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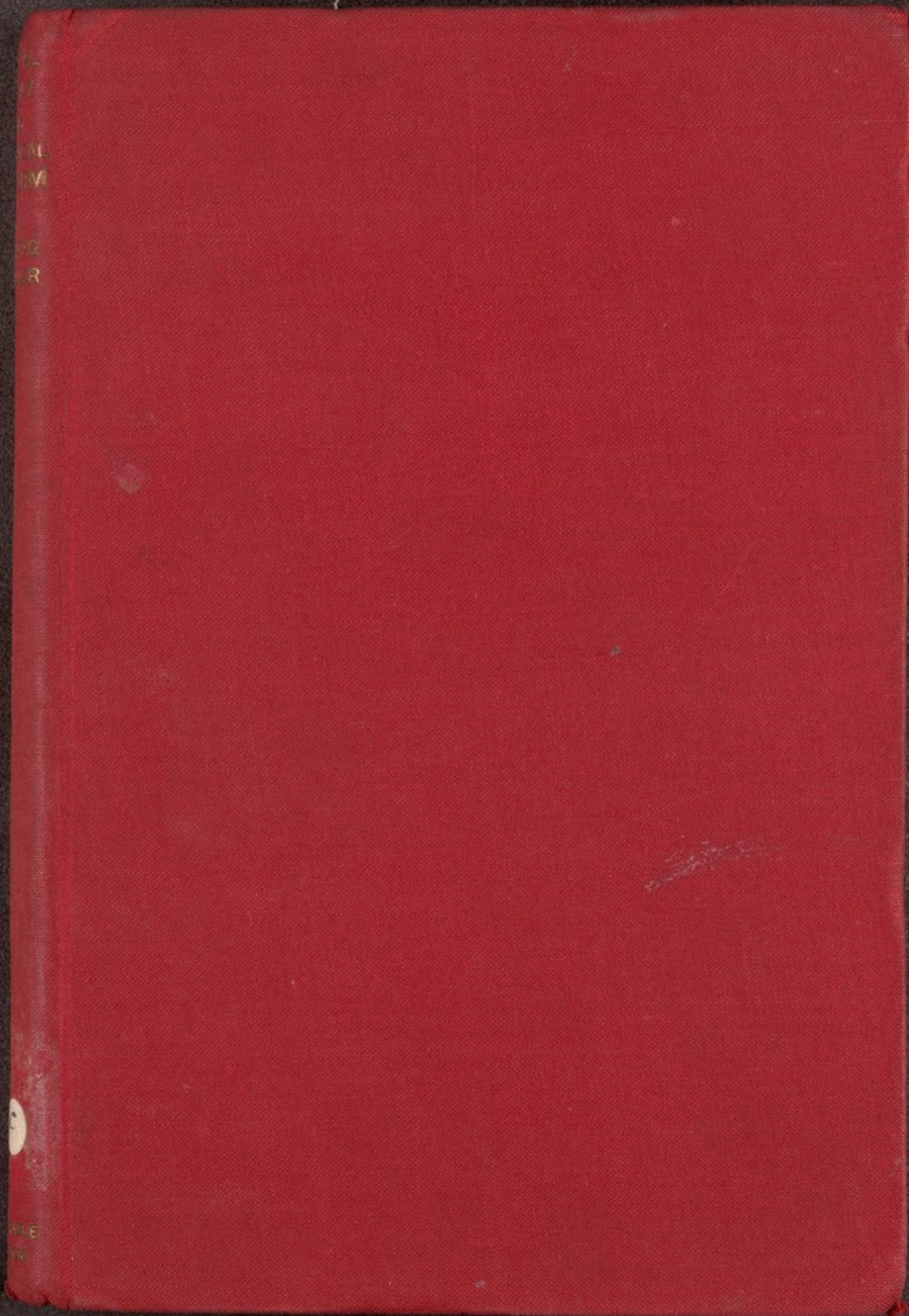
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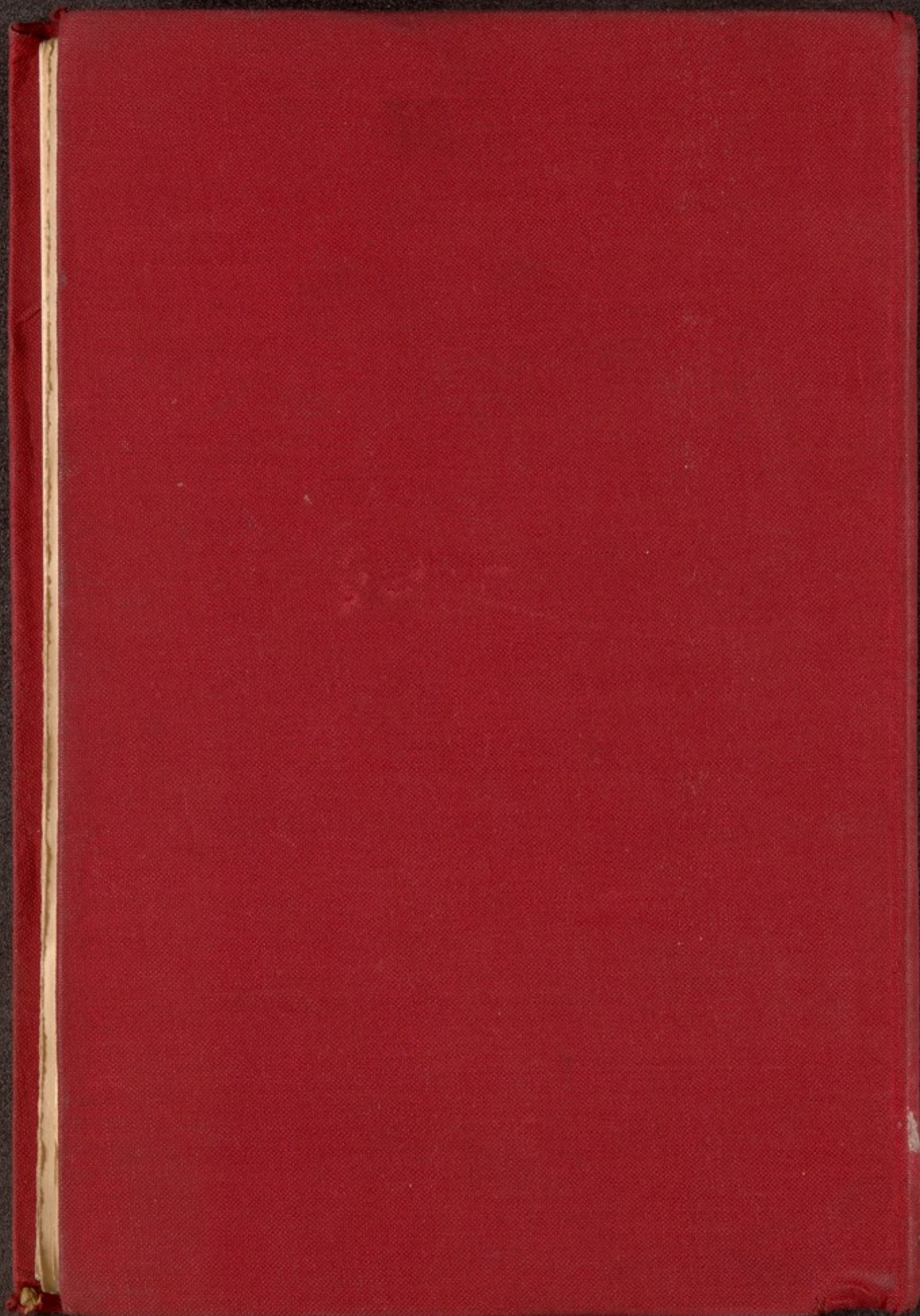
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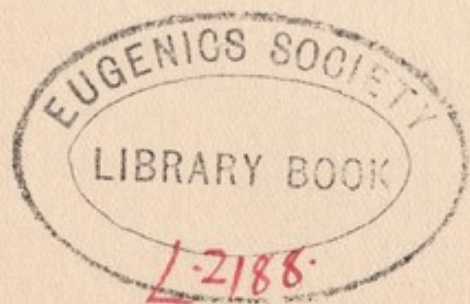
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SOCIAL DECAY AND EUGENICAL REFORM

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

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SOCIAL DECAY
AND
EUGENICAL REFORM

BY

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PREFACE

THE aim of this book is to show, in plain language, that it is perfectly practicable to launch at once, here and now, with quite moderate and simple means, a scheme of 'positive' eugenics, which (if persisted in and not suppressed by violence) will progressively affect the human race in such a way as to improve its intrinsic qualities and render it more and more capable of improving its conditions of life. It will thus reverse the processes of social decay which are now becoming so painful and so unmistakable.

At first sight it may however seem a little odd to propound such a scheme at a time of the deepest depression and gloom, when our civilization is threatened with complete collapse, when its official guides have nothing to suggest, or only remedies which look worse than the disease, and when the masses of mankind, having delivered over their souls to false prophets, seem bent on emulating the Gadarene swine. But in reality a time of crisis is more propitious than one of

humdrum prosperity to reflection on any really radical reform. In more normal times the conservative inertia which resists even the thought of anything new, however promising it may seem and however salutary it may prove to be, is usually too strong. Man only thinks when he has to, and needs the spur of imminent disaster to make any strenuous effort to reform his ways. Conservative complacency requires to be effectively shattered before any plea for any farsighted and scientific reform can obtain a hearing.

It is therefore to those who have realized how very critical is the present situation that I address myself and venture to suggest that the evils from which we suffer are much more deeply rooted in human nature than our pastors and masters have hitherto allowed us to suspect. It is our whole nature which is at fault. We are suffering from what used to be called original sin, but what in the light of modern science is seen to consist chiefly of weaknesses acquired in the course of biological history by inattention to its trends and by lack of efforts to correct them. Man must, therefore, remould himself, and transform himself into an altogether superior creature, if he is to attain to his heart's desire, or even if he is not to degenerate and perish.

PREFACE

vii

Of the constituents of this volume the second and third chapters appeared in the *Eugenics Review*, and the fourth, fifth and sixth in the *Nineteenth Century*, and I am indebted to these periodicals for the leave to republish them, with suitable modifications. I would also like this book to be read as a continuation of my *Eugenics and Politics*, which supplies its historical and sociological background, and of *Tantalus or the Future of Man*.

OXFORD,

December, 1931.

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CHAPTER I

SOCIAL DECAY

Is our civilization beginning to decline? Are we approaching a turning-point of history and entering upon a dismal period similar to the decay of the Greco-Roman world 1500 years ago, when the old social order rotted away, and a new one had to be built up with infinite pains and horrors on a much lower level? Or are we heading for a catastrophic collapse of civilized man or even of the whole human race?

I

Twenty or thirty years ago such questions would have been universally scouted as absurd. Nothing had then been thought of, nothing had occurred, to shake the faith in progress which seemed to be the manifest destiny of evolving man. But it has since been more clearly understood that no guarantee of continuous progress can be drawn from 'evolution'. This popular notion is a hybrid, extracted from the actual course of biological history by means of an interpretation. It argues that because the history of human life *has* resulted in a certain progress man *must* continue to progress, however he behaves or

misbehaves himself. But this is not only unlikely but illogical; it overlooks that progress is a *net result*, not a 'law'. Progress has resulted from the interplay of a multitude of social forces, many of which were always unprogressive or destructive.*

Hence to reverse the progressive trend which has in the main prevailed up to date, it is merely necessary to suppose a slight change in the relative strength of quite a few tendencies. We are therefore beginning to realize that to progress we must *will* to progress, and act intelligently, so that we *can* progress.

The course of events also has disillusioned us of many sanguine hopes. We have had a World War, which revealed all too clearly how ferociously unchanged beneath the thin veneer of civilization lurked the old *bête humaine*, and how illusory was the belief in moral progress. It revealed, even more clearly, how inadequate had been the progress of human intelligence: everywhere men were lacking to cope with its unfamiliar problems, military, scientific, industrial and financial, everywhere human constitutions proved incapable of selecting the right men for the guidance of public affairs. The agony of the World War evolved no great general, no great statesman, and no great idea (unless we can recognize the League of Nations in its present crippled form as the distortion of a great idea): but its blunders were even worse than its crimes. On

* See further, *Humanism*, ch. viii.

the other hand, it has familiarized all thoughtful people (all too few, one fears !) with the possibility that our civilization may easily come to a violent end, if such follies are repeated.

We have had also the Russian Revolution, which *may* contain the seeds of a new social order, but has so far only deprived Russia of her *intelligentsia*, re-enslaved her *moujiks*, and depressed her life to a lower and more bestial level. We have had also a number of social changes, less spectacular than these, but even more pervasive, and as ominous of social decay.

So the question of social decay is clearly on the carpet, and seems a fair one to discuss.

II

To begin with we should realize that the belief in social decay is quite natural and normal. It is more ancient and commoner than the belief in progress, which indeed is quite a modern heresy. It is only during the last two centuries that the faith in progress has grown up : until then men had believed for ages that old times were better than the present, that the Golden Age was over, that their ancestors had been driven forth from a paradise, that the good old customs of their forefathers had been corrupted, and that manners and morals had been steadily decaying.

Aetas parentum, pejor avis, tulit
Nos nequiores, mox daturos
Progeniem vitiosiore !

Nor is this merely the urbane lament of the fashionable poet of a society whose enjoyment only have been enhanced by the thought that the deluge was coming after them ; for in Horace's day the process of social decay which was to overwhelm the Roman world had hardly yet become noticeable : it is the burden of moral exhortation, the theme of the preachers and teachers, throughout the ages.

Now for this belief there is a reason, a reason deeply rooted in human nature. It is a psychological reason, from which it will always be renewed, however often it is belied by the course of events. It is this. About the immediate, and usually also about the remote, past the natural source of information is always the old. It is to its elders that the community goes for its precedents, and that the young bring their troubles to be illuminated by the wisdom of antiquity. They are the natural repositories for traditions and the authorities for beliefs about the past. Until schools of scientific history arise there is no checking of their assertions, and even then their accounts not infrequently prevail over those of the historians, whose works are little read.

Now the elder has a natural bias which vitiates his testimony. He is by nature and profession a *laudator temporis acti se puero*. His own past appears to him in a roseate light ; partly because the kindly falsifications of memory have erased its harsher features, partly because it carries him back

to the golden days of his own youth, when *he* really enjoyed life with a keener zest. It is no wonder, then, that all things past should be transfigured in his report into something better, brighter, and happier, and that the present should appear by contrast dull and sordid. His professional position demands the same attitude. For his social position as the depositary of tradition, requires him to magnify his office, and to exalt the past. Lastly, old age naturally tends to psychological conservatism: it holds that the old is better, merely because it has grown familiar.

Being thus contrasted with an idealized past, the present inevitably suffers. The gloss is rubbed off its achievements. It seems less romantic and less heroic than a nobler and more interesting past. Is it a wonder that when, in addition, the writers of romance exercise their art to select their topics from the storied past, an overwhelming impression is conveyed that the world is not improving but growing poorer in all that makes life worth the living, and that in the days of yore life was richer and more thrilling, even though more arduous, with knights braver and more gallant, and ladies chaster and more beauteous?

III

We are naturally subject, therefore, to a great illusion predisposing to a belief in social decay, and this has to be discounted before we can fairly estimate the trend of social change. When we

have done this, we should next pay attention to the bewildering complexity of social tendencies.

We should first note that it is quite possible that a tendency which in one place and at one time conduced to progress may under changed conditions promote decay. The great historical example of this principle is the *fighting* habit. It has undeniably been the chief road to ascendancy both for individuals and for peoples, it has written its record on the front pages of every history : but the sequel in the appendix is often overlooked, which tells how the habits of the fighters, after they have arrived at prominence, very frequently become fatal to their persistence, and lead to their elimination. Hence the long line of conquerors of civilized communities like China, India, and Egypt have died out, and left but little mark upon these countries.* In general it may be said that societies also have the defects of their qualities, and under changing circumstances their very qualities may turn into defects that lead to their destruction.

We should notice next that a society may be decaying in some respects while progressing in others, and that a slight, almost imperceptible, shift in the relative influence of two tendencies may make all the difference between progress and retrogression. The course of social change, therefore, needs constant watching, and may at any moment engender maladjustments that can be met only by resolute and intelligent regulation.

* *Eugenics and Politics*, p. 82.

The classical example here is the industrial revolution, which followed on the great development of machinery and the use of mass production.

The more then we study the causes of social prosperity and decay the more complex and puzzling they seem. And the more mysterious. For the state of the world is always Janus-faced. If we look upon one aspect it seems evil and deteriorating rapidly, if upon another, it is growing better. A pessimistic and an optimistic forecast of the future always seems in order, even where our only ground for hope seems to be that we have weathered similar storms in the past. But the more we realize what great and serious tendencies to decay have been operating at all times and in all societies, and that every one of them might easily have taken a turn into the broad path which leads to destruction, the more its actual salvation comes to seem a piece of luck, and almost a miracle. We are tempted therefore to regard it as something providential.

I am not at all sure that it is not, but we should do ill on this account to trust to luck and to hope to win through by a miracle. It is far safer and more rational to strain every nerve to escape the dangers we foresee, on the principle that God helps those that help themselves.

Intelligent control of social tendencies, the steering of the course of history towards humanly valuable and desirable objectives, is however a new thing. The human race has never attempted

it before, and it represents a new level of human intelligence. It may enable us to escape from the dangers in which our past proceedings have involved us. For example, the efforts now being made to 'outlaw' war, and to put obstacles in the way of the war-makers, are significant attempts at such conscious common action.

It is to efforts of this sort that the term 'socialism' should be applied. In its widest and truest sense it should mean common action by all human societies in the interest of all humanity rather than what it means at present, viz., an unintelligent attempt to equalize human conditions without regard to merit or capacity, which is inspired mainly by envy and sentimentalism.

War however is not the only danger to humanity which at present cries out for concerted common action. It is the most obvious and spectacular, and perhaps the most pressing; but for this very reason there is a better chance that something effective will be done about it. There are other causes of social decay which are less easy to observe, more difficult to cure, and more irremediable in their effects. And it is upon the possibilities of counteracting these that we shall have to rely in order to answer our initial question whether we are in danger of social decay.

IV

Seeing that individually all men are mortal, every society is vitally concerned with the measures

it takes to perpetuate itself, and to recruit the successors to its present *personnel*. Now it is in the functioning of this social recruitment that the difficulties have arisen (or become aggravated) which give rise to serious apprehensions, even among those least disposed to alarmist estimates of the future.

In the first place, as a joint product of the emancipation of women and of the greater vogue and efficacy of methods of birth-control, child-bearing has for the first time in history become *voluntary*, and the way the modern woman is using her new power may well occasion some anxiety. It seems possible that society may have to face an extensive strike against child-bearing, at all events in certain classes of the population. Whereas formerly a woman could not help having children, she can now regulate the process almost as she pleases. If for any reason she shrinks from the experience, she can avoid it altogether. If after the first experience she does not wish to repeat the experiment, she can stop. If she finds that a couple of children are enough to give employment to her maternal activities and to satisfy her instincts, she can limit her progeny. Only in the rarest cases will she consent to approach anywhere near the maximum limit that is physiologically possible.

Now it is evident that this new factor will make a difference, and may involve a social revolution in the nature of the family. If mating no longer entails children, if the size of the family can be

regulated by the parents, its social function is radically changed. It ceases to be a merely natural process and becomes a subject for rational control. This change is being recognized : already it is said to be a question for deliberation among the newly married whether they will have a baby or a Baby Austin, and when it is clear that the course of nature can be interfered with thus, the whole subject will invite State interference and social regulation.

Not that these are likely to be successful. It is safe to predict that in the long run no social influences will be able to cope with woman's wishes in this matter. The State will have to yield, like the husbands, even though the State should improve their legal position. At present the husband's position is quite abject. He can no longer coerce his wife, and a refusal to bear children is not yet a legal ground for divorce, even in America. Nor is it at all likely to become so in any country in which women have votes and form a majority of the voters.

The denunciations of birth-control by Churches and militarists are as little likely to prove effective. At present the Roman Catholic Church is putting forth all its strength, which is far from despicable, to arrest the growth of a practice which is clearly antagonistic to its policy of recovering control of Christendom by means of the differential birth-rate, and Mussolini is exhorting the Italians to increase the over-population of Italy on patriotic

grounds. But the thunders both of the Church and of the dictator are effective only among the most backward and least intelligent masses, who are below the intellectual level at which birth-control commends itself. It is much more likely that birth-control will spread throughout the world and will be generally adopted as the means to check undue proliferation than that any religious or political doctrine will succeed in stopping it.

Nor is this wholly a matter for regret. A world that has stabilized its population will be less prone to go to war ; for even its militarists will see that the natural growth of population will not speedily make up for the losses of a war. Moreover, birth-control will take the place of the worse methods now so largely used, such as infanticide and abortion. Also the world is over-populated, conspicuously so in parts, such as the whole of Europe (except France), Egypt, India, China and Japan. In all these countries population is far above the *optimum* density, the point at which it can *best* make its living ; and birth-control is obviously a better way of reducing population than war, famine, and disease have ever shown themselves to be. Birth-control then promises to be a cure for over-population and a guarantee of peace ; but it also threatens us with a feminine revolt against child-bearing and a reign of sexual licence.

Our social philosophers are plainly at a loss to suggest a remedy for this situation ; so they may

even listen to the suggestion that it is a case for *laissez faire*, because the evil is plainly one that will cure itself, if only nature is allowed to take her course. For at present a desire for children, a real maternal instinct, is certainly a part of feminine nature. It may not be strong enough in many women, and some may not have it at all; but the normal woman has it. What then will happen if society refrains from exercising social pressure upon these different sorts of women? Those who do not desire children will have none; those who do not desire many will have few; and the normal woman will perpetuate the race. She will also usually transmit to her daughters the emotional attitude and constitution she possessed; hence in every generation the percentage of women with strong maternal instincts anxious to become good mothers will increase, until there are women enough who feel motherhood to be their supreme vocation, to assure an adequate continuance of the race.

It is therefore only necessary for society to leave the field open for the normal woman, and to refrain from bolstering up abnormalities and frustrating natural selection, in order to raise the strength of the maternal instincts to any height desired. Thus a general strike against child-bearing is a mare's nest; it is never to be feared unless a society should organize itself so foolishly as to penalize and extirpate those who undertake the duty of perpetuating it.

Unfortunately not a few modern societies have shown tendencies in this direction, so far at least as certain classes are concerned. They have so arranged themselves that a large family is a serious social handicap, and that public opinion in certain classes frowns upon them. Similar sentiments abound also in circles in which a mad pursuit of pleasure, a reckless 'having of a good time' has become the accepted form of the good life, and where any family at all is viewed as an encumbrance or impediment. The Areoi of the South Sea islands prove that this type of sentiment may become predominant, and also what may happen to a society in which it does: but in themselves these phenomena are artificial, and only illustrations of the careless fatuity of so many social institutions. It should not be too difficult to reform them, and in theory to do so is quite easy.

V

A much more formidable social problem is that presented by the phenomenon known as the differential birth-rate. This phenomenon is now conspicuous in all civilized societies, and broadly speaking means that different social strata reproduce at different rates, with the consequence, of course, that the faster-breeding classes contribute more to the next generation than the slow breeders, and ultimately determine the character of the stock. At present it is found that the birth-rate diminishes steadily (and rather rapidly) as we rise

in the social scale. The death-rate diminishes also, but not so much as formerly, and nothing like enough to compensate for the lower birth-rate in the upper classes. Both these phenomena are (relatively) new, and contrast markedly with the conditions in uncivilized societies. In them the conditions of life are so severe that the less favoured classes can raise very few children, and the children who survive to form the next generation are predominantly descended from the chiefs.* Hence in a barbarian tribe most of the population is literally *well-born*, descended from the chiefs of the previous generation; whereas in a civilized society, a large and growing portion of each generation has risen from the ranks. Thus natural selection is in the one case improving the stock, while in the other social conditions are deteriorating it.

This elimination at the summit of the social scale can be traced back to the beginnings of civilization, but has now become much more severe, and extends further down. It is computed that the birth-rate in the upper and middle classes has now sunk so low that their numbers are bisected in every generation: the vacancies they leave are filled by promotions from the lower ranks. Thus the result is that every civilized society now recruits itself preferentially from its 'proletariate'.

But is this a salutary method of recruitment? There are cogent reasons for supposing that it *must* lead to a progressive deterioration of the

* Cp. *Eugenics and Politics*, p. 89.

stock. Every society which is not split up into absolutely rigid castes—and even in India the status of castes is not absolutely fixed—recognizes and rewards ability by more or less social promotion. The ability which is admired and the qualities which are valued in a particular society at a given time lead to a raising of their possessors in the social scale. This does not necessarily mean that the best men will be raised to the highest posts ; for the sort of ability recognized and rewarded will of course be relative to the ideas and ideals of the society in question, and in consequence of the inheritance of status the ability represented in the actual nobility may diverge appreciably from the ability now most highly valued. Thus whereas the ancient nobility was recruited from successful fighters, the modern springs from successful traders. What is common to both cases is that the qualities rewarded were those valued and admired at the time. But in so far as ability is unspecialized by nature and directed into one channel or another only by social circumstances, the successful man of one age would be the same in type as the successful man of another.

In a society therefore which practises the social promotion of the able, the natural ability generated in it (or attracted by it) will always tend to *rise*, and to accumulate in the highest social strata : we should expect to find it rather at the top than at the bottom of the social scale. In itself this is a rational arrangement, because it places ability in

those quarters in which it can be most influential and contributes most to the common welfare.

But of course it means, incidentally, that the lower strata are constantly *drained* of any ability they may produce. The greater are the possibilities of rising, the more efficiently are they drained, and the more efficiently they are drained, the less capable they must become of generating further supplies, if there is anything in heredity. Theoretically therefore a society which fosters or permits the promotion of the able should sooner or later find all its ability and all its admired and admirable qualities congregated at the top, and all its stupidity, inefficiency and worthlessness sunk to the bottom of the social structure.

VI

But is this what in fact we find? It is certainly not what we *appear* to find: but explanations may diminish the discrepancy between the theory and the facts. In the first place, there is still ability rising from below. This is explicable by the fact that until quite recently the social structure was so rigid as to promote only a fraction of the ability which existed in the lower strata. Secondly, the ability in the upper strata is exposed to many deleterious influences and so much of it is spoilt and wasted that the congenital superiority of the upper classes is much reduced. No society that exists, or ever has existed, can be said to have solved

the problem of getting full social value out of the abilities of its upper classes. No society has discovered an adequate stimulus to arouse the ambitions, and to exercise the powers, of its best material. Instead of trying to provide it with stimulus for exertion, every society besets it with ruinous temptations. It is clear that for the favourites of fortune in the upper strata of society the struggle for existence is relaxed, and the need for exertion greatly reduced: they inherit by birth the objectives of desire and ambition which others have to work for strenuously. Why then should they exert themselves, either at school or in later life? Society therefore, as at present constituted, constantly loses a great part of the ability it contains from simple *sloth*—or rather fails to elicit and utilize it.

Nay, it does worse than fail to use the good material it possesses. It sets to work to spoil it. It does not prohibit dysgenic matings which will adulterate and corrupt the good qualities which have been sifted out and brought to the top with so much labour.* Indeed so far from restrain-

* It is true that some States forbid legal marriage between different human stocks. But their measures do not avail to stop miscegenation, which is going on all the world over with growing rapidity as the possibilities of human intercourse are increased. And as the habits of the Nordics are apt to grow promiscuous when they get into tropical countries, their type looks likely to be swamped by the masses they regard as their inferiors.

ing its upper classes from debasing the most precious stocks at will and spoiling and ruining themselves, every social order leaves them free to go to the devil as they please and tempts them with every possible lure. The primrose path of pleasure is spread before their eyes and bristles with traps which engulf them body and soul. Is it a wonder that so many of them do not live to reproduce their kind, but prefer to eliminate themselves by a short life and a merry one? Is it a wonder that aristocracies are always dying out, and that men of ancient lineage are rarities in every land? No society has yet learnt the art of *preserving* the ability it has recognized and promoted.

VII

Until this essential art has been mastered the prospects of progress must remain precarious. For until then progressiveness will have no real roots in human nature. The human race will not be able to grow *intrinsically* better and more capable of solving the growing problems of human life. Indeed it will be lucky if it is able to maintain itself at its present level. For it will be subject to an intrinsic deterioration by reason of the social contra-selection, sterilizing the better and favouring the worse, among its constituents. For a time the decline which this fatuity entails may be cloaked by the progress of the sciences; for these now possess so much better mechanisms

for preserving and increasing knowledge that they can continue to grow, even in the absence of superior minds, by the cumulative team-work of individually inferior workers.

But the biological deterioration produced by the sterilizing of the best in our present social order is a cumulative process. Hence the progressiveness mediated by better mechanisms and better organization has natural limits and must soon cease. The crop of discoveries and inventions grown by the sciences will grow ever poorer, and anon will be used only for the trivial and harmful purposes of a degenerate age. Moreover, the machines and mechanisms devised by stronger and abler ancestors will become a danger: when wielded by feebler hands they will get beyond control and turn into engines of destruction.* There is some reason to fear that this process may already have begun. For certainly there are indications that the complex mechanisms of modern life, trade, finance, employment, government, and warfare, have already got out of hand, and that the men in charge of them are exhibiting growing incapacity to control them for any good (or indeed for any) purpose.

* Earl (Bertrand) Russell already foresees 'an increasing collapse . . . until the skyscrapers become as strange as Maya ruins in Yucatan,' *Whither Mankind*, p. 81, and in *The Scientific Outlook*, p. 98, suggests that 'machines will survive the collapse of science, just as parsons have survived the collapse of theology'.

VIII

The sterilization of the fit, the spoiling of the cream, is not, however, the only deleterious process permitted to go on in modern society. It is deadly to the prospects of progress and to the possibilities of intelligent guidance in human affairs, but it is not in itself incompatible with a stationary civilization in which the ordinary man of average stupidity might contrive to muddle along indefinitely without disaster. There is, however, in addition, operative in modern society a deteriorating agency which is directly conducive to a rapid and irremediable decline. It, too, is incidental to the differential birth-rate, and in the magnitude and volume of its effects it greatly surpasses the sterilization of the fit. We may call it the *proliferation of the feeble-minded* at the bottom of the social scale. It is practically certain that much, if not all, feeble-mindedness is due to heritable mental defect, though the precise mode of its inheritance is not yet established beyond dispute, probably because there are several kinds of what now is lumped together under the rubric 'feeble-mindedness'. Mostly it seems to be inherited as a Mendelian recessive; which means for practical purposes, that from two feeble-minded parents nothing but feeble-minded children will result, and that if one parent is (apparently) normal a large percentage of 'carriers'

of a (latent) feeble-mindedness will be generated. Mental defect, therefore, is very hard to extirpate ; because there are no means of knowing in advance who may not be a covert carrier of it, and society can only impede the propagation of the manifestly feeble-minded.

At present, however, next to nothing is done to stop the dissemination of feeble-mindedness. Indeed we seem to do our best to further this fatal process. Most of our 'social welfare' work ('baby-saving,' etc.) seems to have the purpose of enabling to survive and breed the naturally incompetent and defective who could not have done so by their unaided efforts, while much social effort (especially of the educational sort) is wasted, or yields poor returns, because it ignores the natural limitations of its beneficiaries.

Now ethically the spirit of the social attempts to mitigate the harshnesses of the struggle for existence is worthy of all praise ; but intellectually the methods by which society seeks to incorporate its purpose are simply fatuous. Surely the social intelligence should learn to help those who need social support, without inflicting not merely useless expense but progressive damage upon itself. Nor should the conceding to the weak of a right to live be thought to entail a right to reproduce their kind. We may freely grant that society does right not to kill its weaklings ; but it does not follow that it should also propagate their weaknesses. No society can in the long-

run *afford* to perpetrate such folly. If it does, it dooms itself to decay and eventual destruction.

Yet this is the course on which all civilized societies seem to have embarked. At present the feeble-minded are allowed to multiply freely ; and they take full advantage of the permission. They increase far more rapidly than the intelligent and competent who feel some responsibility for the fortunes of their offspring ; for none of the checks on reproduction which affect the latter has any influence on the feeble-minded. They do not look ahead into the future ; they do not care whether their children can maintain themselves ; if the question had occurred to them, they would merely assume that the social support which had enabled them to be and to multiply would be forthcoming also for their children. Hence they see no need for any sort of forethought, prudence, or self-denial, and could not be brought to practise any form of birth-control, even if they were intelligent enough to use it. They are, in short, social parasites of a peculiarly pernicious kind.

For they multiply without stint. Their families average seven or more, and are rapidly supplanting those of the superior classes, which average less than two. At the same time the growth of taxation required for the support of the growing multitudes of the feeble-minded is impelling the wealth-producing classes to further restriction of their families. Thus the strong and efficient are being extirpated, in order that the feeble

and incompetent may be preserved. As a social phenomenon our procedure is strangely similar to the insanity of the social insects (bees and ants) when they harbour and cherish in their midst parasites who devour their grubs.

IX

The free dissemination of insanity permitted in our present social order is a further cause of social decay, although both the harm done and the means of arresting it are more questionable than in the case of feeble-mindedness.

In the first place, even if it were quite certain that all forms of insanity are hereditary and that we had detected their mode of transmission, it yet would not always follow that a stock tainted with them ought to be eliminated. For, unlike mental defect, a tendency to insanity may be associated with valuable qualities, also inherent in the stock, and these might be a greater social asset, than the insanity was a detriment. So the stock might be worth preserving on the whole. A popular recognition of this possibility is implied in the widespread belief that there is a connexion between great wits and madness; although statistical study does *not* bear out the belief that genius is conjoined with lunacy more often than might be anticipated from the present random mixture of human characteristics. This conjunction is however common enough to warrant

Mr. H. G. Wells's remark that he was acquainted with many common-place people whom he would like to slap on the back and to tell that it was high time a lunatic married into their family! For we are weighed down by an appalling sort of normality which stifles all hopes of human progress, that is, of the progress which does not merely augment man's comfort and security but can lift him to the higher level of a superman. A strain of madness in the stock which is capable of rising thus might not be too high a price to pay for its services.

Secondly, so little is known of the various causes of insanity that it may be too early to despair of curing the defect, or at any rate of preventing its development in a stock which tends to do so. Here the case of tuberculosis affords an analogue. If at a time when the nature of tuberculosis was not understood and no cure for it was known, all the stocks which tended to it had been eradicated, tuberculosis would have ceased to be a plague, because the human race would have become immune to the assaults of the tubercle bacillus. But much ability would have been lost with the tuberculous stocks, and the alternative policy, of controlling and defeating the bacillus by intelligently changing the conditions of life for his victims, was in this case probably superior.

Lastly, the ravages of what appears to be hereditary madness in a family are sufficiently patent and terrible so to impress its saner members

that they pass a self-denying ordinance upon themselves and refrain from transmitting their taint. Hence social interference is less called for than in cases where the reckless or selfish individual has little or no motive to consider the public interest.

X

We have seen that our civilization is not insured by nature against tendencies to social decay. Also that there are at present operative several strong tendencies which must bring about social decay, unless they are counteracted. But there is no reason to think that they cannot be counteracted, if we will it, and set ourselves intelligently to take the proper steps. No doubt the proper steps will require a pretty radical reconstruction of the social order; but more difficult and far more violent alterations are at present being tried. The communist experiment in Russia may strike us as calculated to debase human nature rather than to raise it, and it certainly contains no remedy for the evils we have rehearsed; but it is a big thing and a spectacular admission that all is not well with our actual social order. Moreover, the more we loathe and fear Bolshevism the more anxious should we be to propound a better solution of the social problem, and a better preservative against social decay.

Now it has already been hinted in diverse places that the most promising specifics against the social decay which threatens us are to be found in the inquiries called eugenical ; for eugenics is defined as the study of the agencies under social control by which the human race may be improved. Moreover, eugenical reform is conservative in essence ; not merely because it recognizes the wisdom and the historical justification of our actual institutions, and starts from the actual state of human sentiment, and aims at preserving and enhancing the values of our present order, while disclaiming the excesses of revolutionary communism, but because it harks back to the past and scientifically rehabilitates ideas which have been universally believed, until the last hundred years or so. It recognizes, for example, the rationality of the aristocratic idea, and will restore some aristocratic order. Nevertheless its essential conservatism may not commend it to the psychological conservatism of the old, which is but another name for stupidity and prejudice, just as its reforms may not commend themselves to a dying liberalism that has degenerated into an irrational attachment to antiquated catchwords.

But for many reasons Eugenical Reform should commend itself to the intelligence of youth. The cause of reform must always make its first appeal to the young, and draw from their enthusiasm the strength to remould the world nearer to the heart's desire. Moreover the young

have little offered them just now by any party. Conservatism is a refuge only for weariness and disillusionment, and is, as ever, unteachably reluctant to absorb fresh blood and new ideas, even though they might be its salvation: it will recognize no ability that is not grey or bald. Liberalism no longer has either principles or policy or prospects. As for Labour, it is no place for the intelligent. It distrusts its own intelligentsia, and offers a career only to the cautious craft of trade-union veterans. It is as bankrupt of ideas as conservatism, and its ideals are short-sighted, dull and drab. But ideals are what youth has most need of, and now that the old ones are all fading out, will it not cast about for new ones, and find them in eugenics?

CHAPTER II

EUGENICS AS A MORAL IDEAL

EUGENICAL Reform, the need of which was set forth in the last chapter, as the only alternative to social decay, divides naturally into two great branches, which may be called the negative and the positive. *Negative eugenics* aims at checking the deterioration to which the human stock is exposed, owing to the rapid proliferation of what may be called *human weeds*, under the conditions created by cultivation : it is imperative to cope with this growing evil, and easy to see that, unless something is done to stop them, the weeds will impose intolerable burdens upon the more valuable flowers of humanity, and will crowd them out. The admonition to cultivate our garden includes, therefore, the duty of weeding it.

It is also fairly easy to see what sort of thing must be done. For the weeds of civilization are largely *consequences* of civilization. Under other social conditions they would not flourish and could not exist. Natural selection would speedily eliminate them. All that a society desirous of rational action has therefore to do is to refrain

from cuddling and cultivating them, to withdraw the protection extended to them by social institutions, or, better still, so to improve on nature's crude and cruel methods as to eliminate them painlessly, rapidly, and effectively. Of such improved methods many are known, and others can be devised. Negative eugenics therefore, though an urgent need, is practicable, and probably the most important social aim philanthropy can set itself at present.

I

But negative eugenics is not enough. It is powerless to *improve* the human race and to lift human life to a higher level. It can only arrest deterioration. If we want improvement, progress, the creation of superior types of humanity, the realization of ideals, we must look to *positive eugenics*, which sets itself to inquire by what means the human race may be rendered intrinsically better, higher, stronger, healthier, more capable, so that human life may become happier and more worth living.

Now this is a very much bigger and harder job. The more one goes into the ways and means of it, the more difficult it looks. Still, it is not a task to despair of. It is not impossible. Something very like what is needed has been done once, and can presumably be done again. For the present human race has evolved, from some-

thing we all think lower and inferior, by the efforts of creatures much less potent, intelligent, and well equipped than ourselves. Under providence no doubt; but is it not very near blasphemy to assume that the creative *nisus* was exhausted in evolving us, and cannot be trusted to sustain further efforts if we will make them? Is it not unspeakably base and craven for us to content ourselves with remaining the poor creatures we are, when we might become something greater and better? For us to despair of carrying on the evolution of man would be to confess ourselves traitors to the cause of progress and *essentially inferior* to our ape-like ancestors who aspired to better things *and attained them!* As, moreover, only the most besotted optimist would contend that at present man is perfect and needs no improvement, it is clear that he *ought* to be improved. He ought to be improved in a great variety of respects, in all possible ways and with all possible speed. And it is a great shame that we have done so little to explore these possibilities. Herein lies the essential and enduring justification for *positive* eugenics.

II

Now if the function of positive eugenics be such as has been indicated, it clearly constitutes a moral ideal at least as good and legitimate as any other. For it is fit to stimulate our moral

energies and to evoke moral enthusiasm. Moreover, it may very well fill the gap in our social structure left by older ideals which have faded or become defunct under the conditions of modern life. It is almost a *secret de polichinelle* that modern life stands in great need of new and effective ideals, and that morals are in desperate need of reinforcement, precisely and particularly in the quarters with which positive eugenics would most directly be concerned. I mean, of course, the social relations of the sexes and the arrangements for the propagation, preservation, and education of the human kind. These have always constituted one of the major problems of human society, and to whatever ideals, motives, and sanctions any society has appealed, no arrangement has ever been quite effective and satisfactory in practice. Now it is no exaggeration to say that over large areas of the civilized world sexual morality has broken down, not merely in practice—which would be nothing new—but even more palpably in theory, and that the great institution which has hitherto assured the continuance of the race, the family, is everywhere showing ominous symptoms of collapse. It is high time, therefore, that we discovered or devised some further moralizing influence.

It is evident, moreover, that the moral agencies on which we have hitherto relied to curb individual licence and self-assertion are progressively losing their grip on the moral situation. For a variety

of reasons, including the unwisdom and unprogressiveness of their attitude towards the problems of modern life, the religions all seem to be waning, and though their moral value is not perhaps in all cases beyond cavil, there is nothing to take their place.

Certainly ethics cannot hope to do so. Theoretic ethics is a broken reed. No intelligent man can live long in any academic atmosphere without becoming aware that academic ethics has no positive moral value. Indeed, on the whole its value is strongly negative. It is often positively demoralizing. The academic disputes as to how (if at all) the Good is to be defined, and how it is related to pleasure, may conceivably be a good mental gymnastic, though even this may be doubted. But it is an old story, as old as Socrates and the beginnings of ethical reflection, that, as his critics complained, ethical reflection is very upsetting to moral beliefs. 'Know thyself' does not mean 'Respect thyself,' and does not tend to translate itself into 'Improve thyself'. So the intellectual analysis of instinctive and ingrained emotions and convictions is apt to be merely disintegrating.

The professors of morals usually try to counter this criticism by contending that moral theory cannot be *expected* to have any beneficial effect upon moral practice. Morals, they say, merely provide the material for ethical theories to contemplate and speculate about, and it is vulgar

and Philistine to look for any more intimate and vital relation between theory and practice. Substantially the same answer is given to a second objection that ethics, as it is taught in universities, diverts our natural moral energy into unprofitable channels, and fritters it away in the futile discussion of artificial and antiquated subtleties which never mattered much and have long ceased to have any practical meaning, while it leaves aside, untouched and unmentioned, the real pressing problems of moral life.

This second charge leads on to a third, the most damaging of all. Moral philosophy is practically useless, not merely because it has adopted a false theory of the relation of theory to practice. Its professors have intentionally, of malice prepense, and in their own selfish interests, made it useless and meaningless, in order to shirk a theoretic problem which they could not solve and dared not touch, lest it should get them personally into trouble. This problem concerned the application of moral principles to concrete cases. After the Catholic moralists in the seventeenth century had come to grief and fallen into ill repute by evolving a very scientific but very demoralizing system of Casuistry (upon mistaken lines) in their vain endeavours to solve this problem, the Protestant moralists, who were really involved in *the same* difficulty, thought it safest to steer clear of the subject of application, to cases, to fact, to life, altogether. So, in order

that the purity of moral principles might run no risks of contamination from contact with the sordid facts of life, they proceeded to make them *inapplicable* in principle.

The culmination of this sort of trickery—for it is nothing more—is to be found in the Categorical Imperative of Kant, which ostensibly proclaims the sacrosanctity of Duty with tedious reiteration, while actually forbidding us to ask it what, in fact, our duties are. It is still esteemed in academic circles as the supreme effort and example of a pure morality, and largely accounts for their emptiness. Its academic admirers have overlooked the damning fact that it is only 'safe' because it is utterly meaningless. For a principle that cannot be applied to concrete cases at all, or (what comes to the same thing) can be made to answer them in any way any one pleases, is as meaningless and worthless in theory as it is in practice.

III

Eugenical ethics clearly will not fall into this trap. It will not refuse to be 'practical'. It will not refuse to consider application to cases. It will avoid the dilemma of Casuistry by pointing out, with Aristotle, that moral rules are never absolute, nor meant to be taken in abstraction from cases. Hence they are never in themselves decisive. They are meant for the guidance of

moral agents, with whom the decision must remain. But these must learn to apply them with an intelligent appreciation of the circumstances of each case. And the better they understand the circumstances under which they are called upon to act, the better is their judgment likely to be.

Hence the enormous enlightenment, which we owe to modern biology, as to the laws which determine our physical and mental inheritance, can, and should, affect our actions, and modify them for the better. For example, the man who knows that there is heritable weakness, defect, disease, or insanity lurking in the stock from which he springs, and that he may either be a 'carrier' of such a defect, or himself succumb to it, should conscientiously consider the probable effects of his defect, not only on himself, but also on his offspring. If he finds himself compelled to regard himself as hopelessly tainted, he should abstain from parenthood. If he is not so bad as that, and thinks that he may risk marriage, he should at least make sure that he does not marry into another tainted stock, and should scrupulously avoid defects identical with those of which he knows himself to be the hereditary victim. If he is drawn towards a woman afflicted with a similar taint in her blood, say insanity, he should vividly realize the likelihood that some or all of his children will go mad, even if their parents themselves escape the doom they transmit.

Already eugenical moral judgments of this sort are far from rare, though they will have to attain a much greater diffusion and intensity before they can do much to rid human stocks of dangerous 'recessives,' or even create a social sentiment strong enough to support strong measures against those who will not or cannot see their duties in this eugenical light. For it is one of the most distressing features of the situation that such considerations will *not* occur to those who need them most. The feeble-minded, for example, just because they are such, are very unlikely to perceive their duty to posterity. Being incapable of exercising self-control, they will have to be controlled by other means.

But this social control of those who cannot control themselves clearly belongs rather to the problems of negative eugenics. There is no doubt that heritable but preventable defects contribute a large percentage to the flood of human misery and that their inheritance can and should be stopped. An allusion to the social failure, involved in the existence of vast numbers of blighted lives brought into the world to suffer needlessly and uselessly, was only needed to illustrate the hideous and repulsive immorality of our present social order and of the systems of ethics and moral philosophy that do not hesitate to approve of its atrocities, or at best say nothing about them.

IV

We may now proceed to consider what suggestions *positive* eugenics can make to improve the social order and the human race. We should advocate for this purpose, in the first place, a resuscitation of an ancient institution which has played an enormous and, on the whole, a beneficial part in history, but has in recent times lost greatly in repute and in many countries fallen into disuse. I mean the larger family, clan, or *gens*. It is not too much to say that originally the *gens* was the backbone of the early civilizations. It was nearly everywhere the social unit interposed between the individual and the tribe, city, or state, and far more potent than the latter in controlling and training the former. The most cursory reader of Roman history can hardly fail to apprehend that it is very largely the history of the great Roman families, their ambitions, rivalries, and policies, and owes its distinctive features to their continuity and tenacity of purpose. Similarly, the Roman character, in virtue of which, more than of anything else, Rome conquered the world, was formed by the stern discipline of the *patria potestas*.

Our histories do not perhaps make it equally plain that the early history of the Greek cities was almost equally dominated by the great families, and that so long as these endured aristocracy

was the natural form of government in Greece as in Rome. Similarly, it is obvious that the history of the mediæval Italian city-states is essentially family-history, and the superb palaces which adorn them are intelligible only as the abodes of noble clans, of whom a surprising number have survived to our days. The stable civilizations of the East, again, the Chinese and Japanese, owe their survival primarily to the family-system which endured through all the vicissitudes of wars and dynasties.

It seems clear then that the *gens* as a form of social organization is highly conducive to the preservation of a biological stock, and so of any valuable qualities of which it may be the vehicle. The *gens* is not, however, by itself or merely, a biological stock; it is at most one-half of such a stock, and as inbreeding is impossible or dangerous, an association of *gentes* into a congenital aristocracy is requisite to conserve the qualities of a superior stock. It follows that the conception of the *gens* must be reformed in the light of modern science; it must embrace the *cognati* as well as the *agnati*, it must no longer be conceived as patrilinear *or* matrilinear, but as *both*. Our noble families should realize that they must trace their descent through *both* their parents, and that biologically the mother is just as important as the father, and that the captivation of a callow boy by a flighty ballet-girl may mean the ruin of a noble stock. This realization is

likely to be a powerful check on the *mésalliances* which are a blot on so many pedigrees. In future King Cophetua will not marry his beggar maid so lightheartedly at sight.

V

Another novelty to introduce into the old clan-system would be a more democratic organization. There does not seem to be any good biological or social reason why the position of head of the clan should descend by primogeniture or seniority without regard to merit and ability. It should be made elective, after the fashion sketched in the next chapter, and it is conceivable that with a small number of electors with a strong *esprit de corps* and an intimate knowledge of all the circumstances, all keenly alive to the welfare and greatness of their family and anxious both on public and private grounds to pick the best man, better elections might as a rule be made than with the vast hordes of ignorant and careless voters to whom we now entrust our political destinies.

Of course, it would be necessary to endow the clan with a legal status and certain sorts and degrees of authority over its members. In particular there would devolve upon it the duty of controlling the matrimonial vagaries of its members. Rules, of a eugenical character and intent, would have to be laid down as to the

conditions under which the clan's assent to a matrimonial alliance would be granted or withheld. These rules would evidently be more effective and easier to enforce than ordinary legislation to prohibit socially undesirable marriages, and would more narrowly restrict the right of a member of a noble clan to follow his whims than that of ordinary citizens. Rightly; for the principle of *noblesse oblige* would clearly apply.

But in itself there would be nothing new about the principle of family control of matrimonial affairs. It is already and everywhere a very real influence, and in many societies, past and present, left the individual, especially the woman, very little choice. Too often it took the form of forcing women to make 'good matches,' i.e. to marry rich or powerful old men, whom they detested. Perhaps under eugenical tuition they may detest them less in future, because they will have more admiration for the qualities of which wealth and power are commonly the consequences.

It may be hoped, however, that in the eugenical society of the future family pressure on the individual will tend to be exercised in a more rational and salutary way, and will interfere with the individual's liberty of choice only in cases where there is genuine ground for objection, and he might well pray to be saved from his own desires. Hitherto, the strongest argument for the love-match has been, not the insight and wisdom

of the parties to them, but the shallowness and unwisdom of the principles on which the *mariage de convenance* has usually been arranged. In future we may hope that eugenical qualities and records will enter more and more into the preparations for the great adventure of mating, and will exercise such a fascination over the young that they will find it easy to fall in love with their possessors.* It is not probable indeed, for several reasons, that marriage will speedily cease to be a lottery, but it need not be so *appallingly risky* a lottery as it is now rendered by the prevailing ignorance of both parties as to their own and each other's defects. And in course of time it ought to become a lottery in which every one worth marrying should have a good chance of drawing a prize, in the shape of a eugenically sound and commendable mate.

Finally, the institution of the improved clan-system outlined above would not detract from the influence of the narrower family upon the individual, but would reinforce and reinvigorate it. It might indeed be contended that it would suffice to rely on the family spirit alone, without the clan, to control the individual, simply by cultivating social approbation and recognition of eugenically superior families and thus fostering family pride. Now history shows that family pride is a potent passion, and one to which men are capable of sacrificing themselves and everything

* Cp. *Eugenics and Politics*, pp. 215-16.

else. It would therefore be a master stroke to enlist it as an ally of the eugenical conscience. But there can be no harm in further reinforcing and regulating it by setting it in the wider context of the clan. We can hardly err by imposing too many structural restraints on the licence of the amorphous hordes that throng our modern cities.

VI

Of course, I am aware that these proposals mean a revival of aristocracy. But the question should be raised whether a true aristocracy is not worth achieving. If we emancipate ourselves from catchwords, democracy is a means not an end, defensible only as conducive to a better life than was possible under a reign of privileged classes whose superiority was merely imaginary. The real argument for political equality is not that men are born equal, but that they are born so *unequal* in so many ways, and that society requires such a variety of services, that the only practicable form of political organization is to ignore their inequalities and to give votes to all, and then to trust to the intelligent few to manipulate or cajole the many into abstaining from fatal follies. Now this is not a very strong argument, though it may have been stronger than any that could be urged for any of the old alternatives to democracy. But a eugenical aristocracy would be a novelty in the political

world, and would really *be* superior. Moreover, if we aim at better things, we must follow nature's method. Whatever else natural selection means, it means that some are to be preferred to others, and we too must select if we aspire to better types of man.

But what *are* the better types of man we should aspire to? The critics of eugenics often assume that it must be possible to state them with their specifications all complete, before it is possible or worth while to make the least eugenical effort. But this is a complete delusion. It is not the way we ever learn. We learn by trial and error. We do not know what the good, or rather the better, is, any more than we know what the true, or rather the truer, is, in advance of experience. Until we have experimented and learnt wisdom from the outcome of our experiments, we can only state in general terms that it would be good to achieve something better than the existing average of man, a creature stronger, healthier, wiser, more intelligent, trustworthy, and moral, and less ephemeral. Nor need we hesitate to add, 'more beautiful,' though from the strictly biological point of view beauty is perhaps the hardest of all the coveted qualities to account for rationally.*

There is, however, one piece of advice which may safely be given to any society that attempts to remould itself nearer to the heart's desire by eugenical expedients. This is that all attempts

* Cp. *Eugenics and Politics*, ch. iii., § 12.

to reach an ideal must start from the actual. It is no use to postulate, to begin with, a human nature that does not exist. The mentality invoked and the motives appealed to must be such as are familiar to human psychology; the institutions presupposed must be those operative in our actual world. Neglect of this proviso was the fatal mistake which Plato made in his *Republic*, and which condemned all his ideals to sterility and futility. Plato postulated a philosopher-king with absolute power and perfect wisdom, who was to institute the ideal state by an instantaneous *coup d'état*. But his first measure was to be grotesquely impossible. All above the age of ten were to be driven out of the city, and the philosopher-king was to rule and educate the remainder. Evidently Plato did not realize that he could not have taken care even of a single baby.*

VII

Any practicable, and therefore serious, proposal for eugenical reform must eschew such follies. It must not presuppose a revolution but must begin to be operative here and now, and operate more potently as more resources are placed at the service of the eugenical idea. We may therefore conclude this chapter by sketching one such institution which could be started by

* *Republic*, 541A.

private enterprise with quite a moderate outlay, and ask whether it would not have an effect of the sort desired. We may call it the Eugenic Baby Show, and could proceed as follows :

First, let a representative committee be formed of doctors, educators, scientists, artists, practical philosophers, and other persons in whom the public would have confidence. Next let them collect funds and organize their Baby Show (or perhaps, at first, merely a Eugenic Section in a Vulgar Baby Show, which would serve as a control experiment), offering as many and as substantial prizes as their funds permitted. The parents of the babies entered for these prizes would, of course, have to state their pedigree and to allow their statements about the history of the family to be verified. Then the babies would be themselves examined and the awards made after due consideration both of themselves and of their ancestry. Finally, and as a matter of course, their pictures would be published, like those of our successful athletes and other notorieties. For evidently, to be the first eugenic prize-winner of the year would be a high social distinction, and a prelude and stimulus to further honours. In subsequent years there would be periodical revisions and renewals of the awards, and further publicity about the doings and development of the prize-winners, who would no doubt be aided by eugenic scholarships, with more pictures. They would thus remain in the

public eye, and much would be expected of them—more, and more important things than are now expected of a prince, duke, athlete, or film star, the attractions of whom they would in a manner combine. They would lead a strenuous life and one highly competitive, but glorious, and would from time to time be re-examined and re-appraised, in order that the committee of eugenical judges might estimate how far they had judged aright, and whether their prizewinners were availing themselves of their opportunities. When their education was completed, they would go out into the world as distinguished men ready made, with a national reputation, greater and better deserved, because more in accordance with their intrinsic merits, than those of the characters with which I have compared them. Every profession would be open to them, and their success would be practically assured. They would be flooded with lucrative and honourable offers of employment, and no right-minded girl would dream of refusing their offers. So they could always make their fortunes by marriage, if they did not prefer to do what would be still better, namely, marry eugenical prizewinners of the opposite sex. A eugenical first prize would soon be recognized as the greatest prize to be won in the lottery of life.

And what about the lower prizes and the honourable mentions? They, too, would be well worth winning, and would stimulate many am-

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bitions, including that of reversing the original verdict and surpassing the original victors. Thus, insensibly but constantly and inevitably, the thoughts of all would be turned in the direction of eugenical excellence, and gradually but surely, their thoughts would influence and improve their acts. It is safe to predict that sooner rather than later an enlightened public opinion, thus converted to eugenics, would compel every State to take over the private enterprise of improving the race, and to extend and enforce it by legal sanctions. And then biological evolution might get under way again, and man might grow into a being as far superior to his present type as he now is to the gorilla and the chimpanzee.

CHAPTER III

EUGENICAL REFORM OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS

WE have seen in the last chapter that the adoption of positive eugenics, that is, the improvement of man, would, as a moral ideal, involve a revival of aristocracy, and also that any serious attempt at eugenical reform must start from the institutions actually in being: these two considerations should suffice to explain why eugenists should concern themselves with reforming the Lords. The present House of Lords may be a very poor representative of the eugenical ideal, but it certainly is an extant institution. Moreover, the House of Lords cries out for reform. Besides, with a little goodwill, it is very easy to reform, at all events on paper. The House of Commons, on the other hand, though it also greatly stands in need of even more drastic reform, no one in his senses would dream of reforming. Nothing short of a Mussolini could reform the House of Commons, and take away its baubles.

I

The House of Lords is our Second Chamber, and people sometimes are perverse enough to ask why we should have a Second Chamber. The answer is easy. A single all-powerful Chamber is too dangerous, especially if one thinks how it is elected. It leaves the life and property of every one, and the whole prosperity of the country, at the mercy of a chance majority, which may not even claim to represent a majority of the electorate. A Second Chamber is as useful and as necessary as a Court of Appeal.

If, however, a Second Chamber has the same function in politics as a Court of Appeal has in law, it would seem to be reasonable to give a little thought to its composition. Now, though it is generally admitted by those who see the need for a Second Chamber that it should be something of a Senate, replete with the ripe experience and mellow wisdom of the aged, not all would contend that it need imitate the Court of Appeal in *all* respects. It need not, for example, approximate to its highly octogenarian composition; nor need it be filled entirely with unhorsed or forcibly-elevated politicians, retired governors, veteran generals and admirals, superannuated civil servants, pensioned headmasters and professors, ex-directors of industry, eclipsed actors, extinct movie-stars, and the like. What is wanted in a Second Chamber is the unpartisan judgment of dis-

interested ability on the legislative efforts of the Commons, and outbursts of youthful energy should occasionally be appropriate, and even welcome, in an effective Second Chamber.

More serious divergences of opinion are likely to arise when we inquire upon what principles the Second Chamber should be differentiated from the First. It should clearly be something distinctive. If we admit that the First Chamber, in any country that still prides itself on being called a democracy, must be elected by popular clamour tempered by electoral trickery, more or less misguided by journalistic stunts, and mobilized by subventions from a well-filled party war-chest, and then by *counting heads*, regardless of their size, shape or contents, whether dolichocephalic or brachycephalic, whether swelled or not, whether empty or full of fads, it follows that mere *numbers* cannot form the right basis for election to the Upper House.

A territorial basis naturally commends itself to States whose organization is more or less federal. A property qualification has often been imposed on the electorates for Second Chambers, but it looks prejudicially undemocratic, and if it were successful, would merely duplicate, in a more invidious form, the plutocratic influence which is at present exercised, unobtrusively and far more effectively, by employers of labour and subscribers to party funds.

That a Second Chamber may fitly be composed

in part of representatives of various important interests and institutions, is beginning to be understood, though in our House of Lords room has as yet been found only for a few bishops and law lords. This principle, however, is both expedient and just; for democratic institutions do not guarantee that all who *should* be represented *will* be. Many important interests, upon which the country's prosperity is vitally dependent, may never be able to obtain parliamentary representation at all. There is no constituency, for example, in which doctors and schoolmasters are numerous enough to elect their representative, and the City of London is probably the only constituency in the country which is disposed to lend an attentive ear to the voice of the banker. And how is science or philosophy ever to obtain a hearing? But by authorizing the interests to which it is socially expedient and desirable to listen to depute representatives to the Second Chamber, a very strong and valuable Upper House could theoretically be composed. Unfortunately this method has nowhere been adopted to an adequate extent, although a late eminent philosopher used half seriously to contend that the only reform needed by the House of Lords was that *all* the Bishops should be given seats in it! They might then periodically resign *en masse* whenever the Commons refused to pass their Prayer Book or any similar fruit of their collective wisdom.

II

There remains, however, one principle which in former days was taken as a matter of course, and is still in being; but it is treated by our political theorists as beneath contempt and hardly worth a mention. I mean, of course, the hereditary principle. Even the late Professor Henry Sidgwick, certainly the sanest and most reasonable of our political theorists, polishes it off in a single paragraph of his '*Metapolitics*'. He treats it as merely "a survival from an earlier stage of social development," and thinks "it can hardly be counted among the methods requiring to be seriously considered".* Remarks like these painfully reveal how little understanding even the best philosophers show of the discoveries of modern science. Here, for example, is the great outstanding fact of Heredity, which makes every man, woman and child, nay every animal and plant, what they severally are, and determines what can be made of them, and yet when the question of its political import arises the political philosopher does not think it need be 'seriously considered'! It is almost incredible how fatuously and wickedly unscientific were the advanced liberal thinkers of the nineteenth century!

We, on the other hand, feel bound to consider seriously the value of a hereditary Second Chamber,

* *Elements of Politics*, p. 543.

and to reform the House of Lords in a truly scientific way. And we should consider this matter seriously in the light of the principles of scientific eugenics.

To begin with, let us take for granted, as a matter of common notoriety, that the House of Lords needs reform. Paradoxically enough, however, it is the Conservatives who desire to reform it; or rather some of them, to wit that section of them which still respects the old aristocratic values and ideals, whereas the merely plutocratic section, believing as it does in the control of masses of voters by large employers and vote-catching 'stunts,' is indifferent and even hostile. The plutocrats succeeded in so intimidating the feeble-minded Conservative Government of 1924-29 that it never dared to use its great majority in the Commons to reform the Lords, although the Party Congress annually passed a resolution in favour of this reform. Again, the Liberals and Socialists prefer to leave the House of Lords as it is, from fear that any change will strengthen it. It suits their book to leave it in the condition of a survival of recognized absurdity, and they would resent any reform that might make it useful and effective. Science, however, is not restricted in its vision to the ignoble trickeries of party-spirit, and it ought to consider impartially how, if hereditary ability exists, it can best be utilized by the commonwealth.

III

Now, that hereditary ability exists we may take for granted, or at any rate, need not to prove at length. It is just as inherent in certain stocks as feeble-mindedness or a tendency to sundry diseases and defects is in certain others. So it should not be considered profanity to speak of noble lords in the same breath with noble horses and noble dogs; nor is it quixotry to try to develop hereditary excellence in legislators also. Moreover, such excellence, being inherent in the stock, in the germ plasm as the biologists say, may crop up in all its members, whether male or female, whether first-born or younger sons. It may also be latent in those of its members who may appear to be quite ordinary folk. They may not show much ability themselves, and yet may transmit it to their descendants like any other 'mendelizing' quality. It is clear, therefore, that the unit of heredity is not the individual but the stock: ability comes out in the individual because it lurks in the stock.

It follows from these scientific facts that our traditional method of selecting hereditary ability is not wholly rational. There is, however, nothing absurd in the main idea which underlies the House of Lords. It is right enough to select those who have shown conspicuous ability (in whatever pursuit or accomplishment that a society approves and delights to honour) for promotion

into a hereditary House of legislators. This method has, indeed, the weakness that if social ideals are wrong and corrupt, the wrong qualities will lead to honour and promotion ; but *all* methods of social promotion whatsoever share in this weakness. If the fount of honour is corrupted its waters will poison the community. Moreover, it has always been customary among political philosophers of all schools to shirk this difficulty and to evade consideration of the problem how the sovereign, whether monarch or people, may have brought home to him the error of his ways, and be taught to mend them. To solve this problem, science would presumably employ the same technique as it does elsewhere to detect the truth and to correct popular error. Here also the process would be gradual, but in the end science would meet with a measure of success.*

IV

On the other hand, it can be seen at once that it is not rational to act on the assumption that the ability inherent in a stock will necessarily and invariably be concentrated in the eldest son. Our system of primogeniture, therefore, is not the best that could be devised. This is not, of course, to say that it is wholly bad ; it may even be relatively good. It may be better, for example, than the commoner custom of

* Cp. *Eugenics and Politics*, p. 97.

dividing the family property equally among all the children of the rich. For if it be granted that those who make fortunes tend to be able, and also that the education of rich men's children tends to fail to imbue them with the ideal of shunning delights and living laborious days, it follows that unearned and merely inherited wealth is *a great danger* to the family which acquires it, and threatens to ruin it biologically, if it is not rendered innocuous by education. Moreover, the effect of a system of equal division will be to corrupt *all* the descendants of the successful, whereas the system of primogeniture will corrupt only the eldest sons, and may actually tend to stimulate the ambitions and to improve the prospects of the rest of the family. Accordingly the achievements of the cadets of noble families fill many of the brightest pages of history, and it has often been remarked that primogeniture makes only one fool, or rather wastrel, in a family.

Still, the present system of primogeniture is capable of being bettered. So soon as the social problem is seen to be that of recognizing and exploiting the hereditary ability of a stock, it is easy to see that better ways of bringing out this ability can be devised. Much more may be done to make it more likely that the stock will be represented in the House of Lords by its worthiest members.

In the first place, it is *the stock, and not a person, that should be ennobled with a peerage.* Our

present practice may indeed be said to recognize this principle after a fashion, in making the honour hereditary, but it does nothing to ensure that the descendants of the new peer will conserve and continue to display the ability which won the peerage. Really, the old Chinese practice of ennobling the ancestors of a man who had rendered distinguished service was far more rational.

V

Next, the succession to the peerage should be rationalized, to increase the probability that the stock will contribute its ablest member to the House of Lords. So, when the first holder of the peerage dies, let his children and grandchildren meet together and choose the one whom they regard as his worthiest successor. If it was considered desirable to enlarge the constituency, e.g., on account of the ability shown and distinction achieved by other relatives of the first peer, his brothers, sisters, and cousins might be included in the electorate, or even be rendered eligible themselves.

Of course, to be an elector to a peerage would be a social distinction, to which, with the growth of eugenical sentiment, a growing importance would be attached, and the electorate of the House of Lords would soon come to be regarded as a real eugenical nobility of which the actual peers would be a representative selection. On the

other hand, the commission of an offence, or even persistent failure through several generations to attain distinction, might lead to disfranchisement or to the lapsing of a peerage. It is also evident that the same person might be an elector to a number of peerages and that, if he came of an ancient stock which had laudably intermarried with others of the eugenical nobility, he would certainly be an elector to many peerages.

Moreover, inasmuch as the British public, though essentially and admirably snobbish, has little respect for knowledge, learning, expertness, or distinction of any sort, unless it is adequately backed up by wealth, it would further be expedient to *endow* these eugenical peerages, in order to ensure that their holders would always be able to support their dignity; this Endowment Fund should go with the peerage and with at least one of the family seats. So in future our peers would not be forced, as at present, to have recourse to the eugenically reprehensible, and often biologically ruinous, expedient of marrying heiresses; for, as Galton showed, heiresses are apt to be the last effort of a degenerating and expiring stock. As moreover nowadays the heiresses are mostly American, the peerage is rapidly being Americanized in blood. This device would also be an effective protection against the ruin of the family fortunes by prodigal and spendthrift holders of the title, and if the chief of the family seats formed part of the endowment this would preserve its

local ties, and save the country from the æsthetic losses which it now sustains by the break-up of ancient collections and the conversion of the stately homes of its nobility into schools, hotels and lunatic asylums.

About the initial endowment there would usually be no difficulty. For the rich men who obtain titles in return for their 'public services' in endowing the war-chest of the dominant party have long been accustomed to make settlements for this very purpose, and the only difference would be that these endowments would henceforth benefit, not merely their eldest son and his progeny, but whichever proved to be the worthiest of their descendants. In course of time, moreover, the endowment fund of the peerage would be augmented by legacies; it would be the natural destination of the property of maiden aunts and bachelor uncles throughout the whole family or clan, and as the holder of the title would only have a life interest in it, it would naturally and properly escape from the operation of the devastating death duties which are at present wasting so much national capital, and proving so destructive to the maintenance of family traditions. Even if the first holder were not wealthy enough to provide an adequate endowment at first, such a one would speedily grow up, especially if wealthier relatives were eager to recognize the honour done to the family and were allowed to subscribe to it, being enrolled in return among

the electors to that peerage. So it can hardly be doubted that within a short time all the peerages would be adequately and *permanently* endowed, and secured against the danger that a prodigal son might any day find himself compelled to sell the family seat and to dispose of its heirlooms.

VI

Lastly, it is obvious how greatly the existence of a well-endowed peerage in the family would stimulate ambition in all its members. They would be impelled to use every effort to distinguish themselves, in the hope of qualifying for the family honours, and with a good prospect of winning further honours in their own right, even if, by reason of bad luck or family jealousies, the old ones eluded them. And so our reformed House of Lords would contribute powerfully to the solution of the great problem over which education has everywhere failed throughout the ages, viz., how to provide the children of the rich and powerful with adequate incentives to develop their abilities, and to make the best of themselves.* At present it can hardly be doubted that there is much ability diffused among the aristocratic classes of every civilized community; but most of it remains uncultivated and unstimulated, and is unused or wasted, simply because the actual institutions of society do not provide sufficient motives for exertion and attractive careers for the

* Cp. *Eugenics and Politics*, p. 105 f.

descendants of the able who have distinguished themselves. So what with the fatuous organization of society which practically imposes sterility on aspirants to social promotion, and its pathetic inability to utilize a great part of the ability that exists, it is no wonder that the affairs of nations are conducted with as little wisdom as ever.

VII

These proposals may perhaps sound more fantastic, when thus lightly sketched, than they would seem if the details were filled in with tedious particularity. But they are in no sense utopian. We must insist that their underlying idea is perfectly practicable. Indeed it has been carried into effect with signal success. For, properly regarded, the idea is merely that the hereditary ability of the community should be organized in hereditary *clans*, each privileged to depute its worthiest member to a senate as its contribution to the collective wisdom of the community, in order that there may be formed an effective and respected Second Chamber, capable of exercising an intelligent control over the transient impulses of the mob and of the ephemeral governments that emerge from the turmoil and deceptions of a General Election. Historians are agreed that such was probably the original composition of the Roman Senate, the greatest council and the most successful governing body the world has ever seen. The

' Conscript Fathers ' of Rome were the elders and representatives of the noble *gentes*, and each *gens* was a patrilinear clan claiming descent from a common ancestor. The only innovation we have ventured to introduce into the composition of the *gens* has been to include in it, in accordance with our greater knowledge of the nature of heredity, the female members along with the males. The historical omens, therefore, are favourable to the eugenical reform of the House of Lords.

A further advantage would be that its introduction might be gradual, tentative, and largely voluntary. In the first instance it would only be the new creations that would be based upon the constitution of a *gens*, and the House of Lords is already accustomed to a variety of tenures. The old peerages need not be affected in their tenure. But their holders would be invited to come into the scheme if they were deemed worthy ; and if it were found to involve the concessions indicated in the matter of taxation, it can hardly be doubted that all who were qualified—and they would surely be a large number—would be eager to join the ranks of the new eugenical nobility. The rest, who would be merely the decadent dregs of the old aristocracy, might safely be left to die out in the course of nature, though it would also, of course, become easy to deprive them of their seats in the renovated House of Lords.

Whether the reformed House of Lords should be *wholly* hereditary in its composition after this fashion, may be left an open question. It might be expedient, and would not be unreasonable, to supplement the hereditary element by Life Peers, who did not wish to found a *gens*, by men of distinction who had grown old in the public services, by representatives of institutions and activities which form important and valuable features in national life, by the Agents-General and notable residents from the Dominions. Certainly, the present university representation in the Commons should be transferred to the Lords, and increased, so as to allow of minority representation. On the whole it may be suggested that not more than one-third or one-half of the House of Lords should be drawn from the eugenical nobility, while the rest could be made up as suggested above. A very able, attractive, respected, and powerful Upper House would be the result; even without any enlargement of its present powers it would easily outshine the Commons.

VIII

It would consequently arouse the latter's jealousy. But it would be a fatal mistake on this account to bolster up the Commons. The House of Commons in these days, like the 'democracy' from which it springs, is visibly

declining in wisdom, intelligence, and competence. It abounds in anomalies, inconveniences, and absurdities, such as that a nationally important statesman may be thrown out of politics by the whim of a local electorate for merely local reasons. Its legislative procedure is incredibly cumbrous, inefficient, and inept, and its results are so ridiculous and unintelligible that even the invariable beneficiaries of its law-making, the lawyers, are moved to frequent complaints. Its party system favours the extreme party men and suppresses moderate opinion, it stifles the voice of minorities, and habitually over-represents majorities, and the vice of misrepresentation has grown so *chronic* in its system that it can no longer be trusted to represent the majority even of the voters. It cannot be reformed save by reforming the whole nation at a blow, and this is not a practical proposition in this (or any) country.

It must therefore be left alone ; but its power for mischief may be circumscribed. There is nothing to be said in its favour, save that it is still, in theory, the seat of power. As a governing body it is farcical, and in point of fact it has lost most of its power to the Cabinet and the Civil Service, and has been reduced to a mob that obeys the crack of the Whips, and lives in constant fear of a premature dissolution. If it were not artificially bolstered up and privileged, it would speedily lose the best part of its *personnel*.

Its ablest members would leave it for the greater dignity and security of the House of Lords, if Ministers were allowed to address either House irrespective of where their seats were,* as in most European countries, and the greater freedom of choice thus accorded to the Prime Minister to fill up offices in the most suitable way would probably lead to the construction of better Ministries. They would be recruited in growing measure from the reformed House of Lords.

IX

Nor would the consequences of reforming the House of Lords be merely political. They would extend to many activities of social life, and affect many institutions. They would engender new ideals and revive decaying morals in ways the present House of Lords would never dream of doing. At present the only ideal to which the House of Lords can be said to minister is that of Snobbishness. Now snobbishness is by no means an unmitigated evil. It is a great principle of social cohesion and in some ways a valuable factor in civilization ; for the imitation

* This simple little reform should also commend itself alike to the Liberal and to the Labour party, because they would no longer have to create numbers of otherwise unsuitable and politically untrustworthy peers in order to make their voices heard in the Second Chamber. Only the senile conservatism of all our political parties prevents it from being passed by acclamation.

of the manners of a superior class by the inferior leads to a general levelling up of manners. It has therefore great æsthetic value, and it is moreover a fact that for many purposes æsthetics can perform the functions of ethics, and manners take the place of morals.

Still it can hardly be contended that in the past the House of Lords has been a great moralizing influence. Such familiar utterances of proverbial wisdom as 'drunk as a Lord' do not seem to indicate that the moral influence of the House of Lords was ever exemplary; nor would a study of legal biographies suggest that 'as sober as a judge' was always undiluted praise: still we may admire the judicial ingenuity with which many Law Lords have contrived to hit the mean between drunkenness and sobriety.

In the reformed House of Lords there would be reason to believe that all this would be changed. The individual Lord would no longer be raised aloft in a region where he could go as he pleased, but would be firmly set in the social tissue of his clan, which would exercise constant supervision and pressure upon him, conserve his form, and prevent him from going to pieces. So the public opinion of the clan would keep its members in order and stimulate them to exertion and rivalry in well-doing. And, of course, snobbishness would ensure that the example set by the House of Lords would spread far down the social scale.

X

So would the influence of the clan or *gens*. The clans which possessed nominations to the House of Lords would not be the only ones that would organize themselves, and pride themselves on their descent, and interest themselves in their distinguished relatives. Strong clan feelings would grow up throughout the social order, and counteract the centrifugal tendencies of the individual.

Moreover, these feelings could be trusted to strengthen an ancient and invaluable institution, the family in the narrower sense, which seems at present to be drifting on to the rocks, and to rescue it from the dangers that threaten it. In large sections of modern society the family seems to be not so much breaking up as petering out. It is losing its inherent connexion with marriage, which is itself coming to be regarded merely as a temporary association for mutual amusement, as in decaying Rome. Now this is a very serious situation, for experience shows that the only really stable civilizations, the only ones which have endured without eclipse, have been based on the family. The family, moreover, in both the outstanding cases of an enduring civilization, both in China and in Japan, has been held together by the spiritual sanction of ancestor-worship.* What we need is something similar,

* Cp. *Eugenics and Politics*, p. 30.

a modern scientific equivalent for ancestor-worship. And the institution of a *gens* might be the very thing that is needed. It would impose on the individual the salutary restraint of a social organization larger than the evanescent family and less remote than the community at large. The chances are that both the organization and the sentiment of society would grow more and more aristocratic.

XI

What is even more important from a eugenicist's point of view, they would also grow more and more eugenical. And this might prove to be the beginning of the solution of the greatest problem the science of eugenics has to face, that of *positive eugenics*, that of actually *improving* the existing composition of the human race. Compared with this, any proposal for *negative* eugenics is child's play. Any intelligent person can perceive the folly of our present methods of recruiting society, and foresee that unless they are arrested in time they must lead to the biological ruin of the societies which tolerate them, and possibly of the whole human race. Any one also can see in what ways they may be arrested and what must be changed. The necessary reforms are clearly indicated, and would be easier to enforce than a number of social interferences with the habits of individuals that have often proved successful. It is also becoming

plain that these changes are relatively urgent, and may be forced upon all societies which are desirous of prospering, and even of surviving, in a relatively short time. To urge only the most obvious point, it is ruinously *expensive* to breed large masses of lunacy, feeble-mindedness, and disease. Lastly, the dangers which negative eugenics aim at averting could be staved off effectively in quite a few generations. But even the most energetic and effective campaign of negative eugenics would improve the composition of the race only relatively and not positively. It would weed out the unfit, but it would not raise the standard of fitness, nor increase the numbers of the fit, save in so far as there would be more room for rearing the flowers of humanity after the elimination of the weeds.

On the other hand, positively to improve the human race is a stupendously difficult undertaking. It will not only demand the painless extinction of bad stocks whose existence is only a curse to themselves and others. It will demand from the biological *élite* unremitting efforts, sustained from generation to generation, to rise above themselves to heights of physical, mental, and moral development never yet attained and hardly dreamt of. And there can be little doubt that the training required to achieve this development will not only be long, but also severe. It will require an asceticism and a heroism equal to any that has ever been achieved in the past, though more

rational and more scientific alike in its aims, principles, and methods. Lastly, it will demand from the average man willingness to co-operate with this lofty enterprise, willingness to subordinate himself to a social order which has a rational plan and a definite aim, to improve the human race and not merely to perpetuate the *status quo*, and willingness to abstain not only from scattering the seeds of weeds about the face of the earth, but also from overcrowding it with inferior types, in order that there may be room enough for the noblest.

Moreover, this great undertaking which is eugenics will manifestly have to start from the present state of human life, from the actual conditions of human *physique*, human nature and human sentiment, and to transform them gradually into something better and higher. Assuredly this will be no easy matter. It will also be slow, because only three or four generations can be reared in a century. But it must not be pronounced impossible. For to do so would not only be to renounce the ambition of rising above our present nature, but to confess our intrinsic inferiority to the Miocene apes who overcame the most terrific obstacles in order to turn themselves into *men*!

CHAPTER IV

EUGENICAL REFORM OF THE PLUTOCRACY

IN the last chapter we began our suggestions for the eugenical reform of our present institutions at the most unlikely point. For a reform of the House of Lords may at first appear a very hopeless and reactionary undertaking. But it really makes a very convenient starting-point for an attempt to sublimate human snobbishness into a basis for positive eugenics, to transform our present 'nobility' into a real aristocracy, and to stimulate everywhere an appreciation of aristocracy in the original and proper sense of the word—i.e., a regard for human excellence. Its intention was so to modify public opinion that institutions aiming at the improvement of the human stock could grow in it. Thus the reform of the House of Lords was to be a starting-point on the path of progress, the easiest, and perhaps the nearest, to a very distant goal.

It was not, however, overlooked that actually the House of Lords is far from being an ideal institution and a storehouse of the nation's wisdom and virtue. Actually it is a stronghold of the

plutocracy, and little more than a clubhouse for the rich. Nor need it be disputed that the plutocracy is one of the great social forces which need to be converted to eugenics if eugenical progress is to be achieved. It may, indeed, be regarded as the most difficult and important to convert. It is certainly the most ubiquitous. For all capitalistically organized societies, and perhaps even those which profess communism, have plutocracies to a greater or less extent; so that many 'democracies' may well be camouflaged plutocracies. In America, for example, the plutocracy is clearly very powerful, and though it need not be contended that it is the *dominant* factor in American political life, a plausible case might be made out for this contention.

I

Plutocracy may fairly be called the most elusive of all political institutions. It is often very hard to detect and to drag forth into the light of day. For it prefers to work unseen, and the infinite ramifications of corruption and graft which it injects into the body politic may well elude the most lynx-eyed investigator. Not that plutocracy has not an overt side: under favourable conditions a social display of wealth is possible, and indeed occurs wherever this does not too promptly entail the unwelcome attentions of the taxgatherer

or the executioner. But the display of its power is not essential to the being of plutocracy. It can just as well keep in the background, and work in the dark, beneath the surface of political life. It resembles an iceberg in that nine-tenths of its extent escape the eye; but it can also, like a fungus, send forth tentacles to pervade, corrupt, and transform all political and social institutions. Like a termite, it can undermine all constitutions, corroding their whole substance and leaving only a deceptive *façade* which crumbles at the merest touch of adversity. Like a very Proteus, it can assume all forms and tempt all characters; for money is a means to all objects of desire and a frequent motive for all acts. In short, it is a very formidable power, and to succeed, eugenics must win it over to its side.

II

But plutocracy has also curious weaknesses. It has the defects of its qualities. It has, for example, the demonic rather than divine quality of being no respecter of persons. Thanks largely to the occultness of its power, it tends to impersonality, and even to hostility to personality. Hence, though plutocracy endures, plutocrats do not. They have not the staying power of monarchs and aristocrats. No dynasty of millionaires, not even the Rothschilds, Vanderbilts and Morgans, has yet lasted for centuries, like the dynasties of kings or the ancient houses of nobility.

Nor is the reason for this phenomenon far to seek. Plutocracy is definitely more demoralizing, or rather more enervating, than the other forms of power, and saps the strength of those who wield it even more rapidly. In a monarchical dynasty there has usually been a great deal of natural selection. In former days fool-killing apparatus was plentiful and effective, even when it stopped short of the extreme Oriental method of procuring a capable ruler—namely, systematic civil war among the offspring of a deceased ruler. Right down into our times kings who got too insane, or idiotic, or profligate, have been deprived of their thrones and their places have been taken by more efficient or reputable relatives.

For the royal clan generally formed a matrix in which, in spite of multitudinous temptations, efficiency could grow up and ability could come to the fore. Moreover, a strong *esprit de corps* was generated, and an ample field for ambition and endeavour was generally open. Even where a king had only one son to inherit his crown and no further complications, his relations to his successor were generally such as to demand a strenuous life from both of them and to put a premium on intelligence and circumspection. The wearers of a crown might sleep uneasily, but for this very reason they could not sink into total torpor.

What is true of monarchies very largely holds also of aristocracies. They, too, were practically forced to develop a strong family spirit, capable

of stimulating, training, disciplining, and in the last resort controlling, their erring members. The maxim *noblesse oblige* and the *bushido* of the Japanese *Samurai* indicate this moral backbone of aristocratic power. Nor should it ever be forgotten that the greatest political achievement on record, the transformation of mediæval into modern Japan, of an impotent feudal State into a great world-power within the brief space of a single generation, stands entirely to the credit of an aristocracy. From this point of view *primogeniture* also is an entirely rational and defensible institution. It is not merely that it produces 'only one fool in a family,' but that it directly stimulates ambition, and offers to the younger sons of noble families careers and possibilities of public service which could not have been afforded them if they had had to rise from the ranks. Social philosophers are apt to overlook how much energy is expended by the able merely in rising and forcing their way into positions where they can make themselves felt, and that this energy is merely wasted from the social point of view. Could the able only be discovered at twenty instead of at fifty, would not the world enjoy their services for the thirty best years of their life? But in a democratic State it is simply inconceivable that any one, even an athlete or a film star, should become Prime Minister at twenty-three, like the younger Pitt, and by the time a politician has become of

national importance he is nearly always past his prime. The achievements of the *cadets* everywhere, then, stand to the credit of aristocracy.

But when we come to plutocracy we behold a radically different picture. The plutocrat is one of the most uncontrollable of social forces. He can make money out of anything, from salutary invention and the organization of new industries to speculation and corruptly acquired monopolies. Once he has made his money the *non olet* principle begins to apply. Ill-gotten gains are just as powerful as the rewards of ingenuity and enterprise. Nor is he bound to use his money in any specified manner. The plutocrat is not, as such, under any obligation to anybody. True, he may not be, and very often is not, a lover of money for its own sake. He may have taken to money-making merely because he recognized money as the most universal, most liquid, and most pervasive form of power. He may merely have perceived its unique advantage—namely, that it is enough to be known to possess riches, and that he need not *spend* his money to enjoy the power it confers.

III

Having made his fortune, he can pretty well do as he likes with it. He can spend it or accumulate it as he pleases. He need not even live conspicuously. Indeed, both his power and

his sense of power may be all the greater if he does not display his wealth but leaves it latent and lets its influence percolate through the social structure secretly.

Nor need he found a family. He may prefer to found an institution or to endow a craze. In America he very often does. In England he more often buys a title from the politicians who recognize his 'public services' (*and* his contributions to their party funds!), in order to please his wife and children, thereby recruiting the 'nobility'. But in so doing he is perhaps greasing the wheels of 'democracy' rather than exercising plutocratic influence, and the British method of financing politics is far less harmful socially than the American method of buying legislation. And even when the plutocrat has been 'ennobled' his family feeling is apt to be less intense and exacting than that of the old nobility: besides, he has often been too busy and too intent to shun delights and live laborious days to have much of a family. The money-maker rarely attains his end without sacrificing many things to Mammon, his god, in his own person.

IV

But his own sacrifices are nothing to those he imposes on his descendants and heirs. To these, under our present dispensation, Mammon all too often proves to be another name for Moloch.

He becomes a monster, arrayed in the girdle of Aphrodite and accompanied by Dionysus, the Muses and all the Graces, who corrupts their nature and destroys their life; while they all unwitting become his joyous victims. Much more attention than is usual ought to be bestowed upon the moral and biological effects of inherited wealth upon the stock of its possessors. Actually one of the quickest ways of extinguishing a stock would seem to be to endow it with great wealth. The ancients were far more alive to the destructiveness of what they called 'luxury'; we have been far too blind to the truth contained in their moralistic cant.

The truth is that, with our present provision for dealing with it, money acts in some respects as a racial poison. Even the liquidity of money power has serious disadvantages. Not only can it easily flow away again from the favourites of fortune—perhaps owing to circumstances beyond their control—but it is far too easily transferable to other hands to serve as a criterion of social fitness. Owing to the whims and vices of its possessors it gets 'dissipated' with them.

In former days it used to be a universal literary convention that the son of a rich man must be a spendthrift; nowadays this possibility is less obvious or less emphasized. It may be that the social classes from which plutocrats arise have become more immune to the allurements of prodigality and so more retentive of wealth;

or it may merely be that accumulations have grown so vast that few prodigals know how they can spend so much. At any rate, the old adage 'three generations from shirtsleeves to shirtsleeves' no longer seems to hold extensively. It is rather 'three generations from shirtsleeves to tombstone'.

But though mere prodigality is no longer so fatal to great fortunes as it was, the liquidity of wealth still works great havoc with the personnel of the plutocracy. A millionaire's son is still very apt to lavish his wealth on actresses, and his health on bacchanalia, and his daughter to become the bride of a groom or a handsome 'good-for-nothing'. There is not, therefore, much guarantee that money will remain in the strong hands that made it, nor that the qualities which earned it will be found also in the hands into which it passes. If these qualities are valuable—and if society was wrong in thinking so, why were they so lavishly rewarded?—there is no adequate provision in our society for their perpetuation.

Riches, moreover, are not only slippery and elusive, but also directly demoralizing. In our modern capitalistic societies they provide the most effective stimulus to exertion—and the greatest allurements to work *before* they are gained; they function as the normal reward of labour, of ability, of distinction of every sort, as the source of honour and of power, *after* they are gained. But they then also destroy the strongest motives

to exertion and efficiency and almost inevitably entail degeneration. Thus the classes which produce and inherit wealth are largely paralyzed by it. It puts them in the position of having what most men have to work for ; but it provides them with no other work or useful social function. It does not overtly empower them to rule and to feel responsible for the conduct of affairs ; for all our capitalistic States profess to be ' democracies,' and plutocratic influence is exercised in secret. Thus the rich young man is deprived of the most urgent motive for exertion, the most available reward of ambition ; the sinews of his energies are severed. Sooner or later he discovers, as in America, that there is virtually *no* career open to him. He has just to remain a rich man all his life, and nothing can be done for him. Society appears to have no use for *him*, though it is assiduous in begging for his money. Is it a wonder that he becomes useless to those who will not use him ?

Nor does society merely show itself indifferent to getting any work out of him ; it also sets to work to corrupt him. Every temptation to idleness and dissipation is thrown in his way ; his resistance to temptation is sapped by every conceivable device. He is condemned to be a drone, and a vicious drone at that ; the marvel is that any escape from this doom.

V

All these facts are really familiar enough to us all, though they are rarely mentioned. Eugenic reflection is needed to render us aware of their whole monstrosity. It reveals that the social attitude towards inherited wealth is as idiotic as it is iniquitous. For, after all, the material which we take such pains to spoil is the best we have, and the way we treat it is an outrage. We first enact that wealth shall be the greatest common measure of ability of every sort, and its appropriate reward. We do not, indeed, bestow it in due proportion to the ability displayed, nor always show a just perception of the social value of the ability rewarded; but still wealth, more or less, attends success in every walk of life, and no other rewards are really recognized. For with singular shortsightedness our 'democracy' has swept away the power of kings and nobles and all the claims of hereditary privilege, and has emancipated itself from the spiritual powers and theocracies: for science and the power of intellect it has never acquired any real respect. The power of money alone has not been disputed or curtailed. For money is a power *all* can understand, an idol *all* can worship, the universal measure of value into which all other powers can be transformed. With money our democracy rewards its favourites, whether they be film stars or politicians, jockeys

or heavy-weights. Thus it has *de facto* abdicated in favour of a plutocracy.

But our democracy does not respect the plutocrat, nor recognize in him any *personal* superiority. It declares that all men are born equal and hankers after such an equality of opportunity that any one can become a millionaire. But if he succeeds, envy arouses hatred and he is treated shockingly. *Sterilization of the fit* is the first law of reproduction in our 'democratic' societies. That is the inner meaning of the statistical fact that the birth-rate contracts the higher we rise in the social scale. The refusal to find useful *employment* for the rich, which we have traced above, is the second social law. The third is the systematic corruption of the 'idle rich'. The total result is an elaborate social mechanism for enabling ability to rise to the top, which pretty effectively drains all classes of their ability. But when it has risen, it is destroyed. This is comparable with skimming off and casting away your cream after it has risen, or churning it into froth. Surely so fatuous a social policy must be fatal to the *progress* of humanity, and in the long run even to its survival.

VI

No doubt, it will be said, but what can be done about it? What way can you suggest for extricating us from this disastrous situation?

We may suggest, first, a little lucid thinking

about the future, a little forethought. This will have to be done by all who are capable of thinking and have leisure to think ; for our politicians, whose job rational forethought might be supposed to be, never think far enough ahead. They are all opportunists, hopelessly mired in the details of politics, who never look beyond the next election and are often glad to tide over the weekend.

Secondly, an obvious expedient to arrest the corruption of the descendants of the rich, and to make them work, is the abolition of inheritance. In England we seem to be moving in this direction, and it would only be necessary to raise the death duties to 100 per cent. to do the trick. I confess that this expedient seems to me more specious than sound. *In the first place*, while it might arrest the degeneration of the sons of the successful into our 'idle rich' class, it would do nothing to increase their number, but would, if anything, diminish it. So the law of the sterilization of the fit would still be operative. *Secondly*, it would have tremendous repercussions on the whole social structure. It would rob the able of all but *purely selfish* motives to work. And I am inclined to think that their output of work would suffer seriously. To what extent, one could hardly say ; but it would appear to be a counsel of the most elemental prudence to wait and see how the present *experimentum in corpore vili* of 'Holy Russia' ends. At any rate, to all who have not

been able to persuade themselves that communism can form an enduring and progressive social order and are not willing to scrap all the strongest motives to exertion which have so far animated men, no real case for abandoning the individualistic ordering of society has yet been made out.

But there is a case for reforming it, and that in the interest of the individuals themselves. If we realize the folly of utterly subverting the social order, we shall have to reconcile ourselves to a certain measure of plutocracy ; but it need not be the sort of plutocracy we labour under now. It rests with us to render plutocracy a blessing rather than a curse. For it is not impossible to make it socially valuable and to *use* it. It is not impossible to stop the spoiling of our best stocks and the wasting of the 'cream'. It is not impossible to reverse the dysgenic tendencies of civilization and to make the social order an instrument of betterment rather than of deterioration.

VII

To those who doubt this, and demand to know by what means this great change can be accomplished, the answer may be given in one word : by Education. But not by the education of those who are easy to educate, who crave for it and feel they need it, that is, of the poor, but by the education of those who are hard to educate, who do not

want it but resist and resent it, that is, of the rich. And assuredly this is a terribly arduous task.

All through human history the education of the rich and powerful has been a sorry chapter, one of the great unsolved problems, one of the outstanding failures of the social order. At no time, in no country, and under no constitution, whether monarchic, oligarchic or democratic, has society succeeded in giving to the children of its chief and ruling men sufficient stimulus and motive to exert themselves and to live worthily of their station and their ancestors, far less to persuade them to utilize their fortunate position in order to improve themselves and others. Of course, this source of weakness in all governments did not escape the acumen of the Greeks. We learn from Plato that it was a common topic of remark in the Athens of his time, and that the common inference from it was that virtue could not be taught. And certainly the greatest schoolmen and sages have made but a sorry job of the teaching of princes. From the days of Confucius and Plato down to that of the distinguished German professors who tried to instil some grasp of the realities of politics into the volatile mind of the Kaiser the record is one of all but unmitigated failure. Plato can hardly have been proud of Dionysius, even though we are told that he finally took to keeping a school, nor Seneca of Nero, even before he received his death-warrant from his hands ; and it is not easy to trace any influence

of Aristotle on the world-conquering career of Alexander.

But should it be inferred that the lesson of history is that the problem is insoluble? That would be to recognize an insuperable barrier to human progress. Before we do this, ought we not to explore other possibilities? Let us rather mobilize our educational experts, of whom every civilized community supports an ample number, and summon them to devise a system of training that will at least pave the way to a solution, even if it only succeeds in making Eton about as efficient an organon of education as the ordinary elementary school.

VIII

In order to help them let us try to analyse out some of the causes of past failure, before we venture on any constructive suggestions for reform. Presuming that we are agreed that the fundamental cause of failure is a failure to provide sufficient stimulus to exertion for those situated as are the offspring of the rich, we may yet discern some serious secondary flaws in every system of education that has hitherto been tried.

It is, for example, a remarkable fact, and surely more than a curious coincidence, that the aim of all education, both intellectual and moral, has hitherto been to turn the eye of the soul *backward* into the past and not *forward* to the future. Among

the intellectual subjects of training the leading rôles have been assigned to some ancient, obsolete and sacred language, and to the traditions of the tribe and the achievements of ancestors, as enshrined in a highly selective but patriotically stirring perversion of history. Moral education has similarly appealed to the wisdom of antiquity, to sacred writings embodying an original unchanging and unprogressive revelation and to immemorial custom.

We are constantly assured that all this is salutary, and even necessary, to preserve social continuity, and to inculcate a spirit of reverence into the young; and there is doubtless much truth in this. But does it not harp somewhat monotonously on one string? And what stimulus to progress does it provide, and to what ideals does it teach us to look forward? At no point in this handing down of the cultural tradition can one find any allusion to the many problems of human life yet to be solved, any appeal for resolute thought about them, any tonic for the reason, any effort to elicit a spirit of adventure, any admonition to the young to shoulder the great tasks yet to be accomplished in a greater and more glorious future.

Yet is it not precisely to such appeals that the soul of youth most easily vibrates, and to which its very ignorance and innocence render it more sensible? We complain of the 'cynicism' of the young, and sigh, contentedly, *ah si jeunesse*

savait si vieillesse pouvait! and overlook that in our present dispensation youth is set to learn and imitate the classics and deterred from innovations by unrelenting social pressure. It is not *allowed* to try even the most harmless experiments with the most effete conventions, because the old have sealed their minds against new knowledge and lost their faith in social progress.

If we ask, Why have the tribes of men always assumed this obstructive attitude? I fear we must answer that the real reason for their enormous emphasis on the past has been *selfish*. It has not been the good of the taught so much as the convenience of the teachers. Under the guise of instilling reverence for antiquity, of teaching the lessons of experience, of transmitting the traditions of the tribe, of preserving the continuity of its life, they have really aimed at inculcating respect for masters, pastors and parents, and so assuring their position. Otherwise, why is so much more stress laid on preservation than on progress, and why is not the continuity of life prolonged into the future?

Thus education, instead of being conceived broadly as preparation for the *whole* of life, for the exploitation of all its possibilities, has been narrowed down to an instrument of social discipline, a means to conformity. It is essentially a method of controlling the young and subjugating their minds, or at best of keeping them out of mischief so far as possible.

Of this sort of education our English public-school-and-university training, especially in Oxford, is the *beau idéal*. What is it but a subtle conspiracy skilfully designed to implant traditional customs and stereotyped ideas? Both what is taught and what is omitted seem to have the underlying purpose of fostering a conservative bias in our leading minds and of stamping a caste-mark on the soul. It succeeds only too well. Its stamp is indelible, like tattooing. It turns out by the dozen polished sceptics who have never tried to know, and disillusioned cynics who have never tried to do, anything worth while.

Of course, the system incidentally enlists also the services of many able and devoted men who strive to make the best of the conditions, and perform wonders in overcoming its limitations and keeping the system (relatively) sweet and fresh. But the odds are heavily against them, and their activities hardly obscure the truth that the innermost *aims* of our social education, as well at its earliest and plainest manifestations, are best revealed, and can still best be studied, in the initiation rites of savages.*

* Since writing this I have read an excellent article by Mr. J. Langdon Davies in *Harper's Magazine* for April, 1930. He points out that the social relations of youth, under the conditions of the public schools, are still those of savage life, and that while some of their seniors are 'anti-savages' and resent the artificial degradation into which they were plunged

IX

These methods, however, raise a grave psychological question. Are they the best adapted to develop the minds of the young? This seems hardly credible. They may be good politics, but they are surely bad psychology. They fail to tap the reserves of energy and enterprise latent in the soul of youth.

Now here is where, I think, there is a great opening for us eugenists to come in. It ought to be possible, nay easy, to arouse in the young enthusiasm for our cause. For, unlike tribal training, eugenics is essentially an affair of the future. It looks to the future to redeem the past. It is full of promise. It is an adventure. It is pervasive of all the activities of life. It demands an all-round training of all our powers. It connects up directly and intimately with the most pressing problems in the lives of the young. It must moreover evoke personal pride and the spirit of emulation; yet its ideal is social and not selfish. Its appeal is to any one who feels he is good for anything. What can be better calculated to appeal to the psychology of youth?

just to remind them of their origins, no 'civilized' education is in sight. I agree, but, to get it, it would not suffice to civilize the young 'savages'; we need also to change the attitude of their seniors and the aims of the 'education' they impose.

X

On this psychological basis in the mind of youth what educational institutions can we build? In the first place, it is clear that our education must be *selective*. We must pick out the able and segregate them from the common herd. We shall thus avoid one of the chief causes of educational waste and failure by the contamination of good, quick-witted minds by masses of dullness and stupidity which keep them back and drag them down. This is one of the great sources of weakness in American and German schools: it is less felt in English, because a clever boy is generally allowed to run up the school despite his youth, although, of course, it is only in a few of the best schools that there are enough clever boys to extend him fully. This selection of the capable means special schools for the *élite*; for it is worse than useless to waste resources and energy in striving, vainly, to turn sows' ears into silken purses.

Secondly, having selected and segregated our ability, which is to be also our nobility, we shall train it *competitively*. It will inevitably train itself in that way, and we need not fear that under these conditions it will fail to be extended to the utmost and developed to the full.

Thirdly, the educator's function will mainly be to put before the eugenical *élite* high ideals, and

to see to it that their development is harmonious and explores alike the physical, the intellectual, and the moral avenues to excellence.

Fourthly, the appeal of an intelligently eugenic education will be universal: that is, it will reach all the classes which generate ability. It will be so far democratic. But, for the reasons we have analysed, its appeal will make the greatest difference in the quarters where it is most needed, which are at present most deeply sunk in sloth, most resistant to endeavour, and most indifferent to education. Without assuming that at first all the children of the successful will be found to have inherited the ability of their parents, we may fairly hope to draw many of our most valuable recruits from this class, and shall thereby materially restrict the ranks of the idle rich.

Lastly, if the scheme succeeds as it should do, its working will *progressively* alter the conditions so as to increase its own effectiveness. For in proportion as the products of our eugenical education increase in numbers and influence and display their superiority, the *prestige*, the attractiveness, and ultimately the necessity, of such education will be impressed on all. It will become a condition of success in life. The antithesis and tension between the able and the rich will disappear, because we shall have devised a mechanism which will induce the rich to develop their ability, and will reward the exercise of ability and excellence with wealth. Thus shall we draw

the poison-fangs of our present plutocracy and transform it into a true aristocracy. Nor need any eugenist be told that human societies *must* bring about the survival of their superior members and *must* recover the capacity for *biological* improvement, if the progress of humanity is to be assured.

CHAPTER V

EUGENICAL REFORM OF THE DEMOCRACY

To reform democracy on eugenical lines will seem to many an even more fantastic undertaking than to reform the House of Lords: for is it not part of the democratic creed that all men are born free and equal? And is it not a vital part of the meaning of 'eugenics' that some are *better born* than others? To which it may be replied that no doubt if creeds were construed literally and acted on, the task would be hopeless; but fortunately this is no longer usual. Moreover, the democratic creed, in particular, is far from watertight, and still further from agreement with the facts of politics. So we should not be surprised to find that it falls short of absolutely excluding all hope of eugenical reform, for three good and sufficient reasons.

I

In the first place, not all democracies in name are democracies in fact. Because a State is officially denominated a democracy it by no means

follows that the will of the people always and in all respects controls it and determines the course of national history. In all democracies that have ever existed there have been provided checks in practice upon the whims of the 'sovereign people' and the theoretical 'omnipotence of Parliament'. Thus, as was shown in the last chapter, our modern democracies all have in them a strong infusion of plutocracy, which may easily reduce democracy to a mere *façade*.

Again, unlike ancient, modern democracies all employ bureaucracies, and so far have capitulated to the demand (first urged by Socrates) for expert government. Now bureaucracy is quite as potent and insidious an enemy to the freedom and equality of ideal democracy as plutocracy itself. It is practically inevitable in all large-scale government. It can insinuate itself into all institutions and govern in their name. For it can exploit the human weaknesses of the depositaries of power, and it is only when a bureaucracy has long been allowed to rule unchecked and uncontrolled that it grows stupid, and forgets the arts of expert government, as did the great bureaucracies of Austria, Germany, and Russia, which came to grief in the World War. It is true that in a 'democracy' also the bureaucrats are servants, theoretically, and not masters. From long experience, however, they have become past masters in the art of guiding, and hoodwinking, the rulers from whom they are supposed to take their orders.

Their power rests on the psychological fact that only great intelligence, coupled with perpetual vigilance and unwearying attention to detail, can compel an organized body of officials to carry out a policy they dislike, and prevent them from administering *any* political system in the manner most convenient to themselves. If the ruler is an 'autocrat' (whether a pope, a tsar or a dictator) who desires to know what is actually being done in his name, it is easy to wear him out by making him read all the documents to which his name is to be attached and taking good care to break his teeth and blunt his zeal on plenty of *routine* stuff before showing him anything of critical importance, which can best be slipped in at the end of a tiring day. If he is a politician presiding over a Government office who hesitates to take the advice tendered him by his permanent officials, any trace of laziness, ignorance, or preoccupation with other matters he may show can at once be exploited to his discomfiture.* Normally, therefore, and in the long run, the permanent officials and the traditions of the office get the better of their nominal superiors, who discover that they are Gullivers securely tied up with red tape by their Lilliputian advisers, and that acquiescence is the way of ease and security. So far as

* This appears to have been the inner or office history of the notorious Zinovieff Letter, by means of which the first Ramsay MacDonald Government was beguiled into committing suicide.

bureaucracy has its way the ultimate ruler will always be found to be the master of pigeon-holes, who knows where every document is kept, and has the routine of the office at his fingers' ends.

If, lastly, the victim of professional skill is the sovereign people itself, and the politicians are the 'experts' deputed to ascertain its will, recourse may be had to many methods of deception. Bribery and corruption, promises and threats, excitants and dopes, are freely used, until such mind as the public has is thrown into utter confusion. The politicians in office have a great initial advantage; they have it in their power to appeal to the people at the time and on the issues that best suit themselves. But this advantage is often more than counterbalanced by the people's grim determination at all costs to oust the party in power and the ever-reviving hope that the Opposition may do better. So the art of engineering a general election becomes on the part of the Government an art of obtaining by false pretences a blank cheque to govern for another term, on the part of the Opposition an art of confusing the issue by abundant trails of succulent red herrings.

Even if democracy has been carried to the pitch of allowing direct consultation of the people by means of the Referendum, the same principles still hold. It is quite easy to surfeit the sovereign people with this exercise of power by continually referring to it trivial or complicated issues until

the masses weary of voting on them, and the expedient is discredited because the politicians can plausibly allege that the Referendum is not wanted. This is the exact analogue of the device of stuffing an autocrat with unimportant documents. The whole *modus operandi* of bamboozling a democracy was of course discovered long ago by the Greeks, and modern methods of electioneering, Press manipulation, etc., have not modified the essential principle of distracting public attention from what it is desired to keep secret by attracting it to something trivial which is calculated to engross it. It is best illustrated by the story of the Molossian hound with which Alcibiades amused the Athenians while he was conducting negotiations that would not bear the light of day.

II

Plutocracy and bureaucracy, then, can always be trusted to put sufficient grit into the wheels of democracy's chariot to prevent them from making too many revolutions. Both these political forces, however, presuppose that the masses are mostly fools or snobs; and this is not altogether true. Not all democrats are utterly impervious to the lessons of science and common sense. It is not impossible, therefore, that sooner or later they may take alarm at the dreadfully dysgenical trend of our civilization and may give their consent, and even support, to the eugenical measures designed to cure it.

If we proceed to ask in what places democracy may soonest feel the pinch of its dysgenical ordering, we at once encounter three serious problems.

III

In the first place, what is to be done about the survival of the unfit which is tolerated, supported, and stimulated by our present institutions? Is nothing to be done to arrest the proliferation of the feeble-minded and defectives, and the growth and dissemination of insanity? At present civilized societies are doing practically nothing to prevent the deterioration of their germ plasm by the free breeding of the most undesirable sections of their population. So far from being restricted, it is encouraged in a variety of ways, and financed by the progressive taxation of the classes into which the ability, energy, and industry of a society is more and more enabled to rise. Under this taxation, and other impediments to reproduction which social institutions foster, the classes in which the cream accumulates are more and more rapidly dying out. Thus civilized society is sterilizing its ability and extirpating its good stocks, while artificially multiplying its bad ones.

There is no end in sight to this suicidal process, but it is clear that it cannot continue indefinitely. For the breeding and supporting of lunatics and 'morons' is an expensive process, which must more and more absorb all the resources and

energies of a society which persists in it, and must end in catastrophe.

So long as democracies are not entirely manned by feeble-minded fools the impossibility of this policy is bound to become apparent. Sensible and hard-working democrats will then revolt against supporting idlers, wasters, and morons in ever-growing numbers at the public expense, which they will more and more understand to be at their own. Perhaps they will begin by eliminating first the idle rich, the froth at the top, before attacking the dregs at the bottom of the social mixture, the 'submerged tenth' and unemployables; but it is hard to believe that the workers can have much love for any sort of drones.

Accordingly, as Mr. Henry Sturt has suggested,* we need not fear that a Labour Government, animated by trade union principles, will deal too tenderly with the defectives. We may expect rather that their proliferation would speedily be stopped, whether by segregation or by sterilization, drastically and even ruthlessly. For Labour sentiment would be free from two pernicious delusions which have often affected capitalistic legislation. It would not demand plenty of cheap labour, and it would not believe that anyone was good enough to fight and therefore insist on superabundant cannon fodder. It may be freer also from the stupid conservatism which

* *Socialism and Character*, ch. v.

cannot see the need for new adjustments. So it may even prove that democracies will be readier to listen to the case for eugenics than capitalist plutocracies.

IV

Secondly, the willingness to do something eugenical will be enhanced as the grim spectre of *over-population* comes nearer and nearer. It may not yet be true that Western Europe is as tragically over-populated as China, and that its numbers can be limited only by starvation. But there is little doubt that its population has already far exceeded the *optimum*, and that its growing numbers are supported with increasing difficulty under the law of diminishing returns. No doubt Europe's economic troubles are partly due to its political fatuity in cutting itself up into small areas shut up in lofty tariff walls, and so artificially reducing its production and the efficiency of its industry. But still the fact remains that Europe cannot feed the population it has with the food it can produce. To make a living, therefore, it *has* to manufacture for export to the countries which can still produce a surplus of foodstuffs and raw materials. But as the population of these countries rises their surplus must diminish, and, moreover, under the influence of the same morbid nationalism that is devastating Europe, they, too, are rapidly establishing manufactures

and tariff walls to render themselves independent of European imports. The export trade of Europe therefore seems destined to diminish, and with it the population Europe can support.

But this process might be indefinitely delayed if Europe could contrive to breed *better men*, and to keep them employed at home. At present it probably still has some advantage in the *quality* of its population. As compared with the non-European stocks the European is still superior, not intrinsically, perhaps, so much as in social organization and cultural tradition. However, the peoples which most nearly approach European standards of efficiency, the Japanese and the Chinese, suffer even more than we do from population pressure, and it seems an open question whether they are losing more by malnutrition of their masses or gaining more by the more extensive elimination of the unfit under their social conditions. Probably the adoption of a eugenic policy by either party would prove to be the decisive factor in the struggle for existence of the European and the Mongolian race.

As compared with the colonists sent out from Europe to America, Australia, and Africa, the advantage of the European is probably very slight. Doubtless Europe at *no* time exported its very best stocks, which could always rise to pre-eminence at home; but in the early days of European colonization it certainly exported a large proportion of its more enterprising and

energetic types. Also under the early colonial conditions it was in some respects more difficult to make good in the new countries, and so natural selection was much severer. So weaklings and incompetents of all sorts were eliminated much more ruthlessly, and a comparatively high degree of personal efficiency resulted. Then came a period in which the colonies grew most anxious to import labour, and usually *cheap* labour; so they naturally obtained an inferior sort of immigrant who was willing to do the hard and dirty work the descendants of the first colonists now disdained, and this *lowered* the quality of the population. The United States of America conspicuously pursued this policy throughout the nineteenth century, while Australia kept out immigrants in order to keep up wages. America had her reward in her prodigious economic development, but at the cost of a terrible adulteration of her population, which may yet prove to have been her bane. At any rate, it has filled America with a very mixed crowd, and has reduced the old English stock to an upper stratum, and one, moreover, which is rapidly thinning out and seems doomed to disappear.

As regards the future, America has now closed her frontiers to further mass immigration from Europe (though not as yet from Mexico and the Philippines), and the character of her immigration is therefore bound to change. It *may*, however, change greatly for the better. For her financial

preponderance puts her in a position to attract whatever European talent she desires. She can drain any ability she may covet among the professional classes of Europe by the offer of more money and a bigger career. In other words, she can buy the best men as she can buy the best works of art, if she chooses. On the other hand, she is likely to *export* to Europe an ever larger proportion of her idle rich and an ever-increasing flood of tourists ; for only so will she be able to spend the income on her European investments, so long as she refuses to take payment in manufactured articles. Europe will thus lose professional ability, and be turned more and more into a pleasure resort. This, of course, will be demoralizing, and in the long run hardly to the advantage of the European stocks.

The best policy for Europe to pursue, the only hope of staving off stagnation and degeneracy, would therefore seem to be to augment the intrinsic efficiency of the European : only by excising sternly all the traces of dry rot in the social structure, all the superfluities of naughtiness, will European man be able to maintain himself, or even to survive. We must get rid, therefore, of our unproductive and parasitic classes, alike of the idle rich and of the unemployables, and stimulate the rest to more and more efficiency. The loss of these parasites may no doubt entail a certain loss in numbers, but the loss in quantity will be so amply compensated by the gain in

quality that the volume of production will not suffer. And a smaller, less dense, but better paid and more efficient, population will be far better situated to enjoy the amenities of life than the denizens of our crowded city slums.

This is surely a development that might be welcomed by the leaders of our workers. For though not egalitarian, it may fairly be contended that it would be truly democratic. It would afford to all an opportunity to lead a life worth living, and to rise in the social scale according to the measure of their congenital capacity; from all, also, it would exact some useful social service.

V

The same policy would seem to be indicated also by another consideration. Hitherto European labour policies have aimed mainly at limiting the hours and the intensity of labour, in order to relieve the cruel pressure of undue competition. Thus the efficient, with a fine *esprit de corps*, have sacrificed themselves to save the lame ducks. They have thereby greatly limited the output and the productivity of labour; yet they have woefully failed to limit competition, because they have not limited the supply of labour. This has always been in excess, and has enabled the greedy capitalist to cut down the rates of pay when his labour seemed to him to grow too efficient.

Hence no really prosperous class of workers could arise.

But there is a possible alternative, which has been elaborated in America and to which its industrial success seems to be largely due. It is to limit the *supply* of labour, while increasing its efficiency. If labour is made scarce and dear, it must be made efficient; for inefficient labour is not worth the high wages that are paid. Hence the cutting off or diminution of the supply of inefficient labour would directly raise the wages of efficient labour, which could then attain and maintain an altogether higher standard of life. The workers would no longer be dragged down by the masses of inefficient casual labour which does not limit its reproduction and fills the asylums and floods the labour market with defectives. It can hardly be doubted, therefore, that if this class could be stopped from proliferating so much faster than the better workers, the conditions of labour could be enormously improved.

VI

An incidental result might be to arrest the growth of population, or even to turn it into a slight decline. The cry of depopulation would then be raised, as it has so often been by panic-stricken militarists. These have long been accustomed to bewail the 'growing depopulation' of France, although before the war the actual figures showed an increase which averaged 50,000

a year, and although at present the French birth-rate is two per thousand above our own. The alarmists infer that in a few years a decline of population must set in and continue into irretrievable decay; but they fail to understand that the decline of the birth-rate is a reaction to our present overcrowding and unemployment, and means a blind and unscientific attempt of popular intelligence to reach an *optimum* of population. It may well co-exist with a potential increase which will be realized so soon as a sufficient improvement is brought about in the conditions of life.

VII

We may take it, then, that these two problems, the proliferation of defectives and over-population, will drive intelligent democracies into eugenical policies. At first sight, however, both these problems seem to call for measures only of negative rather than of positive eugenics—that is, for measures to purify the national stock, and to rid it of defective elements, rather than to raise to a higher level. In the main this objection would be true, though incidentally the intenser struggle to live in which Europe would be involved would put a premium on a development of higher types which even the most *doctrinaire* democracy could hardly afford to arrest as too aristocratic. There is, however, a third stimulus to eugenics, now

pressing upon European democracies, which is definitely aristocratic in tendency and definitely favours *positive* eugenics. This is the competition between European and coloured labour.

This competition is rapidly becoming world-wide, though its effects are not yet felt as intensely as they will be when the masses of Asia, in India, China, and Japan, are fully industrialized. At present there is still a great contrast between European and coloured labour. Broadly speaking, the former is better paid, better housed, and better fed. Moreover, the European worker is, pretty obviously, *the better man*. He is, in short, the *aristocrat* of the labour world.

But his position is far from secure. It is being undermined by the short-sighted and unscrupulous capitalists who are industrializing the East. They have already had a large measure of success. The manufacture of jute has already passed from Dundee to Calcutta, and Lancashire is fighting a losing battle to retain that of cotton against Bombay, Shanghai, and Japan. The demand for cheap labour never ceases, and, despite many object-lessons to the contrary, the business man is still ready to believe that the cheapest labour is that of the cheapest man.

So there is no encouragement to the production of better work by better men. Wherever white labour competes with coloured, the latter gains, and drives the former out of business. The white man becomes too proud to work. He leaves the

dirty, hard, and low-grade work to his inferiors. He merely oversees, guides, and controls.

So soon as he does this he gets into the deadly clutches of Gresham's Law. This sinister law applies as certainly to population as to coinage. As certainly as bad money drives out good do inferior populations crowd out and supplant superior. They fill the inferior jobs, which are plentiful, and restrict their superiors to the higher places, which are few. They compose the lower strata of the population, which multiply and lift their superiors to the sparsely populated heights, where they peter out and grow extinct.

It would seem that nothing short of a complete reconstruction of our social structure could bring about a reversal of these tendencies. The psychological and economic forces underlying them must be fought with their own weapons and counteracted. For the alternative of repressing the coloured labour *by force*, though it naturally commends itself to the sentiment of the historically and biologically ignorant in all classes, would lead to consequences too terrible to contemplate, even from afar. It is sure to be tried—indeed, it is now being tried in South Africa and elsewhere; but it seems bound to fail there, as it has already failed in the West Indies and in South America. It is bound to fail, because, although a sufficiently brutal *and intelligent* policy of oppression might perhaps succeed in the countries which are now under white rule, it is

not very likely that the white rulers will be intelligent enough to devise a biologically effective policy of this sort or persist in it long enough, while it is very unlikely that they will *unite* upon such a policy. The temptation to exploit and enslave coloured labour, rather than to exterminate it, would prove irresistibly attractive to a large and potent faction of the whites; the result would be class wars among the whites, to be followed later by successful slave revolts. These would doubtless be fomented and supported by the States *not* ruled by whites—at present China and Japan—and likely to be more numerous and powerful in future. At the moment world-wide race wars of extermination (which, be it noted, our premier prophet, Mr. H. G. Wells, with his uncanny prescience, has already prophesied) might end in the triumph of the whites, *if they were united*; but they are so unlikely to unite, and hate each other so cordially, that their future looks by no means bright.

A policy, therefore, that means injustice, violence, and war is not a solution of the labour problem to recommend to white democracies. It will be safer, easier, and infinitely better for humanity if they will endeavour to maintain themselves, not by oppressing others, but by improving themselves. Let them breed *better men*, and thereby both preserve their position at the head of the human race and set a good example of true—that is, of eugenical—progressiveness to the whole world.

VIII

It is not, therefore, wholly inconceivable that some democracies may be converted to eugenics. Indeed, in this matter also they would probably be easier to convert than capitalistic plutocracies, still conservatively hankering after war and retaining an obsolete belief in force, slavery, and economic exploitation.

But, even if all the democracies should prove unteachable and unmanageable, there would still be room for hope. For not all democrats are utter fools, utterly impervious to the lessons of common sense and science. The more intelligent would abandon democracy when they saw that it was unalterably opposed to human progress. They would allow themselves to be reminded that, after all, democracy is but a form of government, and that *good* government is the final end of government.

If, therefore, democracy refused to minister to this end, some other expedient would have to be tried. Moreover, the post-war experience of Europe manifestly shows that it is by no means difficult to overthrow democracies, and that quite minute minorities can institute dictatorships, if resolute and favourably situated. True, these dictatorships have hardly introduced any new ideas into politics. Neither the Fascists nor the Communists have exhibited any novelty of political

insight or ingenuity. There is nothing new in governing with bombs and bayonets or castor oil and cudgels. But it would be strange if the scientifically selected rulers sprung from a eugenical aristocracy which appealed to all men's noblest ambitions could not progressively improve upon these antiquated and atrocious methods.

IX

And finally, in the very last resort, if the human race should perversely, stupidly, and obstinately persist in refusing to enter upon the pathway of escape from its troubles indicated by eugenics, it will have to be reminded that it cannot hope, after all, to escape from the control of natural law. It can, no doubt, turn a deaf ear to the teaching of biology. A 'fundamentalist' reaction may even suppress all instruction in science. It can sustain institutions of all kinds which ignore and defy the conditions of sanity and sanitation. It has often done so in the past, and may do so in the future.

But if it does, it will suffer for its sins, as it has done heretofore. There is *no* way of eluding or deluding laws of Nature. They cannot be set aside by human enactment, and if they are defied they entail their consequences as before; only these will be found to be less acceptable.

Now the laws of Nature do not promise man

an assured continuance upon earth, whatever he may choose to do and however he may conduct himself. They do not guarantee his survival nor render his progress inevitable. They leave him free, within wide limits, to determine his future. We need not progress. We can prefer to stagnate. We can, if we choose, degenerate. We can even, in the end, become extinct.

In fact some or all of these possibilities are likely to be realized, if we go on as we are going. True, we are at present more favourably situated than mankind have ever been before. We have much more power over Nature—we have vastly more control over the conditions of our life—because we have far more knowledge, and our institutions of learning have not yet quite choked themselves with the waste products of the knowledge they were designed to transmit. We have far greater resources, which we can waste. We are farther from the danger line and the limit of subsistence.

But in the wickedness of his heart and the perversity of his thought man is quite as poor a creature as he was 10,000 years ago, when he devised his civilization and failed to observe that he had unwittingly established a dysgenic institution which would arrest his progress. Since then he has remained at heart a barbarian, or even a savage, while becoming more of a fool. So it is quite on the cards that he may refuse to listen to the gospel of eugenics, and go on eating

and drinking and mating, heedless of science and scoffing at the ' prophets of evil ' who warn him vainly. In that case, men of the day, shall we not go and join the dinosaurs ?

CHAPTER VI

EUGENICAL REFORM OF THE INTELLIGENTSIA

AMONG the social problems of the day none is more difficult than the question, What to do with the Intelligentsia? None also presents greater difficulties to the eugenicist. This problem is often overlooked because the intelligentsia is nowhere numerous, its members are not often held in personal esteem, and they are rarely to be found amongst the ruling circles (or rings) of modern societies. So it is hastily assumed that the intelligentsia is a negligible quantity. But the influence an intelligentsia exercises is quite disproportionate to its numbers and personal distinction, and for some purposes is decisive. Without its aid the purveyors of new ideas of a social or political sort have a very arduous task in bringing them before the public. The eugenicist therefore must seek, if possible, to propitiate the intelligentsia.

Even numerically a more or less extensive intelligentsia is found in all 'civilized' societies. True, it is nowhere dominant, and its treatment varies. Sometimes it is treated brutally, as by

Russia, which has made the interesting but hazardous experiment of driving out most of her intelligentsia, and is trying to crush and extirpate the remainder. Nevertheless, the non-Russian intelligentsia is so little 'class-conscious' as to show a good deal of sympathy with the Russian experiment. In Anglo-Saxon countries little intelligentsia is grown, and it is usually treated with tolerant contempt. It is stupidly overlooked that the intelligentsia performs an important social function, well or ill, and may do invaluable public service. It should not be taken for granted, therefore, that an intelligentsia is necessarily worthless or contemptible.

Indeed, it may even be suggested that, as every country has the Jews, so also it has the intelligentsia, it deserves. The Russians should have remembered this, even though, if their intelligentsia was such as their novelists described, it partly justified their Revolution. Certainly the intelligentsia is a social product, a resultant of social conditions, a by-product of the prevalent education. It is not born, but made, and may be made well or ill. So its *quality* is quite variable. And whether or not a society recognizes its responsibility for the quality of its intelligentsia, it can hardly disclaim responsibility for its *quantity*. For its numbers in every country clearly depend on the sort of education with which the young are nourished.

It has already been remarked as one of the

characteristics of the Anglo-Saxon world, that it does not breed much intelligentsia. It is too healthy and healthy-minded, or too Philistine. It is also too much addicted to keeping its eye on the main chance, to the pursuit of the almighty dollar, to the making of a career, to support a flourishing intelligentsia. Lastly, it takes itself in all its pursuits too seriously, especially its sports; whereas an intelligentsia is more prone to play than to work, and disposed to make fun of the idols and conventions the masses worship.

It is true, however, that nowhere does the intelligentsia amount to more than an infinitesimal minority. Not that on this account its social importance should be under-rated. It is very important, much more than the rest of society realizes, though not perhaps as important as it thinks itself. Not that we should grudge it the good conceit it has of itself. For to think oneself important is the beneficent illusion which sustains and stimulates us all. Still, the social function which the intelligentsia performs is beyond doubt vitally important. For its co-operation is essential to the success of any social movement and to the introduction of any new idea. If it likes, or rather if it likes it not, it has the power of strangling it, of interposing an impenetrable screen between a new idea and the many whom it concerns, and so of preventing the unreading and unthinking masses from ever hearing of its existence. That this is so will

appear if we ask the question, What after all *is* the intelligentsia ?

I

The intelligentsia may best be defined as a collective term for *the people who are interested in ideas*. Now most people are not so interested. They have not a mind for ideas, and so are devoid of the personal equipment needed for joining the intelligentsia. Moreover, they cannot *afford* to do so, being far too busy making their living. So the intelligentsia presupposes a certain degree of leisure and laxity of attachment to the basic needs of life. Or, alternatively, a profession or mode of life which entails encounters with ideas and demands a certain interest in them.

The idle rich do not supply many recruits to the intelligentsia. They are too devoted to sports, too absorbed in the routine of social 'functions,' to spare it more than a few eccentrics. Artistic and literary circles are more prolific and yield most of those who would pride themselves on belonging to the intelligentsia. The higher journalism also is a great recruiting and play-ground for the intelligentsia.

Journalism, moreover, ministers, not only to the economic needs, but also to the intellectual vices, of those who compose the intelligentsia. In other words, journalism not only helps them to make their living, but also titillates their in-

tellectual interests. That is, they have the sort of intelligence which naturally assumes a journalistic attitude towards its objects. So the journalist becomes the typical mouthpiece of the intelligentsia. To understand the latter we must study the journalist.

II

Now the journalist is a very prominent, important, and formidable factor in modern affairs, though he is not, of course, devoid of weaknesses and vices. He has not usually the very highest order of intelligence. Indeed, he is almost bound to be superficial in his judgments, because he has to cultivate a certain facile and flashy but rapidly responsive intelligence, and particularly *because he has no time to think*. He has, no doubt, a certain interest in new things, being more or less of a newspaper man. But not all novelties are news, and they cannot as such reckon on a sympathetic reception by journalists. For one thing, novelties are not always easy to understand, especially at the first and superficial glance, which is usually all that the journalist can afford to bestow upon them. For, as we saw, he is often a superficial thinker, and always has to make up his mind in a hurry. Also he has, of course, his prejudices and inveterate habits of thought like other men, while his experience of the world has probably rendered him cynical,

and his experience of the manufacture of news sceptical.

So he usually finds it the path of least resistance to ridicule a new idea in an airy, irresponsible but ignorant way, rather than to take the time and trouble to expound it seriously, or even to report it fairly. Especially if he is in the employ of an established organ of conservative public opinion, he will inevitably feel that this for him is the path of safety. For in such an organ everything is cut and dried and must be handled in the traditional and customary manner, lest it should shock the old women of both sexes among its readers. At most a new idea may be ventilated, tentatively and apologetically, during the silly season. For then the strenuousness of close attention to politics or business or athletics may be relaxed a little, and a new idea may occasionally be allowed to disport itself a little in the public Press, especially if it is gaily and suitably arrayed in cap and bells. But usually the journalist will realize that in the eyes of his *clientèle* it is enough for an idea to be new and unfamiliar for it to be regarded with suspicion. It may really be quite harmless and anything but revolutionary. It may even be the very thing the public wants and the salvation, could they but recognize it, of the very people who distrust it and are groaning under oppressions which it would relieve. It is just the frequency of this situation which justifies the description of the Conservatives as the stupid party. But

the journalist of course fully understands all this, and as a rule he finds that it pays him best to make fun of any new idea he reports. It was for reasons of this sort, no doubt, that Aristophanes deluged with ridicule the new ideas of the most creative age the world has ever seen, the ideas of the Sophists and Socrates, of Euripides and Plato.

Nevertheless, if he conforms a little to convention, the journalist is in a very strong position intellectually. He has the ear of the whole public, and not merely of its long-eared section. For he is the only writer whose writings are read by all, and what he says goes. He reaches all, and not merely a small coterie. He alone, moreover, is read by the people who matter. The people who control affairs and really do things that determine the course of events, the politicians, business men, and trade union leaders, do not in general read: still less do they read books dealing with new ideas. But they must, and do, read newspapers. Hence they become dependent on the journalist for their intellectual provender, and hear only of such novelties as the latter chooses to impart to them. This may in part account for their growing poverty in ideas, their incapacity for constructive change, and their pathetic insistence in reiterating worn-out and worthless nostrums. A secondary reason for the lack of ideas in modern politics is that the enormous size of modern States calls for the standardization of programmes and for machine-made politics,

and crushes out practically all independence and originality of mind. Also the specialists who occasionally stumble upon new ideas find it much safer and more congenial not to emerge from the seclusion of their laboratories and lecture-rooms and the obscurity of their technical terminologies, and do not often give the journalist interviews in which he can expound and exploit their views. At present it seems to be chiefly the astronomers who are willing to provide the journalist with 'copy'; but then it is so much safer to express opinions about what is happening at a distance of many thousands of light-years than about the unemployment statistics of the next parish or the prospects of the Lancashire cotton mills.

III

In these circumstances, can the journalist be expected to take an intelligent interest in questions of eugenics? It seems very doubtful. For at first the subject seems naturally to lend itself to ribaldry of the Aristophanic kind. And even admitting that in time this sort of thing is bound to wear itself out, as a member of the intelligentsia the journalist belongs to a class which is naturally biassed, by its origin and mode of life, against any thorough-going scheme of eugenical reform.

IV

To understand this, we should consider how an intelligentsia grows up in a modern society. It has already been remarked that an intelligentsia is a social product and relative to a definite type of education. It springs up as a natural reaction from the educational methods practised in a country. Now, educational methods are necessarily adapted, in the first instance, to the masses to be educated; consequently they are not altogether suited to the exceptional few. Or, alternatively, they may foster in the latter an excessive consciousness of their superiority, and incite them to look down on the masses with contempt. For both these reasons there is likely to arise an antithesis and antagonism between the masses and the intelligentsia, such that an idea which appeals to the former is not likely to be approved by the latter, and *vice versa*. Further, it is natural that the educational systems, and generally the social conventions, of any society should arouse criticism, and be seen through by the more penetrating minds in each generation, as they grow up. These minds, moreover, form the natural recruiting ground for the intelligentsia. The outcome is that the intelligentsia is always disposed to be critical of the institutions under which it has grown up, and often is in more or less open and serious revolt against the social order.

Usually, however, the roots of its criticisms do not strike very deep. They apprehend the superficial incongruities and stupidities of social conventions, but not their underlying wisdom. They resent the harshnesses and absurdities of social control and the hardships of hard cases, without realizing that some control of individual vagaries is necessary and beneficial: hence they are little disposed to welcome self-control, even as an ideal, and shrink from anything that involves prolonged or 'ascetic' training. Consequently in all affairs of the sexes they are all for 'liberty'. Let every one do as he pleases, regardless of the future and of the consequences of his acts. Never mind about posterity, which has done nothing for the present generation that it should curtail its freedom. Even as it is, insufficient for the day are the pleasures thereof. So eugenics appears to be merely an addition to the silly restrictions which cramp the style, and stimulate the revolt, of the young intellectual. No doubt he subsequently finds it expedient to modify these convictions as he grows older, sobers, and settles down to the business of making his way in life; but they are evidently antagonistic to the eugenical concern with the recruiting of the race as a highly responsible undertaking, calling for long views, forethought, and self-sacrifice from all the parties to it. Even after sowing his wild oats the former rebel is hardly likely to be converted to the eugenical ideal; he is much more likely to turn materialist,

to restrict his family and to sacrifice his progeny to his ambition.

V

Nor are the other items of the eugenical programme much better suited to appeal to the intelligentsia. The eugenical ideal demands the highest possible development of all human faculties—physical, mental, and moral. So it will look with favour on the bodily exercises and sports which play such a prominent part in our bringing up of the young, and are rightly considered salutary. It will not, of course, content itself with athletics or value them for their own sake ; but it will ever bear in mind that the original meaning of ‘asceticism’ was simply ‘training,’ and that the ascetic’s severities were originally admired (as they still are in India) as athletic feats of spiritual endurance. The intelligentsia, on the other hand, is composed merely of intellectuals. It abhors athletics. Indeed, many of its members probably became intellectuals precisely because they loathed the ‘compulsory games’ they were made to play at school. Nor have they since learned to love the outdoor life and exercises. Their habitat is urban, or at most suburban ; they move and have their being in Fleet Street or on the boulevards. What suggestion, then, could be naturally more repulsive to them than a summons to humanity to go into training to transcend itself, in order that it might

attain the far distant end of a superior race? Hardly even the eugenist's reprobation of sexual licence and promiscuous breeding.

There is every reason to fear, therefore, that our regular intelligentsia can never be induced to take up eugenical ideas with any degree of enthusiasm. Most of them will feel that these ideas are too discordant with their mode of life, however cogently they are put forward. Only negative services, therefore, to the cause of eugenics can be expected from most of the intelligentsia. They may be induced to perform their normal social service of taking note of new ideas. They may be willing to talk about them, and damn them with faint praise. They may even be goaded into disputing and denouncing them. And they may thereby draw attention to them in more important quarters, in which ideas are not usually noticed at all and which depend on the intelligentsia to become aware of new ideas at all. We should not, therefore, despair of eugenical reform merely because neither the journalist nor the other components of our present intelligentsia can be trusted to provide the motive force needed to bring the case for eugenics effectively before the public. We may get it taken up by other, stronger and more earnest, social forces.

VI

In what directions shall we look for such support? In the first place, it should be made quite clear that no practicable scheme of eugenic progress should rely at all on politics. It should not presuppose to start with any appreciable amount of State support. It should not require legislation in any notable or revolutionary measure. It should not appeal for help or favours to politicians of any party. For the politician is a broken reed for any real reform to lean on. Considered as a class he is not, in modern democracies, a leader of public opinion, but a follower, even when he is popularly hailed as a leader. He will not, therefore, blaze a trail into unexplored regions of thought or action, though when someone else has pointed out the way he may sometimes be prevailed upon to advance along it, cautiously and timorously, if he can be persuaded that not too many of his adherents will become stragglers by the wayside. He is too keenly conscious that his primary duties are to keep his party together and to repeat its slogans, to keep his ear to the ground and to keep a sharp eye on the impending saltations of the electoral cat, just round the corner and outside his range of vision. Consequently his political programme is essentially composed of ground-bait for votes and ephemeral devices for evading pressing problems and tiding over the week-end. When

he *has* to adopt a new expedient he is more likely than not to clutch at any nostrum that promises to extricate him from a difficulty of the moment. In short, in a democracy at any rate, he has to be more or less of a humbug and an opportunist, who cannot afford to look far ahead, and who most of the time has as little knowledge of what waters he is steering the Ship of State into as his blindest followers. The eugenist therefore should not look to politics for aid; he may, however, rest assured that *when* he has proved his case and converted the public, politicians will be ready enough to advocate any legislation that may be requisite or desirable.

In default of the politicians, the journalists and the intelligentsia proper, in what directions shall we look for the necessary social support of eugenical endeavours? There would appear to be two great professions which it should be possible to interest in eugenics and whose support might prove sufficient. Though not normally to be numbered among the intelligentsia proper, because too much preoccupied with their professional work to have much attention to bestow on ideas in general, they might perform the functions of an intelligentsia for the purpose in hand, because of the great affinity of the eugenical idea for their professional work, and its very direct bearing upon their problems.

Hence if any considerable proportion of these professions could be converted to eugenics the

case for eugenics would be effectively brought before the public. The professions in question are the doctors and the teachers. The former even now are probably in a latent sympathy with eugenics, which needs merely to be organized and rendered vocal: for their professional work must have made them very extensively aware of the evils which result from the dysgenical practices of our present civilization. And they know, of course, the many defects of man's bodily machine, the limitations of the medical art, and the need for a radical improvement in our physical endowment if the possibilities of a healthy and happy existence are to be widely realized. Many of them must know also that, in spite of the many and magnificent achievements of modern medical science, they are fighting a losing battle with disease, simply because the material upon which they exercise their art is progressively deteriorating. This deterioration, doubtless, makes more work for doctors, and work for more doctors; but the medical profession as a whole may surely be credited with rising above a narrow professionalism and with willingness to bring about an improvement in the human race.

But their sympathy with this cause is nevertheless subject to certain professional limitations. Because the defects they encounter and are called upon to cure are primarily *physical*, they are inclined to lay a somewhat exclusive and one-sided stress on the physical items in the eugenical

programme. They hardly realize that it would be vain to turn man into a better *animal*, if one did not simultaneously develop in him a better *mind* and better *morals*. Further, the ordinary doctor has to be careful how he assumes the part of a social reformer. He must not affront the prejudices of his patients, he must be cautious in advocating anything which is very much in advance of public opinion. It is only the leaders of the profession, the big specialists and consultants, who are in a position to speak out and to give the public a lead. Happily, some of them have already done so, and others could no doubt be persuaded to follow suit.

VII

In this respect what is true of the doctors holds also largely of the teachers. They, too, have to be circumspect, and many of them, especially headmasters, are apt to carry circumspection to the pitch of complete conventionality. But in other respects they have several advantages over the doctors. In the first place, they have direct access to the young, the hope of humanity when it is a question of progressive change—that is, to minds which are still plastic and receptive of new ideas, and not yet fossilized and sunk in ruts of habit. Moreover, they are more directly, and quite specially, concerned with the intellectual and moral features of the eugenical programme, for intellectual training is almost entirely, and

moral training is very largely, in their charge. Finally, in this country at least, they have not a little to say also about the bodily training of the young. If converted to eugenics, and properly instructed, therefore, they could transform public opinion with almost miraculous rapidity. They could impress on their pupils the unitary nature of education as a harmonizing of all faculties, a realizing of all possibilities, a training for all-round fitness. They could develop and expand youthful admiration for physical prowess into aspiration to all-round excellence—as, indeed, they already often try to do. In short, they could put to shame the sordid reality of our actual conditions by holding out to the young, and through them to their cynical seniors, the glittering ideal of a better world inhabited by *intrinsically better* men, stronger, healthier, cleverer, nobler, more self-controlled and more beautiful, than the accidents of evolution and the incidents of history have allowed us to become.

VIII

If the teachers and the doctors can be converted to eugenics, we shall hardly need any further help. But of course they will need to be instructed by the 'pure' scientists, primarily the biologists, but also the physiologists, psychologists, and sociologists. But in social affairs too much must

not be expected from pure science. For the pure scientists are too deeply corroded with 'scientific caution' to intervene in social questions. This means, mostly, that they are so specialized that they are not interested in the applications of science: also that they are not heroes, and shrink from taking responsibilities. It is for them a great simplification of life not to trouble about the social consequences of the ideas they are engaged in elaborating and promulgating. Thus it is part of the charm of the scientific life that the 'pure' scientist has no concern with practical matters. Moreover, few of them are able to free the expression of their thought sufficiently from technicality, to render it intelligible to those that do not share their specialty. Lastly, it should not perhaps surprise us to find that many of them should insist on postponing all action upon undisputed scientific knowledge until some distant day, when certain purely technical controversies which engross them have been finally settled. These do not reflect that it makes little or no difference to the practical applications of eugenics whether the Lamarckians or the Darwinians or the Mendelians are right about the disputed points in their several theories of heredity, and that meanwhile the people are perishing, because nothing is done to stop their deteriorating in a suicidal social order which prefers to recruit itself from its admittedly inferior stocks.

IX

It may excite surprise that there should not have been in this connexion any mention of a great profession to which in former days any question involving moral issues would most certainly have been referred for authoritative decision. But it is precisely in matters of faith and morals that we can no longer look for guidance to the clerical profession. Unfortunately for us and for itself it has been reduced to silence, and no longer ventures to make heard its voice in the discussion of the new problems which beset us. Its declared policy has been so rigid a conservatism that it has lost its intellectual initiative. For over 1500 years the Christian Churches have not seen fit officially to introduce any alteration into the Creeds in which they stereotyped the revelations with which they had been entrusted. By so doing they have intimated not obscurely that the immense growth of secular knowledge during this period has been totally devoid of spiritual significance, and has added nothing to our understanding of the nature and meaning of life. In this they may have been right, though it does not look probable.

But it is obviously false that the enormous changes in social conditions and in the organization of human life which have taken place since the decay of the Roman Empire have made no differ-

ence to Christian ethics. Though all the Churches are reluctant to admit it, the contents of morals change, and moral valuations are slowly but surely adjusted to the conditions of life, even though the forms of obligation persist. So the clerical claim that morals are immutable and unprogressive is not maintainable in practice, and in face of the facts. Actually, striking changes have occurred in moral valuations. The 'contemplative' life of the hermit and the monk is no longer regarded as the highest ideal of conduct, even in Catholic countries, and the Promised Land of the ascetic has been shifted to Tibet. Nor is indiscriminate alms-giving accounted a virtue any longer. Of the Seven Deadly Sins two at least are practically obsolete; for no one now would seriously reckon 'acedia' and gluttony among the seven worst of moral failings, while the reprobation of avarice has been tempered by a recognition of its affinity with the saving disposition which is such a valuable asset in modern economy. In many countries the laws and customs of marriage and divorce are in constant flux, and no one can foresee in what institutions their evolution will end. The Church of Rome, which has most prided herself on her rigid adherence to apostolic tradition, has come nearest to upholding the ancient standards; but even Rome has woefully failed to preserve a decent length of the feminine skirt, and is fighting a losing battle against the practice of birth-control, to which the Anglican

bishops have recently made a graceful but unavoidable surrender. The fate which has overtaken the dogma of Papal infallibility, however, most signally illustrates the drawbacks of a 'standpat' policy. The Pope is infallible in his pronouncements *ex cathedra* on matters of faith and morals; but this privilege is so dangerous to use that he never divulges *when* he is making such infallible pronouncements!

Thus by their unprogressiveness the Churches have lost control over the movements of opinion and the changes of valuations. They have incurred also the more serious charge of a lack of faith in their own mission. For ought they not to have *used* the capital of truth with which they were endowed to advance to *further* truths? Have they not acted exactly like the man in the parable who to preserve his talent buried it, instead of using it to earn more? So the social reformer finds himself forced to neglect the Churches. He cannot expect any active support from them; but neither need he fear any effective opposition. He may rest assured that if and when he succeeds in carrying through a salutary change in social ethics without their aid they will discover that it is quite in order, and in no way contrary to Scripture.

Let us conclude then that the prospects of eugenics, though anything but assured, are not hopeless. For though there exist great masses of dullness and inertia to be moved, and though

nothing more than partial and half-hearted support will be forthcoming from our present intelligentsia, there exist also social forces which can be effectively enlisted in a eugenical crusade, which are able to convince an ignorant and unbelieving world of the very urgent need for eugenical reform.

CHAPTER VII

EUGENICS AND INDUSTRY

DESPITE the many benefits which an intelligent eugenical reform of our social and political institutions holds out to mankind, it can hardly be said that the programme of eugenics has stood every test until it has shown ability to cope also with the vexed question of the relations of man to industry. These relations have long been the weakest and the sorest spot in our social economy ; they seem moreover to be getting more and more out of gear, and clearly underlie by far the greatest part of the existing social unrest. If the eugenicist can suggest anything wise and feasible on this subject, he will plainly show himself superior alike to the conservative and to the revolutionary, to the Marxian and to the orthodox economist. I believe that he is indeed in a position to make a valuable contribution to this difficult problem which may go far to solve it ; at any rate he can formulate a definite policy and has no need to wrap up an unsound argument in obscure technicalities.

I

The problem of the relation of man to industry arises out of the indisputable fact that the world is so constructed that it will not yield us all we want, nay will not yield us a subsistence at all, unless we are willing to exert ourselves, and to do a large amount of hard physical *work*. As this work is distasteful to many, and often exhausting, and as man is not endowed with an instinct to work like a beaver, there has been from the first a strong tendency, shown by those who had the power, to compel others to do their work for them, and, at most, to content themselves with ordering, supervising, and directing the work of these others. This has led to the invention of institutions like slavery, which is in essence *forced labour* and in slightly camouflaged forms, endures unto this day.

But, from the first, man has also pursued an alternative policy. Instead of working with his hands upon the objects he desired to alter and transform, he has invented tools or *machines*, by means of which he could enormously facilitate his work and do a large number of desirable things which would otherwise have been beyond his powers. It deserves however to be noted also, that one of the presuppositions conditioning invention was a certain exemption from the necessity of constant toil, from total absorption in the struggle of making his living, and so a certain degree of *leisure*. Thus the inventor very early

became differentiated from the manual worker, and there was started a certain co-operation or symbiosis of the two, which was greatly to the advantage of both parties. The inventor could enormously augment the efficiency of the worker, and could stipulate to be rewarded by a share of the increased products of his labour. The inventor was thereby enabled to make a living by the use of his brains and not, directly, of his hands.

Theoretically and essentially nothing more than the co-operation of hands and brains, of labour and invention, should be needed for the progress of industry and for the satisfaction of human needs. In practice, however, it is found advantageous to employ also two other parties, the *entrepreneur* and the capitalist. The former's proper function is to supervise and organize the work, so that it may be performed in the most economical and effective way. The capitalist's function is to provide from a store of existing goods, which he owns, whatever is needed to support the worker, the inventor, and the *entrepreneur*, while they are bringing into being and disposing of their products, and to take the risks of final failure. Of course both the *entrepreneur* and the capitalist will expect to be remunerated for their services, and it is also clear that under certain conditions they may obtain undue remunerations, just as in some cases they may be disappointed. In this way, and under the operation of the principle of the division of labour, the surface of industry

is diversified and industrial relations may become very complex.

After these processes and interactions have gone on for a long time, and when the world has been enriched by a long series of inventions, it is found that the machine tends to become the predominant partner in the industrial situation. It proves to be far more efficient than the unaided manual worker, and supersedes him more and more. And, what is worse, it seems to get the better of the craftsman and reduces him to a mere tender of machines. This process dispenses with his skill in using tools, deprives him of all the joy of creation, afflicts him with the deadly monotony of endless repetitions of simple unskilled motions, and, in a word, renders him a 'mechanic,' subsidiary to the machine. In this way it re-enslaves the worker, instead of relieving his labours.

This tendency of machine industry was foreseen long ago by Samuel Butler, when he described the people of his *Erewhon* as rising in revolt against their machines and destroying them. Now Butler's fancy is fast becoming sober fact. For we are living in an age in which the machine is becoming an irresistible Juggernaut, flooding the world with masses of goods for which, in spite of their cheapness, it is ever growing harder to find a market: moreover it multiplies, with almost equal rapidity, the discontent of the workers, who find themselves doomed to spend their life

harnessed to the machines they tend and required to perform only a few monotonous motions, almost as mechanical as those of the machines. It is no wonder that human nature revolts against such senseless and repulsive toil and the system which imposes it.

II

Yet it is hard to suggest a remedy. One cannot accept the Marxian claim that the workers have been robbed because the goods produced with the aid of the machine are properly the fruit of their labour, filched from them by the guileful ordering of a capitalistic society. For this contention entirely ignores or overlooks the organizing, overseeing, and marketing work of the *entrepreneur*, and the faith and enterprise of the capitalist, and their services to production. Without them the factories would speedily come to a standstill, as the Italian communists were surprised to discover when they seized upon the works which employed them after the War. The Russian communists have endeavoured to fill this gap by organizing sales and purchases on a national basis, and if they go on long enough will doubtless learn something about the principles on which State trading can be conducted. But it is evident that they have met with difficulties; and they have not yet allowed the world to form an opinion, based on impartial inquiry and authentic accounts and

balance sheets, as to the success or failure of their undertaking. All one can say is that they have not so far been able to raise the standard of life for their subjects, and that they seem to be everywhere hampered in their operations by their lack of capital. Now this is in the nature of things. For even with masses so frugal and so modest in their wants as the Russian, so accustomed to servitude and so easily terrorized, it is not possible to accumulate large stocks of goods and reserves which could serve as capital; moreover the Bolshevists, having destroyed their own credit, are not able to draw on accumulations beyond their borders.

But Marxian theory suffers also from a further and more serious omission. It overlooks the great part that *knowledge* has played in the development of human society. It is knowledge, in its true and pragmatic sense, knowledge that is operative, useful and applicable, which transforms the world for us, and makes two ears of corn to grow where one only grew before. This knowledge, which is mostly comprised under the head 'scientific,' though to some extent social, moral and political values also contribute to it, is not to be set to the credit of the workers. The men who work the machines are not usually their makers: indeed they are for the most part quite incapable of any such invention. The inventors of the machines upon which our wealth and well-being rest are men of much greater

calibre : they are possessed of that rarest, most valuable, and least appreciated, of human qualities, originality, and, in virtue thereof, have effected (salutary) innovations in the social order. Nevertheless, they are mostly dead, and, largely, forgotten. But modern society battens on the fruits of their labour. It is literally parasitic on the dead. Should not we, who are their heirs, bestow a little thought upon the best ways of distributing our heritage ?

Now Socialists are apt to assume, as if it admitted of no dispute, that this heritage should be wholly lavished on the existing generation of workers and that no other claimants need be considered : but the eugenicist cannot endorse this arrogant assumption. He must uphold the principle that this great fund of scientific knowledge and cultural tradition is part of the capital of the race, and should be used and expended for its permanent improvement, and for the encouragement of its more valuable types.

Of course, if this principle is applied to the solution of the vexed question of the relations between capital and labour, it will follow that the eugenicist can endorse the claim of the capitalist and the *entrepreneur* to a lion's share of the industrial product as little as that of the worker. His quarrel with our present civilization rests precisely on this fact that it over-values the services of the *entrepreneur* and the capitalist, and drives most ability in their direction, while nevertheless

it does not conserve the ability it rewards, but destroys it. Thus in the end the wages of capitalism, like those of sin, are death, that is, racial extinction. So he will deny the right of *all* the living claimants to more than a living wage equitably adjusted to their human value and the social need of conserving their services, while he would think it right to reserve the surplus value springing from the accumulation of the knowledge which is power in order to finance the strenuous endeavour of eugenical reform. Should this decision commend itself to the human conscience and the human intelligence, the principal contention between capital and labour is disposed of, and the problem of their just remuneration is as good as solved.

III

But this is not by any means as yet a solution of the problem of the machine. The machine continues to display its uncanny efficiency, and to disorganize the labour market at every step in advance it takes. It seems to operate by a series of paradoxes. It provides employment, and yet creates unmanageable, and apparently incurable, masses of unemployment. It cheapens goods, and yet renders unprocurable their best and highest sorts. It is an instrument of production, and yet its very efficiency tempts industry to an over-production which paralyses it. It relieves

labour, and yet as John Stuart Mill observed, "it is questionable if all the mechanical inventions yet made have lightened the day's toil of any human being. They have enabled a greater population to live the same life of drudgery and imprisonment, and an increased number of manufacturers and others to make fortunes."*

The reason for this final and famous paradox is, of course, complex. If human wants grow as fast, or faster, than the means of their satisfaction, there is no reason why the amount of labour required of mankind collectively should diminish. And notoriously something of the sort has happened. Even the most zealous advocates of the theory of reducing wants would hardly, in our western world at least, be capable of the heroic consistency of a Gandhi, and would revolt against the simple life of the savage. Moreover, there is a further reason for the phenomenon Mill marvelled at. The use of machines must increase the total wealth of human society, i.e. the total amount of desirable goods, and the leisure potentially existing in it; but there may be a mal-distribution of the extra leisure won by their use. Even though it may greatly increase the total leisure available, even though it may greatly increase the numbers of the leisured classes (including for this purpose all whose work is not directly manual), it does not follow that those who actually work the machines will benefit. They may continue to

* *Political Economy*, Bk. IV, ch. vi.

be employed at the customary wage for the customary hours; nay, if the invention of the machine means that the work can now be done by a cheaper and lower type of man, the individual wage of the machine's human attendant may actually sink. Only workers of this sort will form a smaller proportion of the community.

But this result is not the fault of the machine. There is nothing in the nature of the machine and of its ways to render it inevitable. It is a consequence of the organization of society. The machine as such is indifferent to the length of time it is worked, and can work continuously, if only it is kept in order. Abstractly and subject to this proviso, therefore, it could be worked twenty-four hours in the day, and indeed this would often be the best and most economical way of working it. It is only the strength of its human attendant which would give out under the strain of such continuous activity. But is there any reason why *the same* man should tend the machine during the whole period of its operation?

This question suggests an alternative method of working the machine, by which it *could* be made to lighten the toil of its human tenders. Instead of working it merely for the customary length of the worker's day, we can adopt the principle of *shifts*, and keep it going continuously. How long these shifts should be can be made to depend on the conditions of each particular industry. There might be two shifts of twelve hours, three

of eight, four of six, or six of four (as on board ship) according to circumstances. From the researches of the industrial psychologists it would, moreover, appear that there would, usually, be a gain in reducing the length, and increasing the number, of these shifts. Thus a rational use of the powers of the machine would increase alike its efficiency and the amount of employment it could give, if required.

This would also have the advantage of rendering the organization of industry more elastic, and more adjustable to the varying conditions of trade. It has so far baffled human ingenuity to eliminate the periodic vicissitudes of trade, which appear to be deeply rooted in human psychology, and produce alternately booms and slumps. Industry's traditional way of meeting these variations has been to tolerate or encourage the existence of a permanent reservoir of unemployed labour, which can be drawn upon when times are good, and filled full by the discharge of unneeded workers when times are bad. Little thought is given to the consequences that the labour normally unemployed will necessarily be inefficient, and that the sudden spells of unemployment which may overtake most workers are bound to react detrimentally upon the quality of their work. Both these tendencies, however, may be greatly mitigated. In times of boom when there is a shortage of labour it would become possible to work a larger number of machines with the same

staff by increasing the length of the shifts and paying for overtime: for the previous shortening of the working day would leave an ample margin for special exertions in a temporary emergency. In times of slump, on the other hand, the growth of unemployment might be stemmed by shortening the shifts, and thereby making room for a larger number of workers. The individual's wage might have to be reduced by this policy, but his discontent thereat would be mitigated by the reflections that it was better to get less than to be thrown out of employment altogether, and that he was at any rate getting some compensation in the shape of less work and greater leisure. So provided that all those employed continued to obtain a 'living wage,' a slump could be borne without serious distress and dislocation of labour, and the country would at any rate escape from the suicidal policy which obtains at present. At present, when trade goes bad, industry closes down its factories, and throws its redundant workers out of employment, in the expectation that the country will provide them with 'maintenance'. But it is merely a political illusion that the 'State' can support any amount of unemployment: the cost of maintaining the unemployed ultimately falls on that portion of national industry which is still working, and probably struggling to carry on by reducing the cost of production. For the State can only defray the cost of maintaining the unemployed by higher taxation, and it

is a fatal illusion of socialism to imagine that this will not fall on industry, either directly or by reducing the resources of the capitalists who support it. Even if the whole cost could be imposed on the creditors of the State, the *rentiers*, this action would depress the credit of the State, as would appear in the more onerous terms which would be demanded when next the State desired to borrow. The extra cost of supporting the unemployed thrown out of work by the industries which have failed is thus made to defeat the efforts of those which are still struggling; with the result that they, too, are forced to shut up shop and increase the amount of unemployment. This, of course, means more maintenance, further failures and more unemployment: so the vicious circle rolls on, until national bankruptcy heaves in sight!

IV

The expedient of multiplying shifts in order to lighten the inhuman burden of mechanical labour, and to enable employment to be adapted to the vicissitudes of the trade-cycle, does not, of course, entirely abolish the drudgery of work and remove its irksomeness. It should be frankly confessed that in all work an element of drudgery must continue to be found, if only because it is precisely this that distinguishes 'work' from pleasurable activity and 'play'. But by reducing the amount of drudgery in work and shortening

the length of time during which it must be endured, we can both render it much more endurable, and obviate (probably to quite a disproportionate extent) its depressing and debasing effects on the minds of the workers. The man who tends a machine four hours a day to make his living has time to recover from his drudgery: he would be a very different person from the man who has to do so for twelve hours a day. Thus the work would become fit for a higher type of man, and, when this was recognized, would probably attract him. Shorter spells of manual labour might enlist many recruits from the 'idle rich,' who might not find it so repulsive when disguised as a pastime, or as a half-time job, or for the sake of the exercise, even though they could not be induced to let it absorb them wholly. After all it is this total absorption in a job, or rather the feeling that it is demanded, which constitutes the essential difference between the professional and the amateur, and just as any game, sport or amusement gives rise to professionalism when it is pursued as whole-time job, so many sorts of 'work' would cease to be irksome, if they could be reduced to half-time jobs.

Moreover, in many industries, if not in all, even the mechanical work would benefit: it would be done better by the higher intelligences devoted to it. In these ways the dysgenical tendencies of modern machine-tending might to a large extent be counteracted.

V

Nor should it be overlooked that the application of our principle can be extended far beyond the sphere of industry. When applied to the professions it will mean the systematic creation of a large number of what may be called half-time jobs and an abatement of the intensity of the strenuous struggle to succeed to a more gentlemanly level. At present half-time jobs are rare ; but the need for them is widespread, and should be recognized, if mankind is ever to solve the problem of the humanizing of labour. They exist at present in the teaching profession, in the shape of university professorships, under the pretext of providing for research, although in most of our universities it is left to the professor's conscience whether he will research into anything of value, or indeed into anything at all. The work of the country clergy is often a half-time job, as is that of the soldier in times of peace. But in law and medicine the situation is very different. For the barrister and the consultant there seems to be nothing intermediate between all but complete unemployment and an overwhelming practice which means total deprivation of leisure and immersion in purely professional interests. Both our big lawyers and our big doctors are habitually overworked, and it is by no means only the lure of a big income which incites them ;

it is rather an organization of their professions, which renders it too difficult and dangerous to refuse any work that is offered. A reorganization which afforded less scope for money-making and more for reflection and research could not but prove salutary alike to the advancement of these professions and to the character and happiness of those who practised them.

VI

It should however be made clear that the remedies for unemployment and drudgery which have been suggested can only be safely entrusted to a type of man very definitely superior to the average man of the present day. The latter scarcely deserves to be better off than he is. It might be highly dangerous and detrimental to increase, wantonly and heedlessly, the numbers either of the idle rich or of the idle poor. They are both sufficiently difficult social problems already, and might easily become intolerable burdens upon society. What we need is men who are fit to be trusted with leisure, and who would make a good and noble use of it. At present far too many of all classes use their leisure ill, and it is to be feared that if they were given more they would do more harm. The idle rich might waste and sterilize more of the world's very limited stock of ability, and the idle poor might wreck the social order, while both might deteriorate by becoming more dissolute.

It is imperative therefore to provide for the proper use of leisure in all classes. Without it both the idle rich and the idle poor become a curse to society, and a danger to themselves. Neither are climbing the steep ascent which leads to a higher type of man. Neither should be generated or conserved in a wisely and eugenically ordered state. But of course it is not easy to make such provision for a salutary organization of leisure.

This difficulty, however, is not a reason for despairing of improving the social order and for acquiescing in the existing types of man. It is a reason rather for trying the more strenuously to improve the human race and to grow a type of man who would use worthily the augmented leisure with which he would be endowed by his growing power over nature.

VII

Now the readiest and most obvious instrument for the purpose of inculcating a worthy use of leisure is manifestly education ; but unfortunately education is a vague term, easily corrupted, and can be made to serve a great variety of purposes, good, bad and indifferent. Ideally it ought to fit men for life and for all the activities of life taken at their best ; but the actual achievements both of technical and of professional training fall far short of this ideal. Our current education scarcely fits us even for our daily work. Manifestly

also education for *work* is not sufficient: the young have to be trained also to become tolerable members of the society in which they are expected to live. Hence *moral* education also is a crying need. But nowhere at present can the problem it generates be said to be solved successfully, either by the State or by the Church. The former finds itself confronted with growing amounts of delinquency and crime, and is tempted to abandon moral education to the Churches. But, these in their turn are finding it more and more difficult to enforce their old standards of conduct on the modern world, and are paralysed by their past in their endeavours to adapt them to the actual conditions of the age. Too often they cling to antiquated demands, which were never perhaps practicable, and are no longer salutary, and have been transcended, even as ideals. There is of course always and everywhere a certain amount of moulding of youthful character in any social order; but this also is apt to be perverted. The moral education which society sanctions and imposes is usually given a twist in the interests of those in authority, of pastors and masters, rather than in those of the young themselves,* and aims not at *improving* but merely at *conserving* the social order.

Under these conditions the old ideal of a 'liberal' education also is degraded, until it

* Cp. ch. iv, §8.

amounts merely to the imposition of a *caste-mark*, which serves to distinguish social superiors from social inferiors and to create a psychological gulf between them more insuperable than any physical 'untouchability'. Originally the Greek theory of a liberal education demanded that it should enable the soul to resist or to rise above the soul-destroying drudgery of debasing work ; but this theory has long been misapprehended or forgotten. Not that the actual practice of the Greeks (here or elsewhere) forms a good exemplar for us to copy : actually they pursued their ideal of leisure with all the snobbishness of a master-caste lording it over honest workers in a society resting (uneasily enough) on the slavery of the masses.

The current notion of a 'liberal' education, therefore, needs expansion and re-interpretation. It should be conceived as an education which would fit a man for a worthy and salutary employment of *his* leisure, and regarded as the necessary complement to the education which fits him for *his* work. Evidently this definition will cover many sorts of education for leisure as well as of education for work. Fortunately, however, it is not necessary to enter into the details of either kind at this stage ; it suffices to remark that they should both bear the needs of eugenics in mind and be made as eugenical as possible.

VIII

There is, however, one obvious objection which should be noticed. It will be said that any solution of the industrial problem will be vain which involves an appeal to education, and postulates the success of a process which must be much too slow to save us. The economic crisis of modern civilization is already upon us, its collapse is imminent, its explosion is a matter only of a few years, or even months: hence no means of escape will avail us which cannot be mobilized with similar rapidity.

This objection may be largely justified; but it only shows that the rescue and reform of civilization should have been begun much sooner. It should have been realized betimes that the forces of repair are always much slower than those of destruction: Rome cannot be built in a day, though it may very well be fired in a few hours.

Nor should our growing consciousness of the immensities of the cosmic time-scale delude us into thinking that practically unlimited time is to be granted us in which to repent and to expiate our sins. This is true neither of individuals nor of peoples and societies. The process of decay may for a while be very slow, and yet the final dissolution may come upon them with catastrophic speed. There appears also to be a sort of law of acceleration running through the

life both of individuals and of societies : certainly any process which starts anywhere can be, and usually is, now disseminated all over the world much faster than of yore. Lastly, there are a number of very grave weaknesses and maladies in the body politic to be cured or outgrown, before much can be done to improve the intrinsic quality of the human race.

Thus, our present unhealthy sentimentalism will have to learn that it is no kindness to the inferior types of man, to the diseased and maimed, artificially to bolster them up and to foster them at the expense of the superior, whose nobler and happier lives they taint, corrupt, and spoil. Our present morbid nationalism will have to be greatly abated, and to make way for the *esprit de corps* of a eugenical aristocracy, before nations are effectively able to co-operate for any good purpose. Our present race-prejudices will either have to be vindicated scientifically and sustained by effective segregation, or to be eradicated, in order that they may not, in a not very distant future, involve humanity in race-wars compared with which our old national struggles will seem the height of gentleness and chivalry.

IX

Nevertheless, it is better not to despair too soon of the destiny of man. We may have time enough to save ourselves, if we bestir ourselves at once

to set our house in order. Our present and future follies may not prove fatal any more than those which were committed in the past. A faint glow of providential guidance seems retrospectively to hover over the path we have followed, and may continue to illumine the most promising of the paths that lie before us.

We have at least one presage of success that was lacking to our forefathers. We may be no wiser nor less wicked, and we may even be deteriorating at the moment. But we have *much more knowledge*, alike of whence we came and of whither we fain would go. We are not forced by our ignorance to stumble on in utter darkness: we can guide our steps by the light of science, imperfect as it is, and perverse as may be the course we choose to steer. Moreover we possess in far greater measure the mechanical means for communicating knowledge, and so for concerting common action. So when we stray from the narrow path of salvation we have the means of perceiving this much earlier, and have the power of retracing our steps and altering our course. Granting that knowledge alone will not save us, because it may be misused, it yet gives us the power to avoid the deadly pitfalls in our path.

But we had better use our knowledge before it is too late. If we delay too long, we shall lose it by the intellectual deterioration which we are now promoting so assiduously, and may so obfuscate our vision that we can no longer see

the path of progress. This possibility has been, very temperately but impressively, stated by Earl Russell. He points out* that "the most intelligent individuals, on the average, breed least, and do not breed enough to keep their numbers constant. Unless new incentives are discovered to induce them to breed, they will soon not be sufficiently numerous to supply the intelligence needed for maintaining a highly technical and elaborate system." It is precisely the creation of these incentives, or rather the restoration of the old incentives which our civilization has destroyed, which forms the essence of eugenical reform. Lord Russell is too sceptical about the possibility of creating adequate eugenical incentives to human improvement, because he believes that democracy absolutely blocks the way. He continues: "new incentives will have to be far more powerful than any that seem politically feasible in any measurable future. In America and Great Britain, the fetish of democracy stands in the way; in Russia, the Marxian disbelief in biology . . . In France, the economic system that has grown up around the Code Napoleon makes any eugenic reform impossible. Probably the best chance is in Germany, but even there it is small.† Meanwhile we must expect, at any rate for the

* In *Whither Mankind? A Panorama of Modern Civilization*, pp. 80-81.

† How about Japan?

next hundred years, that each generation will be congenitally stupider than its predecessor. This is a grave prospect." So he concludes that "for a while, the old machinery will survive, just as Roman aqueducts survived in the sixth and seventh centuries ; but gradually there will be an increasing collapse, until the sky-scrapers become as strange as Maya ruins in Yucatan."

X

This argument would perhaps be cogent, if we were bound to take democracy as the final term of political development. But the signs are multiplying that the spell of democracy is waning. As the result of a war which was, humorously enough, said to be fought to make the world safe for democracy, much the greater part of Europe has succumbed to a variety of dictatorships, which are by no means all reversion to the old military despotisms. In America the popular demand is no longer for freedom but for prosperity, and in consequence (as was shown in Chapter IV) the power of a capitalistic plutocracy is steadily increasing. Even in Britain the masses have shown that they have more sense than they are given credit for by their demagogues, and that they know how to refuse a bribe when they realize that it would ruin their country.

But above all it should be borne in mind that the right of democracy is no longer supported by

might. Thanks to the latest developments of the most progressive of all arts, the art of war, military supremacy is no longer possessed by the big battalions of infantry. A minute minority can now control the masses from the air, if it holds the aerodromes and the factories for poison gas, and is supported by a few airmen and trustworthy air mechanics. The air forces can terrorize the civilian population, and neither army nor navy can withstand them, as was recently shown by the rapidity with which the rebellious Chilean navy was bombed into submission.

Hence the requisite conditions for a revival of aristocracy, a revival which we have already demanded on eugenical grounds, already exist on the political, as well as on the military, side. The supremacy of the nobles throughout the middle ages rested on the physical and military fact that, properly handled, the armoured cavalry of the knights could ride roughshod over the opposition of any number of unarmoured infantry. This situation only changed when the discovery of fire-arms enabled the musketeer to put a bullet through the armour of the knight. But now the tables are turned once more. The knights of the air should be invincible, and the princes of the powers of the air should have abundant force to rule the earth. In so far, therefore, as force is the basis of government, democracy is already superseded, and political developments may be expected to make this clear in growing measure.

It does not seem so certain, therefore, that any doctrinaire democracy will be able to thwart for ever the progress of eugenical reform. The human race will have the power, as it has the knowledge, to adopt measures of positive eugenics, if it has the will. But whether it will have the will, remains to be seen.

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