The climax of civilisation / by Correa Moylan Walsh.

THE
CLIMAX OF CIVILIZATION

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BY

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New York
STURGIS & WALTON
COMPANY
1917

Set up and electrotyped. Published, October, 1917.

PREFACE

This little work was originally written as the introductory portion of a larger one to be entitled *Socialism and Feminism, with an Introduction on the Climax of Civilisation.* But the material grew too copious to permit of publication in a single volume, and out of proportion for publication as a single work in two volumes. Therefore it seemed advisable to break it up into its three component parts and publish them as three separate works. This mode of publication also recognises the fact that, though connected, these volumes are independent, and may be separately desired by readers interested mainly in one or in two of the subjects. Yet such readers are begged to bear in mind that each of these works was composed in connection with the others, and a single theme runs through them all as a binding thread.

Standing by itself, the present work is offered as a new exposition of the cyclical theory in the philosophy of history. It attempts to describe the course which all civilisations naturally run, and to locate our position in the cycle of our civilisation. This position is shown to be one near the top, or climax, and to contain premonitions of disintegration and decline. The purpose of the work is to point out these germs of decay, and to emphasise the need of guarding against fomenting and cherishing them. The two most comprehensive sources of trouble are the subjects of the two succeeding works.

Because of its serving as an introduction to these other two works, a few preparatory remarks may here be added concerning the whole series. The work on *Socialism* comes next because dealing with the broader subject, which covers and includes the subject of the other. Yet the final work on *Feminism* has been more fully elaborated, because in our country it is the more obtrusive and menacing. Especially is its entering wedge, woman suffrage, an impending danger.

The two following volumes, then, perform the disagreeable task of cautioning against two things which are presented as

good, and which on account of their pretensions seem to be good. It would be pleasanter to believe that projects offering reform of existing evils would be effectual. Disillusionment before trial is disagreeable, once hopes have been aroused; yet disillusionment after trial, through failure when the aim appears within reach, will be much more — and in these momentous matters a thousand times more — painful, involving as they may national and racial disaster. A small present disappointment is incomparably less bad than a great future lamentation.

There is an old French saying that the means are more important than the end — more important in consideration; for it is easy to know what one wants, and the difficulty lies in learning how to get it. We all are aware of wrongs in the world around us, and we all desire improvement. Plans of improvement are easy to make; but all the consequences that would ensue if they were put into practice, it is not easy to foresee. It often is hard to tell why many specious plans should not be efficacious. Then people who are in a hurry ask why not? and adopt them because they cannot answer. It is the object of this series to answer this question with regard to two much-promising schemes — to give the reasons why their principles are not justified, and why their methods would not work out successfully.

The connection between these two different subjects, which accounts for the treatment of them, if not in a single work, in a single series of works, is explained in the following pages themselves, both of this volume and of the other two. It may only be premised that they both exhibit a common defect. No social arrangement is right that has not the power of permanence in the world as it is. Something that might be permanent only in the world as it should be, deserves not to be adopted till the world is as it should be. Such are the two subjects here brought together. The world is old enough to have learnt much by experience, and to have established some things solidly. In every science (for nothing is a science till this feat is achieved) some things have been discovered that are unshakable. Yet there are persons who in geometry question the Euclidean axioms, in astronomy doubt the Newtonian law of gravitation, in economics deny the quantity theory of

value. The author is not a radical of this stripe, and in things broad and well-founded he is conservative, although he desires to be progressive in matters reasonable and unobjectionable for their results. The present introductory volume is a prelude intended to show that not all that glitters as new is new or golden, that not all reformation is melioration, and that not all advance or progress is forward or upward. In it the teaching of the past is used to reveal wherein the danger ahead of us lies. The other two volumes carry out the theme, and by analysis of the schemes offered attempt to prove that they would but lead us backward in the downward course previously run by older civilisations.

It is not asserted that the arguments presented in these three volumes cannot be met; but it is contended that it is better to try to meet them than to overlook them. Modification of opinions usually results from a discussion that tries to take all possible points of view.

All of the first two volumes and most of the third was completed in the first draft before the war raging in Europe, which our nation has just entered, had begun. This calamity has necessitated a few alterations in words and a few additions of thought, but has required no modification in the general treatment. For the author was one of those who have long expected this war, and he was surprised less at its occurrence than at its delay. Occasionally some passages would not have been written exactly as they stand, had the work been planned after the commencement of the war. But it has not been convenient, and it was not necessary, to rewrite or reset them.

In conclusion a word of warning may be given, alike for this volume and for the two which accompany it, but more especially for the work on *Feminism*. In this series of works no euphemisms are employed. When there is need to speak of a spade, the name of the spade is spoken. The whole series is addressed more to men than to women, and certainly not to children.

C. M. Walsh.

Bellport, Long Island, N. Y.,
June 4, 1917.

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CHAPTER I.

THE NATURE OF CIVILISATION

POLITENESS, urbanity, civility, are terms taken from life in cities. They refer to the effect of such life upon manners, in their refinement. But the original thing is crowded existence on a fixed spot. To live in that condition is to live in a civil state. Civilisation means making civil, or it refers to the condition of being civil, in both the senses of living in a crowded state and of living in a refined state. It has been well defined as "the art of living together in close relations."[1] Among the animate creation certain insects (bees and ants) satisfy the first requirement of living close together, but not the second, as they act by instinct. Some birds, fishes, and herbivorous quadrupeds nearly reach, but fall short of, the first requirement, because, though living in flocks, shoals, and herds, they must wander in quest of food. Man as a brute is a predatory species, and can obtain sustenance only with much room around him. Such is savagery, sparsely occupying large territory. Civilisation is its opposite; barbarism, a mean term. For mankind to be able to live crowded close, is needed a varied exercise of intelligence, directed toward combination. They must work in unison, they must aid and protect one another, they must enter into mutual agreements, they must assume duties of command and obedience, they must respect one another's rights.[2]

[1] Henry George, *Social Problems, Works,* vol. ii. p. 191; *cf.* vi. 25.

[2] Thus J. S. Mill in his essay on *Civilisation* (in *Dissertations and Discussions,* i. 187–8, Boston ed.), treating civilisation as the contrary of barbarism, and finding barbarism to consist in scanty population, poor for want of agriculture, industry, and commerce, with little sociableness and co-operation, with little law and security provided by the state, concluded that civilisation consists in dense population, rich in the fruits of agricul-

Accordingly, the means and the consequences of crowded existence in a definite area are usually added to the notion of civilisation. Politeness is both an effect of such living together and a prerequisite of its continuance. Civilisation includes even more than mere refinement, extending to the system of managing society or the friendly intercourse of human beings, first brought under conscious regulation by citizens (*cives*) in a city-state (*civitas*), along with the security of person and property and the general welfare which ensue. The purpose of civilisation is right living and happy living; and these ends are so much more important, that their manifestations monopolise our attention and have received a prominent place in the definition, where, in strictness, they do not belong. To most of us the meaning conveyed by the word is that of a high, in distinction from a low, state of order and prosperity; while the more scientifically-minded have turned to the other side and spoken of civilisation as "our command over the powers of nature," or "our knowledge of the arts," though the former of these is a consequence of the latter, and this, of our possession of the sciences.[3] An advantage of connoting these characteristics in the idea of civilisation is, that its gradation is measurable more readily by the amount of prosperity, which is its phenomenal effect, and by the extent of command over nature, which is its obvious cause, than by any degrees of being civil or united in a social state. Some have also treated civilisation as an approach toward justice, which, indeed, perfects the art of living close together. But this is not complete; for we can think of a barbarous tribe becoming truly just without any great improvement in its material condition, and we should not consider it highly civilised. Civilisation involves material prosperity as well as moral advance, being imperfect without either.

In this subject, for the student of the means of making advancement, the precedents or causes of civilisation are far the

ture, industry, and commerce, sociable and co-operative, governed by law and protected by the state.

[3] The former of these two "scientific" definitions is given, for instance, by Molinari in the *Dictionaire de l'Économie politique*, and by the Duke of Argyll, who gives also the latter, in his *Primeval Man*, pp. 30, 31. Jevons, following Liebig, defined civilisation as "the economy of power," *The Coal Question*, 122. Ritchie characterises it as mechanics, science, art, politics, *Natural Rights*, 54–6.

most significant. It is not enough to conceive of civilisation as dependent upon man's control of nature: we must include the nature itself which is brought under our control, as there is a great difference between nature on the ocean and on land, in the tropics and in cold regions, where the soil is barren and where it is prolific. Better may civilisation be said to depend on man's control of nature's forces and materials; for it depends as much on nature's supplies as on our use of them. The extent of nature's gifts must be taken into consideration, as well as the extent of our ability to take advantage of them. This our ability itself depends on our knowledge of nature's laws, or science. The two great factors of civilisation, therefore, are this knowledge and the sources of supplies provided by nature. Each of these factors is essential. The largest and most fertile country in the world would not itself bring forth civilisation without science and without the arts by which science is applied; and the science and arts of all the academies would not beget civilisation on an isolated coral reef. There are, in other words, both a moral basis of civilisation and a physical.

Science itself depends on the interaction of intelligent beings working together; and on this also depends the use of nature's materials. This use requires appropriation of nature's sources by men in common; which, again, is collaboration in the management of a territory. Collaboration, then, is the beginning of all civilisation. It requires the coming together of human beings. This coming together is not civilisation: it is as yet only association, or the formation of society. Society is the basis of civilisation, just as the existence which is possible in a crowded state, or under some well regulated government, is civilisation itself. For this the fitting together of the parts into a whole is necessary; which condition, being comparable with that of the organs in a living body, is called organisation. Civilisation is organic: a civilised state is an organism. To such coming together, or congregation, and organisation there are limits. People must congregate in various combinations. Hence mankind is divided into many societies or countries, whose degrees or stages of civilisation may be different. As they borrow one from another, the civilisation of neighbouring societies are generally pretty much alike, the prominent

differences occurring over great distances or beyond impassable barriers.

Such is a static conception of civilisation. Dynamically, civilisation must be considered as a continuous series of states or conditions of a society in different degrees of adaptedness of organisation, in different degrees of power over nature, in different degrees of prosperity. Starting from its negation in savagery or barbarism, civilisation grows; or, rather, a society grows in adaptedness of organisation, in power over nature, in prosperity, and thus bears its civilisation along with it.

Such growth is improvement of condition, or progress. Progress itself is not identical with civilisation, as has sometimes been said;[4] for civilisation may exist at any moment, and over any period it may be stationary, and even retrograde. But civilisation never being perfect, its progress is always desirable. For this, after a certain small advance was made, another growth was necessary — growth in size. For in the beginning the congregations of peoples were very restricted, owing to the slow movement of persons who have only their own legs to carry them and who have to push through the unremoved obstacles of nature. But as paths are cut and enlarged into roads, and other means of transport and carriage are employed, the congregations become larger. At first also, the different congregations, being few and far between, and consuming the substance where they lived, moved slowly about over the earth, or kept a wide area to themselves, in which they roamed from place to place. Such was the tribal stage of human societies, not yet civilised. But as the earth became more fully occupied, and the room for roaming was contracted, the tribes became stationary; and now several tribes uniting at the same center formed there a city, which with its surrounding territory constituted a city-state. Later, the means of communication improving, so many united that they formed several cities all in one combination, constituting what is simply called a state, or country, or nation. States so formed have ever grown larger and larger with improvement in communication between their parts; for — thus it has been put in

[4] According to Guizot civilisation is the progressive amelioration of society and of the individuals in society, *Histoire de la Civilisation en Europe*, Lec. I.

terms of science — "the size for states which is most successful is a function of internal communication." [5]

One reason why such quantitative enlargement is necessary for qualitative improvement in civilisation (which is the main thing), is that collaboration on a large scale gives greater command over nature, as it may appropriate or bring under common management more sources and bring together more materials and accumulate more forces and apply them better. Another reason is owing to the existence of neighbouring states; for the largest state, if also the strongest, may get for its own use some of the produce of the others, or may control and direct the labour of their peoples for its own benefit, and may also save itself from being so exploited by others. The power of one man or state over another or others is an increase of the power over nature of that man or state.

For advance in civilisation has rested on something else than collaboration, at least than friendly collaboration. Friendly collaboration is the beginning of civilisation, and during all the advance of civilisation it remains one of its factors. But there is another factor, which is the exact opposite as regards the accompanying feelings. This is strife, contention, competition. In the beginning, collaboration was almost only between individuals in a society, and the societies were in almost constant warfare. Later, the societies came to see their interest in uniting, and even when not coalescing have helped one another and worked together. But strife and contention have raged also within societies, and when friendliness became common between societies, it is more within than between them that dissension has been constant. One fighter, whether an individual or a state, may subdue another, subjugate, enslave that other, compel that other to join forces with those already employed. Thus strife may cause involuntary collaboration, as in slave gangs, and in this way contribute to the advancement of material civilisation. But its greatest

[5] W. M. F. Petrie, *Janus in Modern Life*, p. 66. This law was not known to Odysse-Barot, who in his *Lettres sur la Philosophie de l'Histoire* advised the division of Europe into small states, nor to his critic, R. Flint, who in his *Philosophy of History in France*, p. 450, rejected Odysse-Barot's statement that in the course of ages "the world oscillates between a system of small States and a system of great empires." The world does so oscillate, but only when the proper conditions for the two extremes arise.

influence is apart from collaboration. It serves the purpose of spurring on to greater effort not only by the sentiment of emulation, because of the dislike of being surpassed, but by the actual need of exerting all one's energies to avoid being subdued. Also it kills off those who lag too far behind, sometimes directly, generally at least indirectly. And as those who have it in them to strive hard are more likely to produce offspring like them, this "survival of the fittest" in the "struggle for existence" brings about a "natural selection," whereby the fittest parents are left over to produce the fittest children. Strife is thus the weeder-out of the weak and unfit.

Of these two factors of civilisation, collaboration, or the faculty of sociableness on which it depends, is absolutely necessary: without it civilisation could not start, nor advance, nor continue; without it our civilisation would cease. Strife, or the spirit of contention, especially in the form of seeking one's own advantage at the expense of others, does not seem so essentially necessary, and looks as if it might be dispensed with — at least within the social groups, if not between them.[6] But in our world things seem to be so arranged, and in the past it is difficult to see how civilisation could have been brought forth from non-civilisation without strife both within the groups and between them. At all events, such has been the course of things.[7] Without any strife at all, it is true, a perfect civilisation once somehow attained, and universally disseminated throughout the world, or in an absolutely isolated region, might

[6] Thus Cournot maintained that as we cannot get rid of the rivalry of economic competition between states, we ought to get rid of it *within* them, (according to Flint, *op. cit.*, 653); and Karl Pearson holds that it is not intra-group, but extra-group rivalry that has improved the race, *Chances of Death*, i. 121, 125–6, 129, 132, *cf.* 132n., 163, 288, ii. 48.

[7] Pearson's statement seems the reverse of the truth. Village-communities in India and in Russia warred with one another, while within them reigned equality and fraternity, and they were the most stationary societies imaginable. Only when the higgling of the market, which began between the communities, penetrated within them, in cities, did progress become perceptible. The most progressive nations in the world — the Greeks, the Romans, and the English — have exhibited the most internal dissensions. Biology teaches the same lesson. "The all-important natural selection is not between species or societies, but within them," says C. W. Saleeby; "the struggle for existence is fought out mainly between the immature individuals of any species or society," the issue of this struggle determining "the survivors for parenthood and the future," *Parenthood and Race Culture*, 1909, New York ed., p. 325. On p. 47 he quotes E. Ray Lankester to the same effect.

continue, simply by the good fellowship of all its members. But where such perfection of civilisation is absent, some elements of savagery still exist, and selfishness and cruelty exert themselves through violence and deceit. The mere friendliness of good individuals in the society cannot eradicate these bad qualities from others. It is therefore somewhat consolatory to know that the contention which these qualities arouse, itself contributes to the advancement of the race.

Advance has, indeed, almost always been made by some few getting ahead of the rest, and by the rest following along slowly behind, many lagging, some not even moving at all. Those who have gone ahead have done so in two ways: either by making some positive discovery or invention by which old wants may be more easily satisfied and new wants created and indulged, or by seizing to themselves through force or fraud some of the goods produced by others. Thus some have risen by climbing, perhaps being boosted, and have pulled others up after them; and others have risen by mounting upon the shoulders of their fellow men, pushing them, or at least keeping them, down. Often those who have done the former, have employed their increase of power to do the latter. These exceptional men become rulers, found families, and oppress the others either by reducing them to slavery, which is subserviency entirely for the benefit of the rulers, or by making them into subjects, in a subserviency only partly for the benefit of the rulers and partly for the benefit of the ruled,— and sometimes pretending to be wholly for their benefit. From slaves they exact service, from subjects tribute. And what is done by individuals within a community, may be done by one community among other communities: it may forge ahead of the rest by the superior qualities of its citizens and by the resources which their qualities and the nature of the land they inhabit put into their hands, and so may conquer their neighbours, and either in whole or in part may exterminate them in order to occupy their land, or reduce them either to slavery or to the state of subjects. The conflict both within communities and between them may be long and stubborn, and generate the very qualities, and lead to obtaining from nature the means, by which victory is won.

A result is the production of classes within a community,

and of subordinate communities within a large state. This differentiation of individuals by contention has been a universal precedent, on our earth, of their organisation, by which collaboration is again obtained. Collaboration is now not of equals, working every one under his own guidance, as wise as any other,—a kind of co-operation which can succeed only when all individuals become perfectly wise; it is of unequals, in which some lead and guide and others do what they are told, and some merely transmit orders. There is multiform complexity, as in the organisms of plants and animals. Individuals in a state are like the cells in a living body, and in the state its members or organs are classes, orders, local communities, contractual combinations or corporations. These develop, and their relations change; and those which change for the best, subdue others and survive till still others subdue them. In short, as we have seen, a civilised state is a growing organism, and the advance of civilisation is this growth.

As such, a civilised state is subject to the fate of all growing organisms in plant and animal life: it is subject to decay. For everywhere growth involves a highest point or stage, which may be occupied for a shorter or longer period, but beyond which the internal principle of growth cannot carry; after which the opposite process of disintegration sets in. The civilisation of every state, or of every cluster of states, therefore forms a cycle, having an ascending movement, a continuance on a highest plane, a gradual descent into, lastly, a lethargic condition, from which if it be again awakened, it will arise to run a new cycle, or else it may stagger on in indefinite decrepitude. And between all such cycles of civilisation there are resemblances, as there are resemblances between the growth and decay of all living bodies, there being common causes for the expansion and common causes for the contraction of civilisation, and also for the passing of the former causes into the latter, though their particular manifestations may be different in different civilisations and lead to different results.

This cyclical theory of civilisation has been long and widely entertained. In antiquity it was held mostly in an astronomical form, when it was found that after certain centuries and millenniums the sun and moon, and then all the planets, reverted to the same positions; wherefore, as the stars were sup-

posed to influence the earth, it was believed that human affairs would return to the starting point in the golden age of innocence, and again run similar, if not identically the same, courses. That theory was one of the errors of the ancients;[8] but even then the late Roman historian, Florus, recognised the analogy between his country's development and decay and the life of man: Rome, he said, under the kings was in its childhood, then till the first Punic war in its youth, in its mature manhood till Augustus, after which it entered its old age or dotage, though still, when he wrote, a hale and hearty one.[9] In modern times this physiological theory of cycles is better known.[10] It is, however, sometimes perverted by being applied to all humanity in the course of the world.[11] All humanity does not form an organism, and so cannot run the course of an organism: whatever be the advance of civilisation in all the world, it is different.[12] Only states are organisms, and only the civilisation of states, individually or in groups, can have the regular evolution and involution that are peculiar to living beings. Many states also have been subject to the misfortune, so common to plants and animals, of being cut off in mid career. Those which have been permitted to run their full course, have always ended in senility.

The way Florus represented the case is not in agreement

[8] As also the statement of Thucydides, II. 64 (3) and Polybius, VI. 57 (1), that everything is subject to the change of growth and decay; which is an overstatement in line with the philosophy of Heraclitus. It might be true, however, in the modification made by Plato, that whatever is subject to growth is subject also to decay,—as put also by Cyprian, *Ad Demetrianum, i.*

[9] *Epitome,* Preface, also I. 8, 22, 26, II. 1, 19, III. 12, (or I. 2, 17, 18, 34, 47). A similar division was ascribed to Seneca by Lactantius, *Div. Instit.,* VII. 15. It was repeated by Ammianus Marcellinus, XIV. 6.

[10] Thus J. W. Draper compared the life of a nation with the life of an individual, and held that the former as inevitably passes through five (arbitrarily chosen) stages, which are the ages of credulity, inquiry, faith, reason, decrepitude, corresponding to the five ages of infancy, childhood, youth, maturity, senility: *Intellectual Development of Europe,* 2d ed., New York, 1876 i. p. iii and 2, 12–14, 20, 53, 222–3, 234, 336, ii. 152, 358, 392–3, 400, *cf.* 246. "Over the events of life," he said, "we may have control,—but none whatever over the laws of progress," i. 390.

[11] So, *e.g.,* L. Benloew, *Les Lois de l'Histoire,* Paris, 1881, pp. 18, 22–4, 266. Particular civilisations are but expressions of the general march of humanity, 194.

[12] "Humanity," said Saint-Simon, "is a collective being, which develops," *Doctrine de Saint-Simon,* Paris, 1830, p. 45. This it is not,—not yet at least.

with the division here made. The Roman doctrine of the four ages of man was lop-sided, having two ascending periods, one culminating period, and one descending period. Better is the conception of one ascending period, followed by a stationary period at the top, and then a descending period, followed by another stationary period at the bottom. Saint-Simon divided the cycles into two periods only, which he described as the organic or synthetic, corresponding to what is here called the ascending, and as the critical or analytic, corresponding to what is here called the descending.[13] He overlooked the stationary periods which succeed to these periods of change.[14] Adam Smith had previously spoken of three states, which he designated as the progressive, the stationary, and the declining.[15] Two of these have given the hint to the division here made; but he omitted to take into consideration the other stationary period which ensues as a fourth, and from which therefore the second needs a distinctive name.

The theory, of course, has also been denied. Some have held it of past civilisations and of the modern up to the period of maturity at present, but have refused to admit that old age is fated to follow; or they believe that a new period is already entering, in which mankind shall reach its goal and stay there.[16] These have generally combined it with the error just mentioned of treating humanity as a single being.[17] Others have rejected it altogether, and in its place have substituted a theory of gradual development, not without relapses, but nevertheless with continual progress to ever improving conditions. The indefinite perfectibility of man was, at the end of the eighteenth century, a popular French doctrine, fervently advocated by Condorcet, and taken up in England by Godwin. This is now replaced by a theory of the definite perfectibility of man's institutions, which is believed to be imminent, and about to form an entirely new era. Of this theory

[13] *Op. cit.*, 71–6. Eugène Véron, it may be noted, has characterised the first of these periods (of world history) as objective, and the second as subjective: see Flint, *op. cit.*, 639.

[14] Fourier divided the two periods (of every cycle) each into two, thus obtaining four, *Le Nouveau Monde*, 457–60, but in a way that is unsatisfactory.

[15] *Wealth of Nations*, I. viii.

[16] *E.g.*, Saint Simon, *op. cit.*, 76; and many others.

[17] So, *e.g.*, Perrault: see Flint, *op. cit.*, 214.

there will be more to say later, and soon we shall see the amount of truth in it. At present let it only be remarked that if the theory of a single progressive movement of humanity were true, there could be no science of history and no foresight into the future,[18] since science must have a multiplicity of repeated instances from which to draw its generalisations, but according to this theory every step ahead is into something new and without precedent in the past or elsewhere. Only in the cyclical theory are similar instances provided already at hand, by which we may learn the general course of civilisation and, in whatever position we find ourselves, be able to draw inferences about the future. Perhaps even so we have not instances enough to provide us with exact science; yet we may acquire a sufficient abundance to permit of forming a body of probable inferences, such as used to pass under the name of "philosophy of history."

This theory, however, must rest on stronger ground than the mere service it may render, and its strong basis is indeed fixed in experience. For we have historic information about at least two grand cycles of civilisation preceding the one in the course of which we find ourselves; and the one in which we find ourselves bears so much resemblance in its beginnings to the beginnings of those other two cycles, that we have good reason to believe its further course will somewhat resemble theirs. Those two are, first, the contemporaneous riverine civilisations, or civilisations of the fields and meadows, where communication was easy, which existed for a couple of thousand years or more, prior to the eighth and seventh centuries B.C., in the Nile valley and in Mesopotamia,— of the Egyptians on the one hand, and on the other of the Chaldæans and Babylonians and Assyrians, these being followed for a few centuries more by the hill civilisations of the Medes and the Persians, who, however, came down into the plains and took up the civilisation of the peoples they conquered, while, in the midst of them all, the Hebrews remained in their hills till they were overrun and dispersed; and, secondly, the Mediterranean civilisations of the Phœnicians and the Greeks and the Romans, the last continuing a thousand years, the former two preceding and the Greek surviving it, the Roman ending in

[18] *Cf.* Thucydides, I. 22 (4).

the so-called Dark Ages, which were spanned by a desert civilisation, fervid and blasting like its habitat, of the Arabs, till, after a minor cycle in the city-states of northern Italy and western Germany (for there may be such eddies in all great currents), our modern and oceanic European and American civilisation grew up. Back of the very first of all these historic cycles, was probably another period of considerably greater length but of considerably inferior civilisation, perhaps not yet deserving the name, about which we have knowledge obtainable only from its scattered remains, and too imperfect to inform us whether it was broken into more than one cycle — such as a stone age of savagery, followed by a bronze age of barbarism. The cycles we are acquainted with have proceeded, in spite of some back currents, from the east to the west.[19] Further east there were and are other civilisations — in India and in China, the civilisation in the one having been subject to many vicissitudes, while that in the other has been more steady that anywhere else on earth. These are so different from ours and so imperfectly understood, that they yield us as yet but little instruction. In the other line of succession, unfortunately, the two earliest civilisations have left inadequate information about themselves to afford us much help in the inductive study of history. Only in their general outlines do they show us the cyclic stages, most clearly exhibited in entirety by the Greco-Roman cycle, and in its beginnings by our own. The Greco-Roman, or classic, civilisation is, therefore, the great precedent upon which we must rely.

The present work can make no attempt to prove this theory by a detailed examination and comparison of all the known civilisations; which would require an encyclopædic history of the world. It will proceed at once to make use of it, and to sketch in general outline a typical cycle, as may be learnt from those with whose history we are most fully acquainted.

[19] Herder, however, took Berkeley's "westward course of empire" too literally when he commenced his account of civilisation in the easternmost part of Asia, *Ideen zur Geschichte der Menschheit,* B. XI.

CHAPTER II.

THE COURSE OF CIVILISATION

In its most general outline the course of civilisation through a cycle is not difficult to trace. Civilisation advances by the striving and by the strife of individuals and combinations of men both within a state and between different states (tribes, cities, or countries), and leads up to success in the attainment by some of a high position of wealth and enlightenment. The greater the height to which the attainment has proceeded, the more difficult does it become to keep what is attained and to carry the process further, and for the latter object the inducement wanes. Then comes a time when the motive and the deterrent forces approach equality; whereupon, strife and striving being no more desired by the leaders, there sets in a period of peace and enjoyment. This, through excessive leisure and dissipation, brings on degeneration of the leaders, giving opportunity to those who were left behind to seek to pull them down, introducing a new kind of contention, in which the lower peoples or orders, now the least bad elements, are the aggressors, and which must bring about disintegration, until out of the turmoil the best elements again obtain the leadership. Thus, in the ascending period, in spite of much destruction, production and acquisition exceed consumption; in the level period at the top, production and consumption for a time balance; in the descending period, even though there be less destruction than in the first, consumption outruns production; and lastly, on the level at the bottom, consumption has to adapt itself to production from lack of stores to draw upon.

More in particular, the subject may be examined from the points of view respectively of (1) the military art, (2) economics, (3) population, (4) morality, (5) the fine arts, lit-

erature, science, jurisprudence, thought in general, (6) religion, and (7) government.

(1) The military art is at the beginning so inconsiderable that most bodies of men belonging to the same race and therefore likely to be equal in physical strength are on a par with one another. The very first development was the adoption of weapons of attack, which must have given the most intelligent an immense advantage over the rest. But with the extermination of the unarmed, the use of arms became fairly general, though with great unevenness of efficiency. Then defence behind stockades and other ramparts, especially stone walls, and on islands and hilltops, would quickly follow, and the defence would become stronger than the attack. Here is where we find all early civilisations at the beginning of their history. Means of communication being bad, as we have seen, communities would at first be small and numerous. The improvement of communication permits consolidation in large states, but what actively effects this is improvement in the means of attack over the defence. Such improvement came with the employment of horses and chariots and the development of metallurgy, in places where mines were discovered and worked, or the metal could be obtained by commerce; and those peoples who were most favoured in this way, or who, having a sufficiency of arms, organised and disciplined themselves most efficiently, could conquer and subdue the others; for enslavement, with disarmament, now took the place of extermination. The upward movement, therefore, is marked by a consolidation into large states, in which the members of the superior race have the hegemony. At last a period is reached when either one single state has absorbed all that it can reach, or a few states have become powerful on such an immense and nearly equal scale that they dread the losses of war, which may be greater than the gain, especially if there be three or more such and the other or others, after two have fought each other out, may step in and seize the prize; in which condition also two or more of the weakest may combine against the strongest, preventing it from attacking them because of their combined superiority, and themselves fearing to conquer it because of the likelihood of succeeding dissension amongst

themselves over the spoils. In either case there comes a period of long peace, liable, however, to be broken at any moment through the foolishness which much prosperity engenders in some of the parties.

The improvement in weapons of attack had another effect within the states: it enabled the first acquirers of such arms — and in all early civilisations arms of metal, both offensive and defensive, were not abundant enough to "go round" — to subdue the rest of the community and to tyrannise over them. The few who owned these instruments of power, and kept them to themselves and their adherents — perhaps a conquering race — would rule the rest. They would seize the land, and their engrossment of the land would in its turn ensure to them the monopoly of arms. But when iron became more abundant and the extension of its use permitted a wider possession of arms, and the weapons of attack were improved sufficiently to break through the armour of personal defence, whereupon infantry became more powerful than cavalry, then the lower classes would rise nearer to a par with their rulers, and, seeing how indispensable are their services in war, would demand a share in the government, and would enforce their demand by actually possessing force enough to make it safer for the occupants to admit them than to continue to exclude them. The period of peace would be reached only after this approximate equality of power had clearly exhibited itself, and a fair balance of the forces of the different classes were established.

Also about as this period is reached, before or shortly after, a change is effected in the composition of the army. At first in all military states the army is composed of a trained militia of all the free citizens. Afterwards these are replaced by soldiers, whose characteristic is that they receive a *soulde* or pay, and become a profession. But when the competition of nearly equally large states is threatening, as in modern Europe, the professional army system is too weak, and the enforced militia system, or conscription, may be maintained even during the period of peace. Militarism has become an art, and like other arts, employs machinery, in the form of ballistic engines or artillery, a large supply of which must be kept up during

peace, to ensure safety from sudden attack, and the larger this supply needs to be, the quicker the attack can be delivered.[1]

This long period of peace, to repeat, broken only by a few quick wars, is a period of enjoyment and of lavish consumption. Luxury enters even the army, and the soldiers become discontented and refuse to fight unless they be well paid and well provisioned. In time the natives become so degenerate that outsiders, mercenaries, have to be hired. All through this period power is in the hands of those who have the ready money to pay the men. No longer the land-owners, but the financiers are the directing class. The time comes when the supplies, not only of delicacies, but of such necessaries as the metals needed for arms, begin to give out. At last not even mercenaries can be obtained, or they, not being regularly paid, behave worse than enemies. The degenerate upper classes are then thrown back on their own resources. Great distances having to be covered, and men being too feeble to make long marches on foot, cavalry again comes into use. Artillery failing, the defence behind stone walls (masons now vieing with smiths in popular favour), again becomes not only equal but superior to the attack, and decentralisation sets in.[2] For now those who before were the weaker have become the stronger, and parts of great states which up till now were held together either through fear from without if they were to stand by themselves, or through internal coercion at the hands of those whose interest lay in collecting the widest contributions, fall apart through mutual repulsion and jealousy. Also less favoured outsiders, barbarians, whose armies are not encumbered with luxuries, and whose weapons by this time are equal, if not superior, to those of the civilised, may overrun the territory of the latter, who find protection only in walled cities or in

[1] *Cf.* Petrie: "The real fact is that great armaments are like great states, a needful condition of the new speed of communication. When it took two or three months to move an army from central Europe to England, we had two or three months to prepare; when it takes only two or three days we must be always prepared. . . . Within a generation of quick transport being started, big armaments were found needful," *op cit.*, 98.

[2] For the influence of the varying superiority of the attack and the defence upon consolidation and decentralisation, see Brooks Adams, *The Law of Civilisation and Decay*, 55, 70, 156, 184.

specially fortifiable spots, where the defence can make itself strongest. These become detached and self-dependent, and lose the incentive as well as the compulsion of holding or of being bound together. In the general *débâcle* there sounds a cry like that in shipwreck of "*sauve qui peut.*" The small sections, into which the large states split, sink back into a condition of petty and miscellaneous strife and warfare.

(2) As regards economics, in the early period land is generally held to some extent in common by the communities. Forests and pastures are so held longest; fields, for plowing, sowing, and reaping, are allotted annually, with a tendency to become settled in families. First to be appropriated are the plots on which the habitations are built and then the hoed vegetable patches around them; then the fields; later the meadows, and lastly the forests. Wealth at first consists in what the land immediately produces or nourishes, and at last in the land itself. People carry on their industries in families or small circles, there making most of the articles that satisfy their simple wants; and exchanges of small articles are mostly by barter, at fairs more or less periodic; for money is unknown, or scarce. In important matters, such as the purchase of land, there is great formality, rendered necessary for impressing the affair upon the memory of witnesses in an age of illiteracy, and because, moreover, such transactions are discouraged. For the land was rarely parted with by its common or private owners, but was kept for ages in communities or families. Advance is made by the introduction of money and the greater employment of writing, more frequent and regular markets, the facilitation of contractual engagements, the breaking down of formalism, the acceleration of business dealings. The early period is one of custom, everything running in long-continued grooves, individuals finding their places fixed for them, from which they can change without becoming outcasts only by entering into new family relations. It has been described as a period of status.[3] Before the period of quiescence at the top is reached, the extension of the use of writing and money has changed it into a period of contracts, which continues on through the next stage of the cycle. Now wealth is

[3] Maine, *Ancient Law*, 170.

mobile, circulation is rapid, and, everything being exchangeable for money, all values are measurable in the common denominator of price.

In the early period, because of the scarcity of money, there could be no taxation but in kind, and therefore it fell directly upon the landowners. Men who were allowed to have land of their own, like their ancestors who had had to fight for it, were required to give in return for it service in defence of the country: the armies were raised from tillers of the soil, who had to equip themselves, and also supply their provisions until they could win their sustenance in the enemy's country. But as money became abundant, wealth was produced by the further elaboration of materials in a multiplicity of industries, taxation was changed from collection in kind to collection in money, and then was levied also on the industrialists. The landed men, who still had the power, said that as they did the fighting the others should pay for it, and so taxes came to be shifted more and more from land to industry, till finally the soldiers were entirely paid, while the landowners retained their land without the requirement of service and with only a small share of the taxes. Men enriched by industry likewise sought to become landowners, and finally land itself becomes easily exchangeable, and often changes hands and passes out of communities (the common land being grabbed in large tracts or purchased at low rates) and out of families, becoming the property of individuals to do with what they please, like any commodity or object of consumption, and bequeathable at will, as is by this time all property. The principal wealth now, however, consists of many other exchangeable things beside land, though all have their root in the land. Formerly wealth consisted chiefly in materials little worked over from the state in which they were derived from the soil. As time advances, more and more attention is paid to the elaboration of materials into finer and finer articles of art and luxury; more also to actions that please, such as exhibitions of agility and of mentality, and less and less to the providing of materials, which labour sinks in estimation and is relegated to slaves or the most mean-spirited freemen; so that the superstructure grows while the base diminishes. Before, power gave wealth and distinction; now wealth gives power, and there is little distinction except

according to one's possessions. Before, the relations between classes were determined by custom and consisted mostly in services; now all relations between free persons, except that between husband and wife (and this too tends to become so) are contracted for in monetary payments, as, for instance, the one already noticed between the government and the soldiers. Money, therefore, reigns as the prime mover and the one general object of desire.[4]

In the ascending period, money growing in abundance from either increased production of the precious metals, or the employment of credit substitutes, or both, prices rise; and this favours the producers of commodities, who get continually greater returns on their original outlay of borrowed capital. Later, the mines giving out, or the class of those who have capital to lend getting into power and corralling the money supply, prices, through many fluctuations often purposely manipulated, gradually fall, and the causes of the fall are carefully nursed, whereby the possessors of loanable capital benefit at the expense of the producers. The corporation system, originally employed for religious, sociable, or eleemosynary purposes, is now put to service not only by industrialists but by financiers; and by large combinations of the last monopolies are formed, which, turned over to business-managers, crush out smaller rivals by unfair competition, and strive to stem the fall of prices, even to raise them, by purposely curtailing production. Such consolidation of capital goes on after the consolidation of the state has come to a stand. Now either the state or corporations manage everything, and individual initiative sinks to a minimum.

The persons who make their fortune in this easy way, try to solidify it by safe investments, which ultimately centre in land; so that a concentration of landownership goes on, the newly rich, whose number necessarily is small, purchasing large tracts from the many long-time owners of small portions, who are ruined through inability to compete with large-scale production. Yet large-scale production, when left in command

[4] *Cf.* Mill: "One of the effects of a high state of civilisation upon character is a relaxation of individual energy, or rather the concentration of it within the narrow sphere of the individual's money-getting pursuits," *op. cit.*, 203.

of the field, always tends to lessen production for the purpose of keeping up prices. The lessening of production is carried further also by the action of the workmen, who likewise, on their side, combine, refuse to work as hard as before, and deteriorate. Slave-labourers, being habitually overworked, always tend to give out, and their numbers were renewed during the early period of warfare by the subjugation of weaker peoples. But this source is now exhausted, and the supply is barely renewed for a time by slave-raids on inferior outside races, until such races grow too strong, or sentiment at home no longer tolerates such conduct. Or cheap free labour is sought from the civilisations which have already decayed or from peoples still barbarous, and lower races are imported to do the hard and dirty work and to keep down wages. In the ascending period, when the time came for taxation, it was first laid upon the sources of wealth, especially upon the land; but in the succeeding periods, the most prominent objects for taxing are the great accumulations of wealth, and so we have the income tax and the legacy tax, of which the latter tends to dissipate capital, and the former permits sources to be held unproductive for speculation, especially land, which, while undeveloped, escapes almost scot-free. Everything thus makes for decreasing production, while nothing restrains consumption.

This course receives still further encouragement. In the ascending period, at least in the beginning, it was by his own strength and influence that the individual possessor, the head of a family, aided by his sons and dependents, had to defend his property. Therefore, too, a man's property, at least, his landed estate, could not safely be divided, and so, where the people were wise, either it went to only one of his children, preferably his eldest son, as the one of greatest development and experience, or — a much less wise expedient — he kept down the number of his legitimate offspring.[5] But already toward the end of the period it becomes the government which, by enforcing all the contractual rights of individuals, protects

[5] There have, of course, been peoples among whom even power itself, in the chieftainship or kingship, was divided among all the sons; but that practice always kept those peoples small and backward (unless one of the sons murdered all the others, which obstructed moral progress), and no great economic progress was ever made until that practice was abandoned.

property. In fact, this function of the state, wielded by the police, becomes one of the principal purposes of government in the culminating period. Now, therefore, a man's real estate, as well as the rest of his property, may be divided with safety, and there arises a demand for its distribution among all his sons, and even among all his children, including his daughters,— or at least a demand that he may be permitted so to distribute his property if he chooses; and he is likely to desire to do so, now that it can be done with impunity, because of a natural inclination to favour all his children alike.[6] There takes place a change in the moral point of view, as will be examined presently. Estates, then, are divided and subdivided, and frittered away, until this tendency is counteracted by a universal economy in children, as we shall see. Furthermore, in general, the distinction between weak men and strong men, and even between men and women, becomes obliterated. Weak individuals without family connections can now rise by their shrewdness to great wealth, and wealth, even land, may be owned, if given to them, by women as well as by men. Wealth, even land, *is* given to women, and owning it women become powerful like men.[7] The distinction between the sexes tends to break down; for women, being made by men independent of men in particular, seem to be independent of men in general, and they come to make the mistake of think-

[6] "When land, like moveables," wrote Adam Smith, "is considered as the means only of subsistence and enjoyment, the natural law of succession divides it, like them, among all the children of the family; of all of whom the subsistence and enjoyment may be supposed equally dear to the father. . . . But when land was considered as the means, not of subsistence merely, but of power and protection, it was thought better that it should descend undivided to one," *Wealth of Nations,* III. ii. Adam Smith, however, did not bring out clearly the proper sequence of the two conditions and attitudes in a cycle of civilisation. The "natural" mode of distribution might have existed originally, had real estate then been owned in severalty; but as that was never the case originally, the necessary precedence of this mode is not made out. Adoption of private ownership of land, however, has preceded every advance toward a high civilisation, and the "natural" mode of distributing it may therefore have existed under barbarism, but this mode of distributing land likewise had to be abandoned, and the other adopted, before ascent could be made into civilisation. This other, therefore, is the prior mode in every cycle of civilisation; while the adoption of the "natural" mode, at the top of civilisation, is always the herald of descent.

[7] *Cf.* B. Adams: "When wealth became force, the female might be as strong as the male; therefore she was emancipated," *op. cit.,* 31; *cf.* 292.

ing they are so and hence are equal to men; to which they are helped by the fact that many weak men are in a similar position of sham independence.[8] This breaking down of old relations goes on with little hindrance during the long period of peace. The upper classes of the wealthy may now be the weaklings of society, while the really strongest men are among the lower; and the abundance of leisure and the indulgence in luxuries of sight and taste and touch on the part of the upper classes tends to enhance this inverted condition. Hence when the period of failing production sets in, the state being ruled by degenerates, disintegration hastens its pace, until at last the ignorant strong ones from the lower classes rise to the surface, where they quickly degenerate in their turn and permit the process to be repeated; or from outside, barbarians overthrow them, who may in time be the beginners of a new cycle.

(3) The influences that affect population run in an equally discernible revolution. In the turbulence of an incipient civilisation a free woman can hardly support herself without an individual male protector, and such a one is sought for her by her father and brothers, while every free man needs a wife to save him from the petty labours of the household, which it is his task to provide for and defend. There is thus a division of labour between the sexes, and a natural dependence of each upon the other. They need each other also on their children's account, whom, too, they need, the father needing sons to aid him when they grow up, and the mother needing in her domestic industries the help and companionship especially of daughters while they are young. For in such a period there are few means of laying by a store of provisions for old age; wherefore poor people need children to support them when old and feeble, and those who possess the only form which capital can then take, land, need children to work it and guard it, and to pass it on. Children thus being, in that period, useful members of the family, of little initial expense, and soon yielding a return and ultimately an indispensable prop, are welcome, and especially so if their value is enhanced religiously by ancestor-worship, which makes it a duty to have a successor,

[8] *Cf.* Goldwin Smith: "Woman does not in civilised countries need protection of the individual man, except a policeman or escort. But she does need, or may at any time need, the armed protection of the male sex as a whole," *Essays on Questions of the Day*, 2d ed., 1897, p. 206.

and also a further object of desire, since the father himself expects to be worshipped and to have his *manes* attended to after his death. Therefore, during this period, except for special reasons (also mostly of a religious nature) almost every one, especially among the upper classes, is married, and families are fair-sized, while the lower classes (the proletariat) are prolific like animals. Many children are produced, furthermore, because in the dearth of other kinds of amusement (the chase and warfare being the two principal ones), the pleasure of intercourse between the sexes holds a prominent place among the sources of happiness,— so much so, that more children are born than are needed, and the defective and superfluous are allowed to perish.

The result is that population tends to press upon the means of subsistence which the tribe or nation has at its command; which pressure increases the incentive to war upon one's neighbours. This warring has the effect, not only of giving more room for expansion, if successful, and, if not, of reducing the excess of population, but, in either case, being conducted mostly in hand-to-hand combats or by the hurling of missiles at short range, of killing off the weakest and least agile. Thus during this period, there is overproduction of population, destruction of the unfit, and survival of the fittest, giving full play to natural selection both between individuals within each community or race and between communities or races. Moreover, the repressive action of outside peoples, who resist and restrain the expansion of any one given people, throws this one people back upon itself, and compels it to seek improvement in its means of support. A new direction is given to effort — to the subduing of the earth; and by the distress occasioned by the failure of food from the increasing number of mouths, venatic tribes are driven out of the forests to the domestication of animals on the plains, or to the pastoral state; the pastoral families are driven from the plains to the river valleys, and to agriculture; and lastly the agricultural clans are driven down their rivers or across plains and mountains to the seashore, to commerce and industrialism, and to the founding of cities and of states.[9] The fittest among these latter continue to enlarge themselves, and, the arts and sciences improving, there

[9] *Cf.* A. Alison, *The Principles of Population,* ch. I.

goes on continual increase of productiveness, permitting increase of population; and this proceeds well into the period of peace, at the commencement of which it advances with leaps and bounds.

For improvement in the means of transport, by enabling provisions to be brought from greater distances, permits the enlargement of cities, which is stimulated by the attractive power of the greater and cheaper amusements there to be found, many being supplied to the poor gratuitously, while the land in the neighbourhood, being high-priced also for purposes of recreation, cannot, beyond the range of truck-farming, compete productively with the cheaper land at a distance, and agriculture gives place to pasturage, and small farms to large estates. The cities suck up the labour of the country, and their sewage drains away the fertility of the soil. Taxes, spent in the cities, fall most heavily, in comparison with resources, on the rural districts, and while the cities grow in population and in splendour, the country is impoverished and depopulated, till at last the cities find themselves left high and dry, without support, on a soil saturated with filth; and then famine, pestilence, and the inroads of barbarians destroy them.

But ere this, the pressure of population upon its limits has, on the whole, for various reasons, been diminishing. For, when a high stage of civilisation is reached, with security of person and property provided by the state and its paid agents, the courts and the police, women no longer have the same need of individual male protectors, and they may now provide for themselves by their own labours, many doing so for a time at least, some throughout life. But especially, as we have seen, they may now in their own right own property, which they have either acquired by their own efforts or, more commonly, which has been bequeathed or donated to them by their fathers and husbands; and therefore unmarried they may be as well off as married.[10] Men also may now have their household accommodations and other wants supplied by servants, or may find them outside in inns and taverns, hotels and restaurants, not to

[10] In fact, one admirer of woman's independence has said that "a definition of civilisation might be framed as 'the ever-increasing possibility of the number of unmarried females that might exist in a community,'" O. T. Mason, *Woman's Share in Primitive Culture*, 210–11.

omit mention of the ancient vaults or stews. Men therefore are likewise less dependent upon individual women: their mutual dependence in great measure breaks down. Consequently marriages are on both sides less desired and become less frequent, and when they are entered their dissolution is less dreaded by both parties, and even is desired whenever to either the connection becomes at all irksome; wherefore divorces are common. Moreover, both men and women now have other capital beside land, and may provide for their old age themselves. Children are by consequence not needed as a future support. Instead, they become a drag, requiring a much longer education, and among the rich often calling for support all through the lifetime of the parents. In fact, children become little more than an *agrément* of life, a luxury, so to speak, yet in rivalry with other luxuries, from which they detract. There are many forms of pleasure, which cast into the shade that derivable from legitimate intercourse in the connubial state. Scientific knowledge is also disseminated of the means of preventing issue and even conception, permitting of sexual indulgence without the inconvenience of child-bearing. The growth of luxury in city-life also gives freer scope to promiscuity and prostitution, with dispersion of venereal diseases,[11] and importation of them into the family, with result on the one hand of rendering the wife sterile or incompetent to bear more than one child, and on the other of giving some women a fright about marriage. Soft living and want of hard work weakens the constitution and not only makes people more sensitive to pain but also less able and willing to undergo it. This is alleviated slightly by voluntary exercise in athletics, which, however, dissipates energy uselessly — chasing after a ball, for instance, which is now done even by grown-up people. Among the many refinements, personal cleanliness becomes habitual, and is often carried to excess, frequent ablutions and rubbings wearing off the epidermis and exposing to contagious diseases, while the sterilisation of surroundings, by giving little

[11] It is of course an error to suppose these a modern phenomenon. From Herodotus, I. 105, it would seem that the Scythians suffered from contact with the depraved Syrians in a manner somewhat analogous to the way the French under Charles VIII. suffered from contact with the depraved Italians. See also the account of the death of Galerius in Aurelius Victor's *Epitome*, XL. 4.

exercise to one's own prophylactic corpuscles, lowers one's power of resistance. New diseases therefore come in, in spite of hygienic precautions. The consequent debilitation lessens the strength to bear the burden of a family. The result is, there are fewer families than there used to be in a given number of population, and the families themselves are smaller. To this change the old religion can offer little opposition, since it too has fallen into abeyance, and worship is but a spectacular formalism. Now wealth is the ideal, and because the fewer the children the more each will inherit, at best only one or at most only two heirs are desired; who may die and leave none.

This change takes place first in the upper classes, then in the middle, and finally extends down to the lower, reaching these when fraternal societies and state pensions for old age take away the last incentive for having children, and the prohibition of child-labour makes children a burden. While it is still only in the upper classes, or also in the middle, the discrepancy between the production of children in the upper and in the lower classes has the effect of increasing their economic inequality; for it promotes the concentration of wealth in the few at the top by making them fewer, while it still permits the lower classes to become poorer through their increasing numbers. When this last effect ceases by the lower classes also learning restraint, at the highest point of a civilisation there may come a balance between the production of children and the room for them, and soon afterward the production of children may even fall below the number requisite for keeping up the race. There is little natural selection now: on the contrary, there is an effort to make the unfit survive, the science of medicine and hygiene being employed for this special purpose. Indeed, natural selection is reversed; for the fit are exposed to hardships and to early death, or they shun the responsibility of giving birth, while the unfit are spared and indulge in irresponsible procreation. There is both decrease of quantity and deterioration of quality of the population, which goes on till the decay of the civilisation lets in outsiders who have not been subject to these influences, and a new period of insecurity and turbulence brings back the former relation between the sexes and between parents and children.

(4) Morality also has its course. At first it is instinctive,

exercising a blind impulse for self-preservation and for race-preservation, the natural need for food and for love. Love brings several persons into close relationship with one another, and thereby primitive man learns the benefit of communion, and from the immediate family he extends fellowship to those whose progenitors were similarly bound together and who now live in the same neighbourhood and join in the chase,— to the clan or *gens,* then to the tribe, and still later to the larger combinations of city and nation. Between these bodies, especially between the large cities and states, competition was so keen that each was exposed to great danger, and lived on perpetual guard, like animals. Hence there was extreme need, which most men are intelligent enough to perceive, for all the individuals in them to herd together in the closest union, and every one demanded from every other more attention to the whole than to himself. So necessary and universal was this collectivism, that it was taken for granted. Later, when the need for it begins to break down, and it has to be cultivated, it is called patriotism, though by now it covers rather the occupants of a territory than the descendants of a common father. When, further, one successful state has absorbed all the others within its reach, or adjoining states with natural boundaries have learnt the wisdom of peacefulness, then the teaching of patriotism sinks before that of cosmopolitanism, or of humanitarianism in general. Every one is now allowed to pay more attention to his own interests, and allows every one else to do the same. There comes on an age of individualism, with the motto of "every one for himself and the devil take the hindmost." To outsiders conduct always was harsh,— brutal at first, but tending to become gentler through mutual regulation when the advantages derivable from keeping engagements were recognised. But the principal means of advance in this line has come through the taking in of more and more outsiders into the circle of neighbourliness, until at last this becomes almost all-comprehensive. The establishment of contractual relations introduces a change in morality, which begins in the culminating period, but becomes most prominent in the declining. In the early period, the principal injunction was of loyalty in the performance of service to the community, and toward outsiders was permitted the use of force. Now the

principal injunction is of honesty in the observance of contracts amongst business connections, with permission, toward others, of the use of fraud. Before, in the period of status, duties were imposed upon individuals according to the conditions into which they were born, and there was no escape from them, however arduous they might be. Now no obligations exist save those which are voluntarily assumed in contracts, and, naturally, disagreeable ones are avoided. Thus, in the rising period, duties of individuals toward the state; in the following, rights of individuals against the state. In the former, obligation; in the latter, liberty. The former is a morality of situation, involving official functions, or duties (*officia*, *καθήκοντα*), according to one's position in the community, different therefore in the various divisions of the people, but imposed upon all by all. The latter is a morality of sentiment, the same for all, each one doing what is right in his own eyes, and letting others enjoy the same privilege, preventing only interference, avoiding everything unpleasant. The difference goes over into economics and politics. It is a change of point of view — from a tribal or national, to an individualistic; from an effort to join with others for upbuilding and preserving the state, to an effort (when that purpose is effectuated) to participate with others in enjoying the prosperity attained; in short, from producing, to consuming.[12] To return

[12] *Cf.* T. N. Carver: "The concentration of attention upon subsistence and enjoyment rather than upon nation-building, leads to an exaggerated insistence upon the rights of the individual, whereas the concentration of attention upon nation-building leads to a strong emphasis upon the obligations of the individual. Therefore there are two distinct types of leadership. One type tells the people a great deal about their rights, their wrongs, and their grievances, and very little about their obligations, except their obligations to themselves. The other type tells them very little about their rights, their wrongs, and their grievances, but a great deal about their obligations," etc. *The National Point of View in Economics*, in Supplement to The American Economic Review, March, 1917, p. 6. The whole address is admirable. Only the speaker, like Adam Smith (above, p. 23 n.), whom he quotes, does not seem to perceive that in the advance of civilisation the second point of view, as stated by him, and which he speaks of as "the new point of view," p. 5, is the first and the old one, and the tendency of things is for it to be replaced by the one which he describes as the first. For the nationalist point of view is most likely to be adopted by a primitive people hard pressed by its neighbours. At all events, it is necessary for it to be adopted by a people that is going to ascend in civilisation and make its way in the world. But having ascended and made its way and reached the top, a people is likely to abandon it for

to a more peculiar matter of social morality, in the marriage relations, the change takes the form of strict wedlock (at least among the upper classes) in the rising period, and of laxity of divorce (for every one) in the declining. At first, divorce was a misfortune for the wife, by which her immorality in compromising the family was punished, while adultery on the man's part was penalised criminally; but afterward, the wife having property of her own, divorce is no longer a punishment, but is used as a means to obtain release and marriage with the lover. When the lawmakers perceive this, that they are encouraging immorality, they alter the law and make divorce obtainable on lighter grounds. It is made easier, also, for the reason that otherwise fewer persons would enter the conjugal state.

There is also a more general change. Because of the need at first of contention, the virtues most dwelt upon, when intelligent observation was turned toward them, were the masculine virtues of fortitude, temperance, wisdom, and justice. But with the advent of the long peace and the coming into prominence of women, taking the place of those stern virtues another set of mild ones come to the fore,— the feminine virtues of patience, purity, faith, and affection. These were first taught among the subjugated and oppressed peoples, who stood in greatest need of them, and they pass from them to the lower classes of the dominant people, and work their way up with them, through a mass of selfishness and viciousness which percolates from above. There is a general softening of morals as well as a smoothing of manners,— indeed a feminisation of them. Before, there was much suffering and endurance; and everybody, being used to pain in his own person, was indifferent to it in others. Now there is more pleasure, and the sharing the joys of others discloses the advantageousness of sympathy; which, however, cannot develop without bringing with it the drawback of sharing their sorrows. Even vicarious pain becomes unendurable. Yet the painful spectacle of pain in others may be eluded by not looking at it.[13]

the particularist point of view — of the individual thinking most of enjoyment both for himself and for others. Then division takes place, consumption outruns production, children are brought forth in less numbers, so as to inherit more, or none at all, so that no inheritance need be left; and decline sets in.

[13] *Cf.* Mill: "One of the effects of civilisation (not to say one of the

Still, as it presses upon us, the more effective remedy is also desired of lessening it, and especially the infliction of it is decried. The punishment of criminals is not only made less public, and is even hidden away behind closed doors, but it is so much diminished as hardly to serve as a deterrent, and law-breaking becomes the order of the day. By now the old intuitive morality has given way before a rationalising science of ethics, which, rejecting the old stand-byes as too rough, experiments with all sorts of new theories, and even with many which experience has long ago disproved. More attention is paid to the welfare of individuals than to the welfare of the whole society or race, and still less to its perpetuation, especially if each individual believes himself immortal. The heroic period has passed away when the individual would actively sacrifice himself for the good of the state;[14] now, if the individual will sacrifice himself at all, it is passively for the salvation of his own soul. Hence the less attention paid to the procreation of children; for, being more tender about the treatment of existent beings, the best people feel greater responsibility about bringing new beings into existence. Hence also the greater attention paid to the education of those who are born, to prepare them to make their own way in the world rather than to fit into the race as it was and must be if it is to last. The old strife with hard knocks and bloodshed is thought a thing of the past; and with the abandonment of warfare between states it is held that competition between individuals should also cease.[15] Socialistic ideas crop up; for the new point of view in morality sets the immediate welfare of the individual before the permanent welfare of the state. Before, it was required of all to contribute equally hard according to their ability; now it is required by all that they should enjoy equally according to their needs. Accompanying this change come new ideas about a

ingredients in it) is, that the spectacle, and even the very idea, of pain, is kept more and more out of the sight of those classes who enjoy in their fulness the benefits of civilisation," *op. cit.*, 205.

[14] *Cf.* Mill again: "The heroic essentially consists in being ready, for a worthy object, to do and to suffer, but especially to do, what is painful or disagreeable; and whoever does not early learn to be capable of this will never be a great character," *op. cit.*, 206.

[15] We now have such doctrines as those taught by Cournot and Pearson, above noted, p. 8, n. 6.

general equality of the sexes; for women are equal to men in the point of view now emphasised — the capacity to enjoy and to consume. Now more or less effort is put forth to bring these ideas into practice. In fact, the distinction between the rich and the poor was the last artificial distinction left in society, and this it is now the desire to abolish, and with it the great natural distinction between the sexes. Wherefore, with the breaking down of competition, there is less striving within each state as well as between states, until at last, with the diminution of production, especially if accompanied by exhaustion of the sources, a new period of hard times sets in, which generates strife again, but finds the more civilised peoples mostly unfit for it, and most likely to give way before the less civilised.

Still another course is run by morality, in the way it is taught. At first, morality is customary,— that is, it is handed on from generation to generation unquestioned, only a little instruction being needed in addition to natural instinct. Such instruction was given to children by their parents, first by their mothers, and then by their fathers, the mothers instilling the broadest and most fundamental precepts and theories, the fathers supplementing with the applications to practise and the practically needed variations. As some individuals, advancing in prosperity, lead the way in civilisation, these take it upon themselves to teach the others, and more or less in their own behoof tell them what they ought to do. There are two original types of such leaders — the spiritually and the corporeally superior men: those who get the leadership through greater psychical power and those who get it through greater physical force, the former persuading others to do their will, the latter compelling them. Hence with advance in the ascending period morality is further inculcated with directions given to the people by priests and by warriors, in religion and in politics. But when the people catch up with these, acquiring both education and arms, and emancipating themselves from their guardians, then intellect gets wider currency, and philosophers or free-thinkers arise, who rearrange moral instruction from the point of view of the individual; for which very reason they can never combine and, as was desired by Plato, become rulers. The experience of the race is re-

nounced: children are no longer trained how they should go, but are taught to use their reasoning faculties so that they may learn each for himself how he would go,— and consequently many are the aberrations incurred.[16] An age of reason, it should be recognised, is not an age merely of the discovery and acceptance of truth: it is an age also of the invention of and running after innumerable errors. Among the new teachers are economists, who inquire what should be done for the improvement of material welfare; and those who have well stewarded their own talents here exert a profound influence, though mostly they stand discreetly in the background. Later, however, with the coming on of hard times again, these doctrinaires, who have been unable to ward off the accumulating evils, and perhaps have mistakenly or dishonestly assisted their advent, are discredited: science and learning recede; and now it may even happen that by men of deep emotional nature (the prophetic type) a new religion is introduced, which turns its back on the world, gives up the task of civilisation, and exalts the lower classes; and this — or in its default the old religion, revived and readjusted — soon degenerating into superstition, provides the basic ideas and customs for the last period at the bottom of the cycle, which shades insensibly into the beginning of a new one.

(5) The fine arts, literature, and science are very slow of growth during the ascending period, and only break into flower near the approach of the culminating period. That art begins religious and ends profane, and that literary composition starts with poetry and proceeds to prose, are trite sayings. Jurisprudence runs a more gradual course through the whole cycle, and is known to progress from procedure by combat, or appeal to the deity, to procedure by evidence, or appeal to one's fellow men. Its course toward the end is a good sample of all. At first it is hard and fast bound in customs generally under religious sanction, with little authority in any one or in any body to alter it. But the expansion of the communities into states makes the old swaddling clothes

[16] In the lower ranks a similar change takes place. In the ascending period there is generally some sort of apprenticeship, in which the youngster is bound to service in return for instruction. Later, anything like bondage becoming insupportable, the father or the state pays for the youth's training, which is voluntary. The result is decline of craftsmanship.

a tight fit, and then an organ of expression is found, the old customs are abrogated, and now follows, especially toward the end of the ascending and throughout the culminating period, an extensive trial of new opinions in a long-continued stream of legislation. In fact, all advance is made by experimentation and the elimination of the unsatisfactory, men like nature needing to use selection among many variations. But many of the changes are not improvements, since they bring with them unforeseen consequences, and the people at last flounder in a mess which they cannot control. An end to the welter is sought, once for all, in a selection and collection of laws that are to be final,— in short, in codification.

Now, codification is in a way the end of all other lines of advance; for everything is finally, for convenience, reduced to rules, which have been discovered during the period of experimentation, and thereafter it does not seem possible to do better than to imitate the best that has been done before. Art especially, in all its branches, becomes surfeited with what has already been accomplished. The culminating period soon turns itself into an age of collections — in literature of libraries, in painting and sculpture of museums. Mechanical contrivances are developed, so that production is superseded by reproduction, and cheap copies are multiplied. Every one has access to all the masterpieces, and is overpowered in their presence. It seems as if all the combinations of perfection were pre-empted, and as if nobody now could do anything but cull and assemble the former excellences. In language, for instance, all the felicities of expression being already invented, what can the later writers do but reiterate the phrases of the earlier, unless they would concoct poorer ones? Aid is provided in summary books of reference— florilegia, anthologies, dictionaries, encyclopædias. Originality can still be obtained only by leaving the great themes first treated of and turning to small ones, and by running into all sorts of extravagances. Love of inanimate nature, or of the lower animate nature, encroaches upon love of the higher animate nature — the human form; and admiration of natural scenery (or contemplation of still life) supersedes admiration of human activity. Literature and art were first made principally for men; they are now made principally for women. They

become scrappy, embodied more in magazines than in books, more in household ornaments than in public monuments. Of what tries to be really good, only the old is highly prized. Music, which may be forgotten and repeated *in infinitum,* now takes the first rank; and a mixture of all the arts is supplied in the opera. Ecclecticism prevails in everything. Only in architecture, city-planning, and gardening is there an ever increasing rivalry in display, between individuals, between cities, between provinces and nations. Their greatest magnificence and luxuriance comes late, supplanting the earlier fineness and grace. All through this period art is commercialised, and those who have the artistic faculty, instead of consulting their own cultivated sense of beauty, seek to make money by trying to please the multitude of rich and middling-rich purchasers, in whom the sense of beauty is deficient. It is an age of copyright, and of other guaranties of profit. Deterioration is a necessary consequence. When at last not only the old avenues but the new by-ways are run through till all that they contain is exhausted, art dies. The end of everything is habit, hardening into a new régime of custom, which may be the beginning of another cycle. The old codes become the new modes.

Science becomes recognisable in any high degree only a little before the culmination, to which it rapidly contributes. For the first period of custom is one of credulity along fixed lines, and is followed by a period of reason branching forth in all directions. Well known is an analysis of the course of thought into three epochs — the theological, the metaphysical, and the positivist or scientific.[17] A fourth is forgotten — the skeptical. The theological and the metaphysical are but two halves of the ascending period; then comes the scientific, ushering in the culminating period. But before it, the metaphysical epoch was critical of the theological, and began the advance. The scientific period is critical of the metaphysical. Then at last criticism turns upon science itself, and the whole crumbles.[18] When no further discoveries can be made, peo-

[17] By Auguste Comte.

[18] It will be perceived that the theological period corresponds with ecclesiasticism, the metaphysical with aristocracy, the scientific with plutocracy, and skepticism with democracy.

ple tire of truths grown old, as they tired of the old errors. They now sink back into new errors like the old. This takes place in the declining period, and in the *débris* room is made for the theological (or personal) trend of human thought to spring up again.

(6) Religion is a conception of the universe that affects emotion and incites action. It is mostly based on a personal metaphysics, and tries to base itself on revelation from a supernal person or persons. Employing the supernatural, being receptive from it, and consequently convinced that all that is good for us has been revealed,[19] it is the antithesis of science, which employs only the natural, wins its own way, and never has enough. Accordingly it is at its zenith of influence only when science is at its nadir. Yet it employs also the natural as a window for the supernatural to shine through, and makes use of as much science at its disposal as serves its purpose. It can begin, therefore, at least in its higher forms, only in an old civilisation prepared for or already entered upon its decline; and it helps on the decline by substituting satisfied belief and emotion for eager inquiry and the employment of reason. It degenerates into superstition, when its leaders become priests, who, continuing to possess a modicum of the previous knowledge of nature, in the midst of an ignorant populace, impose upon them by showing wondrous prescience and performing marvellous deeds. This is the condition at the beginning of a cycle, except that at the beginning of the primitive cycle priests, or medicine men and meteorologists, were perhaps themselves the discoverers of a few natural laws, the secret of which they kept to themselves. These men appear to have control of natural forces by their communication, as they believe or at all events pretend, with supernatural beings; for ignorance does not distinguish, and extra-ordinary exhibitions of power it takes for super-natural. Imagination now has full swing; and fear is rampant of the unknown. Hence there is unity of belief, at least in a general scheme, throughout the whole race, although every locality may have its own special god or saint. The priests work miracles, as it seems to the people, and receive pay from the beneficiaries; and they also prescribe to those who consult them that they must take

[19] *Cf. Ecclesiasticus,* III. 21–4.

a part: must attend regularly, must do homage, must disclose their doings and desires,— all avowedly to the god, through the interposition only of the priest. To save from impending ills is the principal object,— from ills in this world first, but also from ills imagined in another. The priesthood lives on fees, and on landed property put in its possession; and it lives well. But as the people become enlightened and find that the services they are paying for are not rendered as unfailingly as they now can get them from others, cures being more frequently effected by physicians, and battles more surely won by machinery, the oracles become dumb and miracles cease, except in remote regions or secluded spots, among peasants dwelling in villages (*pagi*) or on heaths — pagans or heathen. The priesthood is despoiled of its land, its numbers are reduced, and its support is taken over by the state or by the people, the pay-system being introduced also here, and the priest serving those from whom he gets his salary. For this is the period of the supremacy of money, and the owners of wealth, having present enjoyments, are thoughtless of unseen ills, and the seekers after it are hard-headed and critical, demanding results and paying close attention to causes and effects.[20] The priest now becomes a mere preacher, providing the instruction and consolation which the rulers desire for the people or the people desire for one another. His rivals are the philosophers or scientists, who offer other instruction and other hopes, and also the politicians, who create other distraction, and especially the actors and singers, who furnish other entertainment. The clergy must likewise aim at effect and look for new objects of interest. The old central authority being removed and the new one careless, numerous sects are formed by division from the overgrown body of the old religion. Also religions of other countries are imported as exciting novelties, and everywhere strange fanes are erected. Even devotion must now cater to the emotions of women. Dissipation occurs of religious as of other forces. But when, in the general disintegration and the approach to misery, all these things must pass off the scene, and the world becomes serious again, and men again take charge of it, then appeal is once more made to powers other than human, and either

[20] *Cf.* B. Adams, *op. cit.*, 105, 119, 129, 153, 186, 211, 217.

the old hierarchy or the leading men of the new religion that has won most following, the successful ones among many competitors, gradually assume, or re-assume, the functions of the former priests, and religion again rises as science and civilisation fall; for which reason religion is the strongest link between cycles, rising in the decline of one, and sinking in the rise of another.

(7) In the course of politics may be perceived a grand division between the rule of the upper classes and the rule of all the classes. The former exists during the ascending and part of the culminating period, the latter during the rest of the culminating and most of the declining period. The former is itself divisible, according to the class which rules, into the rule of the priests, the rule of the warriors, and the rule of the rich. The priests and the warriors generally begin together, with varying vicissitudes in their rivalry among different peoples, sometimes the priests getting the upper hand and forming what they pretend to be a theocracy or rule of a god, but generally ending by their being supplanted by the warriors, who form an era of aristocracy. Then the warriors, and the priests with them, are brought under control by the rich,— the merchants, manufacturers, and financiers, who form an era of plutocracy, during which, as is natural, takes place the greatest advance in material prosperity. Throughout this period the rulers rule by their own might, each by the peculiar power of which they have the monopoly, the priests by learning, the warriors by arms, the rich by money, each of them in turn getting possession of most of the land. The priests, however, assert that they rule by divine right; and the warriors, at first asserting that they rule by the right of the sword, might making right, at last get the priests, when subdued, to admit and to teach that they too rule by divine right. The rich have hardly ventured to put in this claim very seriously: they rule by their own superior shrewdness; they are the capable men, who, having managed their own affairs well, have shown their fitness to manage the affairs of others also; at best, owing their advancement to their native endowments, they claim to rule by natural right; or lawyers, who are the accompanying shadow of this class, try to make out that property is the essential thing in govern-

ment, since it pays the taxes, and therefore claim that as those who own most contribute most and have the most at stake, it is logically right that they should have the most to say about the disposal. All these classes pay themselves for the work they do in ruling the rest, and like all monopolists they pay themselves well. At first each ruling class recognises some duty it has to perform toward the ruled, of guiding and protecting them and furthering their interests; for at the beginning in each class there were competitors and only those succeeded in getting the upper hand who won the people to their side by their promise and performance of favouring them and of viewing their own rule as a trust. Each class must, of course, rule itself as well as the rest, and it does so generally at first by selection of its leaders, and finally by hereditary succession, at first trusting only the execution to them, at last also the decision, at first in a republican form, and finally in a monarchical, though each class has its own way, the warriors coming to monarchy quickest and the wealthy slowest. Also each class in turn becomes degenerate, as its power passes on into the hands of descendants who owe their elevation only to their birth, look more and more to mere enjoyment, and taking more pay do less work; until at last they are superseded by the original superior men of the next class, thus each class-rule forming a small cycle by itself with its own waxing and waning. But when each of the succeeding classes come into power, it pulls down its predecessor only from its pre-eminence and position of privilege, and continues to use it as a support, so that the priests remain in high office under the warriors, and the priests and warriors under the rich, but each in a changed form, the priests, as we have seen, as preachers, and the warriors as paid officers of the army; and as each remembers its quondam domination and continues to have its own interests, it forms a party in the political life of the state. Through all these changes there is a constant growth of the power of the central government and of its action upon the people: ever more and more does it regulate the doings of society, substituting laws for customs.

At last the lower classes, winning education, arms, and a certain amount of wealth, for their inferior possession of all

which they make up by their larger numbers, come into power, overthrowing the others from their predominance, but, as each class did before, leaving them as parties, and only placing themselves at their side as participants in the government. This introduces the last half of the great division of the course of politics. We have now reached the culminating period of civilisation, with its manifoldness and complexity of occupations and interests. Enjoyment dissipates. Before, when there was little variety of recreation, the people took their amusement by meeting together and talking over their common affairs. Then concert was possible, and conspiracies of almost a whole class could be hatched, and revolutions could be planned and successfully executed. But later every one becomes engaged in seeking after his own pleasure, and finds it at most in small cliques of boon companions; for the meeting of even a whole town in a theater is merely to receive similar impressions, without any common action on their own part. Concert and united action, thereupon, become much less usual. The ascending period of civilisation is always marked by revolutions; the declining period is a long quiescence, disturbed only by occasional futile uprisings or riots that do more harm than good.

This last half of the great division of politics is further distinguished from the first half by the fact that now all classes rule all. The power of government reaches its maximum, and it is prepared to regulate everything. Affairs of state needing special officials, these are now chosen directly or indirectly by the people as their representatives and agents; or if any one of the old rulers is left, he is reduced to being regarded and treated and made to behave as such. These agents are paid by the people, with salaries, which are not so large as the emoluments the former rulers took to themselves; and their offices are now a public trust, not because they are solicitous so to view them, but because the people require it of them; and they do not rule in their own right or by divine or by natural right, but in the right of the ruling and ruled (the self-ruled) people, or by a conventional right given to them by all the classes. This condition has generally been called democracy, but mistakenly, since it is not the rule of the *demos* or lowest class, but the rule of all the classes, and

would be better called pantocracy. In such democracy itself (for the term is too habitual to be discarded) the most powerful of the old classes is that of the rich, upon which the others lean; and this class of the rich, or the three first classes in one under this name, though they prefer to look upon themselves as aristocrats, may even regain influence and power so great as to overbalance the rest, forming a state which is describable by the somewhat incongruous term of plutocratic democracy. Over against this condition, the *demos* proper may wish to get the upper hand entirely and entirely suppress the other classes. This movement is to-day known as socialism, though this term is more truly appropriate to our present condition, and what is so distinguished is democracy proper (in the literal sense); and sometimes for greater clarity, it is dubbed social democracy; which, in the full extent of its aspiration, has never existed, and, as we shall see further on, probably never will exist, at least not in our cycle of civilisation.

The democracy such as has existed and as now exists, or pantocracy, which rules by agents and makes laws by representatives of the whole people, always sets out with a multiplicity of representatives to whom the appointment or the oversight of innumerable other agents is entrusted, in the form known as republicanism. But as responsibility divided between many is diluted and tends to be little observed, the degeneration of republicanism works for the concentration of power in one representative, to whom is entrusted the direction of all the others. Under this one all-powerful individual all the classes are reduced to an equal position of inferiority, and other individuals can rise to power only as they win his favour or that of his favourites. This last stage can be reached only when the people at large are so unwarlike, and so distracted and divided by their several occupations and amusements, that a comparatively small army in the one man's pay can keep them all in subjection. And when once reached, it can in spite of its enormous and growing evils never be subverted from within the nation by the people, for the additional very good reason that the people have nothing to substitute for it. Previous degenerate rulers, as we have seen, because they were of a class, could be overthrown

and replaced by the better rule of a newly uprisen class, in a line of progress. But in a succession of single rulers representing a degenerate people, although any and every one of them on becoming degenerate may be pulled down by the people, or by the court, or by the army, he can be replaced only by another single ruler of the same sort, better perhaps at first, but with the same proneness to quick deterioration. Or the only rivaling power is that of the rising priesthood, who also tend to come under the dominion of one of their own number and either share in or get possession of the political power, and in either case augment rather than mitigate the evils that come from the rule of some men over others who are not strong enough to hold them to a strict accounting. Such is the despotism — cæsarism or imperialism, ultimately more or less mixed with hierarchism,— in which all republicanism and all civilisation has hitherto ended.

CHAPTER III.

COMPARISON OF CYCLES

THE typical cycles are necessarily written in an absolute form, from which actual cycles depart in greater or less degree. The subsequent cycles always retain something from the last period of the preceding, and therefore start from a higher level, which continues to be maintained all through. For example, in the typical scheme it could be said that the first period is one of status, which changes in the later periods to one of contract. In actuality there is nothing so absolute as this. In the classic civilisations the stage of contract reached was not so advanced as in ours, while on the other hand its stage of status was more complete than the corresponding stage at the beginning of our cycle.

There is a difference also in the comparative duration of the successive periods. The earliest civilisations we know of, in Egypt and Mesopotamia, came to the last condition of despotism so quickly, and it continued so long, that it seems to occupy the whole of their history, though this may be due to the obscurity in which their origin is shrouded. In the later and better known civilisations of Greece and Rome the last period has been much shorter, except in the almost negligible Byzantine empire; and the preceding periods of the rule of priests and warriors under kings and in aristocracies, and of the rich in a republican form (the form of a common*wealth*), were much longer. In those early and oriental civilisations the transitions from the primitive kings to the final despots seems to have been immediate, or through so short an intervening period of republicanism that this has dropped out of the record. More probably, the kings, who were primarily the chiefs among the aristocracy, by pandering to the people became the people's representatives and, subduing the aristocrats, came to be looked up to by all as masters. In the Greco-Roman civilisation not only the stages of kingship and

of imperialism were distinct both in time and character, but the intervening period of plutocracy and democracy was fairly long and prominent. In our own cycle of western civilisation the first period of kingship was still longer, and the period of republicanism already entered upon gives promise of being so well established that few persons dream of the danger of a demagogic and imperialistic despotism. And yet Europe has already had two examples of it, in Cromwell and Napoleon, like Sylla in Rome preceding Cæsar (or were they like the Greek tyrants in the midway position as after-gleams of the overthrown kings and fore-tastes of the succeeding autocrats?); and the contemporaneous civilisation in the east, until our own day, has seemed sunk in that kind of lethargy.

Here, then, at least in the west, or in the westward movement now reaching around again to the east, we see advance. This is another kind of advance, additional to that which takes place within each cycle, being an advance between cycles, or of one civilisation following and improving upon another. The cycles of civilisation themselves move in an ascending series, the subsequent ones being greater, broader, better, and, let us hope, more lasting. This ascending movement takes place in spite of the descents of civilisation in the latter periods of the cycles, because some of the gains made in the culminating period of the previous cycles are retained in the following. The progression of the moments of civilisation may be likened to that of a point on the rim of a wheel rolling uphill: the point ascends to the top of the wheel and then descends, but its descent does not go so far as did its rise, and at each succeeding bottom it is not so low as it was at the preceding bottom, and at each succeeding top it is higher than it was at the preceding top. The proper comparison of successive civilisations is between their corresponding stages within their cycles. A lower cycle may have points near its top higher than points near the bottom of a higher; but that signifies nothing. This upward progression of cycles, it would seem, might go on without limit; at least the reasons determining the limit within each cycle do not operate here. But there may be other reasons, and so the question occurs, whether this series may not also reach a culmination: whether the wheel may not come to the top of the hill and pass down on

the other side, every descent of the point on the rim then being greater than its preceding rise. To this question history can give no answer. All we know historically is that hitherto there have been revolutions of civilisation and that the cycles in which it moves have themselves moved upward. Only inference from other known facts can influence belief with regard to this movement in the future.

The comparison of civilisations, either at particular moments or as wholes, must embrace two aspects — the physical and the moral. The physical or material aspect measures advance by the increase of man's power over nature and his acquisition of comfort; the moral measures it by his command over himself and his distribution of comfort. In each cycle what has been treated as the level at the top is the level of highest material prosperity. The religious zenith we have seen to be situated at the opposite side of the periphery. This indicates that the moral culmination need not coincide with the physical. Yet there are indications that it does. In the literal sense of morality as the observance of customs, this exists in the highest degree at the beginning of each cycle. In the ascending period, too, as has been noted, the masculine virtues are most needed, and attain their highest development. But in the sense of ethics, or a rationalisation of right conduct, the highest teaching is reached at the top of the cycle, where prosperity renders it easy to theorise sagely. Then, too, the feminine virtues are added to the masculine, and for a time they all hold sway together. At last, in the declining period, the masculine virtues give way first, and their loss undermines the rest. But in this period there is more occasion for the application of the highest precepts, and this is now achieved, exceptionally at least, when, under pressure of ever-increasing hard times, people learn to help one another and to endure. It would be a poor civilisation that did not end with a better religion than it began with.

As for the progression of cycles, in both these aspects there can be no doubt about the superiority of our European and American civilisation over the Greek and the Roman; and there is every appearance that the Greek and the Roman were superior to the Egyptian and the Mesopotamian; and that these were superior to what preceded them, there can again be

no doubt. In the eighteenth century it was the fashion to look up with admiration to the superior civilisation of classic times; and that attitude of humility was to some extent justified, as in many respects civilisation had not then reached the height attained in Rome at its period of greatest glory under the early emperors. But modern civilisation was then still in its ascending period, and it has since far surpassed the ancient in its resources and its command over nature, and consequently in its wealth and grandeur. In the eighteenth century an Englishman could travel from London to Rome no more rapidly than a Roman could have done sixteen hundred years before: now he can travel six times faster. Then there were no cities so large and splendid as Rome and Alexandria and Antioch: now London is at least thrice as large as Rome ever was, and two other cities in Europe and even two more across the Atlantic exceed it, while the modern cities that surpass those of second rank in the Roman world are almost too numerous to count. Then, again, no country in western Europe was so large in extent of inhabited territory and in population as a fifth part of the Roman empire: now the empire of Great Britain is seven times as extensive and more than twice as populous, and the American republic over twice as extensive and nearly as populous, even on allowing the extravagant estimation of Roman greatness entertained, for instance, by Gibbon.[1] Then none of the rich even among the nobility could vie with the Roman Lucullus, Crassus, or Agrippa, or with the Athenian Herod: now dozens of multimillionaires, upstarting almost simultaneously, leave far behind all those and all the later Narcissuses, Pallases, and Cleanders known throughout antiquity. In literature and in art, save alone sculpture, it was already then only modesty that led critics to depreciate modern performance in comparison with the classic; and in science our progenitors had already shot so far ahead as not only to pave the way for our present superexcellence, but also to place themselves considerably in advance in some departments, especially in mechanics, as in

[1] His friend Hume was much more moderate in his calculations. But Hume held that cities could never exceed the size then reached by London and Paris of about seven hundred thousand inhabitants! See his essay on *The Populousness of Ancient Nations* (Hume's *Works*, Boston, 1854, iii. 478).

book-publishing by printing, in navigation, and in military appliances. Already then almost any one of the principal countries in Europe could have vanquished the whole of the Roman forces at sea and on land, while to-day so tiny a country as Denmark could march an army to Rome, if still defended as under Cæsar, as easily as Alexander invaded Persia or Cortez Mexico.

Morally, also, throughout its whole course hitherto our civilisation has been far superior to the ancient. There is cruelty inflicted to-day, but it is much less than the cruelty that was tolerated in antiquity. There is oppression practised to-day, but it is much less than the oppression then permitted. There has been slavery in modern times till recently, and when it existed it was habitually condemned as worse than the ancient; which result was arrived at only by the unfair process of comparing modern slavery at its worse, on plantations, with ancient slavery at its best, in domestic service; whereas our domestic slavery was much kindlier than the corresponding slavery in antiquity, and our plantation slavery much less ferocious than the bondage in the Roman *ergastula.* To-day so sensitive are people, especially the wage-earners themselves, to the hardships of wage-earning, that in their ignorance of real slavery they speak even of this as slavery. Yet there can be no doubt that the lower classes of our society are far more comfortably situated than the similar classes in antiquity at its most flourishing period. If civilisation be regarded as welfare and comfort, it may be said that civilisation works downward, beginning in the upper classes, and gradually penetrating to the lower. This process takes place in the advance within the cycles, up to the culmination. It has taken place also in the advance between the cycles; for already there is a further extension of comfort, and so of civilisation, at least of one of its benefits, toward and through the lower classes, than was ever the case in Greece and Rome. Then what we should consider a tolerable degree of comfort extended only to the middle classes: now it extends to the upper layers of the lower classes. Still earlier, in the Egyptian and Mesopotamian civilisations, comfort seems to have extended hardly further than the upper layers of the middle classes. That the slaves were then even more ruthlessly

maltreated than in the Greek and Roman civilisation, is apparent from the fact that whole conquered peoples were not uncommonly transplanted to the centre of the kingdom, where they became the slaves of the monarch and were employed in immense gangs to build enormous palaces and temples, dragging huge stones under the whip like draught animals. But by the Greeks and Romans the condemned captives were parcelled out among the soldiers and sold by them to private parties, who used them for domestic or industrial purposes. Incidentally it may be remarked that this difference in the management of slaves is the reason why Greek and Roman architecture was not constructed on so massive a scale as the earlier, and therefore called for more attention to line and detail. Modern architecture runs still more to private than to public building, and to the use of flimsy material, paying less regard to permanence. Thus there is an advance toward individualism perceptible also through the course of the cycles: the earliest was in all its periods further removed from it than the Greco-Roman, and the Greco-Roman in none of its periods approached so near to it as we are doing.

Perhaps we may discern more of the elements of the early periods of each in the earlier cycles as wholes, and a movement of the general character of succeeding cycles in the same direction as the movement in each cycle. In the earliest cycle we know of, the power of the priests was all-pervasive; in the next, that of the warriors; in ours, thus far, that of the rich. They all went through all the four periods, but in Egypt civilisation never got fully out of the hands of the priests; and the Babylonian went only a little further. The Greek and Roman civilisation went on and fell fully into the hands of the warriors, but even when it reached the plutocratic stage, the warriors retained considerable power. Our modern civilisation has got almost fully into the hands of the rich, and it is beginning to appear unlikely whether it will get much beyond. Mill said that in the advance of civilisation, on account of ever increasing diffusion of property and intelligence, the power of individuals became less and that of masses greater.[2] He did not distinguish between the course within individual cycles and in the series of cycles. Within individual cycles

[2] *Op. cit.*, 189, 194, 203.

this advance takes place up till the culmination. Also it has hitherto taken place in the series of cycles, as such advance went further in the classic civilisation than in what preceded, and it has gone further still in ours; for, for true democracy, the masses must be worthy and capable of exercising power wisely and justly; and whether they can reach that point in our cycle, is questionable.

CHAPTER IV.

OUR POSITION

Two questions suggest themselves. The one is as to where we of the present day and generation — we of Europe and America, we white men, the most advanced of us — stand in our cycle of civilisation. The other is as to where this our cycle stands in the progression of cycles. The latter question has already been answered in regard to the past; and in regard to the future we have seen it to be unanswerable with any certainty. Though it may come up and interest us again, it is a question of little importance. We are much more concerned with the former. This may be answered with tolerable assurance.

The answer, then, is this: We in our present stage of development are entering, or have already entered, the beginning of the culminating plane or swell of our cycle, having nearly reached the highest point of material civilisation, of which our society, on the earth it inhabits, is capable. To compare modern times with the ancient: we are about where Athens was in the fifth century, B.C., or where the Greek world at large was in the fourth, and where Rome was in the two centuries around and about the point whence we reckon the lapse of years. Some use will be made of this comparison further on in these pages.[1]

[1] The analogy of stages in our cycle with various ones in the past has often attracted attention. Some instances may be cited. Mitford found resemblance between the proceedings of the Thirty in Athens and of the Committee of Public Welfare in Paris, *History of Greece*, v. 62. Romieu, in his *Ére des Cæsars*, 1850, held that the European world was, when he wrote, in the same situation as the Roman was when it found relief and rest under Augustus; and he expected that Europe would find the same under a new Cæsar — Napoleon III., (see Flint, *op. cit.*, 565). E. C. Stedman saw a likeness of the Victorian to the Alexandrine age, *Victorian Poets*, 205–6, as did also Draper, *op. cit.*, ii. 367. Ritchie: "The age of the Sophists is the ancient equivalent of the age of the Enclyclopaedists," *op. cit.*, 21. Pearson (hardly correctly): "It [the age of the Minnesingers] is the Periclean period of German development," *Ethic of Freethought*, 399.

Here be it noted that in all the preceding account of the course of civilisation it is evident that on every line of treatment our present condition fits in with the conditions described at the turn from the ascending to the culminating period, unless it be at a step somewhat advanced within the latter period.[2] Our military art has long enough been in the stage of superiority of the attack over the defence, with machinery, and with the soldier and police system, to lead to the consolidation of states; and the improvement of transportation has permitted their enlargement into what appear, for the present, to be nearly their maximum sizes. We have already been living in the period of peace and enjoyment, if indeed we have not passed out of it, although the present war in Europe may be only a flash in the pan, unless, like the Peloponnesian War in Greece, or the Civil Wars in Rome, itself a second edition of the wars of a hundred years ago, it be a turning point toward the down grade. Economically, we are almost fully in the period of contracts and of mobile wealth due to the universal use of money as medium of exchange and standard of values, land itself being converted into little less than a commodity. Wealth is concentrating, and population is leaving the country and huddling in cities, which are sprouting up like mushrooms. Already we witness the power of financiers, who have begun their efforts at contraction, though with some setbacks; the formation of monopolies both by employers and by employés, restricting production and labour; the socialistic demands of the latter for sharing the goods of the former; and the diminution of the mutual dependence of the sexes, the emancipation of women, and their aspirations after further equality with men. For in the large new states the individual is protected by the government in the possession of property and of liberty and in the pursuit of happiness, whereby the feeble and the foolish may lord it over the strong and the wise, and women are clamouring for the right to put their fingers in the pie. Accompanying these phenomena are the deleterious influences upon population that come from a decreasing frequency of marriage, an increasing frequency of divorce, and

[2] Thus Paul Jacoby already sees many signs that the civilised peoples of Europe have entered this period of *épuisement* and decadence, *Études sur la Sélection chez l'Homme,* Paris, 1904, p. 617.

generally a tabefaction of the paternal and maternal feelings and functions, not to omit mention of impotency arising from the contagion of venereal diseases and its counterfeit in the practice of abortion and prevention. The morality of the period of industrialism and of luxury is already upon us: cosmopolitanism (absenteeism, renegadism) impairing patriotism; emphasis upon honesty rather than upon loyalty; greater tolerance of fraud than of violence; coming into prominence of the feminine virtues and of a weak humanitarianism, with its relaxation of constraint, of discipline, of chastisement; the individualistic treatment of all questions rather than the assumption of the public point of view; and, to repeat, the advocacy of socialistic and feministic reforms that would reduce all persons to atomistic equality. There has begun an experimentation with new systems of education, mostly with a view to lessening the hard labour of study. We appear almost to have reached the period of codification, some nations having already performed that summarising of the laws, while others stand in great need of it. Art and literature are imitative of the old, or wildly extravagant. It is an age of museums, of galleries, of libraries. Science is so burdened as to seem at the bursting point. Division of labour is minute: specialisation in everything, in every department, in every detail almost. In religion we have long been in the period of free-thought and extensive speculation, with its reduction of priests to preachers; and we have not yet reached the period when we pay attention to prophets. People think more of this world than of the next, just as they think more of the present than of the future on the earth itself. Yet there is already the phenomenon of the upcropping and importation of many new and foreign religions, competing with one another for popular favour. Lastly, in politics, the extension of the use of arms, of education, and of wealth has put so much power in the hands of the lower classes, that it is a commonplace to speak of this as a democratic era. We have passed through the revolutions in which the priests were overpowered by the warriors and in which the warriors were overcome by the men of money, and we are now under the full sway of plutocracy, which is being defied by the proletariat.

In spite of a few evidences of our being, in some respects,

well advanced in this culminating period, it is probable that on the whole we are only near its commencement; for there is prospect of considerable further material advance. The delightfulness of this prospect is often exaggerated, as we shall presently see; yet the advance is likely to proceed with little check and hindrance for some time, differently in different countries. And differently in different countries will be effected the setting in of the stoppage and of the decline, in some earlier, in others later, in some first through physical exhaustion of the land, in others first through moral exhaustion of the people. One thing we may be certain of: the advance of civilisation cannot go on without interruption forever. We also have reason to believe that the interruption is not many centuries ahead of us.

The superiority of our civilisation in a material way over all that has preceded, rests on our employment of the natural powers of heat and electricity; and our employment of these rests on our production of coal and iron and copper. Coal, indeed, is the ultimate basis of our material civilisation, wherefore ours has not improperly been denominated the Coal Age; because the mining, smelting, forging, and transportation of the metals requires heat in a quantity that coal alone can supply, and electricity not only needs copper for its generation and transmission, but is itself only a form of heat, so that our production of it equally (for nobody has recommended the use of lightning) depends on coal. It is true that waterfalls supply power that is convertible into heat and electricity or that may be directly employed, in never or only intermittently failing constancy. But the amount of power thence derivable is not sufficient to keep up civilisation at its present height. The winds are a too intermittent source of power. Then it has been suggested that the power wasted in the tides might be harnessed and applied in almost unlimited quantity. But this seems to be only one of the dreams of science.[3] Wood as a fuel has, of course, long ceased to be sufficient.[4] Another

[3] A tidal mill existed so long ago as to be mentioned in Domesday Book, according to Jevons, *The Coal Question*, 136.

[4] Jevons reckoned fifty years ago, when the production of coal in Great Britain was not a quarter of what it is to-day, forests covering two and a half times the area of the United Kingdom would be needed to furnish even the theoretical equivalent of the coal then annually produced, *op. cit.*, 140.

product from the soil, reproducible every year, is alcohol derived most cheaply from Indian corn. But to supply this in quantity sufficient to yield the heat and power now supplied by coal, would take up so much land as to crowd out the proper provision of food. Lastly, the sun's heat itself, which may last for millions of years to come, it is hoped may be converted into power and concentrated again as heat where and when needed. This may be done to some extent in the tropics, but reliance on it is again only a pretty dream. Coal itself and its offspring, petroleum and natural gas, are the concentrated extract of the sun's heat supplied during a million years a million years ago. Its supply is a definite and in our time non-renewable quantity. Peat is a comparatively insignificant addition to it. Petroleum and gasolene, which are to-day superimposing a surface wave upon the tidal wave of quickened life, cannot hold out so long as coal itself. When the given quantity of coal is extracted from the earth and consumed, civilisation will not necessarily be placed back where it was before coal began to be used, as the world will continue to possess some use of the other forms of power just reviewed; but it will not be so great and prosperous as it now is and is likely to be in what remains of our era.

What, then, is the supply of coal under the surface of the earth within our reach? and how long will it last? These questions have been before the world for fifty years, and have received various answers. At least so long ago were they started in England as to England's own coal. Jevons then wrote his interesting work on *The Coal Question* (1865), in which he went over the whole subject. He accepted Hull's estimate that the British available supply (meaning the supply that could be found within four thousand feet below the surface) was eighty-three and a half billion tons. Then there were being mined every year in Great Britain about that number of millions of tons; wherefore, if this production were never exceeded, the British mines might last a thousand years. But the production had been going on at an increasing rate, averaging about three and a quarter *per cent.* annually, with prospect of continuing to increase and probably at nearly the same rate for some time, and afterward at a slower and slower rate. He inferred, in fact, that the British mines could not

long maintain their then rate of increase; which he interpreted as meaning that a check to British progress must become perceptible considerably within a century from the time of his writing.[5] The course of events has already confirmed his prediction; for the British production of coal since he wrote has lagged behind the theoretical calculations he made of what it would be if the same rate of increase were maintained. Since he wrote there have been two Government Commissions appointed for investigating the subject, with the remarkable result that in spite of the continued large extraction of coal, which has increased at the rate of about three million tons a year, the remaining supply underground in Great Britain has constantly increased in the estimates! For in 1871 the Commission reported the supply to be slightly over ninety billion tons, and in 1903 the last Commission reported it at a little more than one hundred billion tons.[6] To-day the British are talking of their supply as amounting to a hundred and ninety billion tons; but this takes into account deposits in smaller seams and below four thousand feet, no longer considered to be the limit of depth at which mining is feasible. When Jevons wrote, coal mining had not gone down more than twenty-five hundred feet; now it has gone down beyond thirty-five hundred, and some other kinds of mines have exceeded five thousand feet. The 1871 Commission calculated that British coal mining would last two hundred and seventy-six years, though one of their experts thought it would be used up in one hundred and nine years and another extended its duration to three hundred and sixty; and Professor Geikie, commenting on their Report, believed that the increase of British coal production would go on for seventy or eighty years in a diminishing ratio, and then decline would set in.[7] Since then greater

[5] *Op. cit.*, 215.

[6] See an article on *The National Coal-Supply* in the Quarterly Review, July, 1905, p. 139.

[7] In an article *How long will our Coal last?* in the Pall Mall Magazine, 1901, p. 396. Previously, in 1891, T. Forster Brown held that the increase would go on for a quarter of a century, maintain itself at a maximum for another quarter of a century, and then begin to decline, *The Coal Question,* in The Economic Journal, vol. i. no. 4, p. 666. And still earlier the authors of *Coal: its History and Uses,* edited by Prof. Thorpe, London, 1878, calculated that in sixty years from that date the output of coal in Great Britain would be eight times the then amount, and a certain rise of price of the most serious character would take place within that time, p. 319.

optimism prevails. Even the total exhaustion of the British mines has been contemplated with serenity. "In three hundred years we may bring our coal from China," said Mr. R. T. Moore in the Presidential Address before the Institute of Mining Engineers in 1909,[8] notwithstanding that Jevons had shown that British trade needs the export of coal as the only heavy freight the British isles produce, to counterbalance the heavy freights of their raw imports; and if the heavy freight of coal were added to the import side, nearly half of the British shipping would sail in ballast. Factories are much more likely to go to the coal than coal come to the factories.

To-day Great Britain produces every year over two hundred and fifty million tons of coal, Germany nearly as much, the United States twice as much. The total annual production is well over a billion tons, and it is increasing rapidly. The question is of world-wide import, and to it the International Geological Congress, sitting at Toronto in the summer of 1913, devoted attention. Their investigations estimated the uttermost supply to be about seven hundred billion tons in Europe, twelve hundred billion in Asia, five thousand billion in America, mostly in the northern hemisphere, about sixty billions in Africa, and a hundred and seventy in Oceania, totaling a little over seven thousand billion tons.[9] This liberal allowance will last seven thousand years if the future production and consumption never exceed the present figure of about a billion tons annually. But if the production and consumption be doubled in the next twenty years and thereafter continue without further increase, it will last three thousand five hundred years. If they be once more doubled, it will last about seventeen hundred and fifty years. But if they go on doubling and remaining stationary, its duration will be reduced nearly to nine hundred, to five hundred, to three hundred, and so on, until the end is reached. The solution of the problem when this will be, would be easy if the increases were to be uniform, the mathematics of the problem being simple. Even then, however, we should have to be careful to find whether the increase is in geometrical progression, as just supposed, or in arithmetical; for these yield

[8] *Transactions*, vol. xxxvii, p. 455.
[9] *The Coal Resources of the World*, Toronto, 1913, vol. i. p. xviii.

very different results, the former the minimum, the latter the maximum. With the above data, if the production and consumption continued to double, as they have been doing, every twenty years, the supply would not last one hundred and fifty years. But if the increase were of a hundred million tons every year (a rate that will soon be reached), or a billion every decade, the supply would last three hundred and sixty-five years; or if the increase were half that amount, the supply would hold out for five hundred and ten years.

But things do not proceed in this way in nature. The production of coal will not go on continually increasing until suddenly the bottom is reached. All advance is comparatively more rapid at first, when the preceding states with which the comparison is made are small; and it falls off as these become larger. Therefore a geometrical rate of increase is never maintained for long. The arithmetical rate of increase, on the other hand, generally itself increases after the start is made and the preceding states, upon which the advance rests, grow larger. But with this also a maximum is always reached. In the production of coal the increase will go on till the best sources are worked out,— and in fact the enormous figure above given is only that of the "possible" supply, the "actual" or effective supply is given at only about one-tenth of that figure. Then the cost and probably the price of coal will rise so high as to cut off demand; the consumption of coal will then cease to advance, and with it the production, and after a time, when only still deeper or poorer seams remain to be attacked, the cost still rising, the consumption and the production will wane. This waning period may continue almost indefinitely: perhaps a thousand years hence there will still be some coal produced. The period of importance in our consideration is that at which the increase ceases and after some maintenance of a level the decrease sets in. This period in the case of coal may be much closer upon us than the estimates above made for the theoretical total cessation of coal-mining. It will come, as already said, at different times in different regions. Great Britain, which began the extensive employment of coal, is probably the first great coal-producing country that will experience it; then perhaps Germany and the rest of Europe; afterward America; and lastly China. The pro-

cess will be slow but steady, yet exposing each country to the possibility of a sudden catastrophe. Our material civilisation will decline as coal gives out — in England first, then in Germany, then in America; and it will last longest in China, in the possession of what people or race we know not. For long before coal gives out, its allied products, petroleum and natural gas, will have been exhausted; and without coal it will little matter whether the mines of iron and copper and other metals hold out or not, as it will not be possible to work them on anything like the large scale on which they are now worked and which our civilisation demands. Only of aluminum the production may perhaps be continued indefinitely, with the aid of water-power, but in no great quantity, and not supplying the place of iron. One other metal, in a different category, the production of which does not require much fuel, gold, will also in advance of coal be no longer found within our reach in any part of the earth. Its production will begin permanently to fall off probably well within fifty years from now; and our financiers may perhaps be able to block the introduction of any better kind of money, so as to enjoy the appreciation of the commodity in which they deal.

Here then, beside the moral reasons which will occupy us again, is a physical reason for expecting our material civilisation before long to reach its highest mark, when its material resources reach theirs. To us of the present generation who shall not experience it, it is not an immediate personal concern how soon the climax of our civilisation be attained and the consequent decline set in. It suffices to know that it must take place before many more generations have come and gone. Like preceding civilisations our civilisation is doomed to decay and to disintegrate; and the beginning of this doom is not far away.

The same considerations show also that, materially viewed, our cycle of civilisation is to be the greatest this world shall ever witness; for our civilisation has extended its range over the whole earth and is busily engaged in extracting and using up all the stores of minerals which nature has cached near enough to the surface to be within the reach of man. For the same reason that our existing civilisation must decline, the next civilisation will not be able again to attain such material

greatness. The previous cycles ended when the parts of the earth which they covered were exhausted. But our civilisation, to repeat, is covering and currying the whole earth, and little is likely to escape it. On the other hand, however, it would be presumptuous for us to declare our culture to be the best that nature can produce, and nothing interferes with the view, intrinsically probable, that the next cycle of civilisation may rise to, and perhaps culminate in, a moral condition as far superior to ours as ours is to the ancient. The very fact that it will not be able to approach ours in material prosperity may aid it to compass such moral superiority. Thus from both these points of view we have a not improbable answer to the second question asked at the opening of this chapter.

That any civilisation is doomed to fall, may appear like the teaching of pessimism, which seems to be increased by adding that this civilisation of ours can never again be equalled in the material aspect, although, certainly, it is decreased by the consideration that the next is likely to surpass ours in the moral. Yet hardly can sorrow be caused by the thought that we lucky mortals are near the greatest period our earth is capable of; nor need we be envious if in another couple of thousand years the world may be morally better than it is in our day. In a large view of the whole course of the ages, if the world is to contain a certain number of happy people and a certain number of unhappy ones, it seems of little moment, except for the causal connections, which come first, which last. Even for the decline of our civilisation there may be many compensations. When fuel becomes scarce and high-priced, population will gravitate again toward the south into regions atmospherically the most beautiful; for we cannot put much trust in Arrhenius's theory that the south will come up to meet us and carry us with it to the northward, through the warming effect of the blanket of carbonic acid gas our consumption of coal is forming above us,[10] which itself will be dissipated in a few centuries more. Civilisation hitherto has moved slowly from the warm to the cold regions — into bleakness: in the future it will, in all probability, move back from the cold to the warm regions — into sunshine and light. Then the few rich, instead of going south in winter, will go north

[10] *Worlds in the Making*, 51–63.

in summer; and the mass of the people will avoid the pressure of the need not only of so much heating but of so much housing and of so much clothing, perhaps dispensing with hats and shoes, the latter of which are now often worn, as Senior said, to preserve not so much our feet as our dignity, and which may then perhaps be replaced by that most sightly and sanitary of foot-gear, the sandal. There will be less indoor over-heating and stuffiness, and one cause of unhealthiness will be removed. Then will take place the return to nature desired by the idealists,— to healthy open-air life, the simple life of less eating and more drinking. When electric lights are expensive, we shall be rid of the ugly advertisements that disfigure our streets in the evening. The use of iron in building will be discontinued, and the abomination of elevators will be no more; then the monstrous " sky-scrapers " will be torn down, if they have not tumbled, and our streets, having a more even sky-line, may once more become symmetrical and pleasant to the view. Great cities will give place to small, and the country will again be occupied; for trolleys will cease to run, and railways will no more tempt people to roam hither and thither across the land. Instead, their roadbeds being converted into carriage roads, the country will be covered with well-graded highways, better than the Roman world ever knew, and coaching days will again come back. For us Americans in particular, the distant parts of our country being less accessible, each will have a development of its own, and there will be some variety in our civilisation, in place of the dead monotony which now extends from Maine to Texas and from Oregon to Florida. Sailing vessels replacing steam, the immigration of Slavs and Mongolians will stop, and our people will have time to grow into a nation. We are, in fact, afflicted with too much transportation. We rush about too much. We search for beauty existing elsewhere instead of producing it where we are. The money Americans spend going abroad to see things we have not at home, which is estimated at hundreds of millions of dollars every year, would build every year a Saint Peter's, a Saint Paul's, two or three Pantheons, and before many years might plant in every city in our land a museum equal to the Luxemburg or the British. When transportation again becomes expensive and people stay at home,

they will be more careful about their own surroundings. All effort, however, is at present directed toward cheapening transportation and communication. We have already conquered the air sufficiently for a pastime and for use in war. Many hope that flying may come into general use. Yet if all could fly like birds, it would go hard with civilisation; for nobody would stay at home to work, but all would flit about picking up what they could find in the way of fruit. Who indeed would delve into the earth, or swelter in a factory, if they could leap into the air and betake themselves elsewhere? Civilisation would never have begun, had nature provided us with wings; and if men provide themselves with their equivalent, civilisation may end. The salvation of civilisation rests on the fact that aviation can never become general; for if it were only as safe and easy as automobiling, capital would be still more dissipated in it; and if there be none of it, the world will not suffer. People will then talk of our holocausts of airmen as the Greeks fabled of Dædalus and Icarus. After all, happiness does not depend on such things; for, as Horace tells us people had found out in his day, black care mounts the horse behind us — or gets into the car with us; and a materially lower civilisation in the future may be happier than ours, especially if it be more just and virtuous.

Yet a declining civilisation, used to things which it must give up, can never be so happy as a rising civilisation. Therefore the prospect of a downward turn of civilisation after passing a climax, has never pleased, and to it many have resolutely shut their eyes. Now-a-days much more popular is the opposite view, that our existing civilisation is an exception to the rule which has held in the past, and that it will advance for ever, or at least no tottering is in the present outlook. Our scientific men are especially elated, flattering themselves that they, by guiding the plutocrats in the application of capital, are to be the creators of an entirely new era. "We are in reality but on the threshold of civilisation," wrote Lubbock fifty years ago.[11] There is a theory even, which has been dubbed "the law of acceleration," that progress is ever gaining more and more speed; which is thought to be proved by the consideration that human beings have lived on the earth for some hundreds of thousands

[11] *Pre-historic Times*, 600.

of years, remaining savages most of the time, passing through barbarism in several thousand years, then through semi-civilisation in a couple of thousand or so, and within civilisation have in the last century made greater advance than in the preceding millenary.[12] If such acceleration continues, we shall go up like the spray dashed by a wave striking a wall. The induction is absurd. A spring let loose moves faster and faster, and then stops. The Athenians advanced more between 500 B.C. and 400 B.C. than they had done in the five hundred years preceding; but they did not continue that progress. Of course our present-day socialists, who denounce in unmeasured terms the savagery of strife and competition which is only now passing away, prophesy that the acme of civilisation is to be brought in by the execution of their economic plans.[13] Similar hopes as to their contributions to the epoch-making change now impending, are entertained by our female social philosophers. To them our world has only been "man-made," and therefore is only half made. Accordingly Mrs. Schreiner speaks of our "semi-civilisation," [14] and Mrs. Gilman says our "development as human creatures is but comparatively begun." [15] The theory is that all the past, with its various vicissitudes, has formed one great age of the world, struggling manfully from above to rise out of barbarism; that we are now in a period of transition, seething, but settling; and that shortly the world will, with aid from below and from women, pass into a new and final age of achieved civilisation. According to one college professor, in the past the world was subject to a "pain economy" (the pain of parturition?), and now it is entering upon a "pleasure economy," though these may be merely the early and the late periods of civilisation-cycles.[16] To all of this

[12] *Cf.* N. Angell, *The Great Illusion*, 197, 220. "The theory of geometrical progression" it is called by Morris Hillquit, *Socialism in Theory and Practice*, 109; *cf.* Engels in Marx's *Capital*, iii. 308 (Kerr's ed. of Moore's, Aveling's, and Untermann's translation, Chicago, 1906–9).

[13] *E.g.*, Lassalle believed in the dawning of a new era in 1848, to be followed by sunrise in a few decades, *Arbeiterprogramm*, 1862, (*Gesamtwerke*, Leipzig, vol. i. pp. 187, 200).

[14] *Woman and Labour.* So also the socialist and feminist August Forel, *The Sexual Question*, Marshall's translation, New York ed., p. 501.

[15] *Women and Economics*, 59.

[16] S. N. Patten, *Theory of Social Forces*, 1896, pp. 48, 75ff. (Giddings prefers to call them "an effort economy" and "a reward economy," *Principles of Sociology*, 406n.) More recently, in 1912, Patten seems to shove

school of thought, the past has been an age of warfare and destruction — a reign of militarism; and the future is to be an age of peace and construction — of industrialism. This change is the advance which Herbert Spencer, following Comte, who followed Saint-Simon, believed in; and his view seems to be generally accepted. The future is also, in Maine's distinction, to be an age of contract, the past having been one of status. We are already beyond the threshold and in the vestibule of this new era, and the advance further into it is inevitable.[17]

The theory is glittering, but unfortunately it is false. The world has several times before passed from a condition of status to a condition of contract, from a period of warfare to a period of peace, from a state of militarism to a state of industrialism, and in every instance the latter era ushered in the decline and fall of civilisation. The error seems to owe its rise to the habit of treating antiquity as one whole and of contrasting it as such with our present times. In antiquity there was much fighting: therefore the whole of antiquity was an age of warfare. To-day (till recently), there has been much peace, in the continuance of which few doubted till the present rude disturbance: therefore the present and the future have been considered an age of peace. To-day, again, industrialism is at hand. In the past, militarism was rampant. How great the difference! Out of the past also looms up the great Roman empire, and that was one of militarism, and in consequence deserved to fall; whereas our age, devoted to the arts of peace, deserves to endure, and will endure. No error could be more egregious. The Roman empire was not a military empire. The Romans were a race of conquerors, and the empire was their conquest. Still, during the period of its

also pleasure into the past, and to place us at the entrance into a third stage of "creative economy," *The Reconstruction of Economic Theory*, 92. It would seem, in fact, as if it would have to create coal and iron and a few other things, if it is to last to the end of the world, unless this comes soon.

[17] *Cf.* Mrs. Gilman: "the inevitable trend of human life is toward higher civilisation," *op. cit.*, 73. This is but the re-appearance of an idea once laughed down, but perhaps irrepressible. "As improvements have long continued to be incessant," wrote Godwin more than a hundred years ago, "so there is no chance but they will go on. The most penetrating philosophy cannot prescribe limits to them, nor the most ardent imagination adequately fill up the prospect," *Political Justice*, B. IV. ch. xi.

imperatorship, Rome drew wealth from abroad; but the Roman empire drew little or no wealth from beyond its borders: it produced its wealth. Its condition was that of contract, of industrialism. The Roman republic had been military, and in its day Italy alone (south of the Po) could put nearly eight hundred thousand fighting men in the field.[18] Under the empire, throughout its whole circuit around southern Europe, western Asia, and northern Africa, the Roman army rarely exceeded three hundred thousand men, and all the rest of its teeming millions, with the exception of the upper classes, were engaged more or less diligently in productive occupations. The proportion of soldiers to producers was much smaller then than at present.[19] To-day Italy alone, with no greater population, has kept up an army nearly as large, and France, not even the whole of the ancient Gaul, one twice as large. Even little Belgium is prepared to throw into the field in war time an army much larger than Rome ever sent against the Persians or the Germans. In the whole confines of what was the Roman empire are, in times of profound peace, under arms more than two million men, without counting the reserves. The martial spirit, also, is to-day much more aroused than it was then. One cause of the prevalent mistake is, no doubt, the fact that the title of the Roman chief, "emperor," was a military term, and he was supported by a pretorian guard, who sometimes pulled him down and set up another. But the pretorian guard never consisted of more than ten thousand men, and it was the only garrison retained in all Italy. The fact that so small a body of soldiers could make and unmake emperors shows only too plainly how unwarlike the inhabitants had become. Says a recent historian, speaking of conditions in the third century: "The citizens of the Empire presented a strange similitude to China in the helpless passiveness of the masses of the population."[20] How absurd is it,

[18] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* III. xxiv. (or xx.).

[19] What follows was written before the outbreak of the present war in Europe, and it is left unchanged.

[20] W. S. Davis, *The Influence of Wealth in Imperial Rome*, 316. This writer further says: "It is usual to speak of the Roman imperial army as very large. As a matter of fact it was extremely small for its task of beating back the Picts in Britain, the Germans on the Rhine and Danube, the Parthians and Persians on the Euphrates, the negro tribes in Nubia and the Moors in Africa, as well as for holding in quietness the prov-

then, to say that the Roman empire was military and that Europe to-day is industrial. The truth is that modern civilisation has, fortunately, not yet entirely entered the industrial stage, which the Roman entered under Augustus. We in the United States have perhaps already entered it. The English in their isolation have approached next to it. But Europe as a whole is not yet out of the state of militarism; for no one nation there has yet subjugated the rest. And when Europe and America do get fully immersed in the state of industrialism, they will merely be running into the last stage which was traversed by Rome, by Greece, by Persia, by Babylon, by Assyria, by Egypt.

The hackneyed saying that history never repeats itself, applies only to details; for in a broad and general outline history has hitherto constantly repeated itself. An ever-ascending civilisation would be a new departure, for which no reason is at hand. Since the first cycle there has been, in a generic sense, little that is new under the sun. New things are mostly specific or particular. If we have the printing of books, the ancients had the multiplication of books in factories where numerous scribes copied at the dictation of a reader. If we have newspapers, they had official gazettes and other means for the dissemination of news by writing or by word of mouth. If we have gunpowder and artillery, they had archery and various kinds of ballistic engines. We have railways, but they too had their post-roads. All these things have come to us well along in the ascending period of our civilisation, to which they contributed; and the corresponding things came to the ancients likewise before the culmination of theirs. In their most flourishing periods there was an extension of literature, a suppression of lawlessness, and a practise of traveling about for business and pleasure, such as had not been seen before, and which must have appeared as marvelous then as do these things to-day. Our factories are larger, better equipped, better managed than theirs; but they had factories. They had also banks and various instruments of credit, though not so developed or so perfected or so perverted as ours. Our evils also are not new. There were strikes and boycotts and

inces," 315n. In the interior, "peace had become the normal, the expected thing. Military drill was seldom taught now in the gymnasium," 317.

lockouts in antiquity, and commercial crises. There were teachings of anarchism, individualism, and socialism, with some attempts at putting them into practice, and celibacy and childlessness and physical deterioration. If we seem to have some new diseases of the body, it appears to be merely through lack of sufficient information about them in the past. So also of other complaints. Yet we do often find similar accounts in unexpected quarters. The dodge resorted to by the American Steel Trust of employing labourers from many foreign countries speaking different languages and therefore finding difficulty in combining, may seem extremely clever and original. But read Diodorus's description of the Egyptian gold mines, as worked by the Ptolemies. There the miserable convict labourers had "set over them guards of barbarian soldiery, speaking various tongues, so that none could be corrupted through conversation or familiar intercourse." [21] To revert to generals: ours is an age of science,— a skeptical age, an experimenting age. It is so because we are well along in our cycle. So from the early part was distinguished the later part of the Greco-Roman civilisation. After Aristotle our historians lament that Greek philosophy entered a new phase, losing interest in questions of pure intellect, and transferring attention to physics and mechanics, in a truly utilitarian spirit. Socrates began the process of bringing philosophy down from the clouds; and Bacon repeated it. If we have had a Galileo, the Greeks had an Archimedes. If we have had a Voltaire, they had a Lucian.

Our civilisation differs from the ancient principally in degree: everything now is better, finer, greater, stronger, more extensive, swifter in detail, slower in the mass: as a whole our civilisation is on a higher plane and a larger scale. Disparagement of it in comparison with the ancient is obtainable only by the same error of contrasting our present complex state near the turning point toward decline with the primitive period of simplicity and ascent.[22] Reversely, overpraise of it

[21] *Bibliotheca Historica,* III. 12. Varro likewise advised that plantations should be worked by slaves of different nationalities, *De Re Rustica,* I. 17, 5.

[22] As done, for example, by Forel: "While in former civilisations the rich man regarded a multiplicity of wives and children as a condition or cause of his wealth and also as its results, in our modern civilisation the number of children diminishes with the increase of prosperity. Children

cannot be justified in any such a manner. Nor can prospect of perpetual advance be obtained by contrasting with the past our cycle as a whole. It is sometimes said that our civilisation is world-wide, and that this difference in quantity, having reached the maximum and the absolute, is also a difference in kind from all the civilisations that have preceded. If this were so, it might be expected to escape the fate of other civilisations and possibly last forever. Now, it is true that our civilisation has sent its tentacles, like an immense octopus, over the whole earth, but it is not true that already our civilisation is world-wide. If the highly civilised peoples become wholly peaceful and effeminate, they will be devoured as were the Persians by the Greeks, the Greeks by the Romans, and the Romans by the Germans, and as now China is being devoured by Japan. It is true that as we look around, we see no barbarians whom we deem worthy to take our place. But did the Romans see their successors in the Germans? Tacitus, indeed, and a few others pointed to the Germans as models of uncontaminated simplicity and genuineness. But so do many of our world-trotters hold up to our admiration this or that unsophisticated tribe or race. Whether it is to be by the Russians, or by the Japanese, or by the South Americans, or by the South Africans, know we not; but this we know, that whatever people lets its civilisation decline, will be overpowered and suppressed. Now, it appears that almost all civilised peoples that have sunk have stayed down: they have stayed in the condition of unwarlike, pleasure-loving industrialists. Industrialism has been the final sink of militancy. Perhaps, then, as one after another all the backward races of the earth shall have come forward, mounted to the climax of their civilisation, and passed beyond into the state of effeminacy,—then, perhaps, the whole world may have nothing to fear and may have peace, and the much-desired age of tranquil, pleasure-seeking, and possibly pleasure-finding industrialism may be ushered in and remain till the end of things. Whether it will be the highest civilisation or a degenerate civilisation, we may leave for that age itself to decide.

have ceased to be as formerly a source of wealth; on the contrary, they occasion much expense for their education," *The Sexual Question*, 333, *cf.* 433. This ignores the whole latter halves of ancient civilisations.

But our duty is plain: we must exert ourselves to retard the decay to which the very period we have entered of peace, of prosperity, and of enjoyment (now momentarily interrupted), is the inevitable precursor. Decay may be fated, but its date is not fixed. That depends on us: we may hasten it, or put it off. We greatly deceive ourselves if we think that every change we make is progress. It may be regression. Or rather, instead of progress upward, it may be progress downward — down the slope after leaving the level at the top. We need, therefore, to study the signs of regression or decay as they have exhibited themselves to us in the past. Our schools and colleges teach the history of Greece and Rome chiefly in their rise. Academically, their rise is much their most interesting period. But much more important in its moral lessons for us is the study of their fall. By its aid, perhaps, we may avoid some of their mistakes.

CHAPTER V.

THE CAUSES OF DECAY

THE causes of decay are physical or material, and moral or social and economic. The physical causes set bounds to the culminating period; the moral originate within that period and help to bring on its end. The physical causes consist in the exhaustion of the sources whence material wealth is obtained; the moral, in the exhaustion of the energies of men, whereupon they may cease to extract wealth from its sources even before these be exhausted, or may fail to foresee and prevent or retard that exhaustion, or may neglect to supplement it by discovery or conquest of new sources.

Exhaustion of the sources of wealth is twofold, according to the nature of the sources; for some are stores, such as quarries and mines, of minerals which when once extracted cannot be put back, and others are stores of elements contributing to the growth of vegetable substances, which may be perpetually returned to the soil whence they came in the refuse of their consumption, in which case there is restoration of the fertility of the soil; or which may not be so returned, in which case the fertility of the soil itself may be gradually depleted. This alternative is most prominent in the case of quickly reproduced or annually fruit-bearing plants. Intermediate between these and mineral stores are the stores of slowly reproduced wood in forests, which when once cut down cannot be replaced for the generation who consumed their wood, and which yet are different from mines, since they can be renewed after forty or fifty years by the slow upgrowth of other trees on the same soil. Deforestation, however, is often made without permission of such regrowth, and this exhaustion of the stores of wood is analogous to the exhaustion of the stores of minerals.

The final exhaustion of unreplenishable stores cannot be

prevented. At best it can be protracted by economy in the use of the products and avoidance of waste. In particular countries it may be compensated by obtaining new sources elsewhere by exploration and conquest. But in the world at large there can be no such compensation. Here sometimes the exhaustion of one article may be compensated by discovery of some other article that may serve the same purpose; but to this also an end must come. Some articles, such as stone serviceable for building, are said to be inexhaustible, because they may outlast others that render them serviceable. We cannot quarry stone without metal tools, so that exhaustion of metals is of more concern to us than the exhaustion of stone serviceable for building. The supply of clay for brickmaking may also be practically inexhaustible in certain regions; but if the bricks can no longer be economically transported, their supply will be exhausted in most places. Yet some minerals, such as salt, are supplied in quantities absolutely inexhaustible by man.

Exhaustion of the soil is in all cases preventable, and therefore whenever it takes place, it is due to improper management. One of the first and most frequent instances is the deforestation of the hill-sides whence flows the rain-water that fills the streams. This results in washing away the top-soil from the slopes and in flooding and devastating the lowlands and carrying away their top-soil also, or ruining them by deposits of sand or gravel. For only the top-soil of the earth is good for vegetation. In this during ages have been collected and serviceably combined the half-score of elements necessary for the tissues of plants. Of these, six are inexhaustible, but four are not. The exhaustible four are nitrogen, potassium, phosphorus, and sulphur. Of these again two may be easily resupplied from elsewhere by men, and two not. Thus nitrogen may be fixed in the soil by the action, as we know, of bacteria in the roots of leguminous plants; wherefore rotation of crops is necessary, as was early found out by agriculturists, though they did not know the reason. Sulphur also, beside being replenished in rain, is easily supplied from gypsum. But potassium and especially phosphorus require to be returned to the earth in fertilisers, and the only fertiliser that is inexhaustible is manure, which comes from the soil itself. This return to the soil of its own

elements is sometimes neglected through gross carelessness, but the omission takes place regularly in two cases: when a country exports a part of its agricultural produce to other countries, in which case, however, the other countries may gain for their soil what the one loses; and when a part of the agricultural produce of the country is consumed in cities and instead of being returned to the country as manure is drained away into the sea as sewage, and wholly lost, except for a little return coming from fish consumed in the country.[1]

The peoples of the far East have managed these things best,— in fact, only too well, overdoing it, and keeping up an unnecessarily large population. Through the heavy pressure of their excessive numbers upon the means of subsistence and the consequent over-absorption in the problem of mere existence, their civilisation has declined and become stagnant. Ancestor-worship is at the bottom of their trouble, distant though the cause may seem from the effect; for the demand for descendants to worship one as their ancestor has converted every man at an early age into a begetter of children,— and the more he begets, the safer is his position. All other peoples seem to have begun, and certainly all the Aryan races did begin, with such a worship,[2] but these others abandoned it and thereby won an opportunity for ascending to a higher plane of civilisation. They lost at the same time the necessity of learning the lesson of frugality and carefulness; and, in fact, most of the nations of the middle East managed their soil so badly that certain regions, Mesopotamia, Syria, and Northern Africa, once well-forested and rich agricultural countries, seem to be permanently ruined, or reclaimable only at an enormous expense. Deforestation was the principal cause; but in Northern Africa this was supplemented by long-continued exportation of agricultural produce. Rome is proud of its ancient and still used *cloaca maxima;* but that sewer contributed to the ruin of Italy. In all the ancient civilisations, except only Egypt on account of its constant supply of new soil perennially brought down to it by the Nile, the period of greatest prosperity was followed by exhaustion through the giving out

[1] See Herbert Quick's *On Board the Good Ship Earth,* Indianapolis, 1913, chapters 4, 5, 26, 27.

[2] See Fustel de Coulanges, *La Cité antique,* Books I. and II.

of their resources. This generally took place first at the centre and spread outward, compelling the making of conquests further and further away, until the power of expansion was weakened to equality with the outside powers of resistance. The Roman empire is a good example of this. Italy became exhausted first, and the exhaustion went out toward the rim where alone, all around the empire, remained activity in acquisition and production, until at last the hollow shell crumbled, and the old empire continued only in its northeastern portion, while new civilisations arose in the south-east and in the north-west.[2a]

Long periods of great material prosperity have thus always led, and it would seem must always lead, to exhaustion; for even though the soil be well husbanded by a careful agricultural and municipal economy, there must always come a time when the mines which supply the indispensable means of a high material civilisation will give out. Of course it is possible for the exhaustion of the mines of a country to set in at any time. But if this happens early in its ascending period,

[2a] Recently V. G. Simkovitch has revived an idea of Liebig's, that the fundamental cause of the fall of the Roman empire was the exhaustion of the soil (this itself, for instance, being the cause of the concentration of landownership in *latifundia,* because more and more land was needed to support the farmer), *Rome's Fall Reconsidered,* Political Science Quarterly, June, 1916. And E. Huntington supplements this by a still more recessive theory, that the exhaustion of the soil was caused by an (adventitious) "progressive dessication" due to climatic changes (record of which he discovered in the rings of the redwood trees in California), the process happening to begin about 250 B.C. and after some variations culminating in the middle of the seventh century A.D.: *Climatic Changes and Agricultural Exhaustion as Elements in the Fall of Rome,* Quarterly Journal of Economics, Feb., 1917 (and see his *Civilisation and Climate,* New Haven, 1915, esp. p. 227). But the depopulation went further than was required by the exhaustion. This is plain, for instance, from Dio Chrysostom's account of the depopulation of Euboea in the second century A.D., political and military disturbances largely contributing (in his 7th *Oration,* see especially §§ 11–13, 34–7). *Cf.* also, for conditions in Syria, Theodoretus, *Epist.* 48. The sizes of the *latifundia,* moreover, outran the amount needed to support the owners, who were rich men. The Romans might have met the oncoming exhaustion by improvements in agriculture or retrenchment in expenditure: instead, they preferred to conquer more land from their neighbours, and by greater levyings to exhaust it also, until the circle became too large for them to support. Then, when the outsiders broke through, they found the land more or less restored to fertility after lying fallow so long. By the eighth century a considerable part of Italy was reforested, according to Muratori, cited by Robertson, *History of Charles V.,* i. Note 5.

and the people cannot obtain other supplies from elsewhere, the result is merely that such a people's civilisation is cut off prematurely. The civilisations that have attracted attention are those in countries which have had, or have acquired, sources large enough to support a high civilisation; and in them it is the enormous production and consumption in the culminating period of peace and industry that accomplishes the exhaustion. Here, too, room is given to the play of the moral causes of decay. Hard times, therefore, are at some period bound to set in; and if the people are also morally exhausted, being enervated by their prosperity, or become degenerate through a reversal of natural selection which is its consequence, they will be unfit to cope with the new difficulties. Then the surrounding nations, if such there be, that have remained in less prosperous conditions, and have been hardened thereto, have the advantage. Especially so are the peoples who have never yet mounted the cycle of civilisation; for these are actively strong, being still in the military stage of their development. But even so are the peoples who have previously descended theirs and long been degenerate; for the survivors are those who are passively tough and can live on little, and they have superiority in industrialism. The descent of the regnant civilisation, however, may be slow, because its tenants have the superiority of greater enlightenment, of better organisation, and also of prestige. The conflict may be so protracted that the lower races whose arms are ultimately victorious, have time to acquire the rudiments of civilisation, and thus get started on their own career.

The moral causes of decay are more important, because they help on or retard the physical. Thus the mines within the Roman empire were mostly worked to the bitter end, but on the frontiers many had to be abandoned before they were exhausted, through the Roman inability to defend them. Wherefore some, such as the copper mines of Spain, have been reopened and are still worked to-day; and in other cases, with our superior methods there is a little gleaning even of their refuse, as in the silver mines of Attica. On the other hand, the exhaustion of the agricultural and industrial resources of Italy was almost entirely due to moral causes. As

already indicated, these causes originate in the culminating period which precedes the decline.

High civilisation is itself a heavy burden, requiring much labour to keep it up. Every succeeding generation has to devote a longer term of its youth to education in preparation for carrying on the work left to it by the preceding, and the smaller is the chance for carrying the advance further. At last a balance is reached, followed by some oscillation, which brings on discouragement, and simplification is sought by attending only to the rules obtained, without repeating the processes by which they were obtained, falling into ruts, and doing everything by rote. High civilisation brings with it an ever increasing material burden also, in the shape of ever increasing demands on the government, and hence by the government on the people. Taxation continually becomes heavier, and when resources begin to fail, its weight is enhanced by the weakening of the support. In particular, diminution of the supply of the metal used for money, in spite of credit substitutes (which have a limit), causes prices to fall, and thereby raises the real payment. New taxes are hunted out, some of which, like the legacy tax, may, so far as it goes, dissipate capital, and like the income tax, in the indiscriminate way it is generally imposed, favour celibacy, which again favours the consumption of capital. The same effect is produced by the accompanying encumbrance of luxury, or the need of keeping up with an ever rising standard of living on the introduction of new comforts and pleasures; for while the very rich may increase their personal expenditures out of their incomes, the middling rich may be driven beyond theirs and have to draw in and consume their capital. Luxury is not an evil in itself, so far as it is confined to the use of finer and more beautiful things in the place of coarser and uglier; but if such things invite to an undue expenditure of time in enjoying them, or if other amusements call too much away from work, especially at a time when work is no longer required of those who own property because of its becoming absolute and the protection of it being assumed by the state, such luxury of pastime is an evil, and leads to degeneration through overindulgence in pleasure and idleness, as also to dissipation

of capital, which succeeds to its former accumulation.[3] Here, in fact, is an ever increasing temptation to lay down the burden of civilisation and to enjoy it. When civilisation was young, the burden was light to carry, and the pleasures it offered were small, presenting little enticement to shirk the task, which, too, seemed to be imposed by the necessity of the case — by nature, by instinct. But with advancement in civilisation the burden becomes heavier on the one hand, while on the other the pleasures it offers grow greater, with greater allurement to turn aside from work, which no longer is imposed by necessity in the case of an ever increasing number of persons, who, in favoured positions protected by the almost automatically running governments now instituted, use their reason to adapt themselves to the new conditions. Therefore a time arrives when the motive to lay down the burden equals and then exceeds the motive to carry it.

This change of motive power, with its consequent action, always makes its first appearance in the upper classes of society. Among these the evil of desertion of duty often appears even during the ascending period of civilisation, but then it is corrected by another class overthrowing the corrupt and parasitic class and commencing its own leadership in a healthy condition. But when far-extending security and long-continued prosperity bring this condition to the middle classes, rendering them unfit to purify the rulers, there is little chance that the task will be performed by the lower classes; and when these, too, become infected, the case is hopeless. Everything being procurable for and valued in money, money becomes the chief object of worship, and the only aims money-making and money-spending. The ascent in the earlier period necessarily proceeded by consolidation and the breaking down of old hard and fast distinctions of class and rank. This process now runs on into excess, and hardly any distinctions are left in society but the one between rich and poor, which

[3] This is shown by the rate of interest. In a state like Holland in the seventeenth century, approaching its culmination, interest fell to two *per cent.* because there was little opportunity for spending, amusements being few. But now, though our means of production are much larger, our incitements to spending (on theatres, operas, balls, travelling, yachts, automobiles, aëroplanes, etc.) are so great, that the lowest rate of interest that induces to save is about five *per cent.* In the future it is likely to rise.

emerges more and more and in its turn tends to become clear and hard. Pressure from without being removed, there is disintegration of society into its elementary atoms, every individual looking after his own interests, or at best after those of other individuals as such. Even men and women become less dependent on each other, and when married, instead of becoming one, they remain two, the differences between their functions being as much as possible ignored. The old virtues which prepared to meet danger and enjoined public spirit, the old masculine virtues, become mixed with the feminine, which are purely private, personal, and individualistic. For patience consists in waiting for others to act; faith in others offers opportunity for imposture; chastity, carried to excess because of revulsion from the excesses in immorality of others, helps on the tendency to celibacy and childlessness; and affection, subsisting only between individuals in immediate and intimate intercourse with one another, drops all concern for the public and for the future. The old obligatory relations having been swept away, the only things that bind now are contracts between individuals, and there are no other duties beside those in the bond. When contracts are made in writing, with black on white, definite, signed and sealed, they must be honestly observed; but when they can only be oral or indefinite, as between a trader and his customers, between a corporation and its scattered employés, between its directors and the unknown stockholders, between officials and the public, room is left for fraud. The tendency to break down distinctions and to sunder bands, goes so far even as to attempt to do away with the natural distinction between the sexes and to loosen the marriage tie. The endowment of women by men with property makes them seem independent and the equals of men. Divorce becomes common, and women demand the privileges which nature permits to men. The consequence is dissoluteness. The softening of manners, the growing sensitiveness to pain, and the consequent shrinking from inflicting it upon others, or the general effeminateness and humanitarianism, lead to relaxation of discipline and toleration of immorality, the good abandoning the task of controlling the bad, until this task is reassumed by the prophets and the mischief is corrected by the recrudescence of religion,

reintroducing the old evils of superstition, especially if it have a young and vigorous people to serve as its instrument.

In this survey of the tendencies of high civilisation we see the consequences especially of two great evils — the lessening of effort to reproduce wealth, and the lessening of effort to reproduce men. For the task of civilisation is twofold, consisting of the duty to improve the society in which one's lot is cast, and of the duty to propagate one's race throughout all time. The former requires strife and striving, competition and strenuous exertion; the latter, desire, or at least willingness, to support others. Abandonment of the one leads to diminution of work, and ultimately to poverty; of the other, to deterioration of the race, and to weakness; of both, to the dissolution of society. Both, again, are due to general discouragement, which itself is due on the one hand to surfeit and on the other to discontent, and altogether to loss of incentive. Having a common cause, they appear together in the culminating period of civilisation.

As for the first evil: On the material side the discouragement leads to slackening of competition. The advance of civilisation in the ascending period we have seen to have proceeded through struggle and to have attained its end by combination. That was military and political struggle and combination, and the time always arrived when less was to be gained than lost by continuing the contention, whereupon an era of peace ensued. Now the same process runs on through agricultural and industrial struggle to agricultural and industrial combination. Large fortunes are accumulated by single individuals, and invested in land or in financial enterprises; and in addition large combinations are formed, which seek and often obtain the monopoly of some branch of industry. These procure excessive gain by paying low prices for what they buy, which reduces production, and by charging high prices for what they sell, which reduces consumption. Among their expenditures is the wage of labour, and this wage they try to lower, while the labour obtained for it they try to augment. In reply, the labourers also combine for resistance, and by forming a monopoly of the labour supply they try to raise wages and to diminish labour. On each side greater gain is perceived to be obtained by working to-

gether in agreement and harmony; and here the state is compelled to step in and regulate the relations of capital and labour, and every regulation more or less impedes activity. Meanwhile, between the upper millstone of the few great capitalists, who can employ unfair competition in the exchange-market, and the nether millstone of the labourers, who can be controlled only by the great employers, the middle classes suffer danger of being crushed out, and of leaving the extremes of wealth and of poverty in confrontation with each other, between whom the combat will be mortal. Meanwhile, as an expression of these tendencies, socialistic ideas have appeared, advocated by the labouring classes and their abettors, who would go further in the leveling process of democracy and break down the last remaining distinction, that between rich and poor; for that between the sexes they will ignore as a matter of course. The distinction between rich and poor they would break down avowedly to raise all to wealth, but with the more likely result of reducing all to poverty. The coming of the lower classes into power permits the more or less injudicious execution of socialistic ideas, introducing mediocrity and eventuating in distress.

As to the second evil: The burden of high civilisation, as we have seen, imposes long preparation in youth, and thus compels postponement of marriage to a later age. At the same time the comforts and pleasures of high civilisation give opportunity for amusement in youth, and thereby lessen the urgency of the pleasure of marriage: young people of both sexes wish rather to taste first the enjoyments of promiscuous flirtation at least, if not of some other kind of promiscuity. When they do marry, less need is felt of children, since children are no longer a help: on the contrary, they are a burden, or an inconvenience, consuming the father's resources and the mother's time. On the wife's part, moreover, the pains of parturition being increased through the enervation consequent upon indulgence, there is added unwillingness to suffer them more than once or twice. There is competition, also, of other amusements, and means are discovered and knowledge of them disseminated for enjoying the marital intercourse without result or for obviating it. Hence the tendency is to both fewer and smaller families. This leads to the diminution and ex-

tinction of the lines of the persons so behaving. It begins always in the upper classes, and thus produces upper-class suicide; which means the falling away of the leaders and the unloading of the burden of civilisation upon the lower classes, whose ancestors did not produce it and who are less fit to carry it on. It spreads to the middle classes, which we have just seen are subject to other, to economic, causes of extinction. At last, through the non-observance of the distinction between the sexes and the employment of women in industry like men, it reaches the lower classes, and then there is race-suicide, or a tendency to it, till it is arrested by the end of the civilisation which caused it.

Beside this effect on quantity, there is a deleterious effect on quality. A falling birth-rate means avoidance of the struggle for existence, and thus does away with the basis for natural selection. For natural selection large families, potentially at least, through many parturitions, are needed, that the weak may be weeded out and the strong alone survive.[4] Especially is much engendering (preferably by those who are already strong and efficient) needed, since it is discovered that the elder children are more apt to inherit the feeble qualities of their progenitors, such as tendencies to consumption and insanity, and the later children are more apt to inherit their good qualities and to be strong and healthy; but it is precisely these who are cut off in families purposely kept small, and the former alone produced. In small families, too, is missed the struggle between the children themselves — their competition and emulation, and at the same time their care for one another, which is perhaps the best part of their training. Then, it is precisely those who are most serviceable to society that are most likely to have the fewest or no children, leaving the propagation of the race to the less fit: in fact, it is observed that the feeble-minded and the unintelligent are the most prolific. The tendency to degeneration is also enhanced by the humanitarian spirit, which refuses to punish the criminal severely, and befriends and supports the weak and incompetent, establishing charitable institutions for the purpose,

[4] Where natural selection was most active, the actual families were not necessarily large. Thus Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi, had twelve children, but only three grew up.

while improved medicine and hygiene keep the sickly and defective in existence. Among the primitive Scythians and Germans and even some Greeks it was customary to bathe the new-born babes in cold water, in order to harden them and to let those perish who were too weak to endure such exposure.[5] That was a purposeful aid to natural selection, and the result was a strong and vigorous race. The method, however, may have gone too far, as it would extinguish infants, because of their weak bodies, who might have good mental stuff in their little skulls. But this is no reason why people should go to the other extreme. Yet they finally do: they coddle and perseveringly preserve the infirm, the incompetent, the imbecile;[6] and then they rely on the consequent falling death-rate to make up for the falling birth-rate; and fail to see that as more than a sixth of the annual death-list is of babies under one year of age, and nearly a quarter under the age of five, a falling birth-rate cannot but be attended by a falling death-rate, especially if medical and sanitary methods of saving and prolonging life are being improved and applied the while; in which case it is principally the lives of weaklings that are preserved, and the result means precisely the maintenance of the less fit.[7] When the period of decay has once set in, warfare is renewed, the wealth and the weakness of civilisation inviting attack. But this warfare on the part of the decaying civilised states is different from the old, when they were rising. That tended to improve the race, because all were sent out and the strongest

[5] Soranus, *De Gynaeciis,* I. xxviii. 81. Plutarch, in his *Life of Lycurgus,* says the Spartans used wine for this purpose. Soranus criticised this treatment as injuring those who survived. But he lived in the late degenerate days of Greece.

[6] And we of these later days, so act. Recently, during the winter of 1915–16, in New York, there was considerable criticism, and some talk of prosecution, of a couple of parents who let their monstrous offspring die, instead of having them saved by surgical operations for lives of invalidism and semi-idiocy. Doctors make their living by keeping people alive, and so are inclined to discourse about the sacredness of human life. But many of the laity and also a few doctors came to the defence of those concerned in these cases, and they were left in peace. This may perhaps be the beginning of a change in our views, or at least a recoil from extravagant absurdity.

[7] Deleterious selection may appear variously, often mixed in with beneficial selection. A plague may weed out the weak and delicate, but it may have other effects. Thucydides remarked that in the plague at Athens the most virtuous perished through exposing themselves to infection in attending the sick, II. 51 (5).

and hardiest came back. But in the late warfare only the strongest and bravest are admitted into the armies, and these are destroyed.[8]

Civilisation as a process may be distinguished into two kinds — a "traditional and acquired," which is peculiar to man, and a "racial or inherent," an improvement in breed.[9] The former is all that body of ideas, customs, institutions, standards of desire, etc., handed on from generation to generation, and ever developing, ever growing, till at last, as we have seen, in its complexity the burden becomes almost too heavy to be carried further. The other ought to accompany it, as its basis, since a greater burden needs greater strength to support it. And no doubt there is such adaptation in an ascending race. But in the general run this advance in any breed of animals is naturally slow. It has been questioned, for instance, whether the most advanced races of men to-day are in any appreciable measure superior to the Greeks of the days of Pericles.[10] But the Greeks of those days were superior to our Celtic and Germanic ancestors, and if we to-day equal the ancient Greeks, it shows ascent in our line.[11] Artificial selection, as in the breeding of domestic animals and plants, may cause greater celerity of advance, but always with a tendency to quick reversion, unless diligent care be taken to keep up the excellences obtained, by constant weeding out of the revertive specimens. In the ascending periods of civilisation there is

[8] The harmful influence of standing armies upon "the breed" was noticed by Franklin, in 1783, as reported in the 3d edition of Romilly's *Memoirs*, i. 455. *Cf.* also Darwin, *Descent of Man*, 134 (New York ed.); and Spencer, *Study of Sociology*, 196–7. Otto Seeck in his *Geschichte des Untergangs der antiken Welt* calls attention to the fact that the citizen-soldiers of the Roman republic had wives and children, and kept up their breed, but the professional soldiers of the Roman empire were not allowed to marry and left no legitimate children, and the fighting breed died out, i. 253–4. Nor must the effect of actual warfare be overrated. In all wars the population, at least on the side of the vanquished, are exposed to great hardships, to which the weakest succumb. After many destructive wars there has been a speedy resurrection of the people, due to the disproportionate survival of the strong and the intelligent: so Seeck, *ib.* 284–6, *cf.* 252.

[9] Saleeby, *Parenthood and Racial Culture*, 302–3.

[10] A. R. Wallace, *Social Environment and Moral Progress*, 13, 21, 32.

[11] Ignorance of this is shown, for instance, by Henry George in his bold and bald assertion that "human progress is not the improvement of human nature: the advances in which civilisation consists are not secured in the constitution of man, but in the constitution of society," *Works*, i. 560, *cf.* ii. 2.

such weeding out, and a constant application of natural selection, almost as effective as artificial selection, since (in spite of some exceptions [12]) the instinctive customs of the people favour it. But with the arrival at success and the quiet of enjoyment, this process slackens, and finally is reversed.

The causes of racial decay were studied by Francis Galton, who published his results in 1869 in his work on *Hereditary Genius*. He ascribed the decay which threatens us to the fact that, while "in a young colony" (= the early period of civilisation) "a strong arm and an enterprising brain are the most appropriate factors for a marrying man," and, women being fewer, "the inferior males" are less likely to marry; in an old civilisation the active and ambitious, unless rich by inheritance, cannot make their way up in society "if they hamper themselves with a wife in their early manhood" (p. 361); and when they do marry, they, and their sons after them, often look out for heiresses [i.e. single daughters, of parents thereby proved to be little fertile, who therefore themselves are likely to be infertile] and their line is exposed to extinction (pp. 131-40); as also because they tend "to settle in the great cities, where marriages are less prolific and children are less likely to live. Owing to these several causes, there is a steady check in an old civilisation upon the fertility of the abler classes: the improvident and unambitious chiefly keep up the breed. So the race gradually deteriorates, becoming in each successive generation less fitted for a high civilisation, although it retains the external appearances of one, until the time comes when the whole political and social fabric caves in and a greater or less relapse to barbarism takes place, during the reign of which the race is perhaps able to recover its tone" (pp. 361–2). "The wisest policy," he concluded, "is that which results in retarding the average age of marriage among the weak, and in hastening it among the vigorous classes; whereas, most unhappily for us, the influence of numerous social agencies has been strongly and banefully exerted in the precisely opposite direction" (pp. 352–3).

Galton wisely despaired of a change for the better coming about of itself, or being effected by a mere general enlighten-

[12] Such as ecclesiastical celibacy and the inquisition, noticed by Galton in the work to be cited, pp. 357–60.

ment.[13] Perceiving that specific instruction to this end needs to be given, he founded a school of what he called eugenics, or the science of good breeding. His followers have systematised his views, and emphasised the danger of "reversed selection."[14] This reversal of natural selection now taking place,

[13] He had not the foolish optimism of W. R. Greg, who, in 1874, following him, in his *Enigmas of Life,* although he added a physiological principle (adapted from Spencer) of "a tendency of cerebral development to lessen fertility," p. 103, cheerfully wrote that "a reply to these objections is simply this: . . . True culture, as it spreads,—the influence of a really enlightened civilisation, in our age and country,—ought to [and will, 138, since it requires only a "reasonable" amount of intelligence, 107] have a double operation: in the creation, on the one side, of a class of healthy and educated and laborious, but no longer stinted poor, whose redundant fertility will be controlled at once by greater providence and more developed brains, and, on the other side, in the growth of wiser and more right-minded superior classes, estimating more truly the vital essentials of a happy and worthy existence, less fearing a social fall, and less ambitious of a social rise, less straitened and less deterred from marriage than at present, and therefore both positively and relatively more prolific. The problem of progress may thus be successfully wrought out, in perfect conformity with the physiological laws we have assumed, by the mitigated fecundity of the multitude in proportion to their culture and social elevation, and the simultaneously augmented fecundity of the ranks above them, as they learn the true philosophy of life," 143–4. It is easy to make pleasant predictions, but thereby the prospect of their fulfilment is little furthered. Greg himself says "human tenderness is a sad disturber of human intelligence," and "a large part of the business of the wise is to counteract the efforts of the good," 178. But will the wise, who look to the public at large and to the future, be able to counteract the efforts of the good, who attend to the feelings, the sentiments, and the happiness of existing individuals? It would seem that nature aims rather at a succession of one people after another rising to civilisation and making room for others; for else one race would have gone ahead and kept ahead throughout the course of time. When all have mounted to civilisation, this series must cease, and then perhaps all will be wise and strong enough to act intelligently.

[14] *E.g.,* Saleeby: "Directly the social conditions become too easy, selection ceases, and it is as successful to be incompetent or lazy or vicious as to be worthy. The hard conditions that kept weeding out the unworthy are now relaxed, and the fine race they make goes back again. Finally there occurs the phenomenon of *reversed selection,* when it is fitter to be bad than good, cowardly than brave—as when religious persecution murders all who are true themselves and spares hypocrites and apostates; or when healthy children are killed in factories whilst feeble-minded children or deaf-mutes are carefully tended until maturity and then sent into the world to reproduce their maladies. . . . When a primitive race is making its way by force, selection is stringent. The weak, cowardly, diseased, stupid are expunged from generation to generation. As civilisation advances, a higher ethical level is reached: all true civilisation tending to abrogate and ameliorate the struggle for existence. The diseased and weakly and feeble-minded are no longer left to pay the penalty sternly exacted by Na-

they urge, must itself be reversed. The unfit whose unfitness is hereditary and transmissible must be taken care of, indeed, charitably, by society; but society must see to it that they do not breed further,[15]— the return for state aid must be renunciation of parenthood (not necessarily, by abstinence, say those who incline to Neo-Malthusianism, but by preventive measures, and if necessary by sterilisation). Also those of the unfit who are provided for by their own families, or who inherit fortunes, as well as those who live precariously or predatorily, must be impressed by public opinion, or checked by positive regulation, likewise to avoid propagating their incapacity. There must be no killing of the weak, which is nature's way of selecting; but there must be prevention of their propagation. Some would go so far as to recommend state aid and encouragement for the continuation of the species by those who are fit. Society, if not government itself, must show some concern about marriages. For all this the study of heredity must be prosecuted, much assistance having already come from the labours of Mendel. Some eugenists, of course, go too far, and ascribe all decay of civilisation to the reversal of selection as its sole cause,[16] and find

ture for unfitness: they are allowed to survive *and multiply*. A successful race can apparently afford to permit this, as a race that is fighting for its existence cannot. But in reality no race can afford this absolutely fatal process.— There is thus a real risk involved in the accumulation of acquired, traditional or educational progress. Not only does it tend to abrogate or even to reverse selection, but it serves to disguise the consequences of this abrogation. . . . We may be congratulating ourselves upon our progress, upon our knowledge, our science and art, our institutions, legal and charitable, whilst all the time the breed is undergoing retrogression. . . . Under reversed selection . . . the race degenerates rapidly; and if it be an imperial race, its empire comes crashing down about its ears. All empires and civilisations hitherto have involved the partial or complete arrest or reversal of the process of natural selection; and the racial degeneration which necessarily ensued has been the cause of their invariable doom," *Parenthood and Race Culture*, 306–7.

[15] *Cf.* Saleeby, 26–30. He even objects to the sentiment expressed in the lines:

> "Thou shalt not kill, but need'st not strive
> Officiously to keep alive."

[16] So Saleeby: "I advance this [the reversal of selection caused by traditional progress or civilisation] as the reason why history records no enduring empire," 308. He admits, however, alcoholism and some other "racial poisons" (the term is his own, 237–8) such as syphilis, to be among the "causes of true racial degeneration," 318. But D. S. Jordan finds the one sole cause both of reversed selection and degeneration in war: the

the one sole remedy in their recommendation, which they seem to think will be sufficient,— or at least they think it indispensable;[17] which may well be true, unless natural selection can be restored. But traditional civilisation does run on, through its own momentum, even after the people are decayed,— as witness the Byzantine empire; because its neighbours have delayed giving it the push which topples it over. And when institutional civilisation has become corrupt, even a revival of a good breed might not be sufficient to restore it to health. The new superior race would need to have the knowledge of what they ought to do, and also the will to do it. The latter especially might be lacking, if, instead of being developed by the hard knocks of natural selection, they were produced by the careful nursing of gentle artificial breeding. Yet no one can doubt but that eugenics will be a powerful aid to prevent further decay, if we still have the wisdom and the will-power to apply it. If we do not, and if it be as Utopian as Darwin believed it,[18] perhaps a future cycle will be able to do what we cannot.[19] Meanwhile, therefore, we may proceed.

cause, he says, of the glory of Greece passing away "was the one cause of all such downfalls — the extinction of strong men by war," *War and the Breed,* 141; *cf.* "Had they [the Romans] held aloof from world-conquering schemes, Rome might have remained a republic, enduring even down to our day," 131–2. Yet all his references are to the many petty civil wars of the Greeks and the few great civil wars and proscriptions of the Romans. These indeed rooted out the best — the leading men in those peoples, and left the cringing and cowardly; and were followed later by another reversed selection in the persecution of the Christians, the martyrs being the best among them: see the chapter on "Die Ausrottung der Besten" in Seeck's *Geschichte,* especially in the 3d edition.

[17] Saleeby: "Our redemption from the fate of all our predecessors is to be found only in eugenics — the selection of the best for parenthood," 318. G. B. Shaw: "Nothing but a eugenic religion can save our civilisation from the fate that has overtaken all previous civilisations," in the Sociological Papers of the London Sociological Society, 1904, p. 74.

[18] *Descent of Man,* 617–18, *cf.* 134.

[19] It may be said, in a general way, that one of the important means for keeping down population (with some tendency to weeding) in antiquity was infanticide; in modern times a corresponding means is abortion; and in the future it may be contraception. But abortion does little weeding; and contraception of itself will not do any, but rather the opposite, unless wisdom guide it.— Of course the example of the breeding of domestic animals is so plain that it could not escape the ancients, and so, long before Galton, there was at least talk about, though little investigation into, the science which he has named. Thus beside the well-known lines of Theognis (183–96), and Plato's *Republic,* 459A–461E, see also Ocellus

Still other and later emerging effects of prosperity that are causes of further decay, remain to be mentioned. The evils of excessive, or rather of lop-sided, prosperity, when they develop and become conspicuous, awaken suspicion of the benefits of science, which, though to be credited with the prosperity, is held responsible also for the evils; and this so-called "bankruptcy of science" produces a revulsion to superstition. The selfish individualism and loss of public spirit and of loyalty or confidence in one another, which reigns where wealth alone is craved and honesty in carrying out formal or written bonds alone observed, though it increases the power to make private combinations for gain, takes away ability to combine politically; and thus leads to the leaving of everything to one representative governor, who, because the people are too divided and distracted to hold him to account, becomes an irresponsible despot. At length the failure of the mines (for the last supplies of iron must be used in arms) brings on a lessened use of artillery, and the debilitated bodies of men are unable to wield such heavy weapons as formerly, so that the attack in the open becomes weaker than the defence behind stone walls; which leads, as we have seen, to decentralisation and a final break-up. But these are such ulterior effects, that their causes are not so much the consequences of a high civilisation, as the consequences of its consequences.

Both the physical and moral causes of decay sum themselves up and manifest themselves in one great evil, which increases with advancing civilisation till it destroys it. This is what Ferrero calls "excessive urbanisation," which he considers the disease that killed the Roman empire.[20] For it is the concentration of population in cities, and their devotion to

Lucanus, *De Universi Natura,* IV. 13–14, and Soranus, I. ix. 34, x. 39, 40. Moreover, there was practice of it also, but imperfect, and with imperfect results. Thus Plutarch tells us, in his *Life of Lycurgus,* that the Lacedaemonians not only made their women strong, but sometimes put out their wives to vigorous companions. Yet their arrangements produced no eminent men except warriors. Diodorus Siculus, XVII. 91 (4–7), and Quintus Curtius, IX. 5, describe a people in India among whom marriages were regulated according to the beauty of the bodies of the aspirants, and the offspring (as at Sparta too) could be reared only if approved by a commission appointed for the purpose (*cf.* also Strabo, XV. p. 699). But it did not prevent them from surrendering to Alexander without a blow.

[20] *Ancient Rome and Modern America,* 78.

the elaborating industries there conducted, that call away from the production of materials and cause the decay of agriculture, while luxury and display are fostered, which undermine fortunes. The greatest splendour of the city of Rome was in the fourth century A.D.,[21] when, as we know, its civilisation was well-nigh spent. So also in the Hellenic world, and in the Babylonian before it, the greatest expenditures upon works of public magnificence came near the end. The reason is twofold. First, the civilisation must be far advanced before there is concentration of wealth and means and science enough to be able to erect such tremendous structures; and secondly, the immense expenditure of unproductive labour is the final stroke that drains the wealth of the nation. Cities merely elaborate and consume what the country sends them. The more the spirit of the people drives them from the country to the city for amusement and distraction, the more grows unproductive labour and to less and less falls productive labour. The Roman state, as Ferrero points out, actually fostered this tendency by donations to the poor of the cities, and by imposing taxes and obligations upon the people of the country; all which only increased the evil by attracting the people still more from the country, where they were slaves, to the cities, where alone they enjoyed liberty. We, he warns, must not do this, if we would escape the catastrophe of a state with cities left high and dry without a country to rest on. We must let the peoples in the cities suffer, if they congest there too much, so that they will by their own misery be driven back to the country. But can we? Will we? Is not the humanitarian spirit too strong now, as it was too strong in Rome? The cities lead in control of the state now as they did then. They vie with one another for greatness, taking pride in their size. Will they drive away their own population? Already we have shelters and soup-kitchens, not to forget free swimming baths; already our swarming out-of-work city proletariat scorn the country "hay-seeds," and prefer to half-starve in company than to drudge on isolated farms. It is easy to say, So and so will prevent us from running the course which the ancients ran to their ruin. But the question is: Have we the will to adopt the strong and painful measures that alone

[21] Ferrero, 93.

are the cure? Have we even the desire? It may be, but it also may not be. It may be that we prefer to consider only ourselves, and to let the future take care of itself.[22] This, however, is not our duty.

[22] As directly advised, *e.g.*, by W. J. Robinson, in his work on *The Limitation of Offspring*, New York, 1915: "Somehow or other I have always been of the opinion that if we deal intelligently with the present we can safely let the future take care of itself," 29; and again: "If we will take care of the present the future will take care of itself," 89. In the matter before us Forel believes everything will be well; for he thinks the improved means of communication have brought about "a transportation of town to country and of country to town," in which bringing together "of the two modes of life" he sees "the dawn of salvation in the future," *The Sexual Question*, 329. He overlooks that it is precisely these improved means of transportation that have enabled the cities to grow so enormously, and leave in them a larger and larger residue who never get away to the country, or for so short a time as to have little influence upon their lives.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DECAY OF ANCIENT CIVILISATIONS

ALL the evils we have described are found in accounts of ancient civilisations, and are discovered in greater detail, the more we learn of their conditions. Of the very earliest peoples that have risen to a high culture, our knowledge, though unsatisfactory, is indeed mostly of their declining and low stationary periods; of the so-called classic states our knowledge goes back to a portion of their ascending period and covers the whole of their culminating as well as of their declining periods. On the other hand, of the modern Germanic and Slavic nations of Europe we have complete information starting from the commencement of their rise and reaching toward their culmination; but not yet open to us is more than a forecast of their decline.

In China and India still survive, in the decayed and stationary state, civilisations which may perhaps date back to the earliest times, having seen perhaps but one cycle. They have continued so long because of the prodigious populations of those lands, which has rendered it impossible for any of their neighbours, though conquering, to destroy them. For thousands of years those peoples have remained in a decrepit stage of individualism, every one looking out for himself and his own salvation, in various combinations with regard to the petty affairs of life, but leaving public affairs to a few rulers, despotism being the common end, without patriotism, without national aspirations. The more compact Japanese are now making a new start. Similarly in the west of Asia the Persians had two cycles; for it was those who went down into the Mesopotamian plain that inherited the decay of the Babylonian civilisation, while those who remained in the hills formed the nucleus for a revival, and perhaps may now be preparing for a third. In Arabia a semi-civilisation has languished for millenniums, for an opposite reason to that accounting for

the lethargy of India and China, in that this country is too sterile either to sustain a large population or to attract invaders. Upon the stimulus of a new indigenous religion, at a time when all the rest of the world was sunk in decay, its tribes started to form a new empire, and went forth and subdued other peoples, and made converts, such as the Turks, who continued their conquests for a while, only to fall into irretrievable degeneracy, after the hollowest and briefest civilisation the world has witnessed.

Egypt and Mesopotamia contained two ancient civilisations well worth study in their decline, but whose history has not yet been sufficiently unraveled for us here to make much use of it. The Egypt known to Herodotus in the fifth century B.C. had already reached its final stationary period, while the civilisation of Greece had not yet attained its culmination. Accordingly all Egyptian manners and customs seemed to him to be reversed: he noted, for instance, that differently from other peoples the Egyptian women went out to work in the fields and marts, and the men staid at home and wove, and upon the daughters, not the sons, was laid the duty of supporting the parents.[1] Four hundred years later, when Greece also was in its decline, things in Egypt still struck Diodorus as "paradoxical," [2] but he did not see in them the same contrasts. His own country, however, had not gone so far, and he was impressed by the greater freedom of women in Egypt, and was led to say that there the women ruled the men, because in their marriage contracts something like this was agreed to.[3] These are exaggerations. Some men engaged in weaving, and some women engaged in trade. The support of aged parents was left to the daughters when the property was turned over to them. Marriage settlements, drawn up in written contracts, were common, and in some of them the husband immediately or by degrees turned over his property to his wife, but in others various dispositions were made. When the property was to come later to the wife, she had a mortgage, so to speak, on her husband's estate, and he could

[1] II. 35.
[2] I. 94
[3] I. 27.— Nymphodorus Syracusanus ascribed these inversions to Sesostris for the purpose of making the men effeminate, to keep them from revolting, in Mueller's *Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum,* vol. ii. p. 380.

not sell any of it without her consent, just as in America today. The turning over of property to the wife during her lifetime is supposed to have been for the purpose of ensuring its succession to the children; but as it is done at present amongst us for other reasons, that may not have been its sole reason there. But the women, so far from ruling the men, cannot be rightly said even to have been equal to them,[4] except among the lowest classes. The moralist Ptah-hetep addressed his precepts to men; and one of them is thus translated: "If thou wouldst be wise, rule thy house, and love thy wife." He tells them, indeed, to be kind and attentive to their wives, "for thereby shalt thou make her stay in thy house."[5] This last refers to the ease with which the wife might depart from her husband and rejoin her own kin; and it was this more than anything which shocked the Greeks. Yet if the Egyptian women were more emancipated than the Grecian, they did not have any power over men save what men freely gave them.[6] No woman was allowed to be a priestess. To be a queen regnant, the king's daughter Hatshepset, when installed as co-regent, had to be treated as a man — dressed as such, and represented with a beard; and to consolidate her position, she had to be married to her younger half-brother, the king's son by an ignoble wife, though she was sprung from his regal spouse. An inscription of Rameses III., a king of the twentieth dynasty, says he "made it possible for an Egyptian woman to walk with a bold and free step whithersoever she pleased, and no man or woman of the people would molest her."[7] This bears testimony to a high development of the police power. In fact, Egyptian civilisation was then at its culmination. It is remarkable that in the reign of this king a conspiracy was hatched by the women of his court to put on the throne one of his younger sons, who was not in the regal line.[8] His successors abandoned foreign wars, and gave up their possessions in Syria; and the next dynasty was one of

[4] As maintained by E. Simcox in her *Ancient Civilisations*, i. 200. Yet she quotes from the Maxims of Ani: "The wife talks of her husband, and a man of his trade," 202.

[5] E. A. Wallis Budge, *History of Egypt*, ii. 150.

[6] *Cf.* Ch. Letourneau, *L'Évolution du Mariage et de la Famille*, 221.

[7] Budge, *op. cit.*, iv. 2; v. 161

[8] *Ib.* v. 172–6, vi. 56.

priests. The empire fell into decline, and after several centuries the priests, having lost power, called in the Nubians, who subdued most of the country. One of their kings, it may be noted, abolished capital punishment.[9] The whole land was the property of the king, the priests, and the warriors, all the rest of the population being tenants; and the occupations and professions were hereditary.[10] The warriors being comparatively few, mercenaries had to be hired. Subsequently the country was conquered by the Assyrians, later by the Persians, and lastly by the Greeks and the Romans; and has never again been autonomous.

About the peoples in Mesopotamia still less need here be said. The Sumerians and Babylonians, and the Chaldœans as well, were original settlers in the plain, the founders of its civilisation, from whom the Assyrians were an offshoot. The Medes and the Persians came down from the mountains, and carried on the civilisation they found already developed. A striking similitude exists between the relation of the Babylonians to the Assyrians and that of the Greeks to the Romans; for in each set the former brought the arts and sciences to the more warlike latter, and falling before, rose again after them. There, at least in later times, the land was owned in large sections, women had property, marriage settlements were common, and divorce was easy.[11] The lesson taught by these peoples is thus summarised by Rawlinson of the Assyrians: "With much that was barbaric still attaching to them, with a rude and inartificial government, savage passions, a debasing religion, and a general tendency to materialism, they were, towards the close of their empire, in all the ordinary arts and appliances of life, very nearly on a par with ourselves; and thus their history furnishes a warning — which the records of nations constantly repeat — that the greatest material prosperity may co-exist with the decline — and herald the downfall — of a kingdom." [12]

With Greece and Rome are we mostly concerned, because

[9] *Ib.* vi. 117, 130, 132, after Herodotus, II. 137, and Diodorus, I. 65.
[10] Diodorus, I. 73–4.
[11] Already in Hammurabi's code, consisting of 282 paragraphs, 68 are devoted to marital and parental relations.
[12] *The Five Great Monarchies of the Ancient Eastern World,* end of the Second Monarchy.

only of them we have complete information about the two periods that here interest us. Rome, as the more inclusive, may chiefly draw our attention. Of its empire in the second century of our era, Gibbon wrote in 1776 that, "if a man were called to fix the period in the history of the world, during which the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous, he would, without hesitation, name that which elapsed from the death of Domitian to the accession of Commodus," or from 96 to 180.[13] These words were penned in obvious antithesis to a passage in one of Robertson's histories published seven years before, which runs to the effect that, "if a man were called to fix upon a period in the history of the world, during which the condition of the human race was most calamitous and afflicted, he would, without hesitation, name that which elapsed from the death of Theodosius the Great to the establishment of the Lombards in Italy," [14] that is, from 395 to 571. Robertson's statement is still true, but that of Gibbon no longer holds, as our civilisation has since his day gone far ahead in general happiness and prosperity, notwithstanding that we have not yet fully entered the analogous period of our cycle. That period covered the reigns of the "good emperors" — Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, and Marcus Aurelius; and it was in the days of the last of these that the barbarians began to break through the frontiers and the decline of the empire set in, which precipitated mankind from the pinnacle of happiness to the abysm of misery in the short space of two hundred years. But the long peace, of whose evils Juvenal complained,[15] had begun still earlier, at the conclusion of the civil wars which brought Augustus to the principate, and which were reported to have reduced the population of Italy (at least of the tax-paying classes) by one half.[15a] Those wars apparently killed off the men of combative blood, leaving room for a more industrious type; and then Rome entered its golden age. The conditions were very much like those brought on by the great wars accompanying the French Revolution and the Napo-

[13] *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ch. iii, between notes 49 and 50.

[14] *History of Charles V.*, vol. i., before note D.

[15] "Nunc patimur longae pacis mala; saevior armis
Luxuria incubuit." *Sat.* VI, 292–3.

[15a] Appian, *Civil Wars*, II. 102.

leonic régime, which similarly exterminated the fighting spirit and ushered in a period of peace, whereupon the nineteenth century far surpassed its predecessor in art, in literature, in science, and in wealth.

The Augustine and the Nervan eras, covering the acme of Roman civilisation, contained also the seeds of its decay. The gold standard was adopted, and led to a more or less steady appreciation of money, through the deficiency of supplies and the drain to the East in payment for luxuries. Taxation became heavier, both for national and for local needs. Municipal debts had to be paid to the last tittle of usury, no matter how much the officials and financiers in combination had cheated the people. The practice began of escaping from the burden of taxes by consuming one's capital. The legacy tax was, in fact, adopted by the very first emperors, and it contributed to such squandering; which was further promoted by a high standard of luxurious and idle living. The last-mentioned tax, along with that upon incomes later imposed, fostered celibacy, which in its turn helped on the dissipation of capital, every one desiring to get the better of his heirs.[16] The old fortunes were rapidly scattered, and new ones almost as rapidly formed. We Americans to-day are apt to boast of our so-called "self-made" men, who have risen from poverty and obscurity to wealth and conspicuous station. We forget that such is the common feature of all semi-democratic, semi-plutocratic eras. In Rome this was a common occurrence from the days of Marius, the plebeian consul, to those of Maximin, the peasant emperor. Several other emperors were of humble origin; freed slaves were not unknown among the councillors of the state; and the senate became filled with men of servile descent. For poor men made fortunes, and thereby acquired high position, since position was adjudged with respect to wealth. We may find, after making allowance for the exaggeration of satire, a fairly faithful reflection of these times in Petronius's fiction, where Trimalchio brags that he had started from nothing, made millions, and risen to be the

[16] *Cf.* Horace:

Cuncta manus avidas fugient heredis, amico
Quae dederis animo. *Odes* IV. vii. 10–20.

See also *Sat.* II. iii. 122–3 and *Ep.* II. ii. 190–1.

first man in Naples. Men are worth, he is made to say, what they have, and honours are paid to them accordingly. He was proud, too, of his ignorance, and wished to have engraved on his tomb that he had not frequented the philosophers; which is equivalent to saying he had not had a college education, and did not regret it. People now-a-days, Petronius makes another of his characters say, admire a lump of gold more than a statue by the greatest master.[17] As time wore on, high offices came to be rated according to the size of their salaries or of the fees they brought in, and on gravestones we find inscriptions to the effect that the defunct was a hundred, a two hundred, a three hundred thousand sesterce man.[18] We to-day also are wont to think that the well-known saying "Make money — honestly if you can, but make it" is an American witticism. Yet it comes from Horace.[19] Money, Horace also said, must be got first of all, virtue being of secondary importance.[20] And Juvenal added that money does not reek, whatever be its source, since nobody inquires where you got it, so long as you have it.[21] That it is odourless, had already been hinted by Vespasian.[22] Yet to a few, at least, the nose was delicate.[23]

A phenomenon accompanying this outburst of plutocracy was the appearance of women in politics. For some time past the old restraints upon women had been relaxing, and the old household industries were falling into desuetude.[24] As long before as toward the end of the third century B. C. the old customary relations had so far broken down that a law (the Oppian) was needed to restore some of the earlier simplicity.

[17] *Satyricon*, cc. 71, 77, 88.

[18] While this was writing, a New York newspaper published a full-page account of a certain scientist under the caption "One of America's hundred-thousand-a-year men." This sum in dollars is several times larger than the largest the ancients boasted of.

[19] *Ep.* I. i. 65–66.

[20] *Ib.* 53–4.

[21] *Sat.* XIV. 204–5, 207.

[22] Suetonius, *Vespasian*, 23.

[23] Thus, at least in Greece, somewhat earlier in a corresponding period, Crates, the best of the Cynics, advised that not all gifts should be received, as it was shameful for virtue to be supported by wickedness: see Mullach's *Fragmenta Philosophorum Graecorum*, ii. 338.

[24] A notice of this change, at least among the upper classes, consummated by the middle of the first century A. D., may be seen in Columella's *De Re Rustica*, XII. Praefatio.

This was passed during the low ebb of a desperate war, and when peace was regained, at the beginning of the second century, the women felt aggrieved at its continuance, and not only petitioned for its repeal, but rioted in the streets, blockading the doors of the senate in a manner that has hardly been seen again till recently in London. They extorted from Cato, probably on this occasion, the sarcasm, true only in anticipation, that the masters of the world were ruled by their wives. On some other occasions they secretly poisoned their husbands.[24a] They did not, however, enter politics in any steady stream for a century more, when they took part, for instance, in Cataline's conspiracy both on his side and on Cicero's. By the time, indeed, they became a power in the state, they had, according to Seneca, acquired all the vices, and incurred all the diseases, of men.[25] Now, at the very outset of the new régime, Augustus's wife Livia, though she supervised her women's work in the palace in the good old way, exerted harmful influence on affairs of state; and the misbehaviour of his daughter Julia, who became a wanton, clouded the reign of Tiberius. Julia's daughter Agrippina the Elder accompanied her husband Germanicus on his military expeditions, and caused offence by giving directions to the soldiers.[26] After losing him, she came to a bad end herself, and set an example to the English suffragettes by going on a hunger-strike in prison, and having food forced down her throat, but not so tenderly as now, as we are told she lost an eye in an unseemly scuffle with a centurion.[27] The new habit of high-born dames accompanying their husbands to the provinces in their governorship was objected to by Cæcina Severus, who said that they there became centres of intrigue, forming a second court, and their orders, once forbidden by law, now ruled everything — the home, the forum, and even the army; to which Valerius Messalinus replied that it would be worse for departing proconsuls to leave their wives in Rome, where they would be exposed to the temptations of their own and others' lusts; and the latter counsel prevailed.[28] Agrippina the Younger, after elevating her

[24a] Livy, VIII. 18, XL. 37.
[25] *Epist.* 95, § 20.
[26] Tacitus, *Annals,* I. 69, XII. 37.
[27] Suetonius, *Tiberius,* 53.
[28] Tacitus, *Annals,* III. 33-4.

youthful son Nero to the throne, sat behind a curtain off the chamber where the senate deliberated, to keep tab on their proceedings.[29] Female influence continued to grow, as civilisation declined, till Elagabalus, imitating Caligula, who had raised his horse to the consulship, placed his mother in the senate, and set up another senate, of matrons, over which she presided;[29a] and at last in the utterly degenerate fifth century, while Placidia was administering the West as regent, Pulcheria, after a contest with Eudocia, was proclaimed Empress of the East and sat on the throne in her own right and raised thereto her consort. Similar phenomena had previously appeared in the last days of the Hellenic power, which ended in Egypt in the hands of a queen of ill fame; and in Judea the meddling of women at the court of Herod is well known.

Of course in both these civilisations the advent of women to power was in consequence of the transfer of property to them from men, who thereby weakened their own position. Aristotle noted that as a result of the unrestricted permission to let women inherit and be dowered (which according to Plutarch had been introduced only after the Peloponnesian war[30]), two-fifths of the land of Lacedaemon had by his time come into the possession of women, on which account, the number of fighting men fell off to such an extent that the country succumbed almost at one shock, the women being of no service, and creating a greater disturbance than the enemy.[31] Among the Greeks also the philosophers admitted women to comradeship, especially the later schools, the Epicureans, the Stoics, and the Neo-Pythagoreans; and these philosophies became prevalent in Rome. Already Plato in Greece, and following him in Rome, in the days of Nero, a strenuous advocate of applied philosophy, the Stoic Musonius Rufus, advanced the opinion, which to-day is becoming popular again, that the virtues of men and women are the same, and that therefore boys and girls should receive a common education; and used for it the kind of argumentation which is thought to be a

[29] *Ib.* XIII. 5.

[29a] According to Lampridius, who recounts the petty absurdities therein enacted, *Vita Heliogabali*, c. 4. He also called an assembly of meretrices, *ib.* c. 26.

[30] *Life of Agis*, c. 5.

[31] *Politics*, II. vi. (or ix.) 11–12, 7.

peculiarity of our age, appealing to the fact that no distinction between the sexes is made in the training of horses and dogs.[32] And the women themselves were not backward in claiming the same privileges with men, on the ground, now again currently taken, that they were human beings just as much as men were. Juvenal, in fact, represents a wife caught in adultery saying to her husband: "It was agreed that you should do as you please, and that I too might indulge myself. Clamour as you may, and confound sea with sky, I am a human being [*homo sum*]." [33] In minor matters, it may be noted that they took to drinking wine, which had in the primitive days been forbidden to them, just as women to-day are taking up smoking. They frequented all the places where men congregated, mingled in elections, and formed societies and clubs, and met in conventions of their own. They even took fencing lessons, indulged in various other athletic exercises, and wore bright-coloured "sweaters." [34]

At the same time, as was pointed out in the speech of Messalinus already referred to, many of the hard ways of the ancients had been changed to ways milder and more joyous.[35] The provinces were governed with less extortion. Subsidies were granted to cities that had suffered calamity from fire or earthquake. Public endowments were established by men of

[32] Plato, *Republic*, V. 451D–452A; Musonius, in Stobaeus's *Florilegium*, Excerpta, II. 13, 123, *cf.* 126. To Aristotle this comparison seemed out of place: *Polit.*, II. ii. (or v.) 15. That there is but one virtue of men and women, was held by the Cynic Antisthenes, according to Diogenes Laërtius, VI. 12. He exaggerated this from what Socrates had maintained; for according to Aristotle Socrates held, not that the virtues of men and women are the same, but that certain virtues, such as courage and temperance, are the same in men and women (*i.e.*, whatever virtue they have in common is the same in both, *cf.* Plato, *Meno*, 72E, 73A–B, where the question is merely logical)—an opinion which Aristotle himself combatted, *Polit.*, I. v. (or xii.) 8; on their difference *cf.* II. ii. (or iv.) 10, and with respect to continence *Nich. Eth.*, VII. v. (or vi.) 4. Xenophon gives us the exceptions Socrates made: "The nature of women is no wise inferior to that of men, except in the lack of judgment and strength," *Banquet*, c. 2. Yet Plato himself also asserted generally that women are inferior to men in virtue, *Laws*, VI. 781B. Later Plutarch tried to prove the similarity of men's and women's virtue, in his essay *On the Virtues of Women*, by citing exceptional instances of female heroic deeds, mostly of a character entirely different from men's!

[33] *Sat.* VI. 281–4.

[34] "Endromidas Tyrias," Juvenal, VI. 246.

[35] "Respondit multa duritiae veterum in meliora et laetius mutata."

wealth: temples erected, libraries and other educational institutions founded, orphan asylums maintained, gymnasia and baths constructed, and sanatoriums built in salubrious localities. The condition of slaves was improved, among other things the abandonment of them in old age and infirmity being prohibited. The gladiatorial shows were more strictly regulated, even women took part in them, rendering them less serious, and at last they gave way in popular estimation to the less dangerous races in the circus. The military punishment of decimation was discontinued. The people were disarmed. Eventually the killing or exposure and even the selling of children were given up.[35a] The Romans, tested by our standards, always were fearfully cruel; but compared with their own past, their cruelty slowly diminished.

Greek philosophy aided the growing gentleness of manners. Terence's oft-quoted "Nothing human is to me foreign" appeared ahead of its time in Latin literature, and was probably take from his Greek original. Neo-Pythagoreanism introduced vegetarianism and a greater tenderness toward animals. Epicureanism aided the tendency toward moderation and quietness. Especially Stoicism, with its partially worked-out doctrines of universal human brotherhood and equality, contributed to the improvement of good will among mankind. Cosmopolitanism became prevalent among the small nationalities that were absorbed under the Roman rule, and eventually among the Romans themselves, when they were swallowed up and lost in their own empire. Syncretism grew to be habitual, when information was obtainable from everywhere and education was general. Local religions migrated, and outlandish became mixed with indigenous gods, especially the chief centres of the younger West being invaded by the divinities of the older East. Still more for the fusing and softening of the peoples was done by Christianity; for we should not forget that Christianity was a phenomenon of the Roman world in its decline. It is too usual to treat classicism as one thing and Christianity as another. After the first generation the Jews fell out of account, and Christianity spread among the already degenerate Greeks first, and then, the more they became de-

[35a] Such evils were forbidden by Constantine, who offered public assistance to indigent parents, *Codex Theod,* XI. xxvii. 1, 2.

generate, among the Romans, it being essentially a movement of regeneration. Though as a basis were used the Hebrew scriptures, which, moreover, had been written or re-edited in the decline of the Jewish civilisation, the principal Christian scriptures, contained in the New Testament, were Greek productions. Their leading teacher, Paul, was well versed in Stoicism, coming as he did from one of its chief seats at Tarsus. Christianity, indeed, mixed oriental revelationism with occidental rationalism; but the occidental rationalism was never abandoned or superseded. The writings of the Christian Fathers are a part of Greek and Latin literature. The Christian inculcation of brotherly and sisterly affection[36] and mutual assistance, and of abstinence not only from hatred, cruelty, and vengeance, but from the impurity and disorderliness of erotic love, was acceptable to the lower classes first, and gradually to the better elements among the upper classes, through disgust at and revulsion from the gross materialism and immorality and selfishness of a broken-down and decaying civilisation, originally harsh but orderly, now disorganised and capricious. When the humanitarianism of a high civilisation does not succeed in preventing, and in fact through its mistakes of indulgence contributes to, the decline of that civilisation, the only hope for the future lies in such revulsion of feeling springing up within itself, even turning back to harshness toward vice and intolerance toward whatever appears erroneous.

Co-incident with the advent of Roman civilisation to its period of culmination, was the emergence of the two great evils we have above cited — on the one hand financial monopoly, concentration of wealth, breaking-down of competition, at last a kind of socialism, and on the other a falling birth-rate, which began in the upper classes and worked down to the lower, whereupon it was followed by diminishing population.

At Rome in the first centuries before and after Christ the fortunes accumulated by a few individuals, compared with the poverty which surrounded them, were enormous. At the com-

[36] The Greek word *agape* used in the New Testament means affection, or fondness, not love as it is now translated. It corresponded to the Latin *caritas*, of which the English form "charity" has acquired another meaning.

mencement of this period a reforming tribune asserted, with some exaggeration, it was believed, that there were not two thousand citizens possessing property.[37] Some forms of money-making, such as farming the state's revenues, were a monopoly of the class of the *equites,* the old Roman horsemen or knights having degenerated into financiers. Permanent investment was mostly in land, in which, in fact, men of senatorial rank had to hold most of their property. Whole villages, and even small towns, belonged to one landlord. Columella speaks of estates, like districts, that could not be ridden around on horseback (presumably in a single ride), and were worked by droves of slaves or given over to pasture and game preserves.[38] By the time of the early emperors Pliny tells us that half the province of Africa, comprising the modern Algeria and Tunis, had come into possession of six great families.[39] For more than a century before the founding of the empire this concentration of wealth had been going on, accomplished by a great deal of fraud and even violence, but no doubt also by a great deal of honest diligence and sagacity. The flagrant contrast between the idle rich and the toiling poor led to its inevitable result, of contempt on the one side for the other, and on the other of hatred of the former. And when the people came into power under their representative the emperor, their hatred had effect. Reading in Tacitus of the spying system upon the rich and the seizure of their persons and confiscation of their property, we wonder how the Roman people could endure such evils. The truth is, the Roman populace delighted in them, and gloated over the discomfiture of their top-sawyers — at the expropriation of those who had (presumably in their opinion) expropriated them. Even the wealthy, as a class, were apathetic, except those who feared their turn might come next. As fortunes were made mostly by good luck, why should they not be lost by bad luck? But when the danger spread, and the senatorial party wished, at the death of Caligula, to re-establish the republic, that is, to restore their own power, the people would have none of it, but clamoured for an em-

[37] Cicero, *De Officiis,* II. xxi, 73.
[38] *De Re Rustica,* I. 3.
[39] *Nat. Hist.* XVIII. vii, (or vi.) 3. On the immensity of estates *cf.* Seneca, *Ep.* 87 §6, 89 §§18–21, Arnobius, *Adv. Gentes,* II. 40.

peror, and forced the elevation of Claudius. The emperors also conciliated the wealthy, who, as a body, were not unwilling to see a few of their number, the very wealthiest, sacrificed to the emperor's rapacity, if thereby the rest were rendered safe. In self-defence, to allay the discontent beneath them, they had to make largesses to the people. The benefactions of these great men, and also of the state, in Rome itself and in some other large provincial cities, tended to the sluggardising and impoverishment of the people. Only the city-inhabitants were the receivers of favours, in the shape of doles of cheap wine and of free corn, at last even of bread, along with exhibitions of games and of music, the use of hospitals, baths, libraries. Thus not only to the rich but to the poor luxuries became necessaries, games being ranked with bread.[40] Their enormous consumption exhausted the resources of many a clime.[41] The city of Rome was a great parasite, sucking the juices of the immense body it had fastened itself upon. Its people shared the fate of parasites — degeneration.[42] The corn they fed upon was brought by sea in great quantities from distant provinces where on large estates by slave labour it was produced cheapest. The small Italian farmers could not compete: they sold their farms and flocked to the cities;[42a] and the consolidated estates were, as already stated, also cultivated by slave-gangs, and at last emptied even of these and given over to large herds of cattle, sheep, or swine, tended by a few herdsmen. The transformation had begun under the republic. Appian describes the process: how the rich got possession of the public lands, and bought up or seized more from their impoverished neighbours, and worked them with slaves because these were not drafted off into the army, as were the farmers; and how the slaves multiplied, while the farmers

[40] "Panem et circenses," Juvenal, X. 81.

[41] *Cf.* Seneca: "Luxuria, terrarum marisque vastatrix," *Epist.*, 95, 19.

[42] *Cf.* E. Ray Lankester: "Any new set of conditions occurring to an animal which render its food and safety very easily attained, seem to lead as a rule to degeneration; just as an active healthy man sometimes degenerates when he becomes suddenly possessed of a fortune; or as Rome degenerated when possessed of the riches of the ancient world. The habit of parasitism clearly acts upon animal organisation in this way." Article on Degeneration in *The Advancement of Science,* London, 1890, p. 27.

[42a] *Cf. Novel. Constitut. Justin.,* 80 Praefatio.

decreased in numbers, "destroyed as they were by poverty, taxes, and military service. Even when times of peace came," he adds, "they were doomed to inactivity, because the rich were in possession of the soil and employed slaves only." [43] Juvenal also hints at unjust practices — of first trampling down and ruining the fields of small owners desirous of retaining their land, to compel them to sell.[44] The large plantations, or *latifundia,* were perceived by Pliny to be causing the ruin of Italy,[45]— of her agriculture first, and then of her civilisation. The heart of the empire was eaten up, and the canker spread outward to the extremities.

All this meant the disappearance of the middle classes. Most of the charges of the state were, in fact, thrown upon them, and they succumbed. The richer burghers were enrolled as *curiales* and compelled to serve in the magistracies; and upon them was laid the responsibility for the collection of the tribute due to the imperial government. They were thereby made into tyrants over their fellow citizens;[46] but as they had to supply any deficiency out of their own pockets, their office became a burden which they tried to avoid, and when this was not allowed, from which they tried to escape.[47] They could escape by selling out, by going into bankruptcy, by entering the army, the civil service of the empire, or (when Christianity prevailed) the clergy, or by running away to the barbarians. These means, all but the clerical refuge, were one after another closed to them by the emperor, except he granted special honour (such as the senatorial dignity) to some of them as a peculiar privilege. The wealthiest became thus privileged. Their heirs remained so; but the heirs of the others inherited their duties, which went with the property.[48] Other privileged ones were the very poorest of the cities, especially of Rome, for whose benefit, to appease them and keep them quiet, much of the money collected was spent. The middling rich had to

[43] *Civil Wars,* I. 7.

[44] *Sat.* XIV. 140–51; *Cf.* Sallust, *Bel. Jug.* 41 (8), Horace, *Odes,* II. xviii. 23–8, Apuleius, *Metamor.* IX. 35–9.

[45] *Loc. cit.*

[46] "Quot curiales, tot tyranni," Salvianus, *De Gubernatione Dei,* V.

[47] An early instance of avoidance, under Trajan, in Bithynia, is mentioned by Pliny the Younger, *Ep.* X. 113 (or 114).

[48] See Guizot, *Essais sur l'Histoire de France,* Essai I.

pay for the support of both those above and those below them, and were crushed between the two.

Immediately beneath them, what might be considered the upper strata of the lower classes of freemen, consisting of the undertakers of industry and their master-workmen, shared a similar fate. They were enrolled in corporations, in which they too became cribbed, cabined, and confined. Industrial corporations, mostly in the form of mutual-aid societies, had existed since the days of the kings. Toward the end of the republic they were looked upon askance, because they had become centres of political disaffection. This ill-favour continued for some time under the early emperors, and Trajan forbade, for this reason, the institution of a company of firemen in a town under Pliny the Younger's jurisdiction.[49] But this objection was overcome by strict supervision, and by the middle of the third century all trades were organised and their organisation recognised and regulated by the state. At first the advantages of belonging to such corporations were greater than the disadvantages, and attracted recruits. Later the disadvantages exceeded the advantages, and then the state compelled all the existing members and their heirs to remain in them, and required all their industrial colleagues to join, each according to his occupation. For as the curials were held responsible to the emperor for the taxes of their cities, so the corporations in a city were held responsible to the curials for the taxes of their members. Every member, therefore, kept an eye on every other, to prevent any one from shirking his share. Contributions were levied also in kind and in labour. From every one service was exacted: every one came to be looked upon as a "servant of the state."[50] Withdrawal from membership, when it began to be common, was forbidden. The property of the members was viewed as attached to the corporation. There could be no gift or sale of it, unless the recipient or purchaser assumed the charges and became a member. Heirs of property therefore likewise remained members of the corporation. In the case of a man having only daugh-

[49] See the latter's *Ep.* X. 36 (or 34, or 43).

[50] See J. P. Waltzing, *Étude historique sur les Corporations professionelles chez les Romains,* Louvain, 1896, vol. ii. pp. 16, 267, 333n. He quotes Symmachus: "patriae servientes," *Relat.* 14.

ters, their husbands had to join. Hence inter-marriage between professions became impossible, and were forbidden. Thus every occupation in time became permanent and hereditary. "Once a baker, always a baker" was in accordance with a principle of the Theodosian Code.[51] Children were not permitted to refuse their heritage. "One was born a curial," says Waltzing, "a member of a corporation, an employé in a bureau, a soldier in a cohort, a serf on a field. Every one was compelled to succeed to the position of his forefathers."[52] It is the beginning of the condition of status for the next cycle. The requirement of service to the state was a return by law toward primitive custom. It had the effect of assimilating freemen and slaves; for while the freeman was brought more under the power of the state, his slave was less left to his good pleasure.[53] "The empire," according to Waltzing again, "was transformed into a vast workshop (*atelier*), where under the control of a crowd of functionaries people worked for the prince and for the needs of the state and of individuals."[54] From this many tried to escape by running away to the barbarians.[55] This was forbidden; even travelling was not allowed; and branding was resorted to. A regular chase after delinquents was engaged in.[56] Then the empire became, as has been said, "an immense jail, where every one worked, not according to his taste, but by force, he and his posterity."[57] The only escape, if not sanctioned by law, yet permitted in practice, was for the impoverished to give themselves up for protection to the rich, and to become their *coloni* or serfs;[58] for to serfdom the small farmers had by one stroke of the em-

[51] X. xx. 1 and 11, XIII. v. 14, 19, and 35, XIV. iii. 8.
The Catholic church has merely retained its allied particular case under the same principle, in the form "once a priest, always a priest."

[52] *Op. cit.*, ii. 303. For the above see 269–324.

[53] H. Wallon, *Histoire de l'Esclavage dans l'Antiquité*, Paris, 1879, iii. 115, 198.

[54] *Op. cit.*, 481. With obvious reference to doings in France in 1848, Waltzing adds: "C'était une véritable organisation de travail par l'État, entre les mains de qui se trouvaint en grande partie la production et la distribution des richesses."

[55] Ammianus Marcellinus, XXXI. 6; Salvianus, V.

[56] Waltzing, 336–48.

[57] *Ib.* 266.

[58] Salvianus, V. Also Waltzing, 339–40.

peror's pen been reduced.[59] Or better still, they could apply to the church and become — beggars.[60]

Here was practical socialism of a sort,— of the nature of state-socialism, though without the avowed utilitarian aim of modern socialism, in which the industrialism and civilisation of the ancient world ended. It did not equalise the distribution of wealth: on the contrary, the distinction between the rich and the poor — the *honestiores* and the *humiliores* — became recognised in law because of the different demands made upon them; for in return for greater impositions the rich were accorded certain exemptions, and in return for some favours the poor were deprived of some of their rights. The custom of universal service was not yet established, only the law,— and law, unlike custom, allows exceptions. While the middling rich were reduced to poverty by the exactions of the fisc, a few of the richest landowners, sheltered under patrician or senatorial dignity, and residing both in the city and in the country, evaded these burdens, or escaped their results, being too rich to be injuriously affected, and maintained their privileged position. A great deal of the service, too, was unproductive. Beside the army and the clergy, the civil officers of the imperial administration were multiplied to an enormous extent, because of the minute supervision of the state over everything: — in 303 Diocletian even tried to fix the maximum of prices, with disastrous results.[61] All these harpies became so numerous that it was said by a Christian writer in the time of the same emperor, that there were more receivers of bounty from the state than there were tax-payers;[62] and a century later in Gaul another Christian writer complained that taxes were levied by the rich for their own benefit upon the poor, and whenever any remedy was offered by the emperor, the rich took it to themselves.[63] The poor, too, he added, alone were made to obey the laws, which the rich, especially those in

[59] Seeck, *op. cit.*, ii. 321–4.
[60] Seeck, *ib.* 334–6.
[61] Lactantius, *De Morte Persecutorum*, c. 7.
[62] Lactantius, *loc. cit.*
[63] Salvianus, V. Such also was the complaint of the Greek refugee among the Huns, and further about the venality and delay of justice, as reported by Priscus, in Mueller's *Fragmenta Histor. Graec.*, vol. iv., p. 87.

office, or who had been in office, broke with impunity.[64] We should, however, make a mistake, if we supposed that in this state-workshop the hardship of labour was being increased. Quite the contrary: the object was to reduce labour and to increase pleasure. People "looked for their happiness to their city rather than to their family," says a modern antiquarian.[65] From sixty-six in the reign of Augustus, the number of days annually given up to games and spectacles at Rome rose to a hundred and thirty-five in the reign of Aurelius, and to a hundred and sixty-five in the fourth century, without counting many extraordinary festivals on special occasions. Many cities, in the words of a Christian Father, "made a serious business of pastime."[66] What the system did, was to harass and impede enterprise; and to diminished resources it caused diminished labour to be applied, leading to doubly diminished production. As for theoretical socialism, Roman literature did not dabble in that. Yet such socialism had been prominent in Greece in the writings of Plato and others. In that distracted country from the time of the Peloponnesian war downward, raged perpetual conflict between the rich and the poor, which reduced all to poverty finally. Religious communism had there been put into practice by the Pythagoreans, and was again revived under the Roman rule. Plotinus desired a grant from the emperor Gallienus, to let him institute Plato's republic, in a village of central Italy; but was denied. In the eastern parts were the Essenes, who admitted no women among them, and others, including the early Christians, some of whose sects, such as the Carpocratians, exaggerated the idea that justice consists in simple equality, and ran into great excesses in the community also of women.[67]

The appearance at Rome of celibacy and childlessness towards the end of the republic and their continuance under the empire, is a well-known phenomenon. It began, of course, among the upper classes.[68] The old ancestor-worship had

[64] Salvianus, VII.

[65] S. Dill, *Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius*, p. 232.

[66] Clement of Alexandria, *Paedogogus*, III. 11.

[67] According to Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, III. 2; *cf.* Irenæus, *Adversus Haereses*, I. 28.

[68] Horace, who associated with them, spoke of the "vitio parentum rara juventus," *Odes*, I. ii. 23-4. *Cf.* Juvenal, to be quoted presently. But still

long before broken down, and with it the religious duty to continue one's line of descent, while the economic reasons for desiring children were by now converted into reasons for not desiring them. The old religious form of marriage, which put the wife and the property that came with her in the husband's hands and put him under obligation to care for her and bound the two together almost indissolubly, were abandoned by the upper classes, who adopted another laxer form of marriage which had been in use among the plebs and which corresponds somewhat with our civil marriage, which left the wife and her property out of the husband's *manus* and under the tutelage of her father or after his death of a guardian of her own choice, and thus practically left her her own mistress, emancipated, free. It was a species of free love, easy to contract, and easy to dissolve, so that divorce became common, as also remarriage: Seneca, indeed, wrote sarcastically of high-born ladies reckoning the years, not by the consuls, but by their husbands.[69] Men and women stood over against each other as though independent and equal, each having his or her own occupations, interests, amusements. There appeared, too, the demand with which we to-day are familiar, for the same morality of the two sexes; which means the morality of the male.[70] In such conditions children were not wanted. Even the elder Cato, who in most things was conservative, had recommended to the patricians not to have many children, so as to avoid partitioning their estates.[71] Beside the old method of getting

Lucan was able to refer to "fecunda virorum paupertas," *Pharsalia,* I. 165–6.

[69] *De Beneficiis,* III. 16. Jerome (*Ep.* 2) tells of a woman who had twenty-three husbands, the last of whom had had twenty wives.

[70] So Juvenal, already quoted. Also Ulpian: "It seems most iniquitous that a man should require from his wife a propriety of behaviour which he himself does not show," *Digest,* XLVIII. v. 13, 5. *Cf.* Plutarch, *Conjugal Precepts,* c. 47. But Plautus puts a demand for the woman's morality in men into the mouth of an old woman, *Mercator,* IV. v. 3–15. Aristotle, *Politics,* VII. xiv. (or xvi.) end, and Isocrates, *Nicocles,* seem to require equal continence, at least during marriage; and Musonius made extravagant demands in this connection, in Stobaeus, VI. 61. The Christian Fathers, of course, taught that men should set the example and be as strict with themselves as they required their wives to be, *e. g.,* Lactantius, *Divin. Instit.,* VI. 23, *Epitome,* c. 66; but they did not succeed in getting their teaching adopted in general practice, although they have altered somewhat the idea of "adultery."

[71] Plutarch, *Life of Cato.*

rid of them when born, which was becoming discredited and was retained principally for abnormalities,[72] new means were discovered of preventing birth[73] and even conception.[74] The children the ladies of quality did have, they of course did not themselves tend, that being left to servants.[75] The maternal instincts of women were satisfied by substitutes: a Christian Father tells us that heathen ladies "maintain parrots and curlews; they do not receive the orphan child, but they expose the children that are born at home and take up the young of birds, preferring irrational to rational creatures."[76] Many men did not marry at all, as it was still easier to enjoy free love without contracting so much as this loose tie. To marry a poor woman still left her beyond control; but to marry a rich woman gave the control to her,—and according to Juvenal nothing was more intolerable than a rich wife.[77] The bachelor or the childless widower, moreover, was courted and flattered by those who hankered after legacies, while the father of a family was left to himself. The old aristocratic families, to whom so much of the glory of Rome had been due, were dying out, and their places in the senate had to be supplied by men

[72] Seneca: "Children, if they be born weak or monstrous, we drown," *De Ira.* I. 15, 2.

[73] Juvenal:

Sed jacet aurato vix ulla puerpera lecto.
Tantum artes huius [nutricis], tantum medicamina possunt,
Quae steriles facit atque homines in ventre necandos
Conducit. *Sat.* VI. 594–7.

Ovid tiraded against abortion, but principally on account of the risk his mistress had incurred, *Amorum* II. xiv. *Cf.* also Minutius Felix, *Octavius,* c. 30. In Greece Plato approved of exposing children (using discrimination), *Repub.* V., 460C, (but *cf.* 461C), and Aristotle preferred foeticide, *Polit.* VII. xiv. (or xvi.) 10. The Christians, of course, classed also the latter with murder: so Athenagoras, *Legatio pro Christianis,* c. 35; *cf.* Tertullian, *Exhort. ad Castitat.,* c. 12, *Apologeticus,* c. 35; and of course they condemned the exposing of children, Lactantius, *Divin. Instit.,* VI. 20.—Tacitus remarked the absence of such practices among the Germans, *Germania,* c. 19.

[74] *Cf.* Lucretius, IV. 1269–77.

[75] See Aulus Gellius, XII. i, where the philosopher Favorinus tried to teach a woman, the wife of a senator, to be "a whole mother." Some doctors, however, made a pretty comparison with the transplanting of seedlings, and recommended that the child should be born by one woman and reared by another: so, Soranus, who also maintained that the mother's milk was not wholesome for twenty days after bearing! I. xxxi. 87.

[76] Clement of Alexandria, *Paedagogus,* III. 4.

[77] *Sat.* VI. 460. *Cf.* Martial, VIII. xii.

from the lower ranks and by foreigners from the provinces.

Augustus took early measures with a view to stop the evil, and the *lex Julia et Papia Pòppaea* was passed. In the olden days celibacy had been a criminal offence against religion and the state. So far the public sentiment of the new times would not go; wherefore civil discouragement of celibacy and encouragement of marriage were resorted to instead. The unmarried were deprived of the right to receive bequests, and the childless married were permitted to take only half; while fathers of three children were given advantages in elections and appointments to office and were freed from certain impositions. The law was not strictly enforced, many exemptions being granted. It did not accomplish its purpose;[78] but whether it did not to some extent retard the evil, we cannot know. It stood on the statute-book for three centuries, and was repealed by the first Christian emperor,[79] to whom celibacy was preached as a virtue of perfection. Meanwhile the evil had been extending downward through the middle classes, and from the center at Rome outward. We have seen how many escapes from the burdens that weighed upon the curials of the towns were cut off by decrees of the emperors. One loophole which a little civil discrimination could not stop up, remained, at least for posterity, since the living could abstain from marriage or go without children; which they more and more did.[80] When wars and plagues devastated a region, the population did not respond and spring back to fill the vacant places, but the emptiness remained.[80a] Such a plague occurred in Italy in the days of Aurelius, which passed the skill of the physicians to cure, and occasioned a recrudescence of the worship of the healing gods, such as Apollo and Aesculapius, giving a boost also to Christianity and to various mesmeric superstitions,[81] and thereby weakened the art of medicine in the matters wherein it could offer assistance. Before the barbarians invaded Italy one-eighth of the once fertile Campania was desert

[78] Tertullian scorned such laws as "vanissimae," *Apologeticus*, 4.

[79] *Codex Theod.*, VIII. xvi.

[80] *Cf. Novel. Constit. Justin.*, 38. Praef. §1.

[80a] Livy, in the first century of the empire, expressed astonishment at the earlier continued populousness of Italy in spite of the constant fighting, and contrasted it with the thin population which in many regions in his day barely saved the country from being a solitude, vi. 12.

[81] *Cf.* Merivale, *History of the Romans*, vii. 486–8.

and uncultivated land, which the emperor released from the payment of taxes.[82] Even the offer of abandoned land free and untaxed did not succeed in inviting cultivators.[82a]

Greece was another centre of depopulation, having in fact reached that condition long before, in her own period of decline, when men preferred *hetairae* to wives, and advanced women chose that condition. At Athens, which had passed out of its ascending into its culminating period about the time of the Persian wars,[83] at its climax under Pericles there was a woman movement, led by Aspasia (an early Mary Wollstonecraft), who was succeeded by Plato (an early John Stuart Mill),[83a] and as Athens declined, women became freer.[84] Then the dramatists, beginning with Euripides, advised against marriage, emphasising the burden of a poor wife and the slavery to a rich one, and laying particular stress upon the inconvenience of having children.[85] Then the philosophers took up the same strain, and matrimony was frowned upon, or only tolerated, by many of them, such as Democritus,[86] Theophras-

[82] *Codex Theod.*, XI. xxviii. 2.

[82a] Pertinax allowed any one to occupy and cultivate abandoned land anywhere, and as much as he could manage, according to Herodian, II. 4, 6. Similarly later emperors, *Codex. Just.*, XI. lviii. 8. *Cf.* in Euboea Dio Chrysostom, *Orationes*, VII. 34–7.

[83] A sign of the change may be seen in the little incident noted by Herodotus (VI. 122, or by some interpolator) of a certain Callias's treatment of his three daughters, to whom he bequeathed his property and whom he permitted to marry as they pleased.

[83a] Pericles himself is represented by Thucydides (II. 45) as admonishing women to avoid giving occasion for talk among men either of praise or blame. This may have been due to the fact that he was himself of a retiring disposition, and somewhat conservative or old-fashioned in his views (*cf.* his statement in II. 60 §2 that the prosperity of the state as a whole is something better to be aimed at than the prosperity of individuals), in spite of the radicalness and subversiveness of much of his practice. His words also show that a change was taking place both in the conduct of the women and in the attitude toward the state.

[84] About this time, it is believed, took place, at Athens, the opening of the profession of medicine to women, at the instance of the maiden Agnodice, as narrated by Hyginus (c. 274). Her hair cut, and disguised as a man, she studied under Hierophilus, and being very successful in obstetrics, was haled before the court, but the women came to her rescue, and the law excluding female practitioners was altered.

[85] See extracts in Stobaeus's *Florilegium*, LXVIII. and LXIX. and LXXVI. *Cf.* Plautus, *Miles Glor.*, III. i. 85–128.

[86] In Stobaeus, LXXVI. 15, *cf.* 16; and according to Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, II. 23.

tus,[87] and Epicurus;[88] while the Cynic Diogenes and even the Stoic Zeno recommended promiscuity,[89] and Crates advised his son to have intercourse only with harlots and gave his daughter to his pupils for a month on trial.[90] Within two centuries the result was apparent. At the time of their fall and subjection to the Romans, Polybius wrote that it was useless for the Greeks to appeal to the gods to repeople their deserted cities and fields, since the cause was evident and the remedy in their own hands. Theirs was "a population given over entirely to pride, to avarice, and to idleness; who were unwilling either to marry or, if marrying, to rear the children born to them, or at most but one or two, in order to leave them the greatest wealth[91] and to bring them up in the lap of luxury," with the result that, one or both of the children dying through some mishap, the houses became more and more solitary and the cities lost their power. All that was needed, he naïvely added, was for people to change their ways, or to pass a law requiring parents to rear their children.[92] Nothing of the sort was done. A few isolated philosophers, indeed, exhorted the people to marry and to rear children, and many of them, for the sake of the state and the gods; and tried to persuade them that it was better for a child to have many brothers than a large inheritance.[93] But in vain; and Greece never recovered her former populousness and strength.

Yet so late as at the beginning of the third century some of the provinces at the circumference of the empire still remained fairly swarming; for we learn from Tertullian in

[87] According to Jerome, *Adv. Jovin.* I. 47.

[88] According to Clement of Alexandria, *loc. cit.*, and Jerome (following Seneca), *op. cit.*, I. 191. (Diogenes Laërtius, X. xxvi. 118, is doubtful: see Zeller, *Philosophie der Griechen,* iv. 459.) Later also Epictetus, *Discourse,* III. xxii. 67–82.

[89] According to Diogenes Laërtius, VI. 72, VII. 33, 131.

[90] *Ib.,* VI. 88–9, 93. Theodorus taught that, as it was no shame to ransom a friend, it was no shame to redeem a mistress, and Phocion's son put this into practice, completing it with marriage: Plutarch, *Life of Phocion,* end.

[91] This reason had begun to be operative long before, as it was combated by Socrates, in Xenophon's *Memorabilia,* II. 3, 1.

[92] XXXVII. fragment 4.

[93] So especially Musonius, in Stobaeus, LXVII. 20, LXXV. 15, LXXXIV. 21; also Hierocles, *ib.* LXVII. 21–4, LXXV. 14, and Antipater, *ib.* LXVII. 25.

Africa that even then there was pressure of population upon the means of subsistence, but a pressure caused rather by the exhaustion of nature's supplies. "The earth," he wrote in his best rhetoric, "is every day more cultivated and better furnished. All places are accessible, all known, all open to commerce. Farms have obliterated deserts, sheep have put lions to flight, cities outnumber houses," etc., etc. "Proof of mankind's abundance: we are burdensome to the world, its elements barely suffice us, our necessities become more straitened, and complaints are everywhere heard that nature no longer affords us her sustenence.[94] And anticipating Malthus he added that "pestilence and famine and wars and earthquakes must be regarded as a remedy, as though to prune the insolence of the human race."[95] These prunings did come to the provinces, which were too drained of their resources to be able to meet them or to recuperate from them when they passed over.

The evil days did come to all, bringing wars which the people now coupled with famine and pestilence as intolerable scourges, no longer seeking occasion for fighting as their ancestors had done, but shuddering when it was forced upon them; for they stood on the defensive, with no glory or booty to gain, and their ease and comfort were at stake. "If the peace of the world could corrupt great souls," wrote Longinus in the latter half of the third century, "much more does so the interminable war which now oppresses us, and especially the sentiments which direct the present age; for the love of money with which we are all contaminated and the love of pleasure lead us into slavery and overwhelm our lives, the one disease making us petty, the other vile"; and he added that he was unable to find how such evils were to be avoided by people "who honoured wealth infinitely, and even deified it."[96] A couple of centuries more, and Salvianus, likewise recognising with Juvenal that the vices from which the Roman world was

[94] There was an opinion that the earth was growing old and wearing out: Lucretius, II. 1143–74, Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* XVII. iii. (or v.), Tremellius (combated by Columella, I. Preface, 1–3, II. i.), Cyprian, *Ad Demetrianum*, c. 1. This expressed a truth, that the soil was gradually becoming exhausted; *cf.* above p. 73, n. 2a.

[95] *De Anima*, c. 30.

[96] *On the Sublime*, near end. With the last words *cf.* Hadrian's letter (preserved by Vopiscus in his life of *Saturninus*) about the Egyptians, who, he wrote, Jews and Christian and all, worshipped this one god alone.

suffering had originated in the long peace,[97] similarly perceived that the horrors to which they were exposed rendered the Romans still more depraved.[98] The Romans in Gaul, in Spain, and elsewhere, he admitted to be more vicious than the barbarians who were conquering them.[99] They had begun to be so when pagans, and did not cease to be so when they became Christians.[1] And the Christians added one more vice, the most dangerous of all; for they raised weakness to a cult. "Saintly men," says Salvianus, himself approving, "make themselves feeble, because if they were strong they could with difficulty be saintly. If the Apostle Paul thought he had to seek infirmity of body, who would wisely avoid it? If he feared strength of flesh, who would rationally presume to be strong? For this reason men dedicated to Christ both are and wish to be weak." [2] Naturally, with this failing, and with its treatment of all men and women as brothers and sisters, and its consequent confusion of the sexes,[3] its want of patriotism,[4] and, also springing from its disregard of the morrow on earth, its advocacy of celibacy,[5] Christianity could do nothing to stem

[97] They were the "vitia et longae pacis et opulentae securitatis," *op. cit.* VII. For Juvenal see above, p. 94, n. 15.

[98] VI., and again in VII.

[99] VII. "Ibi praecipue vitia, ubicumque Romani," VI.

[1] VII.

[2] I.

[3] Clement of Alexandria, for instance, would have them wear the same costume, though his words also permit and enjoin several differences, *Paedagogus,* II. 10 (or 11), *cf.* III. 11. He here fell into agreement with Zeno, who had made the same recommendation (Diogenes Laërtius, VII. 33), though he shrank from following Zeno in recommending free exposure of all parts of the body (*ib.*), still recognising that there is some difference between men and women.

[4] "We have no country on earth, that we may despise earthly possessions," *id. ib.* III. 8. In Greece already some of the philosophers had risen [?] to this state of detachment: *cf.* Seneca's account of Stilpo, *De Constantia Sapientis,* c. 5. The sentiment that one's country is wherever one lives well, appears, put into the mouth of the god of merchants, in Aristophanes' *Pluto,* 1151. The Christians could worship God and prepare for heaven in one country as well as in another. In putting off the world, they put off the countries into which it was divided.

[5] Tertullian, who would permit but one sole marriage, ridiculed the idea of the Christians desiring to perpetuate the state — Christians, to whom on earth there is no morrow, *Exhort. ad Castit.* c. 12, cf. *Ad Uxorem,* I. 5. Yet some of the Christians tolerated marriage, for their country's sake: so Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata,* II. 23; or rather, for continuing God's image on earth, Methodius, *Banquet of the Ten Virgins,* II. 1; but only secondarily, as the world was already populous, and virginity comes first, Cyprian, *On the Dress of Virgins,* c. 23.

the decay. Public virtue was not its affair: it enjoined only charity to the poor.[6] What was the ruination of the world to those who expected soon to be in paradise![6a] In Tacitus's time the "inertness" of the pagan Gauls was proverbial.[7] It was ten times worse now that they were Christians. According to Salvianus again, after Treves had been sacked three times, the principal men petitioned the emperor to restore the circus entertainments; and when it was captured a fourth time, they were carousing and did not desist even as the barbarians entered the city. At Carthage, in Africa, while it was being taken by the Vandals, the Christian Romans were luxuriating in the theatres.[8] We are dying, Salvianus remarked bitterly, but we laugh: hence everywhere tears follow our laughter.[9] At Rome the utter idleness and vacancy of life, given up wholly to the chase after pleasure, is well depicted in the pages of Ammianus Marcellinus. He comments on the well-lighted streets at night, imitating day; the speed of the vehicles of the rich, endangering the lives of pedestrians; the prevalence of music over other forms of art; the honours paid to actors and dancers; the care of one's health, and the segregation of the diseased; the popular discussions on the merits of racers; the superciliousness of the rich toward strangers, whom they welcomed effusively one day and forgot the next. The Christian bishop was the first man in the city; he was often enriched by gifts from women; his election was sometimes at the cost of bloodshed.[10] The old military art of dancing had long before become soft and debilitated.[11] The delicacy and effemin-

[6] *Cf.* Seeck, *op. cit.*, II. 335–6. He quotes Lactantius: "Unum certum et verum liberalitatis officium est egentes atque inutiles alere," *Divin. Instit.*, VI. ii. 28.

[6a] "Quid hoc ad Christianos, quid ad Dei servos, quos paradisus invitat. . . . Mala atque adversa mundi fortiter tolerant, dum dona et prospera futura prospectant," Cyprian, *Ad Demet.*, IV.— Christianity, we may note, existed during, and helped on, the ascent of civilisation in Europe through the Middle Ages, but it was another, a revised Christianity. The exemplar of this Christianity was Martin of Tours, in whose life it was chiefly remembered that he had been a soldier and, giving half his cloak to the beggar, had kept the other half for himself.

[7] *Cf. German.* c. 28.

[8] VI.

[9] VII.

[10] XIV. 6, XXVIII. 4; XXVII. 3.

[11] Thus Seneca drew the contrast: "Et Scipio triumphale illud et militare corpus movit ad numeros, non molliter se infringens, ut nunc mos

acy of the city-bred men showed itself exteriorly in the use of fine raiment and ointments, in the shaving of the face and even the depilation of the whole body.[12] At Carthage things were even worse. There and throughout Roman Africa, people were said to have all the vices in a superior degree. Many men became women in face, walk, and dress; and what Clement of Alexandria called "preposterous Venus"[13] was practised openly.[14] As for the women, matrons could not by their dress be distinguished from courtesans.[15] Among other things revived to-day, they dyed their hair yellow.[16] In general, "luxury has deranged everything," a Christian Father complained: "men play the part of women, and women that of men, contrary to nature; women are at once wives and husbands; and their promiscuous lechery is a public institution."[17]

Already by the latter half of the third century the Romans of Italy, where the peasant conscripts often cut off their thumbs to avoid military service[18]— a practice not unknown to-day,— would willingly have left the defence of the empire to the outer provinces, and a party of the emperor Gallienus seems to have desired letting the provinces become independent and take care of themselves; and when Aurelian abolished that policy and reconquered the provinces that had separated, at the same time restoring the currency, the city rose up in rebellion. A little later, the emperor Probus, having pacified the Roman world for the last time, fell into the error some good people at the present day entertain, of thinking that soon there would be no more need of soldiers. Accordingly he set them to the use-

est etiam incessu ipso ultra muliebrem mollitiem fluentibus; sed ut illi antiqui viri solebant, inter lusum ac festa tempora, virilem in modum tripudiare, non facturi detrimentum, etiam si ab hostibus suis spectarentur," *De Tranquillitate Animi*, c. 15.

[12] The last by means of pitch-plasters: see Clement of Alexandria, *Paedagogus*, III. 3; *cf.* Tertullian, *De Cultu Feminarum*, II. 8. Clement remarks that "the bushy hair of the barbarians has something fearful in it," *loc. cit.* *Cf.* Alexander Walker: "They were bearded Romans who conquered the then beardless Greeks; they were bearded Goths who conquered the then beardless Romans," *Beauty* (American ed.) p. 218.

[13] *Paedagogus*, II. 10.

[14] Salvianus, VII.; *cf.* Clement again, *op. cit.*, III. 3.

[15] Tertullian, *Apologeticus*, c. 6.

[16] Tertullian, *De Cultu Feminarum*, II. 6; Cyprian, *On the Dress of Virgins*, c. 16. Also men, according to Clement, *loc. cit.*

[17] Clement, *loc. cit.*

[18] Ammianus Marcellinus, XV. 12; *Codex Theod.* VII. xiii. 4, 5, 10.

ful labour of draining a marsh,— and they assassinated him.[19] They no longer would tolerate even the digging of trenches, and abandoned fortifying their camps. Already Domitian and Caracalla had raised their pay, with the result that it was cheaper to hire barbarians; and when to do that was no longer safe, the Roman soldiers under Gratian, at the end of the fourth century, discarded their cuirasses and helmets; and the heavy weapons of their ancestors, the short sword and the stout pilum, says Gibbon, "insensibly dropped from their feeble hands." At the same time the barbarians were increasing the weight of their armour, and even ordering it from the workshops of the empire.[20] Both the Romans and the Germans took to the use of cavalry, and so the old cycle ended as it and the new one began, on horseback; while the former trembled, and the latter felt secure, behind stone walls. Even Sparta had at last needed fortifications, and the Romans built new ones; and before long the Germans dotted with castles the lands they conquered. The end may be seen to be near when we note with Montesquieu the contrast between the tears shed by Philippicus, the general of the emperor Maurice, who on going into battle wept at the prospect of the slaughter, and those of the Arabs crying with chagrin when their commander made a truce which delayed their spilling the blood of their enemies.[21]

The fall of Rome had many causes. A and B and C may be independent causes each of a part of X. Or A may be cause of B, and B cause of C, and C cause of X: then, while C is the primary cause of X, A and B are earlier or more fundamental causes of X. Or A and B may be partial causes of C, which is primary cause of X; and, further back, of A and of B may be various independent or consecutive causes. The Roman empire fell before the Germans in the north and the Saracens in the south, primarily because from being stronger than they it had become weaker, while its greater wealth and more favourable situation attracted them. It became weaker than

[19] Aurelius Victor, *De Cæsaribus*, c. 37, §4.

[20] *Decline and Fall*, ch. 37 end, ch. 30 between notes 21 and 22. Similarly when the Greeks conquered the Persians, the latter were not strong enough to support such heavy armour and to wield such powerful weapons as the former.

[21] *Grandeur et Decadence des Romains*, ch. 22.

they partly because the quality of its population had declined, while theirs was improving, and partly because the number of its population had decreased, while theirs was increasing. In one word, its breed was degenerating, while theirs was advancing. Of this divergence there were many causes. Natural selection was still permitted to exert its influence among the opponents, who lived closer to nature, and who aided it perhaps by some conscious regulations or customs, pitiless toward weakness or cowardice; while among the Romans selection had become reversed and was eliminating the strong and the courageous, leaving the weak and the cowardly to propagate their kind. This reversed selection was effected partly by party conflicts and proscriptions, which destroyed the prominent citizens, as was done more continuously also by the cupidity of the emperors and their religious zeal; partly by perverse regulations, such as the organisation of the army (recruiting of the strong, with prohibition of marriage), and the method of levying taxes (which ruined all but the privileged); partly by the teaching of the Christian church, which exalted weakness, poverty, ignorance, laziness, and celibacy; and partly, and more fundamentally by the social conditions, which advancing civilisation had developed. Here, on a dead level of individuals distinguished only by the amount and the nature of their wealth, we find inequality of possessions on the one hand, with a tendency to equalise all by making the rich share their goods with the poor in public largesses and private alms, and on the other, equality of the sexes, women acquiring most of the rights of men (without their duties), and men becoming more and more like women, all enjoying life together. Except at court or in the church, there was little incentive for effort, as distinction only exposed to extortion; wherefore the inclination lay rather toward consumption than toward production. These conditions, summed up under the term "luxury," led to childlessness, especially among the upper classes, who, having abundance of other pleasures, avoided the trouble of having children, preferring to use up their capital themselves or at least not to divide what remained. Thus the upper classes left the world to the lower classes — that is, the Roman world, till the barbarians came in and took it; for to the only men who might have saved it, if such there were, it was

not worth saving, and those men and women who benefited by it were incapable of saving it. Then all the Romans practically became equal again in subjection and poverty, and the natural inequality of the sexes re-appeared in a reign of violence.

The review of the course of the Greco-Roman civilisation is especially valuable for us because of its striking resemblance to the course of our modern civilisation, as far as the latter has yet proceeded. With many minor differences, some of which, however, are of importance, the most noticeable difference is that ours is on a larger scale. This similarity and this difference are seen even in the geography of the territory covered by the two civilisations. Greece and Italy were peninsulas, and specially Greece was much cut up and broken into by mountain ranges and by the sea; and they were flanked on the east and the south by a small part of Asia and of Africa, already decayed and industrial regions, and on the west, at a greater distance, by a sparsely peopled and as yet uncivilised land containing great, because still untouched, mineral wealth. So, as a greater whole of which Greece and Italy form only parts, is Europe — a peninsula, much broken and divided into naturally distinct sections, flanked on the east and the south by the whole of Asia and of Africa, and on the west, across a far wider ocean, by a greater land once likewise sparsely peopled and containing vast untouched mineral wealth. Larger size means slower movement of the whole. The upward movement of our civilisation has perhaps not been much slower than that of the ancients. This is because we have drawn more help from them than they drew from their predecessors. But there is hope that our continuance at the top may be longer than theirs, as we are more impressed by the warning of their decline.

The Romans were agriculturists, every citizen cultivating his own little four-acre plot and having a share in the public land, and were still military; while their oriental neighbours had passed on into the stage of artizanship and were industrial. The Romans conquered the over-civilised Carthaginians and barbarous Spain, and afterward Gaul, getting immense treasure in gold and silver from them, and continuing for many years to work the Spanish mines with the enslaved labour of

that country's own people and afterward with slaves imported from elsewhere. This led to the growth of luxury and the ever-growing desire for more, along with the seizure of the public lands by the rich and the concentration of landed estates, to be worked by slave labour; while the superfluous incomes were wasted in delicacies, and their material form, money, was spent in trade with the East. As the supply of the precious metals from the west gave out, the Romans conquered the East itself, as much as was accessible to them — beyond Greece and Asia Minor — Syria, Assyria, Egypt; and, beside possessing in them a new source of slaves, drew from them another supply of accumulated treasure, which again flowed back to the East in return for real wealth drawn from there, and ultimately to the still further East in India and China. They drew also food supplies from Sicily, Africa, and Egypt, which ruined the Italian husbandmen, at first tending to democracy, then enabling the rich all the more easily to buy up the land and turn it into waste for cattle. At last their supply of treasure was exhausted, and, their labour being enervated, they were ruined — in the west first, and later in the east; after which even the former also learned, in sorrow and in pain, to become artizans.

The Europeans also were at the outset mostly agricultural, the land being either held in common by the communes or parcelled out with obligation or service to the state, which was the same as rent paid to the common owner, not in money, but in labour. In the Crusades they tried to conquer the near East, and were successful for but a short time. Then a greater West was opened to them in America,[22] and from there, working the natives to death and afterward importing slaves from Africa, they drew immense treasure of gold and silver, which rendered possible taxation in money and the purchase and sale of land, bringing about the conversion of the old holdings into private property and the seizure of the commons. This treasure was again drained off to the East,— to the far East mostly now. Then again they went after it, and the English con-

[22] "Spain, by a very singular fatality, was the Peru and Mexico of the old world," Gibbon, ch. VI., between notes 91 and 92. Therefore, conversely, Mexico and Peru were the Spain of the new world: so Del Mar, *History of the Precious Metals*, p. 17.

quered India. This brings us to the eighteenth century. In the nineteenth, Europe began to be supplied with cheap food, this time from the west; and where it was admitted free, as in England, it greatly depressed the landed interest, permitting the upgrowth of democracy. But now come in some differences. The drain to the East was met by various expedients, principally by the introduction of credit money. And, greatest difference of all, at the end of the eighteenth century the English, with the aid of money obtained from the East, developed manufacturing by machinery and steam power, on a large scale, with the capitalist system, and have entered the industrial stage, though some of the European states are not yet out of the stage of militarism. This industrialism has supplied England with a substitute for agriculture, and, extending to some other portions of Europe and to North America, has retarded the drain to the East, by putting western productivity ahead of the eastern, so that actually manufactures may be exported thither.

Here we are at present. But now the East is adopting western methods, and in time the same eastern superiority may perhaps tell, due to its people's ability and willingness to live on less. Then the drain may set in again. We have, moreover, recently been favoured by new supplies of gold, notably from the far south and the extreme north. But these will not last many years longer, and may be compared with the gold which Cæsar brought from Gaul. When appreciation again sets in (perhaps forty or fifty years from now, or even sooner) and becomes intolerable, it may be met by resort to paper money. That is a possibility, but not a probability, since the financiers will for their own selfish purposes resist. There will likewise be failure of the sources of real wealth, as we have seen. In addition, we have to face the moral evils ever growing in a high civilisation.

CHAPTER VII.

RE-APPEARANCE OF THE SYMPTOMS OF DECAY

We have, to repeat, already entered the culminating period of our western, white men's cycle of civilisation; but in spite of a few indications that in some respects we are well advanced in it, the evidence is overwhelming that we have not yet passed through it and have not yet reached the period of decline. For we have not yet experienced the exhaustion of artistic expression, nor the oft-heralded bankruptcy of science, nor the deficiency of material supplies. The means for our artillery have not yet given out, and the attack is still stronger than the defence: it is still an age of iron, and not yet again of stone, and the time for decentralisation has not yet arrived. Public opinion is still fairly strong. Money has not yet quite become our only god; and if, when dishonestly gained, it does not always reek with the stink of its source, it is still sometimes looked upon as tainted. Its appreciation has not yet become chronic. Monopolies are still in their infancy, leaving hope that the state may be able to strangle them. A middle class still exists, and privilege is only clandestinely obtained. The poor do not yet fully execrate the rich and exact a share in their wealth. Women are not yet wholly emancipated and held up to economic and political equality with men, nor men yet wholly sunk to such equality with women. Divorce has not yet become entirely a matter of course; preventive measures are not yet altogether reputable; vice is not yet unbridled. Competition is not yet dead. Some artificial and natural distinctions in society still exist. Science still rules, and superstition, always creeping, has not yet lifted high its head. The plutocracy, which already owns the law, the clergy, the army, and the press, has not completely bought out science. Democracy is not yet despaired of, nor is despotism within the range of clear vision.

Nevertheless, symptoms already appear which show that the

seeds of decay are taking root. The long peace which the world enjoyed, with few interruptions, for ninety-nine years, has borne its fruits, and in our country is still ripening them. The evils of peace are not acute like those of war, nor so fleeting: they are insidious, slow-working, and long-lasting. Peace brings ease, and ease saps energy. Appeased, the people suffer mischief to be imposed; and dreaming, they fall into vain ways themselves. Already we have fastened upon our necks the single gold standard; and so long as the idea is held up as a fetich that all values must be measured by the value of a single commodity, it will be in the power of financiers to produce fluctuations while waiting for the insetting appreciation that is sure to come. Public debts are everywhere being established as national blessings, that business men may have a convenient fund for investing their idle capital. The wasted interest paid thereon, added to the ever-enlarging demands made upon government, is perpetually increasing taxation, and leading to the invention of new taxes and the revival of old. Already the legacy tax has been resuscitated before its time — in Europe in imitation of the Roman, in America in imitation of the European — with its squandering of capital; also the income tax, imitated here as there, with its inequitable incidence upon the married and unmarried alike, alike upon those who have children and those who are childless. Already the old Roman appropriation of the public lands by the rich has been duplicated in England in the enclosure of the commons; and in our country little has been attempted till the mischief was done to prevent the purchasing of the public domain in unlimited tracts. In several countries peasants and would-be tillers of the soil have been driven off, and the land given over to pasturage or to hunting ranges; while in our country again labourers returning to their jobs have found them occupied, not by slaves, but by imported cheap labour from abroad. Hatred of the rich is already beginning, with an unreasoning demand for their despoilment. In many countries the people are disarmed, and even in ours, where the Constitution forbids, in New York they are prohibited from possessing arms by the monstrous "Sullivan law," proposed by a certain "Big Tim," as his multitudinous admirers dubbed him,— an advocate of female suffrage, by the way, and not without connection, as he would make

women of men by disarming them. Our soldiers are paid, and highly paid, and they demand all sorts of dainties, and the same are demanded for them. In our late tiny war with Spain it was thought by some a great hardship if they did not have hot coffee every day for breakfast; while the English officers, in their war with the Boers, at least at the beginning, considered indispensable their morning tub; from which, however, it is to be hoped, the present war has weaned them. Weapons are made lighter and lighter, and with calibre diminishing till their projectiles pierce almost without hurting; and more attention is paid to healing than to killing, upon which by international agreement all sorts of restrictions have been put, of course never to be observed. Reliance is placed chiefly on artillery, which is tremendously expensive. There is a widespread agitation for the perpetuation of peace, partly humanitarian, partly calculated, since war is now more injurious than beneficial, at least between the great nations, and if these did not till recently invade the small ones as much as they used to do, it was mostly because their rivalry kept one another out. Moreover, waging war by machinery is not so exciting as the old hand-to-hand fighting. It is one-sided: soldiers are exposed to being killed, without the personal exultation of slashing and slaying in return. And as there is much less contact with slaughter, except that of one's friends, undoubtedly there is much greater shrinking from taking life than of yore. Yet this does not lessen the death-rate; for men who send shells into the unknown, five or ten miles away, where they may or may not be effective, do not feel personally responsible when many years afterward they learn that so and so many of the enemy were blown to atoms. Already our Bryans and other pacifists, like Salvianus and the other old Christians, who wished individuals to be weak that they might escape the temptations that come with strength,[1] would have our country remain unprepared and defenceless in order that it should not be able to fight. Our morality is sentimental, having to do with present feelings, cherishing sympathy, but caring little for consequences or for justice. Everywhere is relaxation of discipline, of punishment, even of permission that the natural bad consequences of wrong commission and careless omission should fall

[1] Above, p. 115.

upon the doers or non-doers. Humanitarianism is showing signs of becoming maudlin.[2] New religions are invading us from the East, or are being invented around us every day. Labour is decreasing; amusement is increasing; and the number of legal holidays has begun to grow.[3]

Worst of all, we see already emergence of the two great evils that accompany the efflorescence of civilisation and foreshadow its end. Attendant upon humanitarianism and discontent, there seem to be coming on a collapse of competition and a lessening of labour, already begun, which are fostered by socialism, seeking complete equality between all men. And attendant upon an already begun breach of the contrast between men and women and the surfeit of abundant amusements, there are a falling off of marriages and a decrease of the birth-rate, which are fostered by a woman movement, seeking complete equality between the sexes. These two companion evils, essentially of diminishing competition and of diminishing birth-rate, indicate that it is becoming pleasanter to put down the burden of civilisation and to enjoy what it offers, than to carry on and transmit it.

The better to understand the appearance of these two evils and the danger to be apprehended from them, we need a review of the immediate past and a forecast of the not distant future.

The era in which we to-day live has had three stages of development, each dating from a period of expansion. The first was the period commencing with the Crusades, the second with the discovery of America, the third with the American and French revolutions, the so-called industrial revolution, in which

[2] *Cf.* Greg: "*Nous avons les défauts de nos qualités.* Our growing tenderness to suffering is accompanied with a corresponding gentleness towards wrong. Our morality grows laxer as our hearts grow softer. We are nearly as charitable to the sinner as to the sufferer. We condemn nothing very bitterly. We punish nothing very severely. We scarcely regard anything as wicked which is not cruel. . . . We are not exactly bad, but neither are we strong nor true," *op. cit.*, 52–4. This was written forty years ago, in England, and things are still more so, and in a wider area, to-day.

[3] Socialists, when elected to office, have at Roubaix, in France, distributed bread freely to the poor, and at Lille they have given to working people free tickets to the municipal theatre. Is this the beginning again of "panem et circenses"? And even without thinking ourselves socialists, we Americans, in many of our cities, give free breakfasts to our public-school children.

England led the way, and the opening of all the world to the freedom of the seas. The first was an ineffectual attack upon the East and the South, which, however, expanded commerce and enlarged men's ideas. It also took off many of the fighting barons and gave opportunity for combination to the peaceful and industrious burghers. The second opened up a new continent for settlement, and gave a vent to the middle and lower classes, and by subtracting some of these improved the lot of those who staid at home; but it caused little to be brought back except gold and silver, which, however, gave a second impetus to commerce and stimulated industry. The third is the one that concerns us most immediately. The events that then took place initiated a great acceleration in the progress of the people of Europe and America, and led to a notable relaxation of the struggle for existence, which has characterised three quarters of the last century and still, though waning, continues. This was due to the advance in mechanical and chemical sciences and their application to production; which, besides augmenting the power of working up raw materials in manufactories, considerably enlarged the production of raw materials themselves, in a twofold manner. For on the one hand, improvements in the art of agriculture and mining increased the productivity of the old soils and mines; and on the other, improved means of communication by steamboat and railway opened up new tracts of land in our West, in South America, in South Africa, in Australasia. The power of man over nature was enhanced, at the same time nature was responding with the offer of new sources. Consequently man's lot on earth has been rendered much easier. Though a struggle for life still goes on in the lowest stratum of humanity, this has been curtailed and confined to a comparatively small number. The struggle is rather for wealth, for luxuries.

From this relaxation of the rigour of nature toward mankind important results have flowed. Most immediate was the cheapening of land. The increased quantity of the new, in spite of the augmented productivity of the old, caused also the old to fall in value. Of this a consequence was very prominent. The class who lived off the land, acquiring their wealth, power, and position therefrom, the landlords, the men

who everywhere form the aristocracy of a country, had their position undermined, at the same time the new industrialism was giving wealth and consideration to the middle class of manufacturers, and increasing the demand for labourers, who also had the new and the cheaper land at their disposal, with the result, completing the earlier movements, that democracy has risen to power. It is true that in some countries political convulsions were needed to drive out the aristocrats and to confiscate and divide their lands, or at least to strip them of power; but it was only the economic changes simultaneously taking place that occasioned and fortified those political changes. Even in our country it was the opening of the western lands that led to the overthrow of our primitive aristocracy under Washington and Adams and to the establishment of democracy under Jefferson.

This democratisation of the western world is an economic and political result almost everywhere (west of Berlin), to some extent, accomplished. Another actual result is social, consisting of the greater humanisation of the people, or upgrowth of the humanitarian spirit, so characteristic of our age. The milder attitude of nature toward us has caused us to assume a milder attitude toward one another. The manners and dispositions of men have grown softer and gentler. Punishments are less cruel. War, to repeat, *pace* the present one raging, is less indulged in: it is not needed for existence, it interferes with wealth, it hardly gives any pleasure in itself. The fall of an old and the rise of a new class to power, that of the middling rich, has broken down old prejudices, mixed classes up, and enhanced the appearance even beyond the reality of democracy, by disguising plutocracy. Women are accorded a freer status. Children are given more play. Education and enlightenment are extended to the masses. Religious intolerance is almost banished.

This humanitarian movement, it is true, has its roots further back than the beginning of the nineteenth century. It may be traced to the Renaissance which preceded, and to the Reformation which followed, the discovery of America. But it has come to its bloom only in our days. In his Arnoldesque essay on *Social Evolution* Mr. Benjamin Kidd ascribed the modern "deepening and softening of character" to a "fund

of altruistic feeling" with which our western societies were "equipped" by the Christian religion during fourteen centuries, and which was "liberated" at the time of the Reformation.[4] The metaphor is limp, as feelings are hardly a kind of things that can be piled up and stored in a fund. Strange, too, is it that when the Christian religion held sway, the humanitarian movement did not exist, and this movement has increased as that sway has declined. Moreover, the phenomenon is not new: no "new era" (p. 245) are we entering, though we may hope that the era ahead of us will be better and more lasting than the corresponding era in antiquity. Mr. Kidd rightly ascribes the progress of the lower classes to the concessions made by the upper classes, who, though at the time the stronger, are by their deepened and softened character "rendered incapable of making any effective resistance to the movement which is undermining their position."[5] But before Mr. Kidd published his paradoxes, Fustel de Coulanges in his fine work *La Cité Antique* had noticed the same phenomenon in antiquity, and had generalised it, writing: "When to the subjects authority ceases to appear just, time is needed for it to cease to appear so to the masters; but this comes at length, and then the master who no longer believes his authority to be legitimate, defends it badly or ends by renouncing it."[6] Indeed, the humanitarian movement can hardly fail to come, in some form, to any civilisation when it has reached the period of ease. Matthew Arnold himself defined civilisation to be "the humanisation of man in society;"[7] and it is probable that he obtained this from his classical studies, because Pliny, in describing the functions which had been assigned by the gods to Italy (civilising functions, evidently, though this term was not used by the Latins), placed among them that of "giving humanity to mankind."[8]

[4] Pp. 165, 166, 177–8, 182, 194, 200, 216, 256, 261, 320.

[5] Pp. 188–90, 192–3, 219, 322, *cf.* 234, 259.

[6] P. 310; again 355: "When an aristocracy comes to doubt the legitimacy of its empire, either it has not the courage to defend it or it defends it badly."

[7] Essay on "Equality," in *Mixed Essays*, 63, also p. vi.

[8] "Numine deum electa, quae . . . et humanitatem homini daret," *Nat. Hist.*, III. 5 (or 6).— Mr. Kidd's thesis is that our individual and social interests are divergent, and that, while instinct prompts to the latter, reason inclines to the former, and while instinct is stronger at first, reason

Now along with these two actual accomplishments of democracy and humanitarianism, have come the tentative beginnings of the two evils which have been signalised,— beginnings which seem not evil and perhaps may not be if they go not too far. On the one hand, the greater productivity of labour, owing to improved processes and machinery and to better sources and greater supplies to work upon, has permitted the benefit to be taken in the forms both of greater production and of lessened labour-time or greater leisure. On the other, the greater ease of production has permitted women and even children to be employed in tending the lighter movements of machines and performing the more delicate operations of manufacturing, opening new opportunities of self-support to spinsters and orphans and even of extra gain to those who are

at last grows to be the stronger, with threat, in socialism, of preventing progress by putting an end to the struggle for existence and to natural selection; wherefore religion is needed to provide a supernatural and superrational sanction to instinct and thereby to keep up competition, but under new conditions of equality of opportunity. This is not an altogether correct conception of reason, the function of which is to draw conclusions from the data supplied to it, and which may do so rightly or wrongly; wherefore the conclusion Mr. Kidd draws by his may very well be a false one. In a recently published remarkable work on *The Fate of Empires*, Mr. A. J. Hubbard has taken from Mr. Kidd this one-sided conception of reason. He has, however, carried on the analysis of instinct prompting to struggle, in behalf of society, and to procreation, in behalf of the race; and examines (what was not so much an object of attention when Mr. Kidd wrote) "the synchronous appearance of socialistic phenomena and a failure of the birth-rate, a simultaneous yielding to the social stress and to the racial stress," which has "again and again" marked "the turning point in past civilisations," and is now upon us (pp. 49–50, vii, 60, 100), in a manner well worth reading. Unfortunately the only conclusion he comes to, is again Mr. Kidd's of the need of some darkly adumbrated future (?) religion, since the Christian has been tried and has failed; for which, however, in one respect, he points to the everlasting civilisation of the Chinese and their ancestor-worship. But it is probable that the religion of ancestor-worship, which is so favourable to the instinct of procreation, and which Fustel de Coulanges detected at the beginning of the Greek and Roman civilisation, was itself originally the product of an anterior period utterly pre-historic. For that religion could hardly have been a product of instinct: rather it had been invented to account for the instinct of procreation; and as it was certainly not given in revelation, it must have been produced by reason, but by a reason imperfectly working on imperfectly collected data, basing itself mostly on dreams and hallucinations. "It must not be forgotten," remarks Huxley, "that what we call rational grounds for our beliefs, are often extremely irrational attempts to justify our instincts," *Methods and Results*, p. 310n. As for the religion of the future, it is likely that when it comes it will, like Christianity, instead of preventing the breakdown of civilisation, teach people to make the best of it.

already provided for. In the first case, the advantages already attained have been to a great extent due to combination on the part both of the employers and the employés; which has inspired hopes in both of still greater adantages from still greater combination, in the employers leading to monopoly, in the employés to power sufficient to enable them to seize control of the industries and to share among themselves all the profits and in consequence still further reduce the hours of labour. Meanwhile "trusts" are formed by the employers, and by the employés regulations are passed forbidding emulation and putting a damper on diligence by the best of them in behalf of the worst of them; and by all it is agreed that competition is an evil and a thing of the past. Thus far the present. For the future, while the employers lie low and do not formulate their plans, the employés look forward to their own supremacy. They promise, however, that all shall be admitted to their ranks, that is, all may become labourers, all owners of the means of production with which they labour. This is socialism. It flatters by a picture of future peace and happiness in a millennium and more of plenty, bountiful nature continuing to supply mankind in return for less and less labour with all the good things of life, so that strife for them will no longer be necessary, and with the triumph of man over nature the struggle of man with man will cease, and mankind will live in a Christ-like brotherhod and become perfect on earth without waiting for translation to heaven.

In the other case, the admission of women to the industries alongside of men, with prospect of adding to the future brotherhood also a sisterhood, is already beginning to have the effect of taking women out of the homes, putting them in rivalry with men, and breaking down that mutual dependence of men and women on each other and that dependence of children on their parents which are the basis of marriage; while the diminution and even the destruction of the old household employments by the new manufacturing industries is bringing idleness into the well-to-do homes where the women have remained, and thereby tends to drive these women out in pursuit of amusement and distraction, which, indeed, are being more and more provided for them. The eventual result may be the placing of all women outside the home alongside of

men both in work and in play, with the consequence that women will hardly have more time than men have for the care of children, who, in the well-to-do classes, and in the lower also if the children be kept from employment, will become a nuisance. Things have not gone so far; but already in the most advanced nations and their most advanced classes, extending to the middle, fewer children are produced, as is marked by the fall of the birth-rate. There is even a desire to aid this tendency of the times. In the place of the old dovetailing of the sexes, with their apportioned relationship to the common offspring, there is an aspiration after equality of the sexes in all things, and a demand that every one, man or woman, shall be recognised only as an individual, as "a human"; wherefore in the present industrial conditions, so long as they last, women are to be admitted into rivalry and competition with men, and in the coming régime of socialism into complete coadjuvancy, copartnership, and companionship. The present inequality, among men, of wealth and of political power, has come altogether from contention, and though of late perhaps mostly, by the shrewd, from acquisition through the use of fraud, yet originally, it is alleged, chiefly from seizure, by the strong, through the use of force. So also the present supremacy of men and subordination of women is owing, it is maintained, only to the greater physical strength of men and their taking advantage of the physical weakness of women, originally to subdue them, and still to keep them in subjection. The future is to be an era of peace and good will, in which nothing shall be permitted to be gained by fraud, and force shall no longer be employed, but over all justice shall reign, which gives to every one his due,— and every one's due is considered the same, since no one is responsible for the virtues or defects with which nature endows him. If any distinction shall exist, it will be only that of intelligence, in which, it is claimed, women are by nature equal to men. Women, therefore, will have as much to say about the management of the world as men, and weak men as much as strong men, "say" in fact being everything, strength nothing. Only children and idiots will be excluded from the common councils, because of their lack of intelligence.

That these dreams are a product of the last hundred years'

peace and ease and plenty, needs only to be stated to be recognised. And they are furthered by an imperfect induction about the indefinite continuance of peace and increase and extension of comfort,— which opinion, in America at least, the present rude shock in Europe has not yet shaken. And if nature were to behave as prophesied by Isaiah and as sung by Virgil, there is no reason why these imaginings should not be realised. But so far is nature from giving any promise of such behaviour, she is rather likely, after a continuance of increasing prosperity for some years to come, to discontinue her bounty; and if the people of the most advanced nations and races carry out these plans, they will, by the mistake of preparing only for good times when hard times are coming, meet with many obstacles and obstructions, and expose themselves to great perils. For the peoples of the other parts of the world will not commit any such insanity. Be they only barbarians, yet like the barbarians of old they may destroy the nations in which attention is centred on present enjoyment,— on consumption rather than production, on distribution rather than acquisition,— and in which little concern is paid to leaving a strong and well-tested, well-strained posterity. So long as barbarians or backward peoples exist, the advanced ones, in the midst of their opulence, should guard their doors, or they will suffer for their negligence. Among them, too, some may hold back, and thereby outwit the others, as indeed the Germans have done.

It was a curious coincidence that the relaxation in the pressure of circumstances upon mankind, so characteristic of the western world during the last century, began at the very time when Malthus was bringing into consciousness the relationship between the sources and yield of provisions and the numbers of the population, and advising that mankind should voluntarily cease to press upon the limitations set by nature.[9] The then opening of new lands and augmenting of the rendering power of old soils amounted to the same thing as, from the other side, a decrease in the number of the people, and therefore seemed to belie Malthus's law about the more rapid

[9] Malthus's *Essay on the Principle of Population* was first published in an imperfect form in 1798 and completely rewritten in 1803, and slightly revised in 1817 and 1826. References here are to the ninth edition, London, 1888.

increase of population than of the means of subsistence. But this was a statement of the general course of things throughout the ages. Malthus himself recognised that on exceptional occasions the means of subsistence might take a sudden leap and widen the room for more population.[10] He held, however, that by its natural expansive power the population would quickly fill up the new room and again press upon its bounds. This has taken place, and the pressure is tightening.

Malthus himself, in his predictions, made some mistakes of detail. Thus he conceded that England "might in the course of some centuries contain two or three times" the population it had when he wrote, "and yet every man in the kingdom be much better fed and clothed than he" then was.[11] The fact is, in one century, every man being much better fed and clothed, the population of England has quadrupled. And in the world at large the population has doubled; for in Malthus's day Malte Brun estimated it at eight hundred million, and now our statisticians reckon it at sixteen hundred million. Such an actual increase has never occurred before, and even such a rate of increase has probably not been seen since the early time when population was scanty and the room for it broad. This is not inconsistent with the complaint above made about the falling-off in the birth-rate. That falling-off began only recently, and it has taken place only in the upper and middle classes of the most advanced nations. It is properly upper-class suicide. If it has extended further, it is at most race-suicide in a few nations only on the globe. But it may amount to civilisation-suicide. There is no world-suicide, and probably never will be. Other peoples are pullulating as fast as ever. While the Romans were letting themselves die out, the Germans ("germinating," as the late Latins said[12]) were swarming over the borders.

Already all the public lands of the United States have been appropriated: our whole territory is occupied. South America, South Africa, and Australia are not yet fully covered. Even our own country is not yet crowded. Spaces still remain for the over-stocked parts of the world to overflow into. But

[10] *Cf.* pp. 252, 293, 334, 340–2, 474.
[11] P. 408, repeated 489.
[12] *E.g.*, Paulus Diaconus, *De Gestis Langobardorum*, I. 1.

they are rapidly filling up. Already provisions are becoming dearer. The recent talk about the higher cost of living refers to some temporary phenomena, such as increased output of gold, or undue exactions of middlemen; but along with these is a permanent cause, the rising ratio of the demand to the means of supply. Land is on this account beginning again to rise in value. It will no doubt soon be the safest investment, and, unless we be careful, it will be bought in large parcels by the rich and we too shall have our *latifundia*. This will happen in spite, and even in consequence, of the soil's diminishing fertility, if its renovation be not properly attended to. As for the permanent stores of minerals underground, which can be tapped only once and are then exhausted, these, as we have seen, are now being drawn upon more prodigally than ever before and at an ever increasing rate, their total amounts have been measured, and the time of their incipient exhaustion predicted. Coal and iron and the other metals will then be obtainable only with greater cost of labour, they will be scarcer and scarcer, and their esteem-value will certainly rise. The same will be the case with those slow-growing products of the soil the renewal of which is only after many years of waiting — the forests. Before long even in our country wood will give place, in the construction of houses, to brick and concrete and stone. Substitutes, indeed, are at hand for most things; but in most cases they are more expensive than the originals. Science may discover some as cheap, even cheaper, in a few instances. Hopes of alleviation may be placed in new chemical combinations and mechanical contrivances, but not of prevention. The most common effect of inventions is to increase our wants and thereby accelerate our drawing upon nature's resources. The economies effected by science can at best but retard the deficiency of material supplies.

Hard times, then, are ahead, not immediately perhaps (when the present chaos is ended), but certainly before many years, at most a couple of generations or so. A return will set in of the re-active pressure of nature upon mankind. Mankind will again be restive under it. They will not live in the peace and concord dreamt of in consequence of the peace and concord experienced during the last century of augmented supplies.

The struggle for existence will again become sharp and bitter, and there will again be wars and rumours of wars. It will not then be safe for the lamb to lie down by the lion, when the lion is hungry. The strong will again rend, and the weak will need defence and protection. Class will contend with class, and nation with nation. Our women may weep at the prospect. Also our Mr. Doves and our Mr. Loves may tremble at it. But woe to that people which has not men that will stand up and fight without flinching. Those countries where the moral decay shall have gone deepest, where the proved stock shall have died out and given way to poor stock, where the greatest effeminisation of men shall have taken place (for the masculinisation of women will be no compensation), where the strong and the wise and the shrewd shall gain no more of wealth, power, and influence than the weak, silly, and incompetent, all being equal,— those will go to the wall. And when this fate shall have overtaken most of our western white men's countries, our cycle of civilisation will be completed.

These words were penned before the outbreak of the war now raging in Europe. This war is due primarily to the comparative overpopulation of Germany and the consequent need which the Germans feel for expansion. It does not mean the end of civilisation, but it may be the beginning of the ending, which is a long process, and a terrible process, and most terrible to those nations which suffer it first — those nations which are first defeated in the struggle for existence.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PROBLEM OF RETARDATION

THE duty of resisting the tendencies that lead to weakness is manifest. As the prospect of the future is not so rosy as the actuality of the present (at least with us), we ought to avoid being enervated by our good fortune or letting our descendants become so, and we ought to steel ourselves and them against the impending change. To say the future does not concern us, is foolish. The race has continuity as well as the individual. Very few of the public measures for which persons devote their energies and even give up their lives, are calculated to have any direct effect upon those persons themselves. All public service is for others, and it would be absurd to confine the others to our contemporaries. We are really more interested in posterity,— even those of us who are childless. Besides, no man knoweth when the evil times may overtake us. We should always be prepared.

The ultimate giving out of nature's stores may be inevitable, but it can be retarded. The ultimate degeneration of civilised peoples may likewise be inevitable, though here is no such certainty. There seems no necessity, if people would only behave themselves properly. But this is the difficulty, whether they can know what is the proper course, or if some of them know it, others will consent to pursue it. Strife and competition appear to be the course nature prescribes. But men who have been much exposed thereto at last grow weary and wish to rest in peace. Those who have are glad to enjoy without interference, and those of the have-nots whom they influence learn to be content with the little that is given them, especially if it comes without much work. At most they yearn after sharing alike, and seek not to strive overmuch with nature, but dream of good times to come. It is such lethargy that needs to be provided against, and all that leads thereto should be shaken off in advance. Such errors are apt to develop in the

period of enjoyment at the culmination of the cycle of civilisation. We have reached that stage. If the lethargy of decay cannot be avoided in the end, at least its advent can be retarded. Retardation, then, both in matters physical and in matters moral, it is our duty to try to effect with all our might.

For the physical causes of decline of civilisation the only retarding remedy is less wastefulness. This applies especially to the irreparable sources of wealth (mines), and to the slowly reproducible (forests). Actually to refrain from drawing upon them, or to stint ourselves, is to sacrifice the present for the future without any gain. But by making what we obtain go furthest, to satisfy our wants with as little consumption as possible, is to make a total gain. The art of saving is to avoid using things uselessly or without obtaining from them their full utility. Thus fine things should be used without reserve when fine things are useful, but not where coarse things are just as good,— *e.g.* brown paper for wrapping; and especially ought we not to use fine things where coarse things are better, as bread made of whole wheat, which is more nutritious than bread made of white flour. The art of saving is also to use things that are inexhaustible rather than things that are exhaustible, as to employ stone for bridges and buildings rather than iron, or to use things annually reproducible rather than things only slowly reproduced, such as corn stalk instead of wood pulp in paper-making. Another instance, we in America split wood for kindling instead of using brushwood, notwithstanding that brushwood is much better for the purpose: we thereby lose revenue obtainable from forests while they are standing, and we consume timber that might be saved. Also, our only conception of forest-conservation seems to be to withhold the forests entirely from consumption, in immense reservations, instead of regulating the annual cutting in agreement with the annual growth. On the other hand, our Constitution forbids us to put a tax upon the exportation of lumber and of coal and the like exhaustible supplies, while it allows us to tax the importation of lumber and coal that would supplement our limited supplies, and thereby enables our interested law-givers to compel us to draw upon our own resources alone.

In the case of the products annually renewed, wastefulness

does not seem so harmful, though it is unwise in everything. Here, however, there may be wastefulness of the sources, of the soil itself; which is still more reprehensible, because it leads to diminution of supplies and is preventable and therefore unnecessary. In a preceding chapter it was pointed out what elements need to be renewed, and what processes can be employed. It was there also noted that while the peoples of the far East have managed these things over-well, the peoples of the near East and the southern Europeans managed them very ill in antiquity. Modern Europeans are now managing them very well, with regard both to forestation and, to a less degree, to the prevention of waste in sewage. Moreover, Europe now (as Italy did of yore, which may have halted its decline) receives agricultural produce from elsewhere, which to some extent goes to the soil. We Americans, however, manage very badly, deforesting our water-sheds and thereby causing the washing away of our top-soil, and besides exporting our agricultural produce, which will be necessary for some time to come, casting away sewage into the lakes and seas most lavishly. In the last century some stores of much needed elements were discovered — of nitrogen in the nitrate beds of Chile, of potassium in the potash pits of Germany, of phosphates in the guano deposits of the Pacific Islands and in the phosphate rocks of some of our southern and western States. All these things were part of the good luck that fell to mankind recently. But the exhaustion of the nitrate beds is already in process; that of the phosphate-bearing guano is practically accomplished, and of the phosphate rocks will take place ere the middle of this century. Only the potash pits appear to be inexhaustible; but it would be hard for the rest of the world if it had to depend on Germany. Potassium, however, may be obtained out of the sea, from kelp, the supply of which may perhaps be never-ending, yet at no time very abundant. As for nitrogen, beside its replenishment by the action of bacteria, hopes are now entertained that science may discover a cheap method of obtaining it in serviceable fixed form from the air. If this could be done, it would revolutionise agriculture and start a new period of relief from the pressure of nature. But, like aviation, though doing good at first, it might end by doing more harm. For it would lead to a quick re-

duplication of population, and all the other limited resources of nature — coal, iron, the other minerals, and forests — would be dug up or cut down and consumed in greater quantities, and their supplies be exhausted the sooner. Preferable is a more modest husbandry; and to keep the soil supplied with its several ingredients in their proper proportion by renovation is rather the task of careful agriculture and municipal economy.

The moral causes of decay are, to repeat for the last time, the most serious; and most important is the problem of preventing them, if possible, or at least of retarding them. If the brakes be put on before the down-grade becomes steep, their action will be the more effective. Or if we know of no positive checks, we may take time by the forelock and slacken speed of ourselves. Without metaphor, our principal concern should be to avoid doing the things that lead on to degeneration.

First of all, we must not delude ourselves with the notion of the new era of peace. We should remember that it was the false prophets who cried "Peace, peace," where there was no peace. This is an often repeated cry raised by sloth and luxuriousness. To-day it is a popular craze, fomented by women and plutocrats. Humanitarian solicitude for life and financial solicitude for property have, till the late madness of two exalted Kaisers and their servile subjects, preserved most of the great nations from great wars with one another, while the latter, despite the former, has led them into little wars with the little nations. But their forbearance could not last much longer, and indeed it has already broken down. Feeble hopes were then indulged in, that when the nations did set to again, the wars of the future would by humanitarian restrictions be rendered almost bloodless, like the combats of the degenerate Italians at the time of the Renaissance, or perhaps even that, like the warriors of Torelore we should fight "with baked apples, and with eggs, and with fresh cheeses," casting them into the water in a contest to see who could splash the most. It was forgotten that Italy was soon overrun by the French and the Spaniards; and little heed was given lest, as in the old tale whence the latter allusion is taken,[1] some Saracens

[1] *Aucassin and Nicolete,* Lang's translation.

should come from over the water and carry off our wealth and our women. Our Saracens are indeed whetting their bayonets beyond the sea of the setting sun. *We,* lapped in luxury, may seek peace, but it is not permitted us to have everything we want, and there shall be no peace, because others will not allow it. So far as can be seen ahead, for centuries yet, there will always be fighting nations. Abundant incentives will soon be coming to them, and pretexts will not be lacking. Then woe to those countries which are not prepared.

There is also an ill-advised over-praise of peace as the *summum bonum,* and disparagement of war as the maximum evil. People speak of war as retarding progress in civilisation. The reference to the destruction of property is mere materialism. Rather does it retard progress in decay: it is a moral purgative. As for the loss of life, it seems to be overlooked that every one must die somehow, and that violent death is generally less painful than natural death.[2] In war, contention is frank and open; in peace, underhand and fraudulent. If the prevention of over-population be left to natural death, especially if this be artificially delayed, the increase must be checked at its source, at birth; and this means an interference with nature's method of selecting the fittest. Eugenics will give little aid, if those who practise it have but one or two children. Female athletics will do no good, if athletic females be mostly barren. In our modern militarism, however, care needs to be taken not to draft into the army only the ablebodied. Even to weak men, in an army as in society, may work be assigned suitable to their capacities. Conscription should cover all who can be fathers, and if under the hardships the unsound perish, the world can get along without them.[3] Of course war is an immediate evil, and therefore it must be faced; and it will be

[2] Even Kingsley was "sometimes tempted to think, having sat by many death beds, that our old forefathers may have been right, and that death in battle may be a not unenviable method of passing out of this troublesome world," *The Roman and the Teuton,* pp. 13–14.

[3] And every man rejected from the army for some inherited and transmissible deficiency (and not a mere acquired incapacity) should be segregated or sterilised. No one, unfit himself to be a soldier, and incapable of begetting a soldier, should be permitted to be a father, at a time when those who are fit to be soldiers and fathers are exposed to being cut off. But we may already be too humanitarian (or too degenerate, which amounts to almost the same thing) to adopt such a harsh system, with all the pain it might entail on individuals.

well if the threat of woe to them that carry the sword can be put into execution by those who would prefer to sheathe it. Instead of a Hague court of peace, it would be wiser if there were formed a United States of Europe. Europe would then be invincible over against the rest of the world. This would be of benefit even to us in America, who would then have to mind our p's and q's, and would not, for instance, so light-heartedly break a treaty as we recently did, until better second-thought withdrew.

War being still not only a possibility but a probability, and war on the most tremendous scale, and, when once started upon in earnest, in the most ferocious manner (we have had recent samples in Manchuria and the Balkans, and now the real thing in Europe at large), it is most necessary for every nation that would remain one among the nations of the world, to see to it that there be no failure of its virility, and that the control of its affairs slip not out of the hands of its mentally and physically strong men. Hence especially two things with which we are now threatened we need with all our might to shun: socialism and feminism, the one the general equalisation of all, the other the equalisation at least of women with men, a particular form of which, and an entering wedge for the rest, is female suffrage. Socialism is a general and all-embracing system that seeks to level out natural distinctions, denounced as artificial, by pulling down the high and raising the low without regard to merit any more than to chance, and it includes the so-called emancipation of women, or the putting of them on the same plane with men. Both it and feminism, which is contained within it, would give equal support and equal control to weak men as to strong men, and to women as to men. They would take away from men their principal incentive to labour, and they would break down marriage and the family, substituting a friendly collaboration and partnership, leaving little room for children, and enhancing the tendency to race-suicide. The nation that adopts either of these things first, will succumb to those who do not. It is important everywhere that men do not abdicate their function of directing affairs, as well as of executing them, which must always depend on them. And we may be sure that they will not do so in many places, and not anywhere without bringing on

eventual disaster. But much harm may be brewed in the mean time in those countries where such abdication is contemplated and trifled with.

Therefore it is well to devote attention to these two movements in modern civilisation — the socialist movement in general, and the woman movement in particular. There is certainly a problem before the world. We have seen that civilisation, after gaining through much labour and strife a high position, inclines, if left to itself, to abandon strife and to give itself over to enjoyment, wherefore, consumption surpassing production, and births falling short of deaths, decay and degeneration set in through lack of energy and through excess of luxury and leisure. The problem, for retarding decay, may then be stated as one of balancing labour and leisure. This, in fact, is what both socialism and the woman movement aim at, the former trying to prevent some men from labouring too hard and others from idling too much, the latter likewise seeking easier conditions of labour for working-women and to provide occupation for the wives and daughters whose household labours have been taken from them. But both overdo what they undertake to do, or do not see clearly what is the true object, which is always a mean between two extremes. Actual conditions depart from the mean on the one side, and these proposed remedies would carry them over to an extreme on the other. Beside the travail of a change without benefit, they would introduce remedies worse than the disease. Actual conditions, because natural, admit of being improved, and will always admit of it. The proposed conditions, being contrary to nature, could only lead to deterioration.

It cannot be the purpose of the ensuing volumes to solve the problem just stated by investigating the means of improving and perpetuating our civilisation. Eugenics alone, as we have seen, will not be sufficient. It may be that to put such means as are necessary into effect would require the excision of some gangrene already formed; to undergo which painful operation our people may not have sufficient courage and strength, there being no anæsthetic for the public at large. But at least we can set our faces resolutely against supporting and promoting measures that would increase the evils. To aid in encour-

aging resistance to such deceptive schemes is the humble task of the present series. Its object is the negative one of helping to preserve our civilisation from the dangers it is exposed to from the two proposed panaceas.

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