we must make men of them in some other way. Treaties will not end war; treaties will be scrapped by *any* nation when they come to obstruct its determination. We must dig deeper than treaties; these lie but on the intellectual surface.

The problem is, I take it, to satisfy man's desire for competition—and also, to teach economics to statesmen. The easier of these steps

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is already being essayed. Society has long unconsciously been developing substitutes for war, in business and play, and the fight instinct in many has already been thus satisfied. It is now proposed to further this movement consciously. Commercial rivalry has its own campaigns, its leaders, its sense of co-operation and its antagonisms, its contests and its victories. Business is now using up much of the primitive egoistic craving. The parallel with war is close in all directions—starting with defence, going on to aggression, and ending with simple joy in the process itself. Politics offers a similar field. In fact, whether it be the effort to produce a Prussian hegemony in Europe, a corner in wheat, a control of the city council, or to beat up the school leader, the psychology of the attempt is the same.

The social modification of the fight tendency is thus already a part of our social scheme, but, unfortunately it does not yet, except with some, entirely satisfy. How could it? It is too new. It is dependent upon patterns too recently acquired, upon patterns not to be compared in compelling force with those old ones which date back to the beginning of things. As with all new patterns, we get tired of them, and tend ever, for relaxation, to revert to the old. Na-

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tions like individuals every now and again come to resent the constricting clothing of civilization. They suddenly become conscious of the call of the wild, and go out to the woods for a vacation.

Business helps, then, but is not entirely sufficient. It is even claimed that business brings on war, that we fight to secure a commercial supremacy. It is said by some that we go to war to gain business; that we go to war to secure the success of war's social substitute! But this is not quite true. Economic interests may be in the background of many a fight, but they are the economic interests as interpreted by statesmen, not by business men—and it is for this reason, I say, that economics should be taught to our leaders. Business men would never bring on a war; they know better.

What remains to be done is this. It is recognized that the emotion is with us to stay; let us strive to divert it into channels where it can no longer be destructive. The natural social evolution has developed only unconsciously its substitutes for war, let these be now cultivated consciously. We have already done, maybe, all that we can do with business, let us now join with the sociologists and see what we can do with *play*. There is in the present world-wide play movement great hope for the future—

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would that Middle Europe had undertaken it sooner! The more a nation plays, the less will it fight. Play, healthful play, is the best of all reversions to the primitive, and if a man can but get enough of it he will need no other. We of the United States did not want to get into the last fight—why? Because we have learned to play and did not need the relaxation. It has been said of us that we are “a picnic, not a nation,” but being a “picnic” has its advantages. Base-ball and foot-ball, tennis, rowing, golf, hunting, fishing and dancing have managed to satisfy most of our primitive propensities. Even our business and politics we approach in the play spirit; they are for us games rather than labour. We have, in other words, distributed the force of the wild stream of instinct into a multitude of channels. We have converted a torrent into an irrigating benefit.

It is something like this that the world at large must do if it is ever to cease having wars. There is no danger in the proposition. It does not unman a nation; such nations can still fight if needs be, but they will not fight at every drop of the hat. Play means just good fellowship and good nature. It is the happiest of outlets for man's egoistic tendencies, and it leads, moreover, to much the same social virtues as

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does war. It leads to team work and to the appreciation of leadership; it leads to a uniting of the group—and it reaches these things without passing through tears.

CHAPTER IV

HABIT, IMITATION AND CUSTOM

The formation of habit is a purely individual phenomenon, and a biological one, being dependent upon certain organic properties of nerve tissue. As we have already found, a nerve current flowing over a certain path, through certain nerve cells and nerves, so alters these cells and nerves as to render more easy a second passage of the current. A path once traversed is, therefore, subsequently, a pathway of choice. Furthermore, each time the nerve current flows it confirms this choice, until, ultimately, it becomes almost compelling. This nerve pattern, as we have called it, now remains, the organic basis of a habit—a nerve path over which a current will flow without effort whenever the proper stimulus is received. Habits are broken with difficulty, and the effort to break them is painful, the easy flow of a nerve current being that alone which is pleasant.

Here, then, is an organic attribute of man,

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and one which is, therefore, purely individual, and yet which, because it is also universal, passes over into the group and there exhibits itself as a group attribute. In the individual it makes for conservatism; in the group it does the same. It preserves the old ways of doing; it resists innovations, and it thereby secures time for a normal development. It gives time for normal evolutionary processes, and it blocks revolution.

Imitation is that attribute of man which leads him to reproduce the acts of another. Unlike habit it is socially determined—one can not imitate unless there be some one to imitate. It is imitation that unifies the group and makes it more social. It has been described¹ as “the prime condition of all collective mental life,” and, though I do not agree with this, placing sympathy as more universally fundamental, it is certainly of great social importance. Its operation begins with the infant’s first conscious effort, and even before, and it may be continued to the last hour of life. It is a large and probably the principal part of all education, that of the schools, the home and the streets. It determines speech in the child and the choice of a profession; it teaches us to write,

¹ McDougall.

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and, because they excite emulation, it makes heroes useful.

Imitation operates both consciously and unconsciously. It may follow an appreciation of the imitated act, and be an intellectual expression of admiration and approval, or it may be but an unconscious following due to some inherent physical sympathy. We may share in the physical stimulation of a foot-ball game, and gain a better circulation by merely looking on, or we may arrive at our imitation, after viewing and admiring, by deliberately attempting to reproduce what has pleased us.

As imitation is a major part of the individual's education, so it is of the nation's. Backward nations learn from the more progressive, and, again, as with the individual, both consciously and unconsciously. The barbarians unconsciously imitated the Romans whom they conquered, and Japan has consciously imitated Europe.

I have spoken above of the unifying and consolidating value of imitation. It is through it we arrive at that like-mindedness necessary for sympathetic co-operation. No society too heterogeneous in its make-up can long survive. There must be a certain similarity in its members if unity of purpose and action is ever to be

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achieved—but this, imitation can secure if the group can be maintained, however artificially, for a sufficiently long period. A man and woman long married will adjust and imitate until they reach a certain mental resemblance; and so with societies. There is, for example, an American type—but of what heterogeneous elements is it composed! It is imitation that has accomplished the fusion and made possible our continued existence as a nation. The importance of the Americanization movement is evident—this is but a helping of nature. The more like-mindedness, especially in ideals, the less the friction and lost motion. Like-mindedness means “a strong pull and a pull all together”; it is a promise that things will get done. Of course, theoretically, there is another side; if all were exactly alike, life would stagnate—but there is no possibility of this; inheritance and circumstance will always secure abundance of contrary opinions, and the most that imitation can ever do will be but to provide a much-to-be-wished-for sympathetic understanding.

In both conscious and unconscious imitation, *sympathy* and, with it, *suggestion*, play a large part. It is indeed difficult to separate these psychological forces, and it may well be that

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sympathy underlies all. Sympathy is emotional and physical; it may be described as the tendency, under certain conditions, to feel with another. The contemplation of the activity of certain nerve patterns in others may be sufficient to set going similar nerve patterns within ourselves. Naturally, then, the more nearly our patterns resemble the other's the more likely they will be to be set in action, or, as we express it, the stronger will be our sympathies. Here is the origin of race sympathies, the choice of one's own race over others. Here is also the origin of the "set", and, above all, of the strong family bond. Within each of these groups the brain and nerve patterns will have naturally a greater resemblance than with those of others outside of the group, and the group sympathies must, therefore, be the stronger. Imitation follows as a normal result. On the other hand, where the patterns are different and sympathy correspondingly weak, imitation generally will fail. The step-parent remains an outsider to the family circle. The school-boy does not often imitate his school-teacher; his model is, naturally and more happily, his father. The American Indians have not largely imitated their despoilers, the

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whites, nor have the East Indians theirs. Orientals in general have made only conscious imitations of Westerners, and then only critically, in a limited field, and to gain some coveted end. Sympathy, then, is a matter of group resemblance, of family, of set, of nation, and of race; but, in this age of relativity, we must recognize, too, that these sympathies are relative. We have a neighbour whom at home we do not speak to, but we meet him in China and fall into his arms.

As regards suggestion, the other force linked so closely with imitation and sympathy, this belongs to the subconscious. It is the operation of the subtilely introduced idea which, taken into our minds, sets in motion there an undercurrent of reaction which may or may not later lead to expression. Suggestion operates even when sympathy is slight, and it is through its action, probably, that we get those slow imitations often observable in the face of contrary patterns. Orientals and Occidentals differ profoundly, and yet there is evident a gradually developing mutual influence. In philosophy, for example, the basic materialism of western thought is already showing the softening influence of oriental mysticism. Our western religion itself is a

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fusion of the oriental infinite with the man-god of the Greeks.

It is evident that imitation is exceedingly complex in its action, but let us forget this complexity for the present. Sympathy and suggestion will be discussed in a later chapter, let us now consider imitation simply as a psychological attribute interwoven with habit.

Imitation and habit together provide society with the great social forces of custom, convention, and tradition. The first of these has reference especially to the imitation of our predecessors in ways of doing; tradition continues old ways of thinking; and convention covers both doing and thinking as determined for us by our contemporaries. Conventions are commonly limited to comparatively small groups and are more or less transient. Should they, however, containing some element of truth, happen to persist, then the convention of doing becomes a custom, and the convention of thinking becomes a tradition. All three together determine the actions, attitudes and ideals of the race, or, in other words, what are known as its mores. These forces are pre-eminently the stabilizers of society. They can never be easily altered; they are subject only to a slow, almost imperceptible, evolution. They can and

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do become changed, but their changes are always reluctant, even when consciously made and desirable.

I speak of three forces, but it should be noted that it is not always easy to distinguish between them. There are many things in our lives that would be difficult to classify accurately. I do not know whether Boston's baked beans and brown bread are a custom or a convention, or merely a pleasing alliteration—nor does it greatly signify, and we may, if we please, avoid these meticulous distinctions altogether by using the inclusive term *mores*. But the distinctions, again, are sometimes both obvious and useful. Let us, therefore, make a tentative separation of the three, but with a due acknowledgment in advance that our classification may be wrong.

Custom, while not always fundamentally wise, depends upon man's tendency to repeat acts which once have been found to work satisfactorily. His unsuccessful attempts are abandoned. Habit secures the continuance of the act, and imitation its diffusion in the group, and then, through the bridge of the child, it is continued into the next generation, and so down through the ages. In many cases the origin of the custom will be trivial. Primitive

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man makes his deductions as does a child, his logic may be good but his knowledge is deficient. Things happening in sequence are supposed to be necessarily related. An expedition is to be undertaken against a neighbouring tribe. Just as the party starts off the chief's wife, or one of them, presents him with a baby—and the expedition fails. Henceforth, no expedition will ever be undertaken at a similar critical period.

Every act of the tribe, and every personal act even, thus comes gradually to get tied up to a custom, and contrary acts are forbidden. Ways of doing become set and unchangeable, and ways contrary become taboo. Time hallows these customs; they obtain moral values, and to go contrary to them is to deliberately expose the tribe to the wrath of the gods. Furthermore, it is important to note that with all simple people their customs and taboos are not only true moral guides but they are the only ones possible. It is through them that obedience and duty and social responsibility are taught. The subtleties of academic theology are to their untrained minds quite incomprehensible, and when these subtleties are offered as guides in the place of the old customs, the poor heathen is generally left with no guide at all.

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It is for this reason that primitive people generally degenerate through contact with civilization. They lose their taboos and with them their religion, and, since they cannot appreciate the substitute offered, they then find themselves free to follow their natural animal instincts.

But if customs are compelling with primitive peoples, they are only slightly less so with the most civilized. Morals and mores are as close in fact as they are etymologically, and they determine our standards whether we be savages or dwellers in cities. "The mores can make things seem right and good to one group or one age which to another seem antagonistic to every instinct of human nature."² Falsehood, theft, murder, the eating of human flesh, and head hunting have been, and still are, with some, highly moral acts. The church has tortured and poisoned and massacred wholesale; slavery was once universal. But to eat in public is, today, with some, counted sinful. To have ten husbands, or ten wives, or only one of each—it is all but a matter of custom, and of custom only. What becomes of our morals? What is modesty but a living according to *mode*? Nakedness of the body with some is proper enough though the uncovering of the

² W. G. Sumner: *Folkways*.

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face is immoral. Clothing has nothing to do with modesty—it was the much clothed Persians who introduced immodesty to the naked Greeks. It is all custom, but it is, in its way, as compelling now as with our primitive ancestors. To live outside of the mores of one's group is to become an alien to it. One who does this simply invites trouble; he becomes a subject of disapproving criticism and may likely enough spend much of his time in jail.

I have spoken of fear as being the psychological impulse toward religion. In custom we find the origin of ceremony and ritual. Customs having become right and important to the welfare of the tribe, certain men learned in customs were set aside to see that all were properly observed. These men formed the priesthood. They guarded, elaborated and transmitted—every movement became significant and important—and ritualism became supreme. But here as with other customs, as time goes on, the original significance of the act may be forgotten and yet its performance continue. This is the tendency in all ritualism, even in the ritualistic churches of today. It is the act itself which finally comes to be held sacred.

So, too, in the courts, and in ceremony gen-

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erally. Ross ³ tells of the clerks in a Calcutta government office, who were found on their knees worshipping the instruments of their trade—their ink, and pens, and red-tape—and adds that co-worshippers of red-tape are to be found in all government offices today. Language, ceremony, ritual, law—these are what Ross calls the “fossil bearing strata” of society. All look backward, all follow precedents, and all tend, therefore, to become purely formal. How many today can follow a ritualistic service and give the original significance of its forms? Certainly very few, even of the clergy.

We hear much of the symbolism of acts. All the peculiarities of church ceremonial are given deep spiritual meaning, but almost invariably, on investigation, we discover that these meanings have been only lately read into the acts. We do what we do, we know not why; but, if any one asks us why, we try to find a reason, we try to rationalize our behaviour. The early symbolism is soon outgrown but the customs continue; later generations explain as they may and, of course, in terms acceptable to themselves. Much of the ritual and symbolism of the Christian church goes back to

³ *Social Psychology.*

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pagan times, and much of it relates to an extremely elemental conception of life, but it is explained today on a different basis.

Easter is the festival of the pagan goddess Ostara, or Eastre, the goddess of Spring, one of the forms of Freyja, the Persephone of the North, who wanders in the nether-world during the winter months, and then comes back to earth in the Spring. Easter has with all peoples been the season of new birth. Our Teutonic ancestors had baptismal rites at that time—they even had Easter eggs, coloured red and yellow, in symbolism of the beginning of life, and of the sun. The May-pole, with its shocking bit of symbolism, formed part of the same celebration. The Chaldeans celebrated to Ishtar or Astarte, Queen of Heaven, and the dyed eggs came in here too, as did the progenitor of the “hot cross bun.”⁴ Jeremiah waxes indignant at this offering of cakes to Ishtar. “The children gather wood, the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead the dough to make cakes to the Queen of Heaven.”⁵ Some of the curious shapes given these Chaldean buns were still imitated, in certain localities of Europe, as late as 1825.

⁴ Inman: *Ancient Faiths*.

⁵ Jeremiah, VII, 18. See, also, J. XLIV, 19.

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The fact is, the Church to get its festivals accepted was obliged to hold them on the days which custom had already fixed as sacred to the older gods. Herein is evident the wisdom of Rome—the Quakers could never have made this concession. Christmas Day is regarded by most as the actual birthday of Christ, but Christ's birthday has been celebrated in January, March, April and May. It was Pope Julian I who finally selected the December date. It was the time of the Saturnalia in Rome, and the holly and laurel, and the candles were all part of the old decorations. This same Yule Tide was, too, sacred to Odhinn, as was the Christmas tree and its ornaments, even to the angel on top. The mistletoe comes from the Druids.

But all customs the meaning of which has been lost, do not, of course, go back to these pagan times. We "touch wood" to avoid bad luck—the "wood" being, originally, the wood of the Cross. The small boy crosses his fingers with the same intent, and his "cross" has been used for a thousand years, especially to ward off "the evil eye." The mid-day angelus of the Catholic Church was first rung to avert the combined menace of a comet and of the advancing Turks—this was back in 1456, but the

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bells are still rung. We may add that bells in general were first used on churches to frighten away demons, and, incidentally, to ward off storms—in those days, even though they had no clocks, people went to church unsummoned.

The church steeple carries back, step by step, to the temples in the valley of the Euphrates and Tigris, 3000 B. C.⁶ When the Sumerians came down to the plain, they brought with them their god En-lil, but he, their “Lord Demon,” was accustomed to mountains, he was domiciled always at the mountain peak; so the Sumerians built a mountain for him, or at least a substitute for a mountain—a tower. Alongside each temple a high tower was constructed, as En-lil’s shrine,⁷ and this still stands guard over our churches.

Whether a custom shall be advantageous or not, will depend, naturally, not upon its origin, but upon its relation to existing conditions and upon the meaning we now read into it. It may have been founded on some primitive misconception, and this may have been either an unfortunate error or just a trivial one. Or it

⁶ J. H. Breasted.

⁷ The highest of these towers was the Tower of Babel, the ruins of which were used during the last war as a wireless station. Morris Jastrow: *The War and the Bagdad Railway*.

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may have been founded on some conception that was basically good. Probably most of the customs that have persisted belong really to this latter class, no matter how baseless they may seem to some of us now. Note the "unclean animals" of the Hebrews. Here is an ordinance founded probably on experience. Its mistakes are secondary—it had to be made simple and easily understood if it was to be generally observed—the hare does not chew a cud, and the pig is not always unclean, but who knows what bitter experiences the Hebrews may have had from hog cholera, trichinosis, or other diseases?

Again, a custom may be well founded, and yet come to lose its value through changing conditions. Customs once good may become antiquated and even obstructive. Something of the vigour of new communities is due to the fact that, in them, often, people are forced, if they would survive, to abandon their old customs. They start their pioneer life with a clean slate, and they institute new customs, new ways of doing, better suited to their present environment. In consequence, they forge rapidly ahead. But after a time this growth slows down. The environment having been at least partially conquered is no longer compel-

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ling, and old customs again become possible. It is the new frontier customs that now become antiquated, while the old racial customs, aided by the later immigration, gradually return. For a time there is confusion, the frontier custom and the old customs stand in unpleasant and demoralizing contrast, but ultimately, of course, the old customs win and the evidences of the pioneer days are retained only as colloquial remnants and sectional peculiarities. American life has well illustrated these transitions. There was the vigour of the early settlers and of the colonial struggle, the crudeness of the early days of statehood—so shocking to our visitors from abroad—and then the final adjustments which have so largely brought us back to the Old World values.

Note that it is not the new customs that tend to perpetuate themselves; there is ever a tendency to revert to those that are more firmly fixed in the patterns of the mind. To get to be *old* a custom must have been useful, or at least not inimical to progress, for a long period of time. When this is the case, however, then they do persist, and lay down firm patterns, even when they border on the absurd; it is simply necessary that they shall not be obstructive.

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Our aviators in the last war were decked out in spurs—why not? They were lucky they did not have to carry quivers. We do, indeed, now welcome in the New Year with whistles, steam sirens and horns, substituting these for the old carols and chimes; and the shepherd's pipe of today, as some one has said, is to be smelled rather than heard; but these are exceptions, they might be offset by a thousand examples of the persistence of the old, and even of the old and foolish.

Custom is a force, a real one, a strong influence on life—how about convention and tradition?

CHAPTER V

CONVENTION AND TRADITION

Here again, as with custom, imitation and habit are the determining forces, and man's "will" plays but a small part.

We all believe in democracy. How many of us can give good reasons for our belief? We may be able, likely enough, to get off a few platitudes on the subject, but how many of us can discuss it intelligently? What we generally do when democracy is criticized is to get mad—the natural defence for all emotionally held attitudes. This belief is ours by convention and tradition; it is part of our mores, and is not often arrived at by any process of the intellect. Much of our life is determined in just this way. Many, very many, of our beliefs are not, as we fondly imagine, the product of our intellectual activities; they are inherited by us, or are imitated from others of our group. They are mental processes, indeed, but they have no more intellectual value than have our

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emotions and, as a matter of fact, those who doubt have generally a more intelligent hold on their position than have those who accept; the former probably will have studied the question, whereas the latter will have found study unnecessary.

Belief in democracy is both a convention and a tradition; the latter, as has already been said, being but a convention of thought that has persisted. But conventions and traditions are not limited to the major attitudes of life, those really difficult of understanding; we find them operating equally in minor affairs. There are conventions of clothing, "proper" clothing for each occasion in life, for sports and for funerals. One end of the body is displayed on the bathing beach, and the other in the ball room. To display the wrong end is to cover one with confusion—nature supplying such covering as it can—though if the underwear be correct the confusion will be lessened. Our bodies carry, in the names of their parts, a wealth of tradition. Adam ate an apple, and it stuck in his throat, where it remains today. When Thetis dipped Achilles in the River Styx, she held him by the heel, and the tendon of the heel is still the tendon of Achilles. So with

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our language, it is loaded with history, each word has its story. Each word? Each letter! From *A* to Izzard—from Aleph, the ox, to *et zède!* Why is *abdomen* polite, and *belly* not? Because the Saxon serf used the latter, and his master, the Norman, the former. For the same reason *pig* becomes *pork* when it reaches the table; the Saxon swineherd drove in the pig but it was *porc* to the master who ate it.

We have rain after battles—due, we say, to the explosion of gun-powder, but Plutarch,¹ long centuries before gun-powder, held the same belief.

“It is an observation,” he says, “that extraordinary rains pretty generally fall after great battles; whether it be that some divine power thus washes and cleanses the polluted earth with showers from above, or that moist and heavy evaporations, steaming forth from the blood and corruption, thicken the air.”

One sneezes and some one exclaims, “God bless you!” A German would have said *Gott hilf*, or, possibly, *Gesundheit*; an Italian, *Felicitè*; a Jew, Good life; a Moslem, Praise to Allah; and the Romans, *Salve*. Hernando de Soto, in his Florida expedition, found that the

¹ Life of Caius Marius.

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sneeze was considered a mark of high favour from the gods, and that it excited admiration from the by-standers.² In New Guinea, on the other side of the world, a hundred years ago, a similar belief was current. There are allusions to it in Pliny; but let us go back to about 800 B. C. Penelope is talking to Eumaeus, when "Telemachus sneezed loudly, and around the roof rang wondrously. And Penelope laughed, and straightway spake to Eumaeus winged words, 'Go call me the stranger, even so into my presence. Dost thou not mark how my son has sneezed a blessing on all my words?' " ³

What is the psychological reason for this so prevalent custom? Namely this—that the soul is breath, that this violent disturbance of breath must mean some great movement of the soul, and possibly the entrance of some visiting soul, the soul of an ancestor or some favouring god. No wonder the sneeze has commanded respect!

Why does a shop-girl look down on a domestic servant? Why does an office boy look down on a grocer's boy? Why does a city man look down on a farmer? Or reverse it—why does

² Edward B. Tylor: *Primitive Culture*.

³ *The Odyssey*. Butcher and Lang translation.

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a domestic servant look up to a shop-girl?—for, the truth is, these conventional attitudes are maintained largely by those who have accepted the socially inferior rating. It is ridiculous, but it is the housemaid, the grocer's boy and the farmer lad who by their admiration and envy have managed to produce these false attitudes. One of the underlying ideas is, probably, that the work of the hands is inferior to that of the head, and this is, in some ways, true; but there is far more headwork on a farm or in a household, than there is in a factory or shop. The difficulty is that it takes a head to appreciate this. The convention, then, is founded on a good enough idea, but the idea does not conform with the facts. The mere soiling of the hands in these occupations seems to have been sufficient to lower them in social estimation; the soiling of the hands attracts attention to the hands, and the accompanying headwork is forgotten.

Then there is the social grading based on financial success—again, with an element of truth, but with, also, several elements of nonsense. This, too, is largely maintained by the socially inferior.⁴ Success produces, however

⁴ Jane Addams: *Democracy and Social Ethics*. See, also, Ross: *Social Psychology*.

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grudgingly, admiration. The poor have more respect for a wealthy, fur-coated landlord, however exacting he may be, than they have for the easy poor one who philanthropically lets them occupy their quarters practically rent free. The poor man may be sarcastic as to the rich; he may be bitter and seemingly contemptuous, but he *envies*, and envy, a frustrated desire to imitate, connotes admiration. Political revolutions, with their upset of classes, rarely bring in any permanent alteration in manners. The new parties of control ape the conventions of the old ones, and when once they become proficient can no longer be distinguished from them.

Many conventions are determined by the economic status of the group which holds them. The poor do not imitate the rich in all things. They do not imitate when it is too obviously to their disadvantage. For example, the rich coddle their children and indulge them as "children" long after, from their years, they might be expected to assume some of the obligations of life. This handicapping of their lives is called "giving them advantages." The poor do differently; their economic weakness compells them. The productive life of a labourer is short; he has to ex-

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pect an early dependency upon his offspring, and he acts accordingly.⁵ The poor boy is trained to share his earnings with his family. He early acquires a sense of family responsibility, and if he does not he excites a just indignation which may even bring him into court. When a rich boy "accepts a position," his conventions lead him to spend his earnings in indulgence of self, and his father continues to pay all of his major expenses. When a poor boy "gets a job" he pays board to his father.

As the economic conditions change, of course the conventions change. In pioneer days the ideal woman was a housewife and childbearer. Indulgence and display come in normally only with plenty. It is the same in economic revolutions. The shortage of servants in England during the war caused many changes in conventions. Among other things it emancipated employers from their servile dependence on others. As some one has said, there are two ends to a bell-rope, and it is uncertain to which end liberty is attached. In the newer conventions, work is now considered decent. In the old days, a gentleman "was supposed to live without working for money; if one re-

⁵ Jane Addams, *op. cit.*

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ceived a salary one must find it inadequate to live on; money one must have, and credit, but the money must come from one's parents, the turf, or some other source. There were few exceptions. Curates and bishops were supposed to live on their stipends; rectors and vicars not."⁶

As regards the convention of success as measured by wealth, it should be noted that there are within this many minor conventions. For example, wealth made in some ways is counted as more desirable than wealth made in others equally honest. The wholesale merchant outranks the retailer. Money made by banking is more to be desired than that made in a store. That made selling cloth is better than that made selling groceries, and that made selling groceries than that made killing pigs. But when the wealth has once been gained, then the removal of a generation or so from its source makes all things right. Theodore Parker, when he visited Cincinnati, found that there was a vast difference in social standing among the pig killers, between the "stick 'ems and stuck 'ems."⁷

⁶ Correspondence, *London Times*. Quoted in the *Living Age*, Sept. 17, 1921.

⁷ Col. Higginson—Quoted by Ross, *op. cit.*

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In the sex sphere conventions are numerous and useful. In the socializing of this elemental instinct we need all the help we can get. Custom, convention, tradition, religion and law must all be brought to our aid; and, even then, we know what occasionally happens. Prospero warns Ferdinand, when leaving him with Miranda:

“Look thou be true; do not give dalliance
Too much the rein; the strongest oaths are straw
To the fire i’ the blood; be more abstemious
Or else, good night your vow!”

On the other hand, it is largely convention that has made platonic love impossible. By convention, intimacy between the sexes has one only significance. How, then, can two persons come together, their minds so filled, and remain unconscious? It is not really that man and woman are compelled by nature to regard each other only sexually; other interests have come in which are quite sufficient to lead them to enjoy and profit by a social communion. Man and woman are complementary and supplementary. In all fields of thought one can learn from the other, and thus round-out life. It is a pity that convention should keep the primitive instinct always in the foreground; it

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is a pity, even if it be, on the whole, socially necessary. But what is the use in talking? Conventions *are* necessary. It is as Mark Sabre said to Nona: "In their application they are often unutterably wrong, cruel, hideously cruel and unjust, but when you examine them, even at their cruelest, you can't help seeing that fundamentally they're right and reasonable and necessary."

The woman especially is safe-guarded and watched—or shall we say, hampered? Loss of honour, in the sex field, is more serious with women than with men, and for a reason. The larger part woman plays in the production of offspring makes it so, as does, also, the greater difficulty in her case of "keeping up appearances." This two-standard injustice she has, however, accepted. She has organized a sort of "union" for purity, and she has herself decided that any woman that can not produce her "union card" on demand shall be socially and heavily penalized.⁸

But to return to the success convention. With groups as with individuals, it is largely wealth and strength that give the prestige necessary to secure imitation. Large, powerful groups are imitated by the lesser groups.

⁸ A. Clutton-Brock: *Atlantic Monthly*, December 1920.

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This is one of the great factors in the spread of the world's social gains, for the powerful nation is, also, commonly, the one that has the most highly developed social life. France, for centuries, was a model for Europe, then England took the lead, and Germany was in the way of succeeding when she lost her head and took, instead, to running amuck.

The conventions and traditions of peoples undergo interesting modifications in emigrating groups. We find in the United States that those coming from small helpless countries soon pass into the body of American citizens. There are, for example, several thousand Armenians in the city of Philadelphia. These have no preferred locality; they are scattered throughout the city; they make no attempt at segregation, and they soon become good "Americans." The Italians have a stronger national sense of their own. They too, many of them, become good citizens, but they tend to gather into groups where they continue to practise many of their Italian conventions. The English and the French, on the other hand, rarely relinquish their allegiance to the land of their birth. Their conventions and traditions hold them, and they are not over-awed by the superior worth of their new land of residence.

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And another phase of this is interesting. When a small group finds itself surrounded by a larger group of alien tendencies, one of two things may happen. Either the small group will disintegrate and disappear into the larger, or it will become more "hard-shelled" and conservative. Which of these two courses will be followed will depend upon the degree of difference between the two groups and upon the strength of the smaller group's conventions. The Dutch in South Africa, surrounded by an alien black race, became permanently and exaggeratedly Dutch; while in America they amalgamated with and disappeared into the English. The French Canadian, his physical environment favouring, remains today a seventeenth century Frenchman.

But, again, a group may superficially accept new conventions and customs, and yet, under the surface, long retain its old tendencies. "Scratch a Russian and you will find a Tartar," is an expression of this. An Oriental may take over Parisian manners, but he remains an Oriental, for all that. Japan may imitate the West economically and politically but it remains Japanese at heart. There is a group in Transcaucasia, now nominally Mohammedans, who were originally ancestor worship-

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pers. Today, they pray before the Green Carpet of the Prophet but beneath this carpet they place a few human bones.

When we compare country and city, we find that it is the former which is ever the more conventional. Mrs. Grundy there has her real opportunity, and the dictates of "Main Street" are absolute. So, too, we find that old customs and traditions remain in country places long after they have been abandoned by the city. The pagan was a "dweller in the village"; the heathen, a "dweller on the country heath." It was the opposition of the country to the new religion that gave these words to our Christian vocabulary. Even after the country did become nominally Christian, the old "pagan" customs there continued. Pagan customs and traditions were in full force up to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and they still may be found for the looking.

As has already been noted, many of these old habits have been taken over and revamped by the Church; but others still remain to be surreptitiously practised, or to be practised in a spirit of only half belief that makes it possible for the Church to ignore them. As instances of the adapting of the old to the new. I have already mentioned the Easter and

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Christmas festivals and their peculiarities of celebration. Twelfth Day, or Epiphany, in Germany is still dedicated to the Three Kings of Cologne, the three Magi, Gaspar, Melchior and Balthazar. The bodies of these gentlemen were supposed to have somehow reached the Church of St. Eustorgio in Milan—brought there, I believe, by that indefatigable collector of relics, the Empress Helena—but from this place they were later conveyed by Frederick Barbarossa to Cologne. The fact is, however, the “Three Kings” were worshipped hundreds of years before Barbarossa and before even the Magi. They were, originally, Tyr, Odhinn (Woden), and Thor⁹—still honoured, today, on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. The three kings were but the old Teutonic trinity—Odhinn, the Father; Thor, the doer of things; and Tyr, the wrestler. If we add to these three, Freyja, we then have the Great Four, to be found in nearly all religions, the Arba-il of the Chaldeans, the three male elements together with the female.¹⁰ It is interesting to note, too, that Freyja, from whom, of course, we have Friday, was frequently symbolized by a fish. The female element has been com-

⁹ Charles Francis Keary: *Outlines of Primitive Belief*.

¹⁰ Inman: *Ancient Faiths*.

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monly so symbolized; it was the symbol of fruitfulness, and was equally sacred to Venus, to Aphrodite, to Isis, to Ishtar and to Maia. The Romans ate fish on Friday in honour of Venus; and the ancient Jews, following the Babylonians, ate fish on the same day, that they might be blessed with more children. This pagan fish makes many appearances in our Christian symbolism. It is a perfect example of the carrying over of the old forms after their original significance has been lost. The bishop's mitre is but a fish mouth—the tail which once hung down the pagan priest's back having been, however, abandoned.

The gods of the northern races had their shrines in the forest. The Gothic temple is the result of the effort to adapt the new to the old; its pillars are the trees, and its dark fretted roof is the foliage. In the temple, near the sanctuary, all is serene, but outside of this guarded region the old heathen gods still hover. We see them now, peering around corners or peeping over ledges—we call them gargoyles, and use them for rain spouts.¹¹

Consider the phrase “gone West,” which was used by the soldiers in France as a synonym for death. This phrase, or at least its underly-

¹¹ Keary: *op. cit.*

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ing tradition, goes back to the infancy of man. With primitive man, the daily journey of the sun was early associated with the span of life. The sun rose and set; it was a symbol of man's existence—a dawn, a mid-day heat, a decline, and then darkness. This easily grasped parallel was seized upon by the first thinking man, and ever since, through all the ages, life has had its beginning in the East and its end in the West. Let us analyse this further. The earliest of our ancestors lived, it is believed, on the highlands of Central Asia. In the first division of this group, one part remained on the western slopes of the Northern Himalayas, while the other migrated to the shore of the Caspian Sea. The first group saw the sun, the symbol of life, set in the steppes; the second group saw it set in the waters of the sea—just as later Persia and Egypt saw it set in the desert, and Europe in the ocean. Now the root word in the European group of languages, *mara*, has the triple meaning of *sea*, *desert* and *death*.¹² From *mara* we have the Latin, *mare*, the old Saxon, *meri*, the German, *meer*, the French, *mer*, and the English suffix *mere*, or *meer*—all with the significance of sea, or, at least, of a body of water. From it,

¹² This, and what immediately follows, is given chiefly on the authority of Charles Francis Keary, *op. cit.*

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too, we have, possibly, the English *moor*, a desert place. But *mara* meant, also, death, the place the sun went down, and so we find it, as *myrai* in Sanskrit and Zend. In this sense, too, it has come to us, through the Latin *mors* and the Germanic *mord*, to the English *mortality* and *murder*.

The Greeks introduced another idea, which was, however, founded on the old. To them the sea was *pontos*, a pathway or bridge, the path to the realm of the departed in the West. In the Teutonic belief it was the Milky Way that was “the path,” and if we follow this idea back we find that the ancient Indians had the same conception. The Milky Way was God’s Path, the Cloud or Cow Path, and the Path of Yama, the ruler of the dead. To the Persians, it was the Bridge of Souls; and to the ancient Lithuanians, the Bridge of Birds, over which passed the souls of the good. The same idea prevails almost universally—to the Basutos the Milky Way is the Way of the Gods, and to the North American Indian it is the same. With all, however, it is the West that is associated with the departed spirits. The ancient “Aryans” went West when they died, and so did the Greeks and the Celts. So strong was the belief that it survived the transition to Chris-

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tianity. In the romances of King Arthur we find many references to it, and St. Brandon, an Irish saint, it is said, actually reached the place itself—thus giving rise, later, to the Irish claim of having discovered America. And the same tradition was in the minds of some of the early Spanish voyagers, even after Columbus—it was not only Ponce de Leon who hoped for the marvellous.

Here, then, is a race-old belief, that life ended in the west and that there was the home of the departed. It is this same belief, hoary with age, that gave rise to that gentle phrase for death so widely used in the trenches. Is it not remarkable, this persistence of an idea? The material things, the things man makes with his hands, are soon lost, but his ideas, it would seem, may go on for ever. The thought of the early man in Asia finds its place in the mind of the Cockney "Tommy."

"Then Bill copped a packet proper,
And took 'is departure West."

The other half of this same tradition is equally persistent and universal—that this life, and the good things of life, arise in the East. Why not? The sun brought light and warmth

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to our struggling, benighted ancestors, and it brought, also, the fruits and the grains. We have, then, a tradition of the East as well as one of the West. Temples to the gods were commonly built facing the East; devotees turned to the East in prayer, and the dead were buried so that they might look first to the East on arising.

Again, nearly all the peoples of the earth have, in their scheme of religion, the expectancy of a Redeemer's coming, and it is in the East that he is commonly looked for. This Redeemer tradition has been realized for us in Christ, but, so similar has been the mental evolution of man the world over, that all have been led to the same hope. The reasoning, probably unconscious, is simply this—the present is terribly hard, and evil is rife; the good gods must be either absent or temporarily overpowered by the bad; but the good will some day surely triumph. Man is ever hopeful. Following human analogies, then, either the good god will return in force, or there will come some great prince or king to assist the good god in his struggle. Evil is to be finally overcome, and the good is to reign supreme. With the Aztecs, we find that Quetzalcoatl, the Sky God, the Good God from the East, had been defeated by

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Tezcatlipoca, the Lord of Night and Famine, and had been temporarily driven from the land. It was Tezcatlipoca who was worshipped with bloody sacrifice—and not through native cruelty, but from policy and fear. All secretly longed for the return of Quetzalcoatl, who, the prophecies said, was to come some day from the East with a party of powerful, fair-skinned warriors. Could anything have been more fortunate for the Spaniards? When the latter arrived on the coast in 1518, they seemed a veritable fulfilment of the prophesied and longed-for advent. Alas! A frightful disillusionment soon followed!

Hope, then, makes for a happy future—but there has, too, always been a Golden Past. Here, the origin is different; the hope for the future has a psychological basis—the golden aged past is *physiological*. As man reaches and passes maturity, he begins to glorify his youth. In his present decay and degeneration, the past appears progressively brighter. And so it is with peoples—this purely physiological phenomenon passes into the group and there gives rise to traditions. This Golden Past we can never discover; when we search for it, it steadily recedes. The youth deploras the change in boys since “his time,” and the old

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man the change since his. Samuel Pepys revisits Paul's School, and finds the "speeches not so good as ours were." Montaigne complains of the "so licentious, so corrupted, and so declining an age, as this wherein we now live." Aristophanes, in "The Clouds," makes Dicaeologus exclaim:

"Of manners primitive, and that good time
Which I have seen, when discipline prevailed
And modesty was sanctioned by the laws."

And then the Chorus chimes in:

"Oh sage instructor, how sublime
These maxims of the former time;
How sweet this unpolluted stream
Of eloquence, how pure the theme!
Thrice happy they whose lot was cast
Among the generations of the past."

Surely Aristophanes, in the fifth century B. C. can not be far, we think, from this happy past—but when we reach Homer, say three hundred years earlier, we find him, too, looking backward, and lamenting

"Such men as live in these degenerate times."

Passing from the writings of middle-aged

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and old men to the tradition as the group has it, we find, since all things must be rationalized, that it was felt necessary to account for the Golden Age's disappearance. The same solution was reached by all—there must have been some world-wide catastrophe, and this was probably a flood. Following this flood, man started again on a humbler plane, either with a Noah and his family, with a Deucalian and Pyrrha, or with some similar God-selected couple.

I spoke some time back of the tribal custom of blaming some individual for the ills that might happen to befall. This individual was the "scape-goat"; he was not only blamed, he was punished. From this idea followed, naturally, that of transferring responsibility in general, and to the scape-goat was gradually given the unpleasant task of atoning for all sins, past, present and future. The word itself comes, of course, from the ancient Hebrew custom: "And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, even all their sins; and he shall put them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a man that is in readiness into the wilderness; and the

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goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities into a solitary land: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.”¹³

The scape-goat idea seems universal. We find it in Australia, Africa, Asia, America, and Europe. In the East Indies, with certain tribes, the chief, having sinned, is seated on a platform beneath which is bound some humble member of the tribe, or maybe a criminal. Water is poured over the chief, and this, dripping down on the man beneath, transfers to the latter the sins of the offender. The man now being killed the chief is happily purified. So in Arabia, the pestilence is “given” to a camel, and the camel then killed. A Bechuana king, being ill, seats himself on an ox, and, as in the first example, is cured by having water poured over him, the disease being thereby transferred. This is a comfortable belief, and we find it with all simple people. In fact, as Dr. White has pointed out, we still follow it today in much of our attitude towards criminals. We make them suffer for society’s sins, and feel ourselves purified by the process.¹⁴

One experiences a real sense of diffidence in treating of traditions, especially when, as in so

¹³ Leviticus, XVI, 21, 22.

¹⁴ William A. White: *The Principles of Mental Hygiene.*

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many of our examples, they pertain to religious beliefs. The traditions of others are interesting and open for discussion, but not so our own. These latter, many of them, are sacred and can not be discussed without some feeling of detracting from their dignity. If our idol's feet be of clay, let us keep them decently covered. To remove the mystery of a tradition's origin is often a deliberate offence, and no writer with a sense of responsibility for his written word can undertake the task without hesitation. Men live by their beliefs, and to undermine a belief is a poor occupation for any one. And yet—what is the matter with the world if the truth must be concealed?

Is not the difficulty one of attitude only, and will not the world be helped by the gaining of a better attitude? Is it conceivable that God's scheme of things needs lies, or even misconceptions, for its sustaining? Science and theology have had a long struggle—or, better, let us say nature and theology, for science is but an interpretation of nature and of nature's laws. And it seems to science that theology is responsible for this struggle; that it has placed the claim for belief wrongly; that it has ever made an over-emphasis on origins, and has practically ignored the real issue. The Church and its

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teachings, it says, in effect, are to be accepted, not because they are good but because they are of supernatural origin. The *reason* for belief has been deliberately removed from the *sphere of reason*, and yet has been claimed to be reasonable. The Church has said, until recently, that the Bible was to be accepted word and letter—even the English Bible, with its errors of translation. If the earth moves round the sun, “then the Bible is wrong, and there is nothing in religion.” If the earth and its inhabitants were not created in six days of twenty-four hours each, “then the Bible is wrong, and there is nothing in religion.” If the whale did not swallow Jonah, “then the Bible is wrong, and there is nothing in religion.” And it is theology that has made these statements, remember, not science. It is theology that has, throughout the centuries, repeatedly invited its own dilemma. Its own belief was so strong that it probably regarded the phrase repeated above as a sort of argument, but each and every one of these last-stand positions has had in the end to be abandoned. Could a more unfortunate attitude be well conceived? What it has led to is that many a man, finding himself obliged to accept certain things as facts, and hearing the

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Church's own statement that if they be facts the Church is wrong, has taken the Church at its own word. Many have, therefore, turned their backs on the Church, and, only too often, more unfortunately, have, at the same time, renounced all religion. Might it not be a wiser stand for the Church to estimate its worth, and religion's worth, by what these great forces can do? Might it not be well to value these things by their fruits? There would be good authority for so doing.

Let us measure the value of our traditions and beliefs by what they can do for us. Psychology is concerned with their origin, theology not; but both psychology and theology are concerned with their values. What is good for one man is not good for another. A religion which leaves one cold and unresponsive is worth absolutely nothing. It is not the origin of a tradition that makes it a living force, but its interpretation, and the hold it has on a man's heart. Let the Church teach this, and it will regain the people. It will then no longer feel called upon to defend its origins against the encroachments of knowledge; it will find itself possessed of a wonderful freedom, and able, in this renaissance, to help all mankind. There can be no substitute for the Church. There is nothing that can

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replace it as an agent for good. It must not be permitted to stultify itself by assuming false attitudes—it must welcome knowledge and work with it, not oppose it.

So it is, that while, as I have said, one hesitates to write of sacred traditions, fearing to do harm, there can be no harm if only the world will see things rightly. Let us get this saner attitude, and know that things are good because they have been proved good—even if they have only a psychological origin, and come, it may be, from man's subconscious mind. To those who find this attitude inadequate, let me make a suggestion. Let such ask themselves, if they will, how these psychological tendencies were implanted. No materialistic study can ever reach back to the first law-laying act—who prepared man's mind for its tendencies? The love of mysterious beginnings will be amply satisfied by such an inquiry, and it may even be surmised that, after all, God may have had something to do with natural phenomena.

No man need be afraid to acknowledge the force of traditions, nor even their sometimes peculiar origins. They colour our lives and guide them, and this is what is now important. We live in the lengthening shadows of the

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past, but we need not be ashamed of this fact—the past is not dead, it is an ever living influence. Imitation and habit are not little things, limited to the life of a man; they are great social forces which carry on through the ages. “We are tattooed in our cradles with the beliefs of our tribe; the record may seem superficial but it is indelible.” So said the *Poet at the Breakfast Table*, and it is a fact very useful to know. From its conventions and traditions, society has erected its code, and, to quote Mark Sabre once more, “when you go into it it’s the most marvellous code that ever was invented.”

CHAPTER VI

FASHION

All psychological attributes are more or less connected, and so in fashion we find large elements of both custom and convention. But we find here, too, another factor apparently diametrically opposed. Custom and convention depend upon imitation and habit, and make for uniformity, while the aim of fashion is to differentiate the individual from the masses—from the masses only, however, for within each small group custom and convention still hold. One wishes to be distinguished, but one must still keep within one's group. One wishes to be as far as possible removed from the masses—we want from them only admiration—but within our own group we will do as the group does, only doing it, whatever it is, a little better. If bustles are being worn, let our bustle be a little larger than any other bustle. If a late hour for a dance be fashionable, let our dance be still later.

Imitation operates within one's own group

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and, also, in emulation of some group to which we may aspire, but it has nothing to do with groups in which we are not interested. Most groups, however formed, have peculiarities all their own—"red republicans have always been distinguished by hirsuteness," says Spencer; radical assemblies are noted for a studied individualism, and conservative ones for a strict adherence to the more sober conventions; the fast set have fashions the university set laugh at—and so it goes—if the gang the small boy runs with turns up its coat collar, no argument of sister or mother can ever persuade this youngster that he would look better with his collar turned down.

Imitation, then, operates within certain limits, but the true psychological basis of fashion is always the desire to secure admiration. The spirit of fashion is not imitation, but competition. In the village, where competition would be futile, where each is known familiarly for his own true worth, fashion plays relatively a small part, and is limited, chiefly, to personal decoration; but in large communities, where these conditions do not hold, fashion, in one phase or another, engages much of the public's attention. It is by no means a trivial thing; it sets our standards in many fields, in morals

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and in notions of propriety especially, and it also has a real effect on economic interests. Transient as most fashions are, they have a modifying effect on the mores; the prevailing plays, the dances and amusements may easily influence the morals of even several generations. They are not, however, continuously progressive—and this is their saving feature—there is always a limit; they are periodic, or rhythmic, and may even turn on themselves. Thus it is that history presents its various marked “ages” and “periods”—the Age of Pericles, the Augustan Age, the Period of the Restoration, etc.—and yet we find that such ages and periods have but little permanent effect on the race. The theatre is immodest today; it has been far more immodest in the past, and the immodest periods of the past have been followed by periods of great decorum.

And so it is with all fashions, they are, by their very nature, periodic. They progress in a certain direction until you think that the limit of absurdity has been reached, and then, if you have not been too squeamish and have not expected the limit too soon, you will find that it *has* been reached and that the fashions are shooting off in some other direction, pos-

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sibly to the other extreme. Sleeves get full, and sleeves get tight; skirts swell out, and then dangerously contract; they drag on the ground, and rise to the knees; hats, too, rise and fall. Strange protuberances appear and disappear; some of nature's own become monstrously exaggerated—and then, where nature had placed some swelling curve the eye is greeted by a surprising flatness. It has been suggested by Professor Ross, that if we could show on the moving picture screen the changing fashions of a woman's dress, and speed up the picture so that the changes would follow each other rapidly, we would see an alternating dilatation and contraction, a swelling and subsiding, like the heavy breathing of some monstrous animal. The motion is always rhythmic; fashions come, go, and come again. Where are the hats of the past? If you will wait you will see them some day on the head of your daughter.

In its simplest expression, fashion takes the form of decoration, and here it has a biological side, really a sex one. With birds, the males find it necessary to compete for their mates, and nature, by natural selection, has succeeded in decorating them satisfactorily to the female taste. The females do not need this additional attraction, and so adhere to the

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more sombre hues—these being so much the safer. In human society we find similar relations. With primitive peoples it is the male who tattoos and puts on the feathers and paint; but in modern society, so attractive has become the single life for the male, it is the female who now does the decorating.

But decoration is not all there is to fashion, nor is it always, or even often, now consciously a sex matter. We have fashions in everything. The necessities of sex have become secondary, and what is now striven for, generally, is, simply, admiration and distinction.

Custom and convention naturally praise the “good old time,” “the time honoured function,” but there is no distinction in being thus standardized with one’s fellows, so fashion breaks with the past and demands that a thing shall be ultra-modern—that is, ultra-modern from the standpoint and memory of the present generation. It is the very latest and newest that excites applause, and to be “out of date” is to be almost immoral. In fact in some cases it *is* immoral.

Fashions, then, must be constantly changed if distinction is ever to be maintained. So it has always been—Chaucer ridicules the fashions of his day; and, again, in the Holinshed

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Chronicles of Elizabeth's time, we read: ". . . no form of apparel liketh us longer than the first garment is in the wearing, if it continue so long and be not laid aside to secure some new trinket newly devised by the fickle-headed tailors." And Montaigne, in France, about the same time, writes: "One self-same judgment within the space of fifteene or twentie yeares, admitteth, not only one two or three different, but also clean contrarie opinions, with so light and incredible inconstancie, that any man would wonder at it." "Every day new toyes, each hour new fantasies."

While change has thus ever been a prominent feature, it is especially so today. The general speeding up of all communication—rapid travel, the newspapers, magazines, and the telegraph—has made the world-wide diffusion of ideas a matter of but hours. King George appeared, some years ago, at a garden party, with his trowsers pressed at the sides, like pajamas; this fact was cabled, and two days later I saw a youth on Market Street in Philadelphia, with his trowsers pressed in the same kingly manner. The speeding up of communication has speeded up fashion as well. Then there is another development, as com-

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pared with the past. Machine manufacture and wholesale production has made imitation both easy and cheap. In the old days one kept, almost of necessity, within one's class. The artisan or labourer had no possibility of emulating his employer, and the bourgeoisie no possibility of emulating the nobles. Fashions then were class matters. But things changed; wars impoverished the nobility, and new trade routes enriched the bourgeois merchants until it came to be the latter who held all the money. Laces and velvets came to be more easily obtainable by the rich burghers than they were by the old aristocracy, and even the passage of sumptuary laws failed to prevent the former from adopting them. Elegance of dress became free to all who could pay for it. Of late years we have gone a step farther. Labour has emerged from its long serfdom and secured for itself a very considerable reward, and at the same time the machine manufacture has enabled the imitation at nominal cost of all of the luxuries—from feathers to tiled bath rooms. It is a sad state of affairs. A woman gets a "creation" from Paris, and a week later her maid is wearing an exact copy. When the shop people in England took on the top-hat and frock coat of the aristocracy, the

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latter were driven to sack coat and cap. They could not go back to satin and frills, these had become impossible under modern conditions—but indeed had they been possible their adoption would have availed nothing; the shop people would have put on the same. Not wishing, then, to resemble a clerk, my lord, as I have said, did the only thing remaining, and turned to a careless simplicity. Here he was safe for a time. The masses are ever more willing to take on finery than they are to abandon it; and the sack coat and cap, moreover, seemed unpleasantly reminiscent of their own recent discards. My lord dressed in clothes that would make an American youth blush with shame—but, alas! the shop class have caught on; they, too, are now in a similar costume. For the present, the aristocrat seems to have abandoned the struggle.

In the United States things are even worse than in England. We do a lot of talking about equality, but we really do not mean it. Most of us agree with Dr. Holmes, when he says that he goes politically for equality, but socially, for *the* quality. We are not so democratic at heart as we sound. A man who has been received by a king, is *made*, socially, for life. We are strong on titles, Judges, Colonels,

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Honourables, Professors and Doctors, not to mention the grandiloquent appellations within our secret orders. We seek such distinctions as seem available, and fashion helps us out, if it be only in the style of a walking stick or in the number of pieces one employs for a dance. I have spoken of the pleasing possibility of starting our dance later than any other—at an “informal” dance given last winter in the ball-room of a Philadelphia hotel, the invitations reading for nine o’clock, the hostess did not arrive until eleven. Now of course it is grossly improper for guests to appear at the hour named in an invitation, but here was a master-stroke, this of the hostess herself staying away. What a pity such an idea could not be copyrighted—but unfortunately this was impossible, and now all hostesses arrive late. Dances run from about eleven in the evening to about five in the morning. Possibly, some one, some day, will start a dance at seven, and possibly, too, it will then become fashionable to arrive before the hour named—possibly, but not likely, for one of the few customs which the working people can not follow is this of playing all night when they have to work all day. This has ever been the joy of the élite, from ancient times to the present, that in this priv-

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ilege of reversing day and night, in this one thing at least, they are secure from any permanent imitation. Not that the labourer of the present day does not try it, he does, but he can not possibly keep it up. There are certain trades, iron-workers and such, who also work at night and sleep in the day time, but these know they are working, and the society people do not. As a matter of fact, however, the smart set are about the hardest working little group in the community. From having engagements every night in the week, they have passed to having several engagements each night—a dance must at least be preceded by the theatre, and the theatre by a dinner. Half of the day is now spent in a state of semi-exhaustion of body and nerves, such as labour, so called, has rarely experienced.

When I say that fashion today has a tendency to greater simplicity, I mean among the really established classes. With the *nouveaux riches*, and with extreme youth—always *nouveau* in experience—it is, of course, different. New wealth has enabled many to join in the race for distinction who, heretofore, have only longed. These new ones, having been just inducted into the spending class, lack the balancing restraint of established taste and con-

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vention, and let themselves go. They are, moreover, the noisy and conspicuous ones, and sometimes seem to occupy the whole social stage—the others, we forget. Theirs is, however, but a passing phase, and the statement stands—that society, under the influence of cheap imitation, is becoming less pretentious in its display. The burden of heavy taxes and the presence in England and on the Continent of the new honourable class of aristocratic *nouveaux pauvres* will further this movement. Money has so largely passed into new and not too clean hands that other standards would seem to now have a better chance than ever before. Whether the new standards will ever win out, however, must long remain an open question. Carlyle says, somewhere, that money will cease to rule society, on Doomsday—in the afternoon. He may be right. However, the movement toward simplicity exists today, and is not limited even to physical things. The barber having become a professor, the professor now prefers to be called mister. The barber shop having become a tonsorial parlour, our parlours have now become living rooms. When the woman who does the washing became a lady, the lady who has the washing done became a woman.

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There is one difficulty in this backward trend, however, a real check upon it, namely this, that distinction alone does not satisfy. It is admiration we want. We despise the masses but we want them to admire us. Now simple things are not admired by simple people, they are admired only by those who know. Your maid, and possibly your husband, finds a piece of machine-made lace quite as beautiful as the wonderful old remnant you inherited from your grandmother—they may even like it better! One is driven, in consequence, to be contented with the judgment of so small a group, and this made up of rivals, that the admiration comes to be almost a matter of self-worship. "Though more good come to a man by the praise of a few wise men, than hurt by the scoffs of a number of fools, yet would I not willingly subject myself to the confused judgment of the senseless vulgar." Most of us have a common feeling with Don Quixote, especially those of us who live in America. The English are notoriously willing to be laughed at by the masses; it is one of their forms of distinction, one which will come some day, too, to be ours. But it is not ours now. The Americans, meaning the conspicuous new rich element of them, are far too insecure in their new social position

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to be indifferent to popular conventions. They do not always know what these conventions are, but they do the best they know how. The new rich, in their sudden prominence, squander their money and make fools of themselves, much as the small boy gets foolish when attention is centred on him. He is embarrassed and uncertain, but he wants admiration, so, his standards being crude and unformed, he makes queer noises and stands on his head. Fashion has a lot of vanity in it, and vanity is a ticklish thing; it is ever on the defensive and is easily disturbed. We tip largely, to avoid the scorn of the waiter and with the hope of gaining his admiration. We want him to think us rich. Is it not strange? Here we are, privately conscious that our own judgment is as good as, if not better than, that of any one else, and yet, here we are, always striving to secure applause, even the applause of some one whom we may otherwise look down on.

Fashions, as we have found, may temporarily modify the mores, but they do not enter them permanently unless they happen to fall in with some psychological truth. Nor do they ever become permanent customs unless happily of some practical value or of a nature to feed to man's comfort. In slowly moving societies

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customs may, indeed, persist for long periods, and even when not apparently useful—pinched feet have survived the political revolution in China and are still the proper thing in the more conservative circles. But such are exceptions. In the more rapidly changing West we find these survivals only in indifferent matters. The ornamental dress of the past has gone; lace cuffs and shirt frills for men do not appeal in these days of industry; nor does the long skirt for the emancipated woman. However, Queen Elizabeth's silk stockings found a permanent place. She had worn only stockings of cloth, until one of her women, Mistress Montague, presented her, "for a new yeare's gift, a paire of black, knit, silk stockings," after the new Spanish style. The Queen swore she would wear no other thereafter, and all women have since followed the Queen.

In a general way, then, fashions would appear to be of but slight social importance. They are often as trivial in origin as in substance. Long coats were introduced by Charles VII of France to cover his ill-formed legs—thus exemplifying the saying that clothes were invented to cover deformity. The Emperor Paul of Russia took a sudden dislike to pantaloons, and had his soldiers stop all wear-

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ing them and cut them off at the knees. It was not done gently, and breeches were the fashion before the end of the week. What matters it, then, what we wear or do? These idle fashions are but passing bubbles. We have had fashions in hoop-skirts, theosophy, and hydrotherapy; in whiskers and watch-chains; in mansard roofs, in sermons and in the kangaroo-walk; in cravats, handshaking and the parting of the hair. So too we have had our fads and our crazes, in decalcomanias, pigs in clover and tiddle-de-winks, blue glass and parrots. All these are harmless:

“Behold the child, by nature’s kindly law,
Pleased with a rattle, tickled with a straw:
Some livelier plaything gives his youth delight,
A little louder, but as empty quite:
Scarfs, garters, gold, amuse his riper stage
And beads and pray’r-books are the toys of age.”

These things are indeed but playthings—but even playthings have their serious side. The trouble comes when playthings are treated as something else. A pastime may become a disease.

No, fashions are not trivial, they absorb too much of man’s time to be that, and they are too, we know, even capable of affecting his

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morals. What if they do not enter the permanent mores, nor interfere with the evolution of the race? They do enter sufficiently to modify a generation or so, and that, after all, is enough for ourselves and our children. The evolution of the race is interesting only when we are in our study—in the living-room, with the rest of the family, it seems less important. Is it nothing to live in a time when the theatres are rotten, when the press places sensation before truth, when fashions of dishonesty are prevailing in business, and when money is king? Is it nothing that the first requisite, we may say the only requisite, in the school selected for a youth is that it shall be fashionable? But even with the foolish pursuits—is it not a poor way of living this life, this spending of it in chasing of these will-of-the-wisps? I am not arguing for the abandoning of all these things, but only that we should recognize them for what they really are. By all means let us play with them, but do not let us falsely estimate their worth. Fools take gilt farthings for gold guineas—do not let us be fools.

There is another side to this, too. I believe that much of the social unrest and discontent can, in one way or another, be traced to the effects of fashion, as may, also, many of

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our economic difficulties. Just as we manage to "make ends meet," along comes some fashion "to move the ends farther apart." It is in this economic influence that the class of ultra-fashionables finds its importance. This class is really a small one and is, individually and as a group, rather contemptible; but it has, like the criminal class, an influence that extends beyond its own limits. By the money and labour it diverts from the more normal channels, the cost of living, the cost of the necessities of life, becomes greatly increased. It is far more profitable, at least for small capital, to pander to the luxury of man than it is to supply his simpler needs, and labour there commands the higher wage. Both, therefore, turn to this more lucrative field, and the cost of manufacturing the necessary thing rises.

Then consider the envies and jealousies aroused—the legitimate envies and jealousies. So long as so many are in hunger and want, social display and extravagance are direct incentives to crime—as well as shameful. An extravagant ball vulgarly written up in the newspapers will be the theme of many a bitter invective behind the closed doors of radical gatherings. Such a parade of inequality makes hungry men desperate.

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And the will-of-the-wisp when caught—who can retain it? In proportion to our success we lose our friends, getting in their place but lip service and flattery. We stand briefly teetering on our social pedestal, and then some other displaces us. Would it not be well with society if this social expression were somewhat modified? It may be, and I believe that it eventually will be, by the substitution for it of some more intelligent ideals, ideals based upon a truer appreciation of social values. The desire, the necessity, for egoistic expression will of course remain, this is perfectly legitimate, but can we not see to it that our goal and our effort shall both be more worthy? Let us play golf and play bridge, but let us never forget that we are just *playing*.

It is through a better training of our children that the change must be effected. Criticism of the finished product will not do. Fashion is self-satisfied; it accepts criticism as covering a hidden envy and true admiration. When it is called contemptible, it just smirks and preens itself afresh. It is hopelessly stupid—but children are not; the child can still be more happily directed.

CHAPTER VII

SYMPATHY AND SUGGESTION

We have already said something of sympathy and suggestion. These potent phenomena underlie much of man's intercourse with his fellows. Sympathy is the principal factor in man's gregarious tendency and, therefore, in the birth of institutions; both sympathy and suggestion, being fundamental in imitation, lie behind man's customs, conventions and traditions; and sympathy, again, plays a principal part in the birth of altruism. "For a crowd is not a company, and faces are but a gallery of pictures, and talk but a tinkling cymbal, where there is no love."¹ Sympathy and suggestion, moreover, organize the crowd and give it personality; they are the positive elements in the make-up of every mob. Sympathy is the cement in all mass formation, and suggestion the determinant in all mass movement.

These forces are, we may say, the most

¹ Bacon: *Essays*.

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social of all forces, for it is largely through them that we get that mental interaction upon which society depends for its existence. It is sympathy and suggestion which produce the group mind, the consciousness of the group and its possible action as a unit; and it is these forces, too, therefore, which make for both national solidarity and patriotism. Many of these effects of sympathy and suggestion have already been referred to; let us here consider briefly some of their remaining influences. Sympathy I have described elsewhere,² as that tendency which inclines us to take on the suffering of another, or, better, the emotional state of another. In a broader sense, however, it may be regarded as the tendency to throw into action brain and nerve patterns, in imitation of the activity of similar patterns in others. It is therefore a psycho-physiological phenomenon. The seeing in another of a certain pattern in operation tends to set going within ourselves the corresponding pattern. It is necessary only that the two shall resemble each other somewhat closely. We see a man facing an approaching danger; we see him draw back, and we draw back with him. We see some one straining to lift a great

² Platt: *Psychology of Thought and Feeling*.

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weight, and our own bodies share somewhat in the effort. We see the pole vaulter rise to the bar, and we half rise from our seats as we follow him. We copy the positions of the one with whom we are conversing; he crosses his knees, and we cross ours; he looks out the window, and we do the same. The patterns here set in motion are the simple nerve patterns possessed by us all in common.

In all these cases sympathy and suggestion are both present, but suggestion, here, may be taken as but a name-word for the process as a whole. It includes both ends of the process, the exciting cause and its sympathetic reception. The two here, sympathy and suggestion, are but two phases of a single phenomenon. But suggestion may operate, too, independently of the physiological sympathy. Our brain and nerve patterns may be set in action by another even though this other may have experienced no similar activity. The setting off of our patterns may be quite otherwise determined, and the element of physiological resemblance may be entirely lacking. It may be but a word, an idea, an odour—apparently the most diverse and far-fetched stimuli may serve. Some one speaks, for instance, of the River Danube, and we instantly think of “The Blue Danube” and of a

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certain evening many years ago. Some one speaks of the North Pole, and we recall that we have not yet paid the ice bill. "That reminds me," we say. What has happened is that in our subconscious mind a series of rapid associations has been made, and, as the result, a conscious thought has arisen. The chance word has connected up with some buried pattern and has set it a-going. You speak at the table and some one exclaims: "Isn't that funny? I was just going to say the very same thing. You have taken the words out of my mouth!" What has happened is that both have chanced to receive simultaneously the same unconscious suggestion. It may have been a remark, a noise, a flavour—it may have been anything at all, but it chanced to strike home to two persons. That the resulting comment should take the same form in words is natural enough, considering our ordinary limitation of vocabulary, and the similarity of expression among members of a family.

While, then, sympathy is a physiologically determined thing calling for the possession of similar brain and nerve patterns, suggestion is not; and the latter may operate independently of the former, as a purely mental or psychic phenomenon. Suggestion involves both con-

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scious and unconscious acts. A suggestion may be either conscious or unconscious in its origin, and it may be received either consciously or unconsciously; but in the limited psychological use of the term, no matter what the origin of the suggestion, it is the unconscious mind only that receives. The suggestion, however emanating, is registered subconsciously, and is then only later raised into consciousness; or, possibly, not being so raised, it remains in the subconscious and is there translated directly into action. We advise a friend, and he accepts our "suggestion," but this is, psychologically speaking, an exercise of reason, and no suggestion at all. When Bre'r Rabbit begged Mr. Fox, please *not* to throw him into the briar patch, this *was* a suggestion, in a simple form. So, too, Mark Antony to the citizens:

"It is not meet you know how Caesar loved you.
You are not wood, you are not stones, but men;
And being men, hearing the will of Caesar,
It will inflame you, it will make you mad:
'Tis good you know not that you are his heirs;
For, if you should, O what would come of it!"

These are suggestions direct. But when confidence in a physician becomes translated into an improvement in health, it is then we have a ver-

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itable triumph of the subconscious activity. In this last case there is no tangible force evident, and yet in the subconscious mind of the patient processes are set going that have a real influence on the whole health of the body.

It may be objected that all this is a matter for individual psychology, but these two attributes of man are so universal and are of such vital importance in social life, that I feel they cannot be too well considered. As I have said, they enter into all human intercourse, whether this be within the family or between nations, and they vary in degree from the unconscious suggestions received in casual conversation, to the wildest hallucinations and delusions of individuals and of peoples. For an extreme individual expression we may take the hypnotic influence, where, the critical rational attitude being laid aside and the subconscious exposed, suggestions enter freely and operate powerfully. The hypnotized mind is a subjective mind; it may be said to operate only through suggestion. But the same thing, in a degree, is observed on a larger scale; hypnotism is not limited to the mental healer's office, nor to the amusement stage, it operates sometimes on great masses of people. Hysteria, too, to take another example of the ex-

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treme, is but a disease where the patient suffers from undue suggestibility—and nations have their hysteria as well as do individuals.

Sympathy and suggestion enter, then, into every one's life, and also into that of the group, but with some, and at certain times, they operate more potently than with others, or at other times. As regards sex, for example, they are far more real with women than with men. They are, indeed, the basis of woman's famed intuition, enabling her to decisions which, at least in the personal field, are generally true, however lacking they may seem in evident foundation. The little things she catches from another are not evident to mere man, and they generally are not even consciously seen by the woman. She sees them subconsciously, and it is only the finished, apparently unfounded judgment that is brought to the light. The wife may find her husband stupid. He has, it may be, failed at some personal or social juncture to recognize the subtle suggestion she gave him. She thinks her suggestion was screamed to the world, but he, poor man, never heard it! Again, however, much of woman's suffering comes from this same faculty of interpretation; she errs on the other side, and find suggestions where not in the least warranted. She takes offence or

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feels hurt because of something which had, in the man, no significance whatever, or which, indeed, may have had only the kindest intent but was bungled. A woman's intuition is a useful thing, but it is not to be considered as infallible. It is but a delicate appreciation of the little things so often missed by men—a sympathetic and subconscious watching of straws to see how the wind may be blowing.

As regards age, sympathy and suggestion operate more freely with children than with adults. Many an aversion, many an attitude carried through life, may be traced back to the period of childhood and to some suggestion then received. A dish which has once made us ill will ever after be distasteful to us, but a mere chance remark may determine an equal dislike in a child. This is of importance for parents to consider. You can not say before a child, "I don't see how he can eat such tasteless stuff," and expect him to go on eating it with relish. It is the force of suggestion that makes the moving-picture of a crime so destructive to children. It is the unconscious of the boy that is damaged, not his conscious. The adult, consciously, will discount the appeal of the criminal hero, but the boy has no such check to his admiration. He sees only a daring perform-

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ance which thrills him with the desire of emulation, and it is this which gets buried in his subconscious. If reason enters in at all, it is only to indicate the hero's error. When the small boy contemplates himself as the hero, he makes no such careless mistake.

It is a popular fallacy that a child, unless malicious, always tells the truth, but expert lawyers and judges know differently. A child may be made to say almost anything a skilled cross-examiner may choose to suggest. And even without suggestion from outside, the child's own imagination may *suggest* the most elaborate of falsehoods. This thing, too, is well worth considering, both by parents and by others. Many an innocent adult has suffered through the accusation of children, and many a playmate has been unjustly punished.

Again, with race—suggestion and sympathy are strong with some races and weak with others. They are strong, for example, with the French and the Irish, and they are weak with the English. Reserve is deliberately cultivated by the English, but we suspect, too, that much of it is really but a failure in sympathetic response. When an American tourist meets an Englishman and gives him, *con amore*, the history of himself and family, the Englishman

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may just growl, and even turn his back. He does not mean to be rude, but he does not understand; no reciprocal enthusiasm is aroused in him, and he is made just plain uncomfortable. This confidential talkativeness is regarded, rightfully enough, as an American trait, but, as a matter of fact, if you can find an American of pure Anglo-Saxon stock, or one of Dutch ancestry, you will find him quite as uncommunicative as are the English. The new type of emotional response is due with us very largely to the admixture of Celtic and other blood. These things are of importance internationally and diplomatically. I have spoken of the woman as sometimes suffering through her finding of meanings where none was intended—many international misunderstandings arise in exactly the same way. Witness the ill-will toward England in sensitive Ireland, resulting from the reading by the latter of ulterior meanings into the simplest and bluntest of English expressions.

The power of suggestion, then, varies with sex, age and race. It varies, too, with time, condition and source. The conjunction of time, place and the girl, has been the undoing of many a resolved bachelor. Suggestibility is increased in illness, in fatigue, and in periods of

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mental tension—in all states, in short, that tend to obscure or divert the reasoning function. In these states we approach the hypnotic condition. These are conditions of emotional susceptibility; the emotions become more acute, and, to paraphrase Hobbes, the emotions dazzle, they do not enlighten, the understanding. One sees much clearer in fair weather than in storm. In periods of depression we are especially obnoxious to unhappy suggestions, and in periods of success to all that is hopeful and promising. As always, it is the same with nations as with individuals; suggestion operates most freely when the nation's emotion is aroused; as witness its power in war-time, or during religious revivals.

So, too, with the source of a suggestion—the greater the prestige of the source, the greater our own appreciation of it and the greater the power of the suggestion given. Influence, we call it. We all know the influence of a loved mother—here the natural prestige of the parental relation, together with the intimate sympathy, make her powers of suggestion transcend all others. But even when the suggestion comes from outside the group, from one who has not a similarity of brain pattern, then prestige of position and authority may replace,

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in a manner, the physiological sympathy, and the power of the suggestion still remain strong—with one exception, however, and that is, provided there be no emotional antagonism. Where an antagonism exists, not only does the suggestion fail, it may even reverse itself. "Please don't throw me into the briar patch," begged Bre'r Rabbit, and into the briar patch he promptly was thrown. A Republican speaker, no matter how able, will arouse only antagonistic patterns with a Democratic audience; a child, both consciously and unconsciously, will do the very reverse of what may be desired of it by an unacceptable nurse; and step-children often have the same negative reaction to the will or wish of the interloping "parent." We will not willingly accept even benefits from a person we dislike; how, then, can we be expected to accept his ideas? This negativism is sometimes extreme. An idea may have been our own, to start with, but if it be advanced by some one to whom we are antagonistic it will immediately lose much of its value. The sharing of the idea does not lessen the antagonism unless this latter be slight—it is the idea that is weakened. Emotions are always stronger than thoughts.

But these negative emotions, fortunately, are

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comparatively rare; and, when they do not exist, position, renown, knowledge and personality all carry great weight. Through these agencies, prestige is accomplished even in the absence of sympathy. A celebrated physician brings comfort to the patient as he enters the room. The young doctor may be quite as able in this particular case, but he can not produce the same beneficial effect. Herein lies the chief value in consultations.

“The self-same speech when uttered
By the ignoble, and men well esteemed,
Comes not with equal force.”³

When we pass to mass influences, we find the same operation of prestige. That which originates with a great and powerful nation is far more influential, is far more likely to be copied, carries more weight, as we say, than that which comes from the small and feeble. Many an experiment in government by one of the great powers has excited world-wide applause, when the same has possibly existed for years, unnoticed, with some lesser people. It is a deplorable fact, but true, that the fate of an idea depends quite as much on its origin as it does upon its own intrinsic worth. Negative emo-

³ Euripides: *Hecuba*.

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tions check sympathy with nations as with men. England and Ireland, again, afford an example in point, England can never have the admiration of Ireland—England makes Ireland see red. Let what you please come from England, and the Irish are against it.

On the other hand, strong sympathies, meaning, thereby, striking similarities in brain patterns, make for cordial relations, or, at least, for friendship. The United States and England have had many disputes on the intellectual plane, and they have even frequently expressed dislike, one for the other; but their quarrels are quarrels of kin, and when need comes this kinship and its obligations are happily acknowledged. More than this—whatever we may say, we like each other; an American is never a “foreigner” to the English, nor is an Englishman a “foreigner” to an American. That similar brain patterns must work in sympathy, is but another way of saying that blood is thicker than water.

The group mind, the national mind, produced as we have already said, through the action of sympathy and suggestion, is of utmost importance in both national and international affairs. It may operate for the good of a people, elevating the mass through the mass's re-

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ception of the suggestions emanating from able national leaders, or it may operate adversely, when these leaders are unworthy. The permanent elevation of the standards of a race is a slow process. The great moral leaders rarely exert their full influence during their lifetime. Great moral truths are slow in becoming established—the world can not quickly adjust to receive them. It is only after they have long incubated in the minds of the people subconsciously that they finally rise to a new birth in the group as a whole. In these cases it is the last man who has stated them that generally gets the credit, and it is only later, when an historical perspective has been gained, that their true author comes to be recognized.

Personal leadership often depends largely upon suggestion as conveyed in such trivial things as a good physique or a good voice. Self-confidence, good appearance, ease of diction, are all potent factors, but so are suggestions of latent power, reserve, and even silence.⁴ In this talking age, silence is mysterious and deeply suggestive. Von Moltke was "silent in seven languages." Grant was silent in but one, but his taciturnity was a large factor

⁴ Compare Cooley: *Human Nature and the Social Order*; and also, Ross: *Social Psychology*.

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in his success. Many leaders, it is true, especially mob leaders, have had neither a commanding presence, nor silence; many have been distressingly vocal, but in these cases you will find other attributes, equally attention-compelling, such as great daring, enthusiasm, supreme egotism and impudence.

One thing is certain, a leader, or a government, must have some kind of prestige and a correspondingly enhanced power of favourable suggestion, or the leadership, or government, fails. And this prestige, moreover, must be based upon some sort of sympathy; force alone will not do. A government that obtains obedience through fear can never last long. A silent resistance accumulates until it finally breaks out in an inevitable revolution. The prestige that is needed in these cases may be gained in a variety of ways. It may be gained through the personality of the leader, as with Caesar, Charlemagne, Gustavus Adolphus, Cromwell, Frederick the Great, and Napoleon; it may be gained by pomp, as with Louis XIV and Charles V; or it may be gained by long elaborated organization, as in the parliamentary government of England. That which comes through personality is obviously the most easily gained—witness the numerical relation

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of the examples which come to mind—but it is also necessarily the most transient. With us, in the United States, the power lies *behind* the government. The latter is always exposed to criticism, and constantly gets it, but not so the natural resources of the country nor the wealth and will of its hundred million people. The prestige here is that of a guessed-at and, therefore, unlimited power. It is the *possibilities* of this land of ours which make others respect us. A power exactly known can be discounted—it may not be so great as stated—but a power not accurately known leaves room for the play of the imagination.

It is prestige, then, which gives to leaders their power over the group. It is prestige of some kind which makes them leaders; and it is prestige, too, which enables them, if worthy, to elevate the group. Prestige is power—it determines suggestion, and suggestion, aided by sympathy, makes men do things. Imitation and habit, sympathy and suggestion, these, as modified by our inherited patterns, are what control our lives, and guide them. It is not so much that which enters into the limited field of consciousness that affects us, as it is these forces which operate in the background of the mind, in the secret operations of the subcon-

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scious. We boast of our free-will and independence, but how vain sounds the boast! The intellectual control would seem but so small a factor!

Let us consider some of the world's experiences with suggestion and emotion.

CHAPTER VIII

MASS ACTION AND HYSTERIA

It is evident, from what has gone before, that the emotional element and the impulses that arise from the subconscious mind are principal factors in the determining of man's behaviour. This being so, we must expect a like phenomenon in social life. And, again, just as individuals "break down," "give way," and become "nervous wrecks," just as they sometimes develop hysteria and the various neuroses, so society has its breakdowns and hysterical seizures. It is not an inspiring page of history but it is quite necessary that it be read—for history may repeat. There is no security against relapses, but we may, if we will, learn something of the disease from a study of previous attacks, and we may, too, thereby, learn to handle it better.

The fact is, man through mental interaction develops a tendency to emotionalism that far transcends any like tendency evident in him as an individual. It is this that gives us our

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“crowd psychology,” with all of its so important irrational exhibitions.

Let us take the more concrete examples, of the smaller groups, first. Parliaments, congresses, conclaves and mobs, though fortunately in different degree, all have this in common that they tend to emotional expression at the sacrifice of reason. Any body of people, no matter how formed, whether by accident or choice, whether with a purpose or no purpose, becoming conscious of itself as a group, passes at once into the crowd category and becomes subject to the laws of the mob. The individuals, here, lay aside their personal controls and inhibitions, and yield to the sway of the mass.

Take an absolutely heterogeneous assembly—some emotional stimulus comes to it. There is, first, a general orienting of attention, laughter and talking cease, there is an “ominous hush,” as the newspapers say, and then the mob takes birth. Any emotion may provide the stimulus necessary—even good ones—but fear is the stimulus most frequent in these chance creations. God Pan, with his panics, is responsible for much. Be it noted that “the mind of a crowd is in no sense equal to the sum of the minds of its members; nor even to an average of the same; it is, instead, on a plane

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distinctly below that average. It is primarily emotional, it is swayed by trivialities; it is intolerant of criticism, impatient, suggestible and credulous.”¹ Now this sounds extreme. Why should man take on these primitive reactions as the result of mere contact with others? The fact is, he does not *take on* anything, he really drops something, and this something is, socially, his best part. What has happened is that he has become simplified by the casting off of his social inhibitions. He no longer fears; he divides his responsibility; and he gains a share in the strength of the mass. Furthermore, in this contact with his fellows, only such attributes as are held in common can come into play, and social attributes are not common. Those which can be shared, and which are, thereby, reinforced, are precisely those attributes which are not social; they are the primitive ones, the universal ones, and it is these the crowd gives play to. Again notice, however, that when we say, as above, that the mind of the crowd is on a plane below that of the average of its members, we do not mean that its actions are necessarily bad; we mean, simply, that its actions, being under the control of emotional and non-intellectual impulses,

¹ Platt: *Psychology of Thought and Feeling*.

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must always be dangerous. It is of course quite possible that on occasion the crowd may become heroic, and even self-sacrificing. A spirit of emulation of altruistic impulses may seize upon the crowd, and often does so, notably in patriotic assemblies. Patriotism depends largely upon emotion, and is, in fact, but an expansion of the individual egoism. It is emotion and suggestion that make both for attack and defence, and that mould people into nations. Rouget de l'Isle wrote a song that made France—a song, “the sound of which will make the blood tingle in men’s veins; and whole armies and assemblies will sing it, with eyes weeping and burning, with hearts defiant of Death, Despot and Devil.”² An ideal presented may be adopted by the group, and with the wildest enthusiasm. It is as with public opinion in general; national ideals, patriotic or otherwise, compel many to conform who would not be at all touched individually. Each attributes to his neighbour the ideal of his group, and is ashamed to be thought wanting; so each asserts the ideal, and endeavours to live up to it. What may have been actually felt by but one great leader, or by some small influential group, may thus become the standard

² Carlyle: *French Revolution*.

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for all; even determine a great national movement.

All this being true, however, the fact still remains, that the mass action is primitive, emotional and dangerous. The crowd is not, indeed, always so bad as old Thomas Browne describes it—"that great enemy of Reason, Virtue and Religion, the Multitude: that numerous piece of monstrosity, which taken asunder, seem men, and the reasonable creatures of God: but, confused together, make but one great beast, and a monstrosity more prodigious than Hydra"—it is not always so bad as this, but it may easily become so, and that without notice.

It may be said that all this applies to the mob only—to the revolutionary swarm, or to some blood-thirsty gang of lynchers—but unfortunately this is not true. It applies, in some degree, to all assemblies; and it is this which gives it its importance. "In the public assembly it is the same. It is *Schwarmerei* that rules, and it is he who best understands the psychology involved who occupies the position of leader."³ Assertion, reiteration, generalized statements and sentiment, cant, the rhetorical phrase, innuendo and exaggeration,

³ Platt, *op. cit.*

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these are what rule—not argument. Reiteration is, maybe, one of the chief of these; it is a powerful agent for persuasion—even a lawyer sometimes comes to believe what he sets forth in his declamations.

“For say a foolish thing but oft enough
(And here’s the secret of a hundred creeds,
Men get opinions as boys learn to spell,
By reiteration chiefly), the same thing
Shall pass at last for absolutely wise,
And not with fools exclusively.”⁴

The worst of it is that one must go with the crowd or be anathema. Not to yield, to retain one’s reason, is to place oneself at once under suspicion; the crowd turns on such a one and rends him as an alien. Many a congressman who has successfully withstood the contagion of the assembly has ended by cynically voting with the others, as a matter of policy. It is the emotional triviality that brings down the house; cold reason excites no enthusiasm. Once when Phocion was applauded by the people, he turned in alarm to his friends, asking, “Have I, then, inadvertently said something foolish?”

To offset this ever present mob tendency of

⁴ Mrs. Browning: *Aurora Leigh*.

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assemblies, various safeguards have been devised. Government is ordinarily accomplished by getting the real work done in committee, while in the assembly itself it is "parliamentary law" that is relied on. The enforced decorum, the presiding officer who shall not share in the debate, the necessity of "recognition by the chair," the formality of the "resolution" and "motion," the "seconding" and "putting of the question," and the ballot—all these are but so many deliberate efforts to check impulse and irrational action. And yet all these may fail. In times of stress all decorum goes by the board. Excited speakers, maybe several at a time, excited auditors crying them down; sarcasms, hootings and vituperations, even blows threatened and given; all these have been known in the most dignified of assemblies. Cries of "Kill him! Kill him!" have been heard, directed against a speaker in the British Parliament—in the very home of parliamentary law! What has sometimes happened in Congress, we will not now remember. When passions have sway, what chance has reason? Passions "raise a dust very hard to see through," said William Penn—and, listen to Thucydides: "When once passions are released, words change their meanings. Audacity

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becomes courage, prudent hesitation becomes cowardice, and moderation, unmanliness. An opponent of strong measures is suspected, and crime becomes virtue—if on the right side.”⁵ How many examples of all this we might recall from the records of the past few years!

As will be recognized from my quotations, the character of crowds has long been a matter of knowledge, and many are the safeguards other than parliamentary law that have been developed to subdue it. Nowhere, probably, has this been so well done as in the army. Here we have a body of men who by the very nature of their dangerous calling are ever surrounded by panic influences. But fear is played against fear—fear of authority, of the prompt military punishment, fear of ridicule, fear of one’s fellows—this is part of the control; and the drill, the everlasting drill, is the rest. Body habits are developed which negative the psychic tendencies. Still, panics do occur, and sometimes they occur even when not at all recognized: Ardant du Picq speaks of “soldiers who advance by flight, or escape by advancing.”⁶ Read “The Coward,” by Service for an example.

⁵ *The Peloponnesian War*, Book III.

⁶ *Battle Studies*; translated by J. N. Greely, and R. C. Cotton.

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We have spoken, so far, of definite groups only, but this exaggerated emotionalism is not limited to those who rub shoulders; it may seize upon great bodies of people, even nations. History presents many examples of this, there having developed, frequently, a true social hysteria. We have, for example, our panics in the financial field, as well as in battle. During some period of natural economic depression, a sudden unreasoning fear may sweep over the country and involve many in its accompanying ruin.

We have, also, periods of hysterical investment, when hope runs riot and all start out to get rich. The South Sea Company, organized in 1711, by Harley, Earl of Oxford, for the purpose of relieving the national debt burden, had existed in a more or less moribund state until 1720, when the public suddenly went mad. John Law had floated the Mississippi Company in Paris, and Paris was struggling for the privilege of parting with its money; and now London followed suit. The South Sea Company's one hundred pound shares jumped to three hundred, and were taken up faster than they could be printed; while to satisfy the insistent demands of the stock buying public nearly a hundred new companies were formed.

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One was to manufacture deal-boards out of saw-dust; another was to make a wheel with perpetual motion. There was no limit to the absurdities offered—not any, we may say, for one of these companies was “for carrying on an undertaking of great advantage, but nobody to know what it is”! For a two pound deposit all investors in this company were at once to become entitled to the dividend of one hundred pounds a year. Having blown these bubbles, as they came to be called, and having watched them with childish delight—until they collapsed—the public then went back to its work.

In the seventeenth century, Holland experienced its Tulip Mania. The country went mad on tulip culture, and houses and lands were sacrificed to get money for bulbs. In 1635, one hundred thousand florins were paid, at one sale, for forty specimens; and a certain Haarlem tulip was exchanged for twelve acres of building ground. A choice tulip of Amsterdam brought “four thousand six hundred florins, a new carriage, two grey horses, and a complete set of harness.”⁷

But the great examples of hysteria are,

⁷ Mackay: *Popular Delusions*.

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naturally, to be found in the history of religions. In pagan days, especially in the oriental religions and in those of Greece and Rome, certain festivals and mysteries were celebrated with true hysteric abandon. The Bacchanals, for example, have given a word to the language. The worship of Dionysus (Bacchus) included orgiastic songs and dances, and processions of women characterized by the most passionate expressions of feeling.

“Behold, behold! the granite gates unclose,
And down the vales a lyric people flows;
Dancing to music, in the dance they fling
Their frantic robes to every wind that blows,
And deathless praise to the wine-god sing.”⁸

In *The Bacchae*, of Euripides, we find all phases of major hysteria exactly portrayed. The culmination is the frightful murder by Queen Agave of her son, Pentheus. Pentheus appeals to her “reason,”

“But she, with lips a-foam and eyes that seem
Like leaping fire . . .”

knows him not, and slays him. Then, with his head mounted on her spear, she returns to the palace,

⁸ Edmund Gosse: *The Praise of Dionysus*.

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“Yea, to these walls her face
Was set, exulting in her deed of blood,
Calling upon her Bromios, her God,
Her Comrade, Fellow-Render of the Prey,
Her All-Victorious, to whom this day
She bears in triumph her own broken
heart!”⁹

Broken indeed, it was, when her reason returned!

Christianity modified the expression of this religious hysteria, but by no means did away with it. We find it all through the history of the Church—sometimes in exhibitions of individual fervour, and sometimes involving great groups. William James gives many examples of hysteria in sainthood.¹⁰ The spirit of the Song of Solomon has provided inspiration for many; and, with not a few the idea of religious devotion seems to have been always that “of an endless amatory flirtation.” All sects, all religions, have had martyrs; there are, in all, individuals who are ready to suffer torture, and many who do so with ecstatic joy. The mediaeval convent life is replete with hysterical episodes. Asceticism, with its deprivation and abuse of the body,—this “honouring

⁹ Gilbert Murray translation.

¹⁰ See, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*.

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of the architect by the defacing of his architecture"—is a direct invitation to mental disease. Abstinence from food has been naïvely recommended by theologians that one might have visions; but unfortunately for some the visions have been evil. The Ursulines of Aix, in 1609, and those of London a few years later, were sadly bewitched.¹¹ On the other hand, churches have been founded, and places of pilgrimage established, as the result of the hallucinations of similar sick minds. With false doctrines as to the body and reason, with "amatory flirtations" substituting for the normal expression of instinct, with asceticism and with the ever present fear of hell, it is small wonder that outraged nature sometimes exploded with violence. The production of mental disease with but a fraction of this incentive is a familiar fact to all psychiatrists; such makes a large chapter in mental pathology.

If we add, now, to these individual tendencies, the power of sympathy and suggestion, it becomes evident that these manifestations must often spread. The Crusades, for example, in their conduct and in the manner of their preaching, reveal this same unreasoning

¹¹ Cutten: *The Psychological Phenomena of Christianity*.

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hysteria. Great bodies of men, without adequate preparation, relying on God to preserve them, set off to conquer the infidels and rescue the Holy Land. In the crusade led by Peter the Hermit, the mob included women and children, the aged and the infirm. The town of Semlin, in Hungary, was sacked and its inhabitants slaughtered, and then the crusaders themselves were exterminated just after crossing the Bosphorus. Murder, rapine and pillage accompanied all of these Christian expeditions, and desolation followed in their wake—the Jews, especially, being sufferers. Then, some realizing that possibly God might not altogether approve of such actions, a crusade of children was organized. From Germany came forty thousand, under two leaders, both boys, one a lad of but ten years of age. France contributed thirty thousand under the leadership of a shepherd boy, Stephen, a boy of twelve. God was to care for this pitiful host, was to feed them, and was even to dry up the Mediterranean that they might walk dry-shod to the Holy Land. The most of this infant army died of starvation and disease, and of the few who finally managed somehow to reach the coast, the majority were sold into slavery in Africa and the East.

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In the thirteenth century there arose, as the result of the teaching of Antony of Padua, a society of Flagellants. Throughout continental Europe could be seen processions of half-naked penitents weeping and praying and plying the scourge. Groups would form in public squares, and there, having laid aside most of their clothing, would vigorously flagellate themselves and each other. As usual, in the enthusiasms aroused, the Jews fell victims, and were slaughtered freely.

Then came the Dance Mania, or Manias, for there were several outbreaks. Shrieking, dancing, gesticulating mobs went through the country and invaded the towns. Some barked and ran on all-fours—but dancing and prancing were the chief of the devotions, and in fine frenzy they danced to exhaustion, and sometimes to death. Finally, the priests became alarmed at the uncontrollable extravagance of the disease's manifestations, and made efforts to stay it. The dance mania had become an hysteric chorea; but now it was found that the relics of St. Vitus, at Strasburg, already famous for their cures of the rabies, were here too, effective—hence the honouring of St. Vitus today, by the naming of the disease after him.

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Is all this of the distant past? Let us consider for a moment the more modern "revivals."

The Great Awakening began about 1734, and reached its culmination under the ministry of Whitefield about 1750. Even in Jonathan Edwards' own congregation, weeping, wailing, shrieking and fainting were ordinary occurrences.¹² Other preachers, notably Davenport, himself coatless and screaming, were able to reduce at least part of their hearers to regular "fits." Wesley, in England was cool enough personally, but he, too, produced emotional reactions in his hearers—the favourite being a sudden falling to the ground, "often in excruciating pain." In the Kentucky Revival we have many beautiful examples of hysteria. The movement started in 1799, at Cane Ridge, but the great meeting was at Gasper River Church, in 1800. Let me quote at length.¹³ "Men fitted their wagons with beds and provisions and travelled fifty miles to camp and hear. . . . Neither distance, nor lack of houses, nor scarcity of food, nor daily occupations prevailed. . . . Crops were left half gathered

¹² Cutten: *op. cit.*

¹³ From, McMaster: *History of the People of the United States*. Vol. II, p. 578 et seq.

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. . . and cabins deserted. . . . At one end of the clearing was a rude stage, and before it the stumps and trunks of hewn trees, on which the listeners sat. About the clearing were the tents and wagons ranged in rows like streets. The praying, the preaching, the exhorting would sometimes last for seven days. . . . Nor were the ministers the only exhorters. Men and women, nay, even children, took part. At Cane Ridge a little girl of seven sat upon the shoulder of a man and preached to the multitude till she sank exhausted on her bearer's head.

“At no time was the ‘falling exercise’ so prevalent as at night. Nothing was then wanting that could strike terror into minds weak, timid and harassed. The red glare of the camp-fires reflected from hundreds of tents and wagons; the dense blackness of the flickering shadows, the darkness of the surrounding forest, made still more terrible by the groans and screams of the ‘spiritually wounded,’ who had fled to it for comfort; the entreaty of the preachers; the sobs and shrieks of the downcast still walking through the dark valley of the Shadow of Death; the shouts and songs of praise from the happy ones who had crossed the Delectable Mountains, had gone through

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the fogs of the Enchanted Ground and entered the land of Beulah, were too much for those over whose minds and bodies lively imaginations held full sway. The heart swelled, the nerves gave way, the hands and feet grew cold and, speechless, they fell headlong to the ground. In a moment, crowds gathered about them to pray and shout. Some lay still as death. Some passed through frightful twitchings of face and limb. At Cedar Creek so many fell that, lest the multitude should tread on them, they were carried to the meeting-house and laid in rows on the floor. At Cane Ridge the number was three thousand. . . . Some lay quiet, unable to move or speak. Some beat the floor with their heels. Some, shrieking in agony bounded about, it is said, like a live fish out of water. Many lay down and rolled over and over for hours at a time. Others rushed wildly over the stumps and benches, and then plunged, shouting Lost! Lost! into the forest."

Later came the "jerks," head and body being thrown about with amazing swiftness. Saplings were cut off breast high, "for the people to jerk by," and, as one observer described it, the earth was all kicked up "as by horses stamping flies." Then came the

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“barking exercise”—men went about on all-fours, and barked until they grew hoarse. “Numbers of them would gather about a tree, barking and yelping. This was called ‘treeing the devil.’ ” In 1803, came the Holy Laugh, wild bursts of laughter marking inspiration by the Holy Ghost. The Holy Rollers expressed their religion by rolling over and over until exhausted. They are still rolling today, at various points in the West. Straw is spread before the preacher’s stand, and here those who are converted disport themselves to their heart’s content. As was described to me recently, “A young girl coming forward, fell on her knees, her face flushed and excited, and her whole body trembling; whereupon the preachers came down from the stand and began to prance round her, shouting at her, and fixing her with their gaze, until she, too, fell, and began to roll in the straw.”

Of late years, of course, such exhibitions as these just recounted have become rare; they are found now only in small groups, such as this of the Holy Rollers of Nebraska. Through the influence of a spreading intellectualism, the extravagant manifestations of religious emotion have become softened. Moody and Sankey aroused great feeling, but devel-

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oped little true hysteria; and Billy Sunday, our latest exhorter, was able, so far as the general public was concerned, only to amuse. Many did, at his command, "hit the saw-dust trail," but the public's interest was principally confined to the amount of his daily collection. Education must necessarily check the extreme hysterical expressions. A more rational attitude having been attained, the emotional, irrational attitude becomes lessened. But this last, be it noted, does not die altogether—it remains as a tendency, and can always be aroused provided only the proper stimulus be given.

It is this tendency, this emotional reaction, that is evident in all gatherings of men. It is this which gives us our crowd psychology, and it is this which makes wisdom so rare in all the deliberations of our larger assemblies. The rational social veneer is still thin, and easily broken through by emotion.

CHAPTER IX

SUPERSTITION AND ERROR

The suggestibility of man and his tendency to the emotional reaction are primitive attributes, shared by him with many other of the higher animals. They are attributes dependent upon the *physiological* properties of his nerve cells and glands, and involve much "the same kind of a response that we get in a knee-jerk." If we cross one knee over the other, and then tap the tendon below the kneecap, the leg will jerk upward. The action of a man in a crowd, and in other emotional responses, is essentially, no matter how complex it may seem, of this same fundamentally simple nature. A stimulus to action is received, and at once there occurs an unreflecting, almost automatic, and entirely predictable response. Furthermore, these impulses, being purely individual and regardless of man's status in society, come frequently into conflict with that which we now count best. They produce, in fact, those irresponsible acts which have provided the chapter of folly just considered.

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But man has another side; his brain has been elaborated until it is capable now of a very considerable control over the simple physiological impulse. Man, we say, has a mental development; and it is this which places him on a plane apart.

There are two controls of the physiological impulse exhibited by all animal life—one is through instinct, which, when perfect, is excellent in its efficiency; the other is through the guidance by the mind. There is no absolute separation of these two; they but represent two trends in development, and are both present in all higher animals. Their contrast is evident when we compare man with the insect world, but it is far less evident when we compare him with others of the higher vertebrates. We may take it that the possession of a brain always carries with it some degree of mental power. There is a degree of “mentality” in all of the higher animals—just as there is, also, a relic of instinct in man. The contrast is, therefore, one of degree rather than of kind. The elaboration of man’s brain has brought about an abandonment of most of his instinctive controls, while these latter still predominate with other animals.

All this being so, certain questions naturally

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rise. Is this mental development of man perfect? Is it dependable? Is man safe in placing all reliance upon it? Will it solve all of his problems? Does man's mental power keep pace with the rapidly changing social conditions as effected by discovery and invention? It may be admitted, I suppose, that behaviour founded on truth would always be the best of behaviour. Does man's mental development make him sufficiently wise to always know the truth when he sees it? We will all agree with Montaigne, that "truth ought to have a like and universal visage throughout the world," but we all know perfectly well that it has not, and that there is "nothing so hard or so uncertaine to be found out." We may say that we shall "avoid controversial points" and "stick always to facts," but facts, we soon discover, are illusive things, and difficult to stick to. There are no facts to represent the finality of truth—you think you have a fact safe, and then something changes and the fact becomes a no-fact. The history of the past is a history of dissolving facts. Mankind has always pursued them, has many times thought he had secured them, only to find later that what once appeared so real has evaporated under investigation into a falsehood.

It is in this pursuit of man after truth that is

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to be found the subject matter of this present chapter. Suggestibility and emotion, we have said, have provided much of man's folly—superstition and error have provided something more; they have provided his tragedy. Josh Billings was right, when he said, in effect, that it is not what we know that does harm, "but the things we know that ain't so." No wonder wise men have sometimes given up in despair, and, turning from the world to an inward contemplation, have sought rest in their faiths and beliefs. A belief is a much more satisfactory thing than a fact, for one has only to ignore facts and the belief can not be taken from us. It carries its own complete satisfaction with it. We believe what we be-like, or be-love—that is what the word means—no wonder we are happy in our beliefs! But, unfortunately, to attain to this state of blissful confidence it becomes necessary to lay aside all inquiry, and many of us seem so constituted as to be unable to do this without experiencing a most uncomfortable sense of lack. We are curious as to facts, and still pursue them; we do not have sufficient credulity to easily accept creeds; and so are doomed to go on with the struggle.

What is *true* for us, intellectually, would

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seem to be simply that which finds in us no contradicting brain patterns.¹ The simpler and fewer our brain patterns, then, the more easily are we satisfied; while the more complex our patterns, the more truth would seem to recede. Youth is confident and cocksure, and knows what it knows with an easy satisfaction in its truth; while age doubts and finds truth far less certainly. Youth has few brain patterns to bother him; but the educated mind has many and various patterns. A thing may at first appear true to the latter, but reflection may discover some conflicting experience stored away that will negative it, either in whole or in part. After many such experiences one learns to be chary of judgment.

The simpler and fewer the patterns, then, the more positive always is the sense of truth, and the more confidently are we willing to stake our all upon it. Apply this to the world. The world has a youth and an age, and in its youth it has been, naturally, youthfully confident and unquestioning as to its powers of knowing. It has been ready to stake its all upon what it thought it knew—and it has been ready to beat into pulp any one who happened to think differently. Is it any wonder, then, that the pursuit

¹ Platt: *Psychology of Thought and Feeling*, p. 108.

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of truth has brought tragedy? Bigotry, intolerance, persecution—these are but the results of being cock-sure. When it was a God-given fact, for example, that the sun revolved around the earth, it was certainly reasonable to persecute those who insulted God by an opposite belief. When witches were “true,” man was, in a manner compelled, if he possessed any reason at all, to destroy them. The Bible had commanded him to suffer no witch to live;² was he to defy this command and himself suffer hell fire? A bunch of faggots for the witch was a far saner answer.

Belief in witches has been called a delusion. It was not; it was but an error, and, given the premises the people then had to go by, it was a perfectly natural error. Delusion is another matter. This last is a true mental weakness, a refusal to accept, or an inability to accept, a satisfactory proof to the contrary; while error is fundamentally but a lack of knowledge, and commonly is removed by knowledge. When, however, error is not so removed, when it stands over after the mass of people have discovered its nature, then it becomes a form of delusion, and what we call a superstition. The word superstition means

² Exodus, XXII, 18. Leviticus, XX, 27.

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just this—"a standing over." How many of our cherished beliefs of today shall ultimately be so classed, no man can say; but the point is, that beliefs which in our present light seem reasonable to the masses, and especially those which have received the endorsement of our best minds, can not properly be called superstitions—now. So let us extend the same courtesy to the generations of the past. Extravagant beliefs and beliefs that are hang-overs, these, only, tell us something unfavourable of the minds that harbour them.

I speak of extravagant beliefs; these belong to the category of superstition because of their excesses. There are many superstitions that have in them a modicum of fact. "When a thing is funny," says Shaw, "search it for a hidden truth"—this will not always be found, but it may be. Note the superstitions associated with the cure of disease. That good health may be restored to those who are ill, by certain intangible influences, is a matter of race-long observation. The explanation of the process, the potent influence of the subconscious mind, was, of course not known, but the fact was there, nevertheless. No one suspected the existence of such a thing as auto-suggestion; so the benefit derived therefrom was logically

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ascribed to the supernatural. It was the incantation, the statue, the prayer to the gods, and the relic that naturally received all the thanks. The medicine man of the past has become the psycho-therapist of today, but his results are no better now than they were then—they are, indeed, not so good, for in these days of intellectual criticism the proper subconscious attitude of faith is getting more and more difficult of attainment. Many a pagan temple could out-do Lourdes in miraculous cure. The important thing is, however, that the process is the same in all these cures—whether these be by ancient incantation, by offering to the heathen gods, by Yoga, by intercession of the saints, by relics, Christian Science, or by Menti-culture.

Every country lad knows how to cure warts—spit on a wart and stroke it in the direction of a passing funeral, and the wart soon goes. Eat the hair of the dog that bit you, and you will never get hydrophobia. The mother, today, kisses the bumped head, and the pain promptly ceases. The same psychic influence is in operation here, that once cured “epilepsy” by the carrying of the child three times round the communion table; and which alleviated jaundice by the eating of “nine lice smeared on a

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piece of bread and butter.” The kings, and queens, of England used to “touch” victims of eczema (King’s Evil), and are said to have made many cures. John Evelyn describes the ceremony.³ “His Majesty sitting under his state in the Banqueting-house, the chirurgeons cause the sick to be brought, or led, up to the throne, where they kneeling, the king strokes their faces or cheeks with both his hands at once, at which instant a chaplain in his formalities says, ‘He put his hands upon them, and He healed them.’” Then follows an epistle, prayers, etc. Samuel Johnson was “touched” for King’s Evil by Queen Anne—imagine, Anne!—and this on the advice of Mrs. Johnson’s physician, Sir John Floyer.

All this, as I say, is but the excessive and fantastic elaboration of an unrecognized fact—that mental attitudes have an effect on life processes. And so it is with many superstitions, there is often a grain of truth concealed, and it is often this which makes the superstition to persist in spite of the criticism of the more scholastic men of science.

But, again, a superstition may have had an accidental origin only. It may represent but the persistence of some old taboo or other cus-

³ *Diary*, July 6, 1660.

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tom founded on the *post hoc ergo propter hoc* line of reasoning. As we have seen, with primitive man, when a misfortune occurred, all that preceded the misfortune was scrutinized to determine its cause; and, since knowledge was generally insufficient for any wise explanation, the thing held responsible was, likely as not, something entirely unrelated and trivial. So, too, with good fortune; its causes were similarly determined. When cause and effect are so little understood, "luck" looms large; and in the absence of any true knowledge it is the occult and mysterious that is constantly appealed to. It is far more difficult for an uneducated man to grasp the understanding of a natural cause, than it is for him to imagine a super-natural. Fairy stories are the favourite stories of all primitive folk.

It is for these reasons that religious observances, formulas and symbols, have played so large a part in superstition. The sacred *Hoc est Corpus* of the Mass came to the ears of the awed but not understanding Anglo-Saxons, merely as a formula of some tremendous potency; so they reproduced it as they heard it, and used it, as "Hocus-pocus," in their own most solemn incantations. We "touch wood," the wood of the Cross, to avert bad luck; and,

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because of the Last Supper, we do not today sit thirteen at the table. The horseshoe, as an emblem of luck, goes back much further, even before horseshoes existed! It is in reality but a symbol, chosen because of its fancied resemblance to one of the old pagan symbols of fertility and plenty.

Many of these minor superstitions, it is true, are accepted and acted upon, today, with only a half-belief, but they are none the less real for that. We have seen a political convention defer its final ballot until after midnight on Friday; and while we laugh at the thirteen-at-table idea, all the same we avoid the fatal number. We say, maybe, that we do these things only on account of others—but do we? Pagan gods die hard. To combat the plague in Rome in 1522, acting on the belief that the ancient gods were now devils, an effort was made to propitiate them by the sacrifice, in the Colosseum “after the heathen manner,” of an ox.⁴ This would seem to have been an application on the municipal scale of the idea of the old lady who placed two candles at the altar, one for St. Michael, and the other for Satan.

Much superstition still exists in the religions

⁴ A. D. White: *Warfare of Science and Theology*, Vol. II, p. 72.

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of today, but it should be noted that such superstition lies not so much in any given act itself, as in our attitude toward it. Baptism, for example, is with some a symbolic and sober commemorative ceremony; while with others it is a pure superstition, a supernatural imparting to the soul of certain privileges. It is said that in the olden days it was customary, with some, to make a mental "reservation of the right arm," that this might be preserved from the softening influence of the new religion and still remain capable, therefore, of giving a wicked blow. As to the Church miracles in general—when, for instance, it is attested that the fish thronged to the shore to hear St. Anthony preach; that the Virgin of the Pillar, at Saragossa, restored an amputated leg; that St. Clement once celebrated Mass simultaneously at Pisa and Rome—is any psychological comment necessary? Well attested miracles are common throughout all early history. A whole Roman army certified to having been led in battle by Castor and Pollux. Let Plutarch explain: "Where history seems in a manner to force our assent by the concurrence of numerous and credible witnesses, we are to conclude that an impression distinct from sensation affects the imaginative part of our nature, and

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then carries away the judgment, so as to believe it to be a sensation.”⁵ The modern scientist could hardly express it better. And then Plutarch goes on, with true wisdom, to conclude, on the other hand, that there can be no limit to God’s power; and that, as Heraclitus says, the knowledge of divine things may easily be lost to us by incredulity. Could there be a better statement of the position of the Christian man of science of today—that miracles might happen, but do not?

Diffusion of education has of course lessened credulity, but before schools were common the demand for the miraculous was insistent, and the supply was, naturally, made equal to the demand. Men seem, indeed, to “have imagined that the more things there were to be believed the more the merits of the believer.”⁶ Failure to believe in the miracles of the Church was but to expose oneself to the dread inquisition; but the people were, generally speaking, ready enough to believe, and even went further than was demanded. The Olympian great ones had become devils and had gone to hell, but the Naiads, and Dryads, and Satyrs long survived in out of the way places—indeed, as Banshees,

⁵ *Life of Coriolanus.*

⁶ Isaac Disraeli: *Curiosities.*

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Brownies, Elfs, Gnomes, Pixies and Leprechauns they still exist today in the secret belief of many simple peasants. Photographs of fairies were exhibited in the hall of the Theosophical Society in London, in 1921.⁷

It may be safely said that no belief ever current is as yet entirely gone; somewhere, with some people, it will still be found surviving. In March, 1921, the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania had the task of solving a tangle which had arisen in the firm belief of the litigants as to the powers of a certain "witch doctor." In a book recently published the activities of spirits are explained on the old basis of demonology.⁸ The author has a fine scorn for those who do not believe in spiritual manifestations, but he has an equal scorn for those who believe them due to the spirits of the dead. He says: "I was at first myself disposed to accept this interpretation, but fuller knowledge and painful experiences compelled me to modify this view, and I am now persuaded that they are more probably fallen angels masquerading as departed human souls." They are "intelligences hostile to mankind" and "their aim is

⁷ *London Times*. See *Living Age*, April 9, 1921.

⁸ Raupert: *Human Destiny and the New Psychology*, Phila., 1921.

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to invade the personality upon which they operate and ultimately to control, that is, to obsess or possess it." It is to be hoped, for the sake of the mentally ill, that these beliefs will not again become current! Insane people were once always regarded as "possessed," and efforts were made to reach their internal, lurking devils by lashing and torturing the poor labouring flesh. In fact, in the old days, the flesh had a hard time of it altogether. The soul and the body were supposed to stand always in antagonism, much as did God and nature, and the body was made to suffer accordingly. Its indulgence was counted the grossest of sins; and there was a time, even, when to clean it was considered lascivious. St. Athanasius glorifies St. Anthony because he never washed his feet. St. Sylvia never washed any part of her body save her fingers. It seems as though the great baths of Rome had become mixed up, in the minds of the holy, with paganism; and cleanliness had, therefore, come to be not the next thing to godliness but something quite different.

The belief in demons, and the naturally associated belief in witches and sorcerers, has provided the saddest of all the world's struggles with error. Many hundreds of thousands

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of the victims of this belief have suffered torture and death. There were burned at the stake seven thousand at Trèves alone. At Toulouse, one of the seats of the Inquisition, four hundred were once destroyed in a single execution. It is a sickening record of human imbecility—and unforgivable, you feel, until you remember that witches were *facts* in those days, and that there was then no doubt as to man's duty to exterminate them; the Bible had so commanded. The belief was universal, it was confined to no one church, nor to any one country. Martin Luther would "have no pity on these witches [who spoiled farmers' butter and eggs]; I would burn them all." King James presided at the torture of Dr. Fian, who had been accused of having brought on a storm against the King's ship, on its way from Denmark—"by the aid of a fleet of witches in sieves" who had carried out with them "a christened cat." This Dr. Fian, under torture, at first confessed to his deviltry, and then retracted and could not again be brought to acknowledge his guilt. His bones were broken, and, finally, at the suggestion of the King, "his nailes upon all his fingers were riven and pulled off with an instrument called in Scottish a turkas, which in England wee call a payre of pin-

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cers, and under everie nayle there was thrust in two needels, even up to their heads." However, notwithstanding all this, "so deeply had the devil entered his heart that hee utterly denied all that which hee before avouched"—so was burned unconfessed.⁹

The belief died hard with the orthodox. In 1768, John Wesley writes: "It is true likewise, that the English in general and indeed most of the men of learning in Europe, have given up all accounts of witches and apparitions as mere old wives' fables. I am sorry for it, and I willingly take this opportunity of entering my solemn protest against this violent compliment which so many that believe the Bible pay to those who do not believe it. . . . They [the latter] well know (whether Christians know it or not) that the giving up of witchcraft is in effect giving up the Bible." His attitude, note, was that same old dangerous one, of being willing to bet the Bible and all of religion on the truth of some long cherished belief.

As suggested by Wesley, in the quotation above, belief in witchcraft declined first in England. Even in King James' time there

⁹ Pitcairn's *Criminal Trials of Scotland*; quoted by Lecky: *Rationalism in Europe*.

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were many dissenting voices; and a book against the belief, by Reginald Scot, was ordered burned—but on the continent the author would have accompanied his book.

Well, witchcraft has died out—but miracles still happen, doubtful relics are still adored, old errors survive and superstitions are still common. Professor Dressler found some three thousand superstitions to be held by eight hundred and seventy-five California normal school students. Ross comments on this—"If the semi-educated young people to whom we are presently to commit the teaching of our children are such slaves to the unreason of benighted ancestors, can we wonder at the popular faith in lotteries, luck, mascots, fortune tellers, clairvoyants, occultists, mediums, "divine" healers, quacks, patent medicines, absent treatment, water witching, and the like?"

The tragedy of it all is, however, fortunately lessening. These beliefs are now generally trivial, or, if not, are of such limited acceptance that those who hold them can no longer persecute the others. With the intellectual growth of the world, there has come in an appreciation of law as opposed to the former appeal to the supernatural. It has also come to be recognized that the laws of nature are God's

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laws and quite sufficiently wonderful to engage all our attention—we do not now need the supernatural, as we once did.

As was said in the beginning of this chapter, there is a youth of the world, and an age of the world. No man can say when we are free from error; this age of ours may appear woefully ignorant to the centuries to come—probably will—but we can at least claim to have attained to one of wisdom's attributes, and that is, to *doubt*. As a world, today, we have no longer the youthful cock-sureness, and we, therefore, no longer persecute. We have, indeed, become a bit over cynical, but this will not last. We are, I take it, about in the sophomoric stage of existence—we know much, but that which we know cuts no figure, proportionately, with that which we do not know. Doubt is our chief acquisition to the present; we have learned to go slowly over the places that look slippery. Individuals of us, and even groups, here and there retain the old attitudes; but when these old attitudes are concerned with life's larger affairs, we relegate them to a place of their own. We fence them in, and through most of the day forget them. We manage things now so that a man may be a keen and rational man of business six days in the week, and then, on

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the seventh, go demurely to the "Scientist" Church. We thus satisfy at once both sides of our nature; we exercise our newly developed grey matter until this fatigues, and then we relax and revert to some easier pattern, some comfortably old and primitive pattern, which shall no longer tax the tired brain.

PART II

THEORIES AND CONCLUSIONS

CHAPTER X

A PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORY OF SOCIETY

This, the story we have told, is the story of man's life. But where, then, have we arrived? Would it not seem but to an endorsement of that estimate made long years ago by the "gentle cynic" of Ecclesiastes—that all is vanity? Possibly, yes—if we started out with the idea that man is the "image of God," and is and always has been, normally, a paragon of virtue and intelligence. But suppose, on the other hand, we view man from the evolutionary standpoint, and take his history as the story of his *ascent*—does it not at once all become more intelligible, and even hopeful?

We materialists are often asked what there is in life for us; and we are told that, holding such a dismal idea of society as ours would seem to be, we ought, reasonably, to give up and quit. To us it does not seem so; it seems rather that it should be the orthodox sentimentalists who should quit—so many have been their disappointments and failures. To us,

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bad as things are, and have been, there is ever possible a satisfaction in their progress toward better. We find the world growing better. We marvel at the exhibition of law, and delight in law's execution. We are not, it is true, overly impressed by man's greatness; but we magnify the God that made him, and feel confident in this God's wisdom.

Man has problems—yes; and he also has a history of several hundred thousands of years. He has been civilized, or socialized, only since yesterday—and when you realize that, you must acknowledge that he is really doing pretty well under the circumstances. His brain patterns, his habits of reaction, his tendencies which are oldest and most fixed, those which function most easily, and those to which he ever tends to revert, are those which he formed in his childhood, in the long racial childhood of his primitive life. His social patterns are new ones, and, indeed, so far as they are of the mind, intellectual, they are so new as to be quite untrustworthy.

But let us emulate the renowned author of the "Outline of History," and start at the beginning.

Going back to the original "simple life," we find the body senses diffused throughout

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the body substance. In the next stage, certain parts of the surface became specialized to respond to certain stimuli, and nerve cells were formed. These, again, became joined by "nerves," and the latter, then, gradually combined along the dorsal region to form a nervous cord, the spinal cord. Next, the nerve cells tended to accumulate especially in the forward end of this cord, and, requiring there more room, caused this end to enlarge and to double on itself. The brain was the result, the first rough infolding producing its lobes. But the accumulation of cells on the surface of these lobes still continued, and, more and more room being ever demanded, the surface became ultimately, in consequence, intricately indented and convoluted. We speak of nerve cells—but we must remember that the "senses" followed these cells. Functions belonging once to the body as a whole passed, in this evolution, first to the cord in the back, and thence to its forward, complicated, convoluted end, the brain; and the higher we ascend, therefore, in the evolutionary scale, the more are the brain-controlled functions. Finally, with the continued elaboration of the brain's convolutions, with the continued multiplication of the brain cells, and, especially,

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with the formation within the brain of "association fibres" connecting its various parts, we arrive at a time when the original, scattered senses are correlated and inter-related until they become not *senses* so much as a *sense*.

This animal, with a brain so sufficient to itself that it seems to be something apart from the rest of the body—a relation which, I believe, gives "consciousness"—and with a complexity which has brought in the seeming possibility of choice—a choice which I believe to be "will"—this animal is man.

In all this development there are no "breaks." We can trace the process from one species to another, as a continuous one, with steps that are almost imperceptible. From the single immortal cell of opening life, to the complex mortal man, there is nothing but a steady evolutionary progress.

Let us go on; and let us remember, too, that man still retains many of his early body-controlled functions, that not all have ascended to the mental sphere.

The first man continued of necessity to lead a natural life, a life very similar to that which he lived before he was man. And in this natural life his old body defences, his glandular

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reactions, his emotions, in short, remained quite as important as were his newly acquired mental judgments. Judgments need exercise that they may develop, and also need knowledge; but the knowledge available to primitive man was but an extended acquaintance with the old forest life. Man was now "intellectual," it is true, but his intellectual reactions were limited to a reinforcement of the old body tendencies. The new brain patterns but emphasized the old body ones, and man was become but a more cunning animal, interested, still, only in sex, in the obtaining of food, and in the defence of his body.

So things continued for many thousands of years, and these old patterns became gradually so fixed that they remain, even today, the predominant ones. Then discoveries came; and new conditions entered in. Groups were formed, in one way or another, and man began to be social. His old individual tendencies now passed to the group, and there, becoming group tendencies, laid the foundation for the group customs, its conventions and traditions, and, finally, for the group institutions. All these are but so many responses to man's psychological impulses and needs; institutions do not arise from man's thought, but from the

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strongest of all possible urges—the demands of his psychological nature.

So far good, but the difficulty is that man has never yet become entirely socialized. He is still, alas! two sided—on the one hand socially inclined, but on the other still primitively egoistic. The demands of society and the demands of the individual still clash. Many of man's individual tendencies are not at all easily adjusted to the group conditions; but they still persist, and conflict is the necessary result. It was so at the beginning of the historical period, and it is still so today. No perceptible biological changes have taken place, or could have taken place, in this short interval of time, and man, biologically, is now as he was at history's dawn. As to his problems—these, too, are the same, with additions.

This, then, is a psychological idea of man; and it involves, also, necessarily, a psychological idea of society. To the individual inheritances of man, passing over into the group and determining the group's action, we have but to add the ever present conflict of the two antagonizing tendencies, the primitively egoistic and the new social, and the definition of society is complete—a *group of individuals, acting under laws inherent in the individual,*

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gradually evolving, by continuous adaptation, in the general direction of an ever increasing unity of action and purpose. Man we recognize as an evolutionary product; and society, though drawing both life and form from man, we recognize as the same.

I have said that man has all of the problems he started with, and others in addition. Consider, for example, the changes effected by the introduction of machinery. Labour is a large part of man's life, but the psychology of labour has changed. Pride in achievement is the basis for most sustained effort, but how is one to feel pride in just "feeding a machine"? One can now become an expert in a few days' time. A man no longer makes anything, but just some infinitesimal part of it. The woman, alone, in her housework, retains the old privilege of constructive labour, turning out with her hands and head a complete job in which she might well be expected to take much pride; but upon this privilege she is, rather foolishly, turning her back.

Well, machinery and subdivision of labour have come to stay—what are we to do about it? One might think, since society is the product of man, that it could not develop any problem beyond man's easy control; but this is not so,

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and the reason it is not is evident enough when we compare the two manners of growth. Society is a plastic, mental structure; man, a biologic, psychologic, anatomic one. Man "grows" only through slow evolutionary changes, while society is subject to true revolutionary upheavals. It is invention and discovery that introduce the demoralizing forces. "What one exceptional man may do, may, in its far-reaching social influences, derange the whole of the social growth, and give it, by increased impetus or side-thrust, a movement very different from and far beyond that possible by evolution alone. . . . Man's movement is almost imperceptible; that of society is saltatory."¹ Do not economic difficulties seem somewhat intelligible, from this point of view? Is it any wonder that man is not today well adjusted to the society he himself has produced? There are two kinds of evolution here, the one of the individual and the other of society, and the latter is complicated by many a revolutionary jolt to which the former is never exposed.

Many formidable problems beside that of machinery have arisen in just this last century. Let me mention that which is, possibly,

¹ Platt: *Psychology of Thought and Feeling*, p. 98.

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the most important of all, the rapid increase in population. Invention, philanthropy, medicine and hygiene have broken in on the methods of nature; the unfit are no longer eliminated, but are, rather, especially cherished. The world's population is now increasing hand over hand, and, in the resulting struggle for food, in the effort of each to secure that coveted "place in the sun," we have introduced many a new element of strife. Who can doubt but that the ultimate cause of the late war was a population-food problem? This same problem lies, too, in the background of all internal labour troubles and, especially, in that of unemployment. We may pass immigration laws and so save ourselves at the expense of others, but this is only a temporary makeshift, we but delay the crisis. The world is fast approaching its maximum possible population, and its difficulties in this direction are already acute. We know what sacrifice attended the feeding, during the war, of but a part of Belgium's population—Professor East of Harvard has calculated that there is added each year to the world a population equal to *two* Belgiums.

Nor is the problem one of quantity only; there is also a problem of quality. It is believed by many students of this question that there

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is, in process, a lessening of the world's intellectual power. Said Major Leonard Darwin, at the Second International Congress of Eugenics, in New York, September, 1921: "I can find no facts which refute the theoretical conclusion that the inborn qualities of civilized communities are deteriorating." The "long heads" of Europe are being replaced by the "round heads." It has been estimated that one-half of Great Britain's population is derived from its lowest sixth, from those, in other words, who are least able, and who are least adjusted to the social order. Some of these rise? Yes; but what happens then? As they reach the upper classes, as they begin to function mentally, their children decrease. There is, thus, going on, continually, a process of skimming—as the cream rises, it is systematically removed.² And, furthermore, as we approach the maximum of population, and, also, as this tends more and more to concentrate in cities, the rate of deterioration may be expected to increase. Economic considerations, under these conditions, lead the thinkers—whose families nature has already limited—to consciously limit them further; while those

² Compare, McDougall: *The Group Mind*.

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who think not at all go on procreating at pleasure.

We *know* more today, because we have a vast store of accumulated experience, and exceptional men are still adding to this; but as a race, it would seem, we are probably less capable than were our ancestors. Life has been made easy. We travel in luxury. We “exercise” in a car. We push a button when we want light, and we turn on a spigot for water. What we lack, we ‘phone for and have sent. In the olden time, man worked for his food and his clothing; we, today, work only for money. Even our amusements must be made easy—we do not like to think; a novel must be both snappy and short. Conversation is now practically unheard of—people just chat, until even the strain of this proves too great; and then some one proposes the “movies.” One does not need brains to lead such a life, and our paucity of intellect does not, therefore, become obtrusive. But is it not apparent that social evolution today is on a new trend, one decidedly detrimental to a further advance in a reliant intellectualism? What has been gained by a more general education is a rise in the average knowledge; but out-standing intel-

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ligences are certainly becoming more rare. The loss, here, is more important than the gain. The people may be the back-bone of a nation—they are certainly its muscle—but the leaders of the nation are its brain and nerves. The best of bodies is but pathetic, if it has not a good brain—it is the same with nations. Man, today, it would seem, is being standardized into a fair imitation of the machines he has invented; and society, too, has had to develop a mechanical movement in order that, in its mediocrity and hugeness, it might not dissolve into a helpless mob. Society has itself become one vast machine, all parts interdependent—but, unfortunately, too, with not more than 15 per cent. of these parts well adjusted! No wonder the machine works jerkily and gets heated by friction! I wonder how many have realized how small is the group that is carrying the world, financing and feeding it.

The answer to this population problem is not clear, nor probably can be until the world loses much of its present sentimentality. The eugenists may be expected to accomplish something in the improvement of quality, but as regards the problem of quantity we must wait—as yet, there are not many of us who even

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know that the problem exists. We are still living under the convention established in pioneer times, the Mosaic one, that large families are glorious. They were glorious, once, because also useful and necessary—but how is it now?

With the problem of population comes in that of poverty. Society has, indeed, something to solve here; but, on the other hand, however imperfectly it may seem to be functioning, society is not to be held responsible for all of its poor. A stone sinks because of no fault of the water; it sinks because of its own inherent properties. So, many must sink in the social sea. That some sink who should not, is, however, true, and unfortunate; and that some rise who should not is also true, and unfortunate. It is with the former of these, the victims of social error, that society's efforts in philanthropy should chiefly lie—and really do lie—a public spirit is even now working hard to salvage them. As to those who have risen when they should not—all decaying bodies float for a time, but when these lose their gases of putrefaction they again go to the bottom. That much wealth is now in the hands of the unworthy need not especially concern us—they will lose it again. War has brought on an

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economic revolution, a stirring of the depths in society—stir any pool, and see what strange things will come to the surface.

With poverty comes in delinquency; for though the two are not necessarily connected, it is, in practice, the poor who contribute most largely to the delinquent problem. It is a matter of environment; but environment can not be dismissed with a word, it is a rather complicated influence. With the child it is a moulder of character, and, if the individual happen to retain childish reactions, it may continue this moulding influence even into adult years. On the other hand, with an adult, if normal, environment does not at all make character—it merely gives character opportunity. A plant will draw from the soil just such elements of nutriment as it finds fit for itself. So with man in society. He draws from his surroundings that which comports with the something he already has in him. But poverty adds difficulties—and here is its chief importance. It increases vastly all of man's problems, and especially that great one of his social adjustment. Given a mind not alert to overcome the complexities of life, and a man turns naturally to his more understandable primitive reactions. Here is the poor man's disadvantage; his prob-

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lems are greater than are those of his well-to-do brother, and he is, therefore, more liable to fall. Two men may be psychologically equal, but the poor one may become a criminal, and the other remain a peaceful citizen. Potential thieves and potential prostitutes exist in our "best society," but they have been lucky; they have had no fundamental problems to solve, and have not, therefore, been exposed to failure.

But all criminals are not poor, nor are all poor criminals! It is probable that the city of London contains more paupers than does the whole of the United States, and yet any one of our smaller cities will exceed London in crime. A man becomes a delinquent through some failure of adjustment to the social demands, and this may be quite aside from any poverty. Let us get this necessity for adjustment clear.

Conceive that in the human body the cells represent the individuals, and the organs, the liver, etc., represent institutions, specialized groups of individuals. The parallel with society is close. A man is well just so long as all these parts, cells and organs, are well and work in harmony. When one part becomes ill, the whole body becomes ill. It is the same with society. Society depends for its health upon

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the health of its component parts. In both society and the individual, moreover, to maintain health, all parts must function with common purpose. But, in society, all are not well, nor can all here make the necessary adjustments. Some there are, for example, who are born with so deficient a social sense that they are doomed always to remain outsiders. Even if these obey society's laws, they do so without comprehension; but the majority of them will not obey—they choose, rather, to set themselves against society, matching their wits against others. It is here, of course, that we find our anarchists and our “born criminals.”

Again, there is another, much larger class, who fail even though they have some social sense. These may not be at all anti-social, and yet they can not fit in. It may be that they are the victims of economic errors; or it may be that they are simply deficient mentally; but in either case they have now found themselves unable to grapple with life's complexities, and so have chosen some apparently simpler way.

What is to be done with these various classes? The last mentioned are very evidently well worth a helping hand; their misfortunes make the strongest of appeals to our

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humanity; and duty, even, compels us to help them. But with the anti-social, the problem is different. These, too, are indeed acting according to their light, and, in this sense, have no greater responsibility than have the "victims of fate," or the subnormal; but, on the other hand, their lack of social sense is a menace to society. The problem with them should be simply their permanent removal from the social group—it is but a misdirected, sentimental philanthropy that interferes. It is no very sensible "love of one's fellows" that will endanger the good of the many, for the sake of the evil and unworthy. Philanthropy needs to be discriminating.

This matter of adjustment is a group problem as well as an individual one. I have said that for a healthy social body, all parts, all organs, all institutions and groups, as well as all of the individual "cells," must function healthfully and to a common end. If a socially ill individual can give us problems, how much more an organ that fails! But that such conflicts do occur, we know—and, the sad part of it is, the most of them are due simply to ignorance. The "organs" do not realize that they should work together; they regard their own interests as foreign to those of others—though

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this, of course, can never really be; all *must* have the same interest. Capital and labour have long been arrayed against each other, as enemies. Is this not a mistake? Theodore Roosevelt thought so; he ever took the position that there could be no conflict, if only there were a mutual understanding. "Labour needs a few headaches to understand capital, and capital a few backaches to understand labour,"³ and then all will be well.

But social conflicts may arise in other ways. The various groups of mankind have not all experienced a uniform evolution. For one reason or another some have progressed more rapidly than others. It is as though one leg of a man should grow more rapidly than the other—the man would limp. And so society limps because of its unequal development. Insurrection, like disease, is an evidence of one of two things, either of an abuse, or of some mal-adjustment; and the fault may lie either with the social body itself, or with the mal-adjusting part. A revolution is but the explosion of some force that has long been accumulating under pressure.

Does it not seem that the factors of this psychological theory—the persistence of the primi-

³ Irving T. Bush.

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tive individual reactions, and the failure of man to completely adjust these to the new social life—together with the peculiarities of the social evolution, its exposure to sudden revolutionary changes, and the resulting increase in difficulty of adjustment—does it not seem that these will account for practically all of man's troubles? This is, at least, the psychologist's idea of it; but it does not seem to have been that of mankind in general. Man's difficulties, indeed, have been apparent enough, and man, from his earliest thinking period, has striven always to circumvent them. With all his puny force, with all the best vigour of his imperfect and limited mind, he has struggled to combat the great social trends; but with a result which is, to date, largely negative. Society has seemed to swing along its own path, and to be ever quite regardless of man's efforts. And yet, society is the product of man.

The seeming paradox here, I would explain on the basis of misdirected effort. Man's chief characteristic is conceit; he figures himself, from babyhood upward, as the centre of everything, and learns limitations only when forced. Given a field sufficiently unknown to render disproof difficult, and man feels himself entitled to

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speak freely. He may hesitate to invent his own laws of physics—but when it comes to social economics, it is different. Then, to this natural egoism of man, let us add another, equally infantile, trait, one referred to earlier in this book, namely that which leads him to refer all disaster to influences outside of himself. Child and man we recognize easily that we are indebted to our own wise behaviour for all the good which may befall us; but we know, too, of course, that all which is bad must come from outside. Our own worth, wisdom and ability would never invite disaster; it must be something outside of ourselves that is to blame when this comes.

And here we have, it seems to me, the cause of man's failures in his efforts at social control. Man has persisted in looking outside of himself for his explanations. Following the usual infantile reaction of finding himself all right, he has confidently proceeded with the arranging of things for others. Man has, indeed, made society, but he has not made it this way; he has made it unconsciously, by the passing on into the group of his own individual tendencies. He can modify it only in the same way, by first producing changes within himself, and then passing these changes on to the

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group. He can do nothing radical by the writing of formulas; these apply only to social forms, they do not reach their underlying motive.

Man, today, finds himself fighting society as he once fought nature; but just as he finally gained over nature only by discovering its laws and adjusting to them, so must he do with society. And when he does this, he will make several discoveries. He will discover, first, that society, though liable to eccentric movements, is fundamentally and essentially as he himself makes it; and then, with this thought well in mind, will come the further discovery that society is not really rotten. But it is in the final step that he will reach a truly constructive conclusion—he will then discover that though society needs now, in its complexity, some conscious guidance, it is himself as its unconscious architect that is really in need of an overhauling.

Up to date, unfortunately, man has not reached even the first of these discoveries. He is still sure that he himself is quite all right, and that society is a monster that is trying to crush him. This monster he fights—with formulas! He would be happy, he thinks, if only something, apart from himself, might

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be changed. He has thought it all out, knows what is wrong, and proposes to rectify it. He is even ready to guarantee the result. In the preamble of the platform, for 1921, of the Social Democrats of Germany, they "guarantee the welfare of all members of society, and thereby the highest intellectual and moral culture of the race." This is the usual language—the natural expression of the old infantile reaction; the result of a blaming of the environment for all ills, together with the infantile egotistic self-confidence. Society is rotten, man says—just as he may kick at a stone over which he has stumbled. It is the same reaction that was cultivated in the nursery, when his mother chided the table for bumping his head.

Single Tax, a maximum wage, minimum labour, socialism, government ownership, proletariat control, luxuries for the poor, a taxing of the successful, destruction of capital, "universal treacle"—these are the panaceas for society's ills! By these it is proposed to overturn the laws of nature, God's laws. The great forces of life which have so far developed man and society are here and now "voted down"; man himself will now run the world. He will show this table which has bumped his

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head that it is he who is master—even if in so doing he has to smash it.

Are all formulas then worthless? Mankind is very fond of formulas; he makes them for everything. He has even tried to formula-rize language, and to stop its normal evolution by some process of spelling reform. Henry Adams spent a lifetime in seeking a formula which should fit life as a whole. Such attempts are, of course, futile; but, nevertheless, formulas are not worthless—the new artificial trends of society have made many artificial controls necessary. The point is, however, these artificial formulas must not be confused with panaceas. “The sicklier a society,” says Tolstoi in his Diary, “the more institutions for curing its diseases, and the less thought given to the necessary changes of the whole life.”

The political economists have to do with the institutional forms—but our concern lies deeper; it lies with the necessary changes referred to by Tolstoi.

But let us, first, in contrast with the psychological idea, consider the formula conception further.

CHAPTER XI

SOCIALISM AND DEMOCRACY

NOTE. In this chapter and the next, frequent references will be made, and sometimes rather contemptuously, to the masses. Reference will be made, also, to the upper classes and aristocracy. There must be no misapprehension here. These divisions are not the conventional ones; they have nothing to do with wealth or so-called social position. They refer simply to intrinsic worth, to ability and to social value. A man may be poor and still belong to the world's aristocracy; he may be a multi-millionaire and belong to the masses. No man's worth is to be measured by money—many of the world's best, if not most of them, have quite other standards. So, too, as regards any criticisms of "labour"—these are only for such as have earned them by selfishness or ignorance. There is no prouder title than that of "working-man"—this meaning, we take it, a man who works, is able and does things.

It is no part of my intention to discuss the subjects of this chapter from the standpoint

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of political economy, but only in a psychological way, and in the broadest generalities at that, applying the test of the theory of society just given. As to other economic problems and the formulas which have been offered for their solution, these can not even be touched upon. They are, most of them, I feel, but incidental to all life. They are but recurring phases, the onward flow and recession of the waves that accompany all tides. "Boom times invariably bring all manner of extravagances and loose living. In due time this brings disaster. Hardship begets a saner frame of mind. Economy is exercised. Pride, arrogance, boastfulness and the like give way to humility, industry and earnestness of purpose. This in turn gradually brings about sounder conditions all around, and the movement toward prosperity is again under way. As before, prosperity sows the seeds of its own destruction and the cycle is started all over again." ¹

But it is the tidal movements alone that can be considered in so limited a work as this; we must learn something first of those great and persistent psychological trends which provide the actual mass movement in society. These

¹ D. C. Forbes, in the *Phila. Ledger*, Aug. 12, 1921.

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other things come in more fitly when we know what is beneath them.

Democracy is a reality to which, for better or worse, the whole world seems committed. Socialism is an ideal which is constantly being offered in substitute. How do these two stand psychologically?

Probably all conscious efforts now being made to solve the problems of government are based upon some one interpretation or another of the old "Contract Theory," a theory which purports to explain not only government but the behaviour of the people who go to make that government. It is simple enough. The social structure is pictured as an embodied agreement, a business arrangement, a partnership consciously made by an intelligent world. Men, it is conceived, come together and, to effect a useful co-ordinated life, agree upon a set of by-laws. Society is the result of this planning, and society's conventions and institutions the product, alone, of man's judgment.

Now it must be conceded that this is an attractive conception. It fits in nicely with man's no mean idea of himself. It flatters his own confessed superiority, and distinguishes him at once from all the rest of nature. Man is a

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thinker, a person with brains, why should he not order these things for himself? His ancestors, he will concede, may not have been competent—that is why so many things are now wrong—but he, now—well, *now* is a different matter. Strange, this relation of the now and the then! At four, we are perfect in judgment. We are still perfect at eight, but with a fine scorn for four. At sixteen, we know that we are perfect, and find eight incredibly foolish—it is the same through life—at sixty-four, we know that thirty-two is strangely immature. It is the present always that finds our judgment most able.

“Truth is that which finds in us no conflicting brain patterns.” We are always right and wise if we but use all the patterns we have. It is only when we stop our inquiries with some available patterns still uninvestigated that we are able to feel we may be wrong. An oyster is as satisfied in its “judgments” as is the most learned professor. No wonder, then, that man finds himself capable of ordering society. He has, moreover, if he needed them, many proofs of his theory. He has but to look around him and he finds that men do actually meet just as he has conceived. He finds that many minor groups are so brought into being and function

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well, and that certainly all business is so conducted.

It seems all reasonable enough—if only we take man at his own valuation. But what about the man we have been describing in the chapters of this book—this evolutionary product still retaining so many vestiges of the past, this man with persistent, emotional, animal reactions, and with a but imperfectly functioning mind? Certainly primitive man did not “think out” a society on the contract basis—just when was the contract made?

But to go on. The contractualist figures, as I have said, that man has produced society by an intellectual agreement, and this being so, he is doubtless right when he further argues that man is at liberty to change it. Any contract, if need be, may be abrogated. So it is that many today propose to set aside what they call the existing contract—but what we call the product of many thousands of years of evolutionary growth—and then to arrange things better. It is of “socialism” I am thinking, for it is in socialism in some of its many forms that we find practically all of the reformers of the day. It is proposed to break up all existing relations, these having become irksome to many, especially to those low in the scale, and

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then to form new ones that shall make every one happy. Well, the feat is quite possible if only we can satisfy certain conditions—namely, first, that all shall be sufficiently intellectual, and secondly, that all shall have high social ideals; and, lastly, that these ideals shall be the same with all.

I have said that the contractualist finds support for his theory in the fact of the present actual existence of certain small groups which, having been formed by contract, are now functioning well. But even in the smallest of groups the conditions named above must be satisfied. The intelligence of the members of the group must measure fully up to the duties involved in its purpose. The members of the group must have ideals compatible with the welfare of the group; and these ideals must be sufficiently alike to operate in harmony. No contractual union of non-intelligent men, or of men with conflicting or unworthy ideals, has ever succeeded in business—how, then, can such a union be expected to succeed in the appallingly complex and intricate affairs of society? If one acknowledges, as it would seem one must, that men are not all highly intelligent, that they are, on the contrary, in the vast majority deplorably limited, and have, moreover, an al-

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most infinite variety of conflicting ideals, then it would seem that socialism is an experiment condemned in advance.

And yet, the socialist idea is not altogether untrue—if it were it need not concern us, for things psychologically false have lives that are both short and unimportant—it is untrue only in its assumption that men are *social*. It is founded on a basis of genuine social trend, and it is conceivable, even, that it may some day be realized. We may go further; we may say that it may, even, be realized soon—but not, probably, in the form of its popular conception. This last will probably always remain but a dream—or a nightmare! There is a real trend toward socialism, has been from the beginning, and the far-sighted ² idealists, looking that way and believing they could see its goal, have proposed to hasten its attainment. They are in two-fold error. In the first place, man is individual, not social. Socialism calls for a social sense that man is far from possessing. One can not force biological evolution—one can not even hurry its movements—and yet this is what is called for by the idealists. It is man himself that must be changed, not so-

² Presbyopic—meaning, thereby, those with a defect of vision rendering near objects difficult to see.

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ciety. Here is ever the error of the social formula-maker—finding society a more or less plastic structure, and finding that he can actually do things with it, he fondly imagines that he has but to make the determined-upon changes and mankind will alter to suit. This is one error. The other lies in the fact that while the social trend is visible enough, its goal is not. We see, it is true, where the social trend would lead us if only it be let alone, but we can not see where it will lead when modified, as it must be, by other forces. The goal of the social evolution will be reached through a “resolution of forces,” and not through any one alone.

Looking at it from another angle, what the insect world has achieved through instinct would hardly seem possible to man. Socialism is the kind of a thing that would seem to call for co-operation through automatic and non-thinking compliance. It does not seem probable that the diverse trends of instinct and reason should evolve in the end to the same issue. Pure socialism is revolting to man; he has not the instinctive hive habit. The leaf-cutting ant of British Guiana has a true social state, but “after studying these beings for a week one longs to go out and shout for kaisers and

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tsars, for selfishness and crime—anything as a relief from such terrible unthinking altruism.”³ Therefore it is, I say, that while socialism is in some form probably to become a world-wide experiment, it will not be in that theoretical perfection which the idealist now conceives and would strive for, nor yet in the form of its popular conception.

It is the element of truth in socialism that makes it a menace. This gives it a sufficient vitality to work with, and makes it possible that, if forced into the social movement, it may bring about a catastrophic revolution. Evolution does not exclude revolution, nor does it necessarily mean progress for good. It means, simply, a movement proceeding along the lines of cause and effect. Time and again in the history of life on this earth, as revealed in our paleontological records, great groups of life forms have suddenly disappeared, and life has, as it were, started anew. It is quite conceivable that something of the same may happen to our social forms. By murder and starvation, by class struggle and war, by despair and indifference, as in Russia, it is quite conceivable that the whole existing social structure may be thrown into chaos and ruin.

³ William Beebe, *Atlantic Monthly*, Nov. 1921.

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As a matter of fact, prolonged interruptions of the social progress have already occurred in the past. To mention but one, and, possibly, the least of these, we have the example of the so-called Dark Ages. The ancient and elaborate and highly intellectual civilization of Greece and Rome had come to destruction, and the Dark Ages were but the chaotic, experimental centuries through which society floundered before it could once more get a start. The Renaissance marked but the beginning reassertion of the old normal trends. Does the world want to try this again? It would seem so.

Given a formula containing an element of truth together with a promise of an abolition of all man's misery, and we have one that is sure in its appeal to the masses. "When the popular mind gets hold of a truth it seldom gets hold of it with strict scientific precision. It commonly gets hold of one side of the truth. . . . It puts that side forth in a form which may not be in itself distorted or exaggerated, but which practically becomes distorted or exaggerated because other sides of the same truth are not brought into due relation with it."⁴ It has done this with socialism; and I am free to confess that if this be

⁴ Freeman.

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regarded only from the standpoint of a theoretical ideal, it is truly attractive. A man who reads socialistic literature only, and who has no general sociological or psychological corrective knowledge, may well become a most ardent follower of Karl Marx. Youth flocks to his standard—and naturally—youth's sense of power, his freedom from experience, and his desire to do something big make of him, naturally, an ideal idealist. "Truth is that which finds in us no conflicting brain patterns." The mind of youth, virgin of conflicting economic patterns, receiving from some youthful instructor a presentation of the socialistic idea, finds in this a great and new truth.

That socialism should appeal to the masses is another matter. The great book of Marx, says Frederick Engels, is known as "the Bible of the working class." How many of the working class, I wonder, have read this book, or, if they have, have understood it. "*Das Kapital*" belongs, among books, with Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations," of which, it is said, every one talks, and but few read. Though simple in language, it is highly analytical and profound in thought. It is anything but a book for a labourer. It can be read intelligently only by those who have

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trained student minds, and who have, moreover, already a wide knowledge of economics. No, the labourer is not a socialist from a reading of his "Bible"! Why then?

There are certain ideas current as regards socialism, very foolish ideas the socialists say when they write for the economic journals, but they are current ideas for all that. One of these is to the effect that under socialism all the wealth of the world is to be equally divided—and all shall be rich! Another is that the present relation of employer and employed is to be changed. There is to be no longer a "master and man," or, if there is, it is to be the present man who shall then be master. Unintelligence ever resents the supremacy of intelligence, as does incompetency the greater gains of the competent; but in the new order of things there shall be no such unpleasant discriminations. Labour is to be recognized for its own great worth. The man who carries the bricks is to be recognized as the true architect of the house; the man who oils the engine as the true maker of railways. The paltry executive intelligence, under this new and happier régime, is to be given its proper second place. Labour is to do the hiring, and is to pay for brains just what it

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thinks them worth—which is not much! Socialism in the sense of social works, government ownership, and so on, interests labour only as a dim expectation that it is the government that shall bear the expense of their private enterprise. The profits belong, of course, to the workmen, but the deficit shall be cared for by the government—where the government is to get the money, they do not ask—governments always have plenty of money.⁵

Now this is, of course, a ridiculous statement of socialism, but it is, I believe, the only one that really counts. From the study of Karl Marx, the labour world would get—nothing. What it does get from Marx comes to it through the medium of radical agitators, who appeal to the passions, not the mind. Marx was a student of economics, an educated man, but one who had omitted psychology from his studies. He believed in economic formulas and was prepared, if his own were followed, to guarantee the happiness of all. He made a religion of his system and held out his arms to the poor and distressed. Now there is one thing the poor know, and that is their misery; and there is one standard they

⁵ Russia having destroyed its own capital is now peevishly demanding that Europe and the United States shall provide it with more.

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are ever ready to follow, and that is the standard which, it is promised, shall lead them to comfort and ease. Where it has actually led them in Russia, the socialistically inclined labourer is now asking with considerable pained interest. Russia is, today, an "economic vacuum," but it is illustrating, as no one was ever hard-hearted enough to wish to see illustrated on so huge a scale, the logical outcome of applied socialism. We have had in the United States, in the past century, probably a hundred attempts at socialistic community life; but these have done no harm—they have but added a certain comic element to our history. Russia is another matter. Here we have a great nation involved to its temporary ruin.

In this Russian vacuum socialism itself has naturally disappeared, and in its place there has emerged a despotism such as the world has never before known. Oligarchies and despotism we have, indeed, had in the past, and the people have sometimes even profited by them; but this Russian attempt, to balance the pyramid of society on its apex, with the broad base of the ignorant masses on top, is decidedly new—as new as the laws it defies are ancient. Since pyramids are not designed

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thus to stand on their heads, a social crash naturally followed. The apex was crushed by the base, and the base itself shattered by its fall. Out of this ruin there is now struggling into life a new structure. A red Czar has replaced the white Czar. A new bourgeoisie is forming, and new social class lines are being drawn; but, as the best of the nation is gone, these new classes, in their ignorance and lack of experience, have a terribly long labour before them. "Give us time," the socialists say—but what is the end? Have not each of the "steps forward," made by the Russian oligarchs, been but an indorsement of the old order? Have they not been made by abandoning, one after the other, the theories they started with? How, then, can these "steps forward" be counted as endorsements of socialism? In the end, the best that can be hoped for is to get the country back to where it was before the catastrophe. The personnel only will then have changed; the structure itself will be the same as that which was so cheerfully destroyed. There will be the same old ruling class, the same bureaucracy, the same bourgeois workers and the same old helpless masses. Evolution has its interregnums but, eventually, it finds its way back to the old paths.

In the meantime, the people suffer, and suffer

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horribly, in fear, in hunger, in cold and in general demoralization; while labour, which had hoped for so much, is now in a slavery it had never known under any of the abuses of capital. Under the old régime, Russians were punished by banishment; now they risk all, even life, to escape from their country. "It is utterly impossible to describe our feeling as we stepped from the bridge on the other side [out of Russia] and stood once again on free soil." So writes one refugee. Speechless relief—that is the experience of all!⁶

I have said that in the Russian wreck socialism itself has disappeared. This was, of course, inevitable; but the leaders there seem to be naïvely and sorrowfully surprised. Let me quote from the Moscow *Pravda*, the official organ, in one of its issues of July, 1921. "The appeal to brotherly discipline does not

⁶ I can not give space for a sustaining of these general statements, but the curious, or doubtful, are referred to the pages of *The Living Age*, especially to its issues of 1920 and 1921. Here will be found many translations of reports of visiting labour delegations, articles by both escaped and resident Russians, articles from the official Bolshevik press, and addresses by Bolshevik leaders. They all agree. It is only in Bolshevik propaganda that one gets a different picture; here there is much talk of child care by the state, of art and education; but the farce of these, as actually practised, is revealed in the articles mentioned. Finally a reading of L. Trotsky's *Defense of Terrorism* will supply what may still be lacking in imbecility and horror.

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reach the heart of the working masses, who are backward in socialist sentiment, and respond to no incentive but compulsion or private gain. . . . The sooner we open our eyes to our illusions and cease to be guided by them, the sooner we shall be able to restore the economic prosperity of the country, which has so far been steadily on the wane. . . . Side by side with the disorganization of production is a parallel disorganization of the workers themselves. They lose the attitude of proletarians. Many of them acquire the attitude of small independent producers, who make a living by petty traffic and speculation; or else they adopt exclusively the attitude of consumers, viewing the world as a place where they merely receive and do not produce.”⁷ Human nature is a wonderful thing! Even Russians seem to have a share of it. The simple psychological fact is, of course, that socialism tends to check ambition, which is primarily an individual trait; and with the taking away of man’s privilege of striving for himself, man ceases to strive.

⁷ In the *Pravda*, Nov. 8, 1921, (see *The Living Age*, Feb. 4, 1922) Lenin, himself, goes a step farther. He explains that there is really no antagonism between communism and private trading. He explains, also, that the abandoning of revolutionary methods for those of reform does not mean that the revolutionary methods are not the best. It is the old story—facts must never be permitted to stand in the way of a theory.

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This, the Bolshevik leaders now seem to be discovering—their remedy is, at the time of this writing, to withhold food from all but good communists.

The dictatorship of the proletariat does not seem to have worked very well. And yet, absurd as it is, it is just this kind of socialism, this socialism based upon proletariat control, that alone appeals to the masses—and naturally, as it is this only that promises them instant elevation. Socialism tends, in effect, to penalize talent and industry, and to deny special profit to the able; while capitalism penalizes inefficiency and sloth. No wonder inefficiency and sloth hate capitalism! The other socialisms, those which dream of a powerful, well-ordered state to which all shall be compelled to give service, and from which each shall receive such reward, and just such only, as his worth entitles him to, these have but a limited appeal. According to Carlyle and Ruskin and Emerson, the state and its people shall be governed by their true aristocracy, their *aristos*, their best, and there is to be “no hypocritical prating about the masses . . . the masses are not to be flattered but to be schooled.”⁸ Part of this view the present Russian rulers would seem now to accept—the proletariat is no longer mentioned outside of

⁸ Emerson: *Considerations by the Way*.

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propaganda intended for proletariat consumption.

The trouble with socialism, as I have already indicated, is that as regards the ideal it has not as yet a sufficient basis on fact. If attempted, therefore, it is bound to lead, man's psychology being as it is, to just what we see in Russia. The laws of nature compel this. Furthermore, however, what the masses really want is something quite other than the social ideal—they want something even more impossible. What the average radical socialist is trying to do is not to equalize society, but to reverse it. When a walking socialist finds fault with his employer for riding in a car, the picture in his mind is not of both walking, nor even of both riding, it is of himself in the car and his employer on foot. Upset a society and see what happens. A beggar on horseback rides roughly. In Russia the old aristocracy and bourgeoisie have been destroyed, but the vices of the new upper classes far transcend those of the old. The new society has power but is lacking in the controlling and sobering conventions derived from experience, and it abuses its power as do the new rich their money. Imagine a baby with the strength of a man—it is a parallel case—there would be a high mortality among mothers.

CHAPTER XII

SOCIALISM AND DEMOCRACY, CONTINUED

The fact is, as it seems to me, the present socialistic movement is not a truly social movement at all; it is but an expression of radicalism. The world has become confused and confounded by the problems presenting; the unrest has reached to the lower classes, and upon this unrest they are basing new hope. To those who have little, all revolutions look good. When one holds a poor hand a new deal is welcome. Then, too, there is an increasing knowledge of luxury, and the fact that this has come at least within the "visibility" of all has made it, also, seem possible to all. "Aspiration sees only one side of a question." If one man can have comfort, why not I? The question is natural enough, and, in the present riot of extravagance, it is natural, too, that it should be asked with bitterness. Extreme radicalism is largely an emotional state, a feeling of injustice and a resentment to which the more

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lowly placed are necessarily prone. The man who attacks society is by no means always a bad man. No man at bottom means wrong—"it is always for some obscure distorted image of a right, that he contends: an obscure image diffracted, exaggerated, in the wonderfulest way, by natural dimness and selfishness; getting tenfold more diffracted by exasperation of contest, till at length it becomes all but irrecoznizable; yet still the image of a right." ¹

However, complete as our understanding of these aspirations may be, and willing as we may be to pardon even their extreme manifestations, the social duty remains, that they must be restrained. They are misdirected, we know; they can not, we know, ever accomplish their aim—they can but make matters worse. Our duty toward them is comparable with the duty of a parent toward the unreasonable and dangerous desires of a child. The child must be guided and restrained. But as with parent and child, so with knowledge and ignorance, the restraint must be judiciously imposed.

"Who keeps
The vessel's main-sheet taut, and will not slacken,
Goes cruising, in the end, keel uppermost." ²

¹ Carlyle: *Chartism*.

² Sophocles: *Antigone*.

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When the parent becomes angry and can not see the child's point of view, then the child becomes sullen, and broods; and, likely enough, in the end, becomes a bad child.

Radicalism, today, is not limited to political affairs, it pervades all of life. It is in the air. There is, it would seem, a general resentment of all form. Youth has been emancipated; it gets good pay; it gets too much pay. It has the money to try out its youthful fancies; it has power before it has reason, and it is rioting in the expression of this power—no wonder the world is radical! The "cubist" movement is but an expression of contempt for art's conventions; as is the new free verse. And, then, there is the "new music," which is neither musical nor new but is interesting as a survival of the primitive love for noise and for rhythm. Youth is largely responsible for this. This is the age of youth, and youth is setting the standards; and youth is defiant of form. Youth has conventions of its own, if it true, and it lives strictly within these, being here the most conservative of all groups; but its conventions are not the conventions of experience, and so, frequently, jar somewhat in this prosaic world. Putting it another way, all these things are but so many manifestations of the movement

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toward democracy—they are forms of the coveted individual expression. That they should become extreme is to be expected—there are certain minds so constituted that they tend ever to evolve the absurd. One can not reach such minds through argument. If one attacks their absurdities, they promptly offer not an explanation of them but a triumphant pointing to some element of truth upon which, likely enough, they were founded.

It is so in the political field. Extreme radicalism is founded upon a sane enough realization of present social ills, and, also, upon natural desires; its idealism, too, seems promising, and even in accord with the social ideal. The menace comes in its failure to grasp the true nature of man. Fundamental truths have been largely missed—but even fundamental truths, poorly or eccentrically interpreted, are as dangerous as lies. Ruskin, we will say, taught truth, but from Ruskin we have Morris, and Marx, and Engels, and Lenin. It is like the transition from Turner to cubism.

Radicalism is but an exaggerated, one-sided idealism. Like idealism it is drawn by desire, not urged by reason. It fixes its entranced gaze upon the mirage, and would ignore the facts of the desert. The conservative, also, sees

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the mirage, and it looks as good to him as to the other, but he realizes, too, that if the pictured oasis is ever to be reached, it is the desert itself that must be mastered. There is, however, much to be said on both sides. Both types are essential for progress. Practical people make the world safe for idealists. The militants fight the battles of the pacifists; and the pacifists—well, the pacifists are probably useful too. There would be no government were there no old men; and there would be no advance were there no young ones.

It will be evident that what I have been criticizing in the preceding pages is not the principle of socialism so much as its popular and idealistic interpretations. As a principle it is reasonable enough. It is, in fact, but a political embodiment of that to which, according to our evolutionary ideas, society has been trending since its beginning. I have spoken much of the social mind and of the necessary altruistic sacrifice of the individual for the sake of the group; I have spoken of this as essential to the successful group life—it is but this social attitude that is emphasized in true socialism. The popular conception is something very different. But aside from this, the ideal itself may become a

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menace if the attempt be made to realize it prematurely. Let me reiterate. The popular conception of socialism stands condemned by all thinking people—but not so the ideal. Let us, if we will, favour this ideal, but let us do so with eyes open to the danger. As was said in the last chapter, the trend toward socialism is evident enough, but the ultimate fate of this trend is by no means as yet visible. We see well enough where it would carry us if there were no other social forces at work, but we can not at all see where it will carry us conditions being as complex as they are. The problem involves the biological one of man's evolution, and this is not susceptible to any but evolutionary forces. To make an error here might easily be as fatal to society as a whole, as has the dictatorship of the proletariat to Russia.

What about democracy—the reverse of socialism? ³ Democracy, like socialism, is an evolutionary product; but with this advantage over socialism that it is founded upon a more ancient and ever stronger tendency. It is, we take it, the product of man's effort to retain his native egoistic reactions *in spite of the group*. It is the antithesis of socialism. The latter is a so-

³ "We repudiate democracy in the name of the concentrated power of the proletariat." Leon Trotzky: *The Defense of Terrorism*.

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cial ideal, but democracy is essentially of the individual. The one looks to the submergence of the individual *into* the group, with a yielding of all his individual rights, while the other involves an emergence *from* the group, with the preservation of as much as possible of the individual freedom.

Politically the two ideas can not be combined. The only "combination" possible is that of Hegel, which is not a combination at all but an absolute divorce, in which each leaves the other for a home of its own. With Hegel, the government is social, and the individual has no political rights; in all things political he is subservient to the state. His freedom, however, he is at liberty to seek elsewhere—in arts, science, literature and religion. Here is a true "social democracy"—only we commonly give it some other name. Prussia, before the war, was an example.

Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, the happy slogan of democracy, present a triple alliance most difficult to maintain. Liberty is one thing—it appeals in its suggestion of freedom. Fraternity suggests not freedom but responsibility and interdependence. Liberty suggests rights; and fraternity, duty. As to equality, it does not exist. However, the formula is a good one. It

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gives us always something to talk about; and, since it involves two extremes, it covers all cases. We can run up and down the scale as the occasion demands. In times of peace and before elections we can talk liberty and rights: in times of stress and after elections we can emphasize duty. It is strange how idealism as to liberty and rights falls down in times of crisis, evident, obvious crisis, such as war. And yet, rightly considered, are not all times critical, and is not the failure of the ideal in war evidence of its inherent weakness? If its unfitness is then so marked, may it not be suspected of unfitness in times of what we call peace, when the problems are certainly far more complex, even though not so noisy?

The struggle between liberty and fraternity, between democracy and socialism, began with man's first union. It is the story of man in society. From the moment of the first group's formation these two tendencies have been in conflict.

The difficulties of democracy from the practical standpoint are easily comprehended. They are derived in part from the struggle just referred to, and in part from two false assumptions—that of the equality of men, and that of the universal wisdom of man.

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Men are not equal as regards social values. They are not even, as we physicians know, born equal. No two men ever had the same value to the state. There is just one social equality conceivable, and that is in the right to fair play. There is no other equality at all, unless it be that which we have every right to assume exists in the relation of man to an all-knowing God. Nor can you make men equal by treating them so. Says Aristotle, there is no greater inequality, no greater unfairness, than the equal treatment of unequals. Or, as Ruskin puts it: "Nature and Heaven command you at your peril to discover worth from unworth."

But to this untruth of an assumed equality, democracy adds that other, that the majority of men are intelligent. Man is conceived of as not only able to make the wisest of selections in his choice of executives, but to be able himself to become an executive, by the simple process of getting tagged for the duty. Now, confidence and assurance we know man has in plenty, but we know, too, that his intelligence is rarely equal to his tasks. The great mass of the population is hopelessly mediocre; talent is limited, and genius still more so. And if reliance be placed upon the few favoured ones with the hope that they will leaven the mass, it must

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be remembered that off-setting these are other ferments of a very different character. Against talent we have the vast, unskilled proletariat; against genius, the vicious and insane.

The inability of men and the fact of their obvious inequality, democracy would fain ignore. It meets such criticisms with glib references to man's brotherhood, forgetting, seemingly, that even brothers commonly differ in worth. It confuses the political issue with the moral, and talks about giving all equal opportunity. Opportunity is but another name for fair play, and is a thing most earnestly to be worked for—but it has nothing to do with political forms. Democracy, however, is true to its tenets, and has shown a willingness to stand by them, for it has gradually extended the suffrage until it has embraced all. It has thrown the determination of the intricate affairs of society into the hands of the masses, into the hands of those who have given every evidence of not being able to manage even their own simple affairs. It has given it, for example, in the United States of America, into the hands of over six million illiterates—six million who can not even read the names on the ballots they cast. Do these people, these and the others of the great subnormal electorate, realize their

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deficiencies? Not a bit of it! They will acknowledge that they have no learning, but they know that their judgments are good—the high-brows they rather despise. “He who has neither intelligence nor virtue nor delicacy of sentiment imagines always that he possesses these things abundantly.”

The extension of the suffrage has been, it is true, a normal evolutionary process; but it is fallacious to argue from this that it must also be a good one. As we have already indicated, all movements in evolution are not toward permanent progress. Once started, any tendency, good or bad, if not too incompatible with existing conditions, will go on developing until, finally, through exaggeration, its goodness ceases to be or its badness becomes evident. Remember the great animal forms of the past, the great monsters of enormous vitality now known only in the museums—these, too, were evolutionary products, examples of evolutionary trends, which had gone on, however, to a final overdevelopment and destruction. Let this thought be ever kept in mind when we are praising a movement as a normal development from what has preceded. It may be a normal development well enough, but it may, too, be the last step. History can offer many suggestive les-

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sons in this trick of evolution. With many small groups, wise leadership and prosperity has been followed by group vanity and extension of franchise until a disintegrated, non-social mass is obtained; a mob with ears only for leaders who shall resemble themselves. Political chaos ensues; and then comes the strong man to once more teach the benighted that they were born to be ruled, not to rule. It is a case of Aristides and Pericles, Alcibiades, Cleon the Tanner, Eucrates the Rope-Maker and Hyperbolus—and then a conquering Macedonian, Philip.

Advocates of universal suffrage base their hopes upon two claims. They say, in the first place, that while it is true man is not yet able in social affairs, he will some day become so; that the necessary social sense will some day be acquired, and, with it, the necessary intelligence—through education. They say, further, that while man may be individually unfit to govern, there is, nevertheless, a public voice, a general will, which may be counted upon to guide him safely.

As regards the first of these optimistic claims, it need only be pointed out that when man has become universally social and wise, the especial form of government that may hap-

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pen then to prevail will be a matter of indifference. But the attainment of such a state is unthinkable. It implies equality, a natural impossibility, and one, certainly, never to be reached by education. Education is of all things that which most reveals and emphasizes inequality. Opportunity for education reveals differences which, without it, might easily have remained unsuspected.

As regards the second claim—that of the general will—there is something to be said. There is a general will, a public opinion, which is, too, generally speaking, on a higher plane than that of the average individual. And this public opinion may easily carry the mass with it. It is born of the leaders, and of the race's accumulated wisdom; but, so far as the masses are concerned it comes chiefly from the former—and is as fine, just so fine, as they are. We can readily believe, then, that a government of the people by its *aristos*, its best, would be productive of the highest of public ideals; but we are not so sure that the same can result under present political conditions. But assuming the achievement of an elevated public opinion, how often this falls down in the ballot! How many reform movements of great promise have dwindled to insignificance when the ballot has

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actually been cast! The ballot is secret. A man may talk most patriotically of the public's welfare, and yet vote for his own, or for what he, in his ignorance, believes to be his own. "In the perfect act of legislation," says Rousseau, "the individual or particular will should be at zero." We will grant that, but we do not find it so in society. We find that in spite of the best of public opinion it is but little more than the average of these often undesirable individual wills that comes to light in the election. That "the voice of the people is the voice of God" does not seem to us in the least likely.

Let us sum up these unpleasant criticisms of socialism and democracy. That they have been unpleasant is unavoidable—they have involved certain long-standing traditions, and these, as has been said in a former chapter, are sacred and not open for discussion. The facts, however, as I see them, are simply these. Both socialism and democracy are normal, somewhat divergent, evolutionary products, the former an ideal development of the altruistic social spirit, the latter a result of man's efforts to preserve his individuality intact. The errors of each lie chiefly in an over estimate of man's ability. Man is not yet social, and he is not yet wise—at the best

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he can but look forward to the ultimate attainment of these attributes after much further development. To put it all in a sentence—man's egotism and ignorance, and the peculiarities of his psychological controls, are facts that can not be ignored without inviting disaster.

Today the ideal socialism remains but a dream. Democracy, however, or something very like it, being founded on a stronger tendency of man, is a working reality, and one, moreover, that is working fairly well. But it, too, is as yet so far from its ideal politically, that it should welcome all criticism, not resent it. The popular recipe for furthering a cause is, of course, to dwell upon its good points only—it is even attempted to reform nations "by cheers." But whatever we may think of this method, we are not here trying to further either democracy or socialism; we are merely inquiring. Following Epictetus, we are as indifferent to the answer as is the traveller who inquires which of two roads shall lead him to his goal. Socialism is a pretty ideal; and democracy needs no praise—the conventional attitude toward it is ever one of inordinate admiration. What we are concerned with lies deeper than either of these forms.

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Psychology is not pessimistic as regards society's outcome. It is, on the contrary, decidedly optimistic—if only certain truths come truly to be grasped. Psychology has an idea that all the thought that has of late been stirred into being can not remain fruitless. Out of the present conglomeration of formulas and ideas, it believes there will emerge some at least that are true. They are not likely to be new thoughts; they will probably be hoary with age; but they will be discovered again in their true significance. It is with ideas as with seeds, the soil must be ready. Most things, ideas included, are discovered at least twice. The first time they find root only in the minds of a few, or even take no root at all; but a time comes surely when they are discovered again, and then, flourishing abundantly, pass into the possession of the race. What I am thinking of just now, is this particular old truth—that the success of a government, the success of a society, depends not upon any details of its form but upon man's attitude toward it. Let us abandon our devotion to the formula; let us reorient our thoughts. Society is all wrong? Well, is it not barely possible that the trouble may be elsewhere? Is it not even possible that the trouble may be with ourselves? It is cer-

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tainly true that no government seems good to those who have not adjusted themselves to it.

Why not try some experiments in adjustment? The psychologist's theories may be as wrong as the political economist's formulas—this we willingly concede—but there is a common-sense side to the matter. The formulas, so far, have accomplished so little; the mess is getting yearly more and more hopeless—why not try some other method? Since the Mountain, up to date, has shown no signs of approaching Mahomet, might it not be as well if Mahomet himself should prepare for a journey?

Let us strive to make the world safe for democracy—not in the sense in which the phrase was first used, by eliminating those who think otherwise, nor yet in the sense of that pleasing eversion, “making democracy safe for the world”; but let us make the world safe for democracy, and for socialism or for whatever you please, by making man more fit to be governed, and, incidently, thereby, more fit to govern.

CHAPTER XIII

OLD TRUTHS—PSYCHOLOGY'S ANSWER

It is evident, to return to the psychological theory of society, that for an interpretation of the social forces we are thrown back to a consideration of the individual. The success of society, it would also appear, must depend upon the success of the individual's adjustment to it. It is the individual's relation to his fellows and to the group that must determine both his own happiness and theirs. No man who frets himself by opposing society can experience peace; and no society that has continually to exhaust itself in combating individuals can know healthful progress. These facts would seem self-evident. Let us go a step farther. All this being so, there is but one possible deduction as regards hope of reform, and this is that the reform shall begin with the individual. It is the individual unit that must be considered in all attempts at the reform of that combination of units we call society.

But is this thought, which seems so logical,

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also a useful one? The psychologist says that it is, and that it is upon this foundation he bases his hope—and yet, modern psychologists are supposed to be pure determinists. Modern psychology has been freely criticized as having conceived of man as but the plaything of fate or as a sort of machine which must run as constructed. Let us see. Man's actions, we know, are largely determined for him, by his inheritances, his instincts and his temperament. These he brings into the world, and he brings them, too, into an environment in the selection of which he has had no choice, but which is filled with customs, conventions and traditions he is compelled to obey. It does sound deterministic. It might well seem from this that not only can man not help himself but that there can be little use in trying to help him. Some do hold, I know, just such ideas, and, consequently, reject all philanthropy; while others, hearing that psychology so teaches, turn their backs on psychology. A college president, for instance, writes pleasingly, if not illuminatingly, of "the Gogmagog, the stuffed bolster, of the bio-psychological determinists."

The fact is, however, as it seems to me, the truth stated above, as to man's inheritances,

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is not stated in its entirety. There is more to be said, and it is in this more that we must look for the explanation of the psychologist's hope. Man is born into the world with *many* inheritances, with *many* tendencies and instincts—*those which he reveals in adult life are not all he started with in childhood; they are but such as have, through environment, imitation and teaching, been cultivated into expression.* The infant is a complex of potential, often conflicting, inheritances. Which among all these shall become the determining influences in his life will depend upon his education. Here is the other half of the psychological theory; the half which is forgotten, sometimes, even by psychologists, and which is certainly generally missed by psychology's critics. In it, as it seems to me, lies the key to all progress. *Educate—draw out—from the vast subconscious storehouse of the child's mind, those parts which shall be useful to the child and his fellows.*

Doubtless, to some, this "discovery" of psychology will come as a sort of anti-climax. "The child, eh? So then we are not only driven back to the individual, but to the child-individual at that! We had hoped for some contribution to thought, and it is but to this we have arrived!" Well, this chapter I have

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entitled "Old Truths," and old truths are generally pretty good ones; they have commonly had to live through much stormy adversity to attain their old age. "But the child!" the critics continue, "Have we to wait for our children to grow up before we can expect better things?" Yes, and for their children's children, too. We have been at it some aeons already; we need not now get impatient. As a matter of fact, however, this is no *laissez-faire* proposition; it is not proposed just to wait. It is proposed, on the contrary, that all shall work diligently; not otherwise can the ideal be realized. *Laissez-faire*, if one can judge from many present signs, will lead to something quite other than ideal. Nor is it proposed to actually limit our endeavours to the child, but only to concentrate there as the more hopeful field. The child is a great store of potentialities, good and bad, strong and weak; the adult presents the result of selection from these. The environment with the child is a living influence from which he picks his models and ideals, to be then rapidly hardened by him into habits for life. The environment with the adult is another matter. The adult is no longer capable of being easily moulded; he has long ago made his selection from his store

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of possible trends; his habits are set and well-nigh unalterable. To him, henceforth, the environment is but a soil from which to draw that which is compatible with what he already has. (p. 196.)

To the child, we have many avenues of approach, and each of these filled with promise. These avenues, moreover, lead, most of them, into the child's subconscious mind—and the subconscious, we know, is the seat of life's strongest impulses. To the adult, we have, practically, but one approach, and this not to the subconscious but to the conscious. The sole effort ordinarily worth while with a grown man is the effort to train intellectually his already developed tendencies; to teach him to play brain against body, to overcome his emotions by taking thought. The environment has, of course, this much part, even with an adult, that it should be made such as will most easily encourage those tendencies that are good, and offer obstacles to the bad ones—it should, therefore, be made, to the best of our ability, conducive both to health and to healthful pleasure—but this is a very different and much slighter influence than that which it has with the child. With the child, as has been said, the environment determines which of all the inherited

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tendencies shall grow to become actualities for life. Certain dominant tendencies, it is true, there may be, and these may be so strong that no contrary influences can alter them—a saint may grow up among thieves, or a thief among saints—but this is far from the rule; in the great majority of cases the inherited tendencies are so fairly balanced that there is small difficulty in determining a choice. And even where strong tendencies exist, these can generally be off-set and neutralized by the encouragement and development of their opposites. In short, *the child is the bridge from the past to the future, and it is the environment, the education of the child, which determines with what part of the past this bridge shall connect.*

It is evident that I hold environment and education, in childhood, as synonymous. The child learns from the sayings and looks, mannerisms and ideals of all with whom it comes into contact, from parents, from brothers and sisters, from playmates and teachers and pets, in the day-school and Sunday-school, on the playgrounds, the streets, or in the fields. Whether consciously or unconsciously, the child is being educated each moment of its waking life—and the unconscious part, we can readily believe, is by far the more important of the two.

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It is a commonplace of psychology that nothing which reaches our senses is ever lost to us entirely. It may be received and forgotten, or it may not be consciously received at all, but it remains, nevertheless, somewhere in our subconscious minds, there to be woven into the fabric of our thought. From these buried possessions proceed many of those impulses and inhibitions which sometimes surprise us. They influence the whole of our life, and they supply much of the well-spring of action. Now consider the child, each day receiving multitudinous impressions, consciously and unconsciously recording great masses of experience and observation, but little of it understood, and all of it liable to misinterpretation; and consider, too, that all of this stuff, whether rightly interpreted or not, is capable of influencing the whole life of the child—and then realize what child care means! Is environment important? Is there not, indeed, in this “biopsychological determinism” a greater incentive for educational endeavour than can be found in any other attitude toward the child? Can the old orthodox attitude which conceives of the child’s character as wilfully determined give an equal incentive, or anything like as much hope?

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But what is the environment; can it be controlled? The environment is an ever expanding circle, embracing, as the years pass, a continually enlarging group; but, in the earliest years, in that period when it counts most of all, it is a very small group indeed. It is then nothing more than the home, and, first of all, the mother. With the problem so concentrated does it not seem possible to do something worth while for the child?

Education is of three kinds—that for knowledge, that for judgment, and that for habits and ideals. That for knowledge is useful only as it provides the material for judgment, the true goal of all intellectual effort. The intellectual ideal is, or should be, that man shall be able to make correct valuations of his problems, and that he shall seek only that which is truly worth having. Alas! with adults, our approach being primarily through reason, we can hope to reach the ideal with but few. You can not teach a man to think unless he already has something to think with—going to school or to college does not solve the difficulty. As President Jordan has said, you can not put a five thousand dollar education into a fifty-cent boy—you can get into him just fifty cents worth. What a pity this fact is not more generally rec-

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ognized! The colleges ignore it and complacently graduate hosts of the fifty-cent variety—how they do it must remain a secret of the faculty room—the classes are filled to overflowing and the whole standard of work lowered, but still they keep bidding for more. This is not advancing education, this “spreading of it thin” over the multitude—it is doing the reverse; it is stultifying and degrading it. “The more *first-rate* young men and women our universities and technical schools educate, the better; but the more young men and women of mediocre minds and weak purpose whom they push into the ranks of poor lawyers, poor doctors, poor engineers and the like, the more injury they do to the country.” This was the opinion of a learned president of one of our best universities.¹ The universities should be open to all, and at a minimum of expense, but the tests and work should be such as to attract only those who are able to profit. Municipal and part-time colleges commonly do, in this way, a real service to the community; they appeal only to those who seek education—and what a man really wants he will get.

But there is a kind of education where the possibilities are far more general—the educa-

¹ Andrew D. White: *Autobiography*, I, 395.

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tion of habits, of attitudes, of traditions and ideals. Of the three educations, this last is by far the most important. It is the only one possible for the masses, and, moreover, without it, all education, even that of the more intelligent, must remain largely sterile. This is the education which provides action, which harmonizes interests and which maintains that so necessary sense of kinship among peoples. It co-ordinates and correlates the ideals of the world and insures the continuance of the best. It enlists the subconscious to the aid of the conscious and provides both purpose and guidance in life.

There are certain seemingly fundamental ethical concepts which, being found essential to society's well-being, have entered into the mores of all civilized people. I refer especially to the concepts of honour and truth. Under one or other of these two heads may be grouped practically all of man's highest ideals of personal and social behaviour. And it is in the child these must be inculcated. "But is there a necessity?" some may ask. "Is not the child naturally good and true?" He is not. The natural child is a liar, a thief and a highwayman. He has potential social ideals, it is true, but these are of the mind and recent; it is the

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old primitive, animal, egoistic tendencies that first come to assertion. He may be innocent, indeed, of all evil knowledge and of evil intent, but he is rich in primitive impulse, and if his social ideals are to be realized they must be cultivated. When they are not cultivated, a liar and thief and highwayman the child commonly remains until finally hanged.

The parent's responsibilities are great in this matter. The necessary influences must be exerted very early in life—and by example, too, rather than by precept. Words relative to abstract principles have little real meaning to the average child before the age of twelve, but children do possess their potential patterns, and these may be developed by practical methods. Do not excuse "white lies"; they are but the "gentleman ushers to black ones." And do not let your children catch you when you are yourself lying. To be "not at home" when you are at home, to welcome effusively a guest whom you are known to detest, to admire enthusiastically a gown which you later laugh at—these things, and the whole social life is full of them, are not understandable by a child. The child watches and imitates and goes a step farther. It is hard to explain that a lie is all right sometimes and all wrong at others—a child is direct,

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not subtle. You can not reasonably punish the child for imitating what you yourself have set up as a model—you ought to weep, rather, with self-shame.

The lie permeates the whole social life. We use it in our pretence at being more social than we are; but we use it, too, for the purpose of gain, both in society and in business. In both, we use it in false advertisement, in false claims as to quality, in false presentations, and in false statements as to intention and wish. These things ought to shock, but do they? Lies, thieving, deceit and hateful scandal are, of course, not tolerated in the best society; but we clothe them euphemistically, and, as social “fibs,” financial ability, smartness and gossip, they readily find welcome. Regard for a moment the commercial world. If manufacturers are dishonest in their goods retailers will be in their sales and labour in its service. Naturally! Disease, vice and folly are contagious. The manufacturer of a sham, of some contemptible imitation of the real, instils into each of his “hands” a lowered standard of life. His factory becomes a college, and he himself a professor of cheating. Each merchant who sells the sham becomes, in turn, stained with the iniquity of it, and so do his salesmen. It is not the final

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purchaser of the article in question that suffers the greatest harm—the most harm has been done before the article has ever crossed the counter. From the lies of employers comes hatred of capital; from the cheats of the employed comes distrust of labour; and from the deceptions of government comes war. It is a sorry picture, and the sorrier because it does not seem really necessary.

Then there is cant, the first cousin of a lie—and its Uriah-Heep brother, hypocrisy. Cant, says Carlyle, is the *materia prima* of the devil, a double-distilled lie, the second power of a lie, from which come all other imbecilities and abominations. And yet, cant and hypocrisy rule in most public utterances. They are so much the rule that if omitted they are unpleasantly missed. The speaker who avoids them is called brutal. To omit cant when speaking of one's country is to be unpatriotic, and invites letters of protest in the newspapers. Carlyle preached against cant, and aroused a storm not yet subsided. We glory in cant, and can even glow with pride as we listen to that which, in our hearts, we know to be untrue.

Hypocrisy, if not too patent, we at least accept, giving the hypocrite the benefit of any doubt there may be, and holding that his in-

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tentions were probably good. The gentle John Woolman, being about to sail for England and finding the first-class fare very high, objects to "the carved work and imagery of the cabin," and so engages passage in the steerage. But a storm coming up, and his quarters in the forecastle becoming wet and disagreeable, he decides that "the poor sailors had need of all the room" and so himself goes aft to the cabin.² "So convenient a thing it is," as Benjamin Franklin says, "to be a reasonable creature, since it enables one to find a reason for everything one has a mind to."

But even where the hypocrisy is patent enough, we are often led to accept it through pure convention and habit. We Protestants rise and recite in fine unison the Creed. We say, "I believe," but what follows is largely automatic. Tom Paine has a finer appreciation of truth in his dictum that infidelity does not consist in believing or disbelieving, but in professing to believe what one does not. Hypocrisy is found in high places. "The Bishop is elected by the Dean and Prebends of the cathedral. The Queen sends these gentlemen a *congé d'élire*, or leave to elect; but also sends them the name of the person whom they are to

² John Woolman: *Diary*.

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elect. They go into the cathedral, chant and pray, and beseech the Holy Ghost to assist them in their choice; and after these invocations, invariably find that the dictates of the Holy Ghost agree with the recommendations of the Queen.”³

There is needed no dissertation to explain how these things may be changed. They need here but to be pointed out. A child brought up to candour of expression, with the habit of truth, with reticence rather than a lie when candour may hurt, and with a true sense of values, will take no pleasure in the contrary customs—he will throw his influence against them.

Let the instruction be in all forms of honesty. Make it known that the property of others is sacred, that injury to such property, and its waste, are but forms of thieving—even if the property happens to belong to some impersonal corporation. A promise is a promise—let it be lived up to. If there be doubt as to a promise’s fulfilment let the promise be properly qualified. Do not let children promise too readily. Have all contracts, big and small, lived up to; appointments kept and engagements fulfilled. And, above all, make it

³ Emerson: *English Traits*.

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clear that these things are not only for observance in public, but that they apply, first of all, to the home. Do not let the child get a double standard, establishing a code of behaviour and honour for public display only. This is not the way good habits are formed. By such process we get, at the best, but the thinnest of social veneers, liable always to crack under strain.

But there are other things, too, besides truth, that a child must learn from its parents. It must learn, first of all, obedience, the first law of God to man, the breaking of which has caused so much trouble, involving all of mankind—with the exception, according to Oliver Wendell Holmes, of a few families in Boston. And he must learn, also, fair-play, the respect for the rights of others. Privilege, the opposite of fair-play, is the curse of modern society. We are all of us guilty. All seek to form for themselves a privileged group, and then each seeks to become the especially privileged member of that group. The inferior naturally imitates the superior in this, and labour now seeks that which it has so resented in others. To them it is but a “getting into the game”—a process, of course, which has resulted in bitter contest. Fair-play leaves

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small room for privilege— such of the latter as survives can be based only on worth, a very different matter. In a large family of children, these principles of equity are commonly early and naturally established through internecine combat, through rough-and-tumble experience; but where the family is small, or where the child is unfortunately an only child, or a gross favourite, the home influence is only too often sadly reversed. See to it that servants are treated with courtesy—dignity you should preserve; it is not necessary to kiss them, nor yet, on the other hand, should you boss them or treat them with superior condescension. You buy, with your money, service, not servility. You need help and you can afford to pay for it; but no one can afford self-indulgence or indifference to others. Let there be some decent relation between the service demanded and your actual need. Be considerate in the service demanded. A household should be a partnership of endeavour where each shall have duties as well as rights. Make this so and there will be no longer a “servant problem”—nor, when a sufficient number of children have been graduated from such homes, will there be any further problem of labour and capital.

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Work is not evil. Drudgery is an attitude, not a fact. When the Devil "set Adam a-hoeing for a living" he really, unwittingly, did him a kindness. It seems a pity that the world should have accepted the Devil's own estimate of his act. Happiness lies in activity, in labour—this is no cant; it is a truth that is easily demonstrable.

I spoke, sometime back, of the difficulty of maintaining pride in one's work now that this has become so highly specialized and, for the many, a mere feeding of machines. Is not this new type of work evil? Not at all—if it seems evil, then one's attitude is wrong. The humblest soldier feels a pride in his company, his regiment, and even in his division; and yet he is relatively a far less significant part of the whole than is the worker who has the responsibility of some detail of manufacture. It is all in one's attitude. The errand boy of a large bank takes pride in his connection; the clerk in a successful shop takes pride in his; why then should not a labourer in a great manufactory have a similar pride and do his stint with a will and a heart? Is labour hopelessly stupid, or is it just badly led?

No, work is not evil—but laziness is. Laziness may be, of course, but an evidence of phys-

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ical or mental subnormality, but it is often, too, an exhibition of a rather contemptible egotism—believing, oneself, that work is evil, one leaves it to others. Luxury is the “second power” of laziness, and is physiologically, as well as etymologically, allied to lust. Both are, of course, fatal to the welfare of a child, and both, too, have an important social bearing. Luxury excites contempt, or, when displayed before the poor, a mixture of envy and hatred. It is always an incentive to crime. Lust, it might seem, need hardly be spoken of—and yet, some are so ignorant as to uphold even this. “A youth must sow his wild-oats; it will make a man of him!” What it will probably really do is to make a corpse of him, and a particularly unpleasant corpse at that. No, the sole virtue in “wild-oats” is in the struggling free from their bondage. If this can be happily accomplished, and the health restored, then we may indeed get a man.

Let a sense of true values be implanted in a child. “The greater number of miscarriages in life are attributable to the over-valuing of pleasure.”⁴ Comfort is not luxury; it is something far pleasanter and more healthful.

⁴ J. S. Mill: *Autobiography*.

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True happiness does not consist in tickling the senses, but in exercising sense. Youth is prone enough to empty amusement, takes to it kindly, he can understand it without explanation, but this attitude of his is largely the result of false training, begun, maybe, in the nursery. A youth more wisely led will give equal devotion to things better worth while. He who bends all of his energy to the pursuit of the pleasant and easy, shuts in his soul and becomes blind. "Every one is doing it," he says—meaning by "every one," a small group of deluded ones like himself. Fondly imagining that he is eminently social, he becomes in reality socially incapable, and, ultimately, but a parasite on society—a drag on the larger social movement.

It may be, that what has been said, so far, applies more especially to the children of the "better classes." The truth is, I have a feeling that even these are worth saving. Riches should not, off-hand, condemn any one. The constant inveighing against riches, I suspect, is but an echo from the flat purse of writers, but "life can be lived well, even in a palace." It is not only the poor and the sordid who are beautiful, however much the philanthropists

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and radicals would have us think so—"Under the thickest embroidered waistcoat beats a heart."

When one comes practically to compare the needs of the poor with those of the rich, the mind first slips comfortably into some one of the conventional attitudes—both poor and rich have temptations, but the poor have nothing else; the rich have temptations to which the poor are never exposed, and vice versa; the rich are happy and the poor are not; the poor are good and the rich are not. As a matter of fact, however, if we consider, as we have been doing, principles only, the sole difference between the poor and the rich is in their difference of opportunity. The rich have opportunity—for good and for bad—and they have, also, in consequence, a correspondingly large obligation. The poor, on the other hand, lack opportunity—their lives are both narrowed and difficult. The rich and the poor are not otherwise fundamentally different. As it is said, or something like it, in *Sartor Resartus*, the book of life reads the same whether it be written in gilt letters or in black. The trappings of the rich are but adventitious decorations. Strip a millionaire and a labourer and you could not distinguish between them, except as the la-

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bourer might probably measure up the better physically. Man, no matter what his trappings, or lack of them, is much the same everywhere. "Every man beareth the whole stampe of humane conditions."⁵ He has the same psychological needs, and the same social tendencies and aversions, however much these may alter in expression as the background changes. Things do look and feel differently in homes of wealth and in homes where all energy is centred on the finding of the where-withal for the next meal—but the fundamentals are the same for all that. There are unsatisfied and unsatisfiable longings in the homes of the rich—they fill much of the day—and there may be luxury in the homes of the poor; not the luxury of service and gluttony, but the luxury of the mind, which may prefer squalor to striving. "Even vagabondine roagues, as well as rich men have their magnificences and voluptuousnesse."⁶ It is not only the rich who can pass their time satisfactorily, "spitting over bridges" and rocking in chairs.

But this lack of opportunity with the poor introduces a real difficulty in their social education. Where the rich parent may fail with his

⁵ Montaigne.

⁶ *Ibid.*

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child through indolence, indifference, or lack of knowledge, the poor one often *must* fail through sheer stress of circumstance. With every desire to do right, the poor may still be obstructed by the urge of necessity. And then, life begins so early with the poor; the large problems of life get presented before their proper solution can be in any way reasonably expected. While the rich boy is coddled into man's estate, the poor boy takes on man's duties when little more than an infant. No wonder he gets into trouble!

The home, then, often fails—whether from indifference or indolence or lack of knowledge, or from the stress of necessity. And yet the home is the most important of all influences in life. It is a sad state of affairs and gives the darkest of outlooks—but, then, on the other hand, the facts being so, there should be aroused, not despair but endeavour. Stress of circumstance must remain an insurmountable difficulty, but indifference and indolence and lack of knowledge may all be overcome. Let us help to remove them. And as regards the stress of circumstance, the necessity of the poor, let us, too, offset this in such ways as we, by earnestly seeking, can discover. The home is not the only influence in life, even though

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it be the most important. There remains the street, the playground, the school and the church—the teachers, respectively, of worldly wisdom, of social relations, of knowledge and of ethical ideals. Let these all become teachers of the last named. The education of the schools is important only just so far as it inculcates the principles of behaviour; and these, too, may be learned and learned well, through example and guidance, in play time. How shall we help? We are talking now, remember, of the poor and necessitous. As the writer views society, there are certain social endeavours that transcend all others in importance. Hospitals and Homes are good and necessary; but the Playground Associations, the Neighborhood House, the Community Service, the Boy and Girl Scout movements, the Camp-Fire Girls—these are the things that really count. Every dollar spent here goes far to reduce the world's misery. These are the preventive measures that help to keep misery out of the world.

The state and the municipality, too, must take a hand. There are many who fail in life's struggle, who become entangled in the intricacies of life and are forced into social delinquency or want. These can not be saved by

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punishment. Punishment for what? Shall we punish them for their misfortunes? Some must, it is true, for society's sake, be permanently removed from the possibility of doing harm; but others, and even the majority, may be saved by just giving them 'a hand. Here is where the probation movement comes in—it is nation wide now, so far as permissive legislation is concerned; there is an almost universal acceptance of its principle—let us make this movement real. In the Municipal Court of Philadelphia—the “Brotherly Court,” Theodore Roosevelt called it—in the year 1920, nearly eighty per cent. of the new cases presenting in the Juvenile and Domestic Relations divisions were settled by the probation officers without so much as a court hearing. These poor ones, after having come to the very brink of destruction, were set once more in the right way. Here is true scientific philanthropy—no rosewater attitude, nor silly coddling, but just a plain understanding of the needs of the poor, of their needs and limitations, and, then, the helping hand. Can it be doubted but that the community, too, will profit by this humanity, and the whole social life and happiness be correspondingly advanced?

I have spoken of honour and truth as seem-

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ingly fundamental concepts. Strictly fundamental they are not. They are in themselves but individual attributes, and attributes, moreover, which may or may not be helpful, according to *their* foundation. Truth, I repeat it once more, is that which finds in us no conflicting brain patterns. What is true for us may be known as an untruth by another. Honour is determined by the code of one's group—it consists in the living up to the ideals one has set for oneself, and these are generally the group ideals. There is honour among thieves; and there is many a no-truth which is held sacred by the ignorant—and, too, by the wisest. Truth is limited by knowledge, and honour by experience; they are not fundamental. But suppose a man does lead a true and honourable life; suppose a man does act according to such truth and honour as he possesses—then indeed he should be accorded all credit. For here comes in another idea, an ethical principle, an ideal of behaviour—and it is to this our ultimate analysis must lead us. It is a curious thing—materialistic as we may be, and as I have been throughout this writing, if we but analyse far enough we find ourselves reduced to an ideal. We can not rest even on the semi-tangible concepts of

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honour and truth, but must get behind these to something more vague.

Where we have arrived finally, in fact, is to a sort of Spirit of Good, an abstract, a something which we may either conveniently accept as the Will of God, or, still preserving the scientific attitude, and planting our ideal with its feet on earth, regard as a composite formed from the best of the world's experience. I was about to say that it matters little which view we take, but this is not so—there is a practical issue depending. If it is the Will of God we are to seek, we should now turn to prayer; if it is the experience of society we need to know, we should now study man. It is not a matter of religion, at least not of the Christian religion, however much it may be of some others; it is a matter simply of our belief as to God's method. Does He act directly on the hearts of men, or through laws laid down? If the latter be the case it is certainly not irreligious to endeavour to discover these laws. At any rate, it is among the seekers for law that will be found all scientists. "By accumulated experiences the man of science acquires a thorough belief in the unchanging relations of phenomena—in the invariable connection of cause and con-

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sequence. . . . He sees that the laws to which we must submit are both inexorable and beneficent. He sees that in conforming to them, the process of things is ever towards a greater perfection and a higher happiness. Hence he is led constantly to insist on them, and is indignant when they are disregarded.”⁷

Sectarians, sometimes, as Spencer also suggests, would seem to fear that the truth may be bad; they are afraid of it, and call it irreligious. But the scientist exhibits a firmer faith. That “nature is sin and mind, devil,” he does not find at all likely. To him, on the contrary, “the Universe is but one vast symbol of God,” and he glories in its study. He seeks nature’s laws; he suspects that these are God’s laws; and he thrills in their discovery.

Religion is the mainstay of all people, of men and of nations. There is no more ominous sign, today, than this of its seemingly lessening hold. Without it man becomes but a bit of ingenious machinery—even though he may be, we will say, some eminent theologian. Just what faith a man shall hold by is, of course, a matter to be determined by that man’s needs; but faith of some kind he must have if he is to be a complete man. John Burroughs was content

⁷ Spencer: *On Education*.

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to trust in a God he made no pretence of knowing. It is not a bad way. It is the trust, the faith, the honesty of mind which are really important; and this I say as a scientist, though trust and faith are not scientific conceptions. I may add, too, that in the experience of a considerable life, I have found but few men of science, but few seekers of God's laws, who do not possess both trust and faith abundantly. In the study of natural law, there almost necessarily arises a belief in the existence of an inscrutable Being as law maker; and there comes, too, a reverence for, and confidence in this Being. Nature, we learn, is neither cruel nor kind, but just consistent and law abiding—attributes which, above all others, make for trust and reliance. Faith is a response to weak man's need of refuge. It is a psychological satisfaction—"a holy vessel into which man may pour his feelings" and to which he may turn when weary.

What is important to man, must necessarily be important to children. There is a something one gets in a childhood relation to God that is incomparably stronger than any other control that may be obtained throughout life. And it is in childhood, too, that one gets that living faith which later is to enrich the grown

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man. Flippant youth's prevailing attitude toward religion is a sad enough feature of modern life—may it be only a transient one!

But to return to the Spirit of Good. We have passed from the concrete to the abstract. We have found a source of power in the abstract. How about the masses, those stupid ones whom I have estimated so slightly? A power, to be valuable in society, must reach the majority—can these of the majority grasp an abstract idea? Yes, if it be also a true one. An abstract is a composite of experience. It is the result of repeated experiences each with some element in common with the others. Such can not come to man, over and over again, through the long history of the race, without leaving their mark. In each individual, even in the dullest, there must have been gradually laid down a potential complex of patterns representative of these experiences, and the foundation, therefore, of the resulting abstract conception. This conception may remain for ever vague and nameless, but it exists in all and may generally be roused to consciousness. Here it is we find our patterns for honour and truth, and here, also, our pattern for duty. *It is in these patterns I make bold to place "conscience."* Rejection of any judg-

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ment is due to the existence within us of some contrary, conflicting pattern. It may be conscious or unconscious—we may *know* that what we reject is wrong, or we may just *feel* it to be so. The contrary patterns, in other words, may be either in the conscious or subconscious mind. When it is the latter that contains them, and when the question is one of morals, then we say that the “conscience” prevents. Man’s subconscious is his “heart”; it contains, also, I believe, the material patterns of “conscience.”

In the concepts of truth, honour and duty will be found the best of all life’s guides. Of the first two, I have already spoken briefly; let me now mention, in closing, that greatest of all social concepts—duty. Does it need definition? I think not. To attempt to define it would be but to obscure it. Its undersanding lies deep in every man’s subconscious mind—in his conscience. Happiness—or shall we call it joy and contentment?—is attained by following its dictates; and misery and unrest, by ignoring them. It is the nucleus of all social ideals, and must ever remain the key to social progress; it is, moreover, within the reach of all; it is dependent upon no outside influences. The contentment its exercise

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brings is open to the poor as to the rich. One can be a "slave to desires" and unhappy always, because of the externals we long for; but no man can be a "slave to duty"—the sense of duty is a part of ourselves; when we satisfy it we become free. "Let him who gropes painfully in darkness or uncertain light, and prays vehemently that the dawn may ripen into day, lay this precept well to heart. . . . 'Do the Duty which lies nearest thee,' which thou knowest to be a duty! . . . The situation that has not its Duty, its Ideal, was never yet occupied by man. Yes here, in this poor, miserable, hampered, despicable Actual, wherein thou even now standest, here or nowhere is thy Ideal: work it out therefrom; and, working, believe, live, be free. Fool! The Ideal is in thyself; thy Condition is but the stuff thou art to shape that same Ideal out of; what matters whether such stuff be this sort or that, so the Form thou give it be heroic, be poetic? O thou that pinest in the imprisonment of the Actual, and criest bitterly to the gods for a kingdom wherein to rule and create, know this of a truth: the thing thou seekest is already with thee, 'here or nowhere' couldst thou only see!"⁸

⁸ *Sartor Resartus*.

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Do I seem to have arrived but to a moral platitude? So much the better! Platitudes are commonly great truths that have come, through familiarity and our tendency to give to the familiar a lip service only, to be degraded and stripped of their power. It behooves us to re-establish their dignity. To be content to dismiss a truth as a "platitude," is, really a bit of unpleasant personal revelation. Some "platitudes" there indeed are, but that which is properly connoted by the word lies not so much in the thing uttered as in the attitude of mind of the utterer, or of the hearer. Great truths become platitudes when spoken or received in a spirit of cant. Is there nothing in the concepts of industry, honour, fair play, truth and duty to solve the difficulties under which the world now struggles? Should we not rather ask, can these difficulties ever be solved by any other means? Is it possible to conceive of any economic formula that can equal this celestial group of possible human attitudes? Imagine a government in which they prevailed! Imagine a people so guided! Imagine a labour union working on these principles! Is resistance to government determined ever otherwise than by that government's indifference to high

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ideals? Is a tax wisely expended ever refused? Is it privilege or justice that bring discontent? Would a labour union that would take pride in quality of service receive anything but reward? Labour has worked on one line only so far—to get more, for less work. It has evidently now exceeded the maximum possible attainment in this direction—having hampered production to the point where it can no longer be profitably employed. Why not work on some other line? Why not now seek to better service, and to help each other, through their own unions, to a greater efficiency? To be a member of a union should be an honour. Why not make it so? Why not make membership a matter of pride, admitting such only as can prove their worth, and then helping these on to even greater attainments? It does seem, really, that there are some practical applications possible even for “platitudes”!

Out of a distant past appeared man, naked and ignorant, but confident and valiant. Out of the same past came society, crude but compelling. The two are but one. They are but two aspects of the same River of Life—man, the source and the body; and society, the vis-

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ible stream which results. It is from the source, the emotional faculties of man, that the urge of the movement has come; and from these, and from the superadded primitive mental reactions, those laid down in the long infancy of the race, society has taken its form. Its conventions and customs and its institutions, of government and of church, are but the clothing with which man has invested his desires and his needs. These things are growths, the products of long years of evolution and experiment, the outcome of natural laws. Are they wrong? Would we mend them? Shall we with our wits build something new? It were futile to try—that is not the way social structures are made. Were man as able as he thinks he is, still such an attempt would be futile—the forces he would ignore are forces which, whether recognized or not, operate unceasingly. And yet, man is not helpless—there are things he can well enough do.

I have compared society to a stream. Environment conditions the flow of a stream, making it now headlong, now still. Let us consciously labour to make the environment that which shall best conduce to man's happiness. So, too, we are controlled by our inher-

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ited tendencies, but we are not powerless because of that. We can not safely ignore these tendencies, but we can both check and guide them. Water runs down hill; it is a law both incontestable and unalterable; but man has seized this law and studied it, and now uses it to make water do many wonderful things. It is with the child there comes our greatest opportunity. In the child there exist thousands of inherited possibilities—let the adult, in his wisdom, give aid to the child in selecting from these the ones that are valuable. But selection and adjustment are not all; besides the primitive egoistic reactions, the child brings into the world certain potential brain patterns born of *social* experience. Certain patterns there are which have been laid down in man by the repeated experiences of all civilized peoples, and these now exist, at least potentially, in all normal children. From these patterns are derived the great ethical concepts of Truth, Honour and Duty. And here it is, as it has seemed to me, the real hope of man lies. Let these potential patterns be early aroused into being. Let the child, through illustration and example, come to rely on these social concepts as facts. Let him learn to refer to them his judgments, and let him

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use them as measures of value. They are ethical and good—the wise have found them so—let our children be made wise. If we must have a formula, let it be this one—it is not at all easily misunderstood, its patterns are too universal—let us adopt as a slogan, Truth, Honour and Duty—and the world will soon mend.

THE END

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