The Spirit of America

I suggest that diplomatists of the internationalist school should spend some of their money on staging farces and comedies of cross-purposes, founded on the curious and prevalent idea that England and America have the same language. I know, of course, that we both inherit the glorious tongue of Shakespeare, not to mention the tune of the musical glasses; but there have been moments when I thought that if we spoke Greek and they spoke Latin we might understand each other better. For Greek and Latin are at least fixed, while American at least is still very fluid. I do not know the American language, and therefore I do not claim to distinguish between the American language and the American slang. But I know that highly theatrical developments might follow on taking the words as part of the English slang or the English language. I have already given the example of calling a person 'a regular guy,' which in the States is a graceful expression of respect and esteem, but which on the stage, properly handled, might surely lead the way towards a divorce or duel or something lively. Sometimes coincidence merely clinches a mistake, as it so often clinches a misprint. Every proof-reader knows that the worst misprint is not that which makes nonsense but that which makes sense; not that which is obviously wrong but that which is hideously right. He who has essayed to write 'he got the book,' and has found it rendered mysteriously as 'he got the boob' is pensively resigned. It is when it is rendered quite lucidly as 'he got the boot' that he is moved to a more passionate mood of regret. I have had conversations in which this sort of accident would have wholly misled me, if another accident had not come to the rescue. An American friend of mine was telling me of his adventures as a cinema-producer down in the south-west where real Red Indians were procurable. He said that certain Indians were 'very bad actors.' It passed for me as a very ordinary remark on a very ordinary or natural deficiency. It would hardly seem a crushing criticism to say that some wild Arab chieftain was not very good at imitating a farmyard; or that the Grand Llama of Thibet was rather clumsy at making paper boats. But the remark might be natural in a man travelling in paper boats, or touring with an invisible farmyard for his menagerie. As my friend was a cinema-producer, I supposed he meant that the Indians were bad cinema actors. But the phrase has really a high and austere moral meaning, which my levity had wholly missed. A bad actor means a man whose actions are bad or morally reprehensible. So that I might have embraced a Red Indian who was dripping with gore, or covered with atrocious crimes, imagining there was nothing the matter with him beyond a mistaken choice of the theatrical profession. Surely there are here the elements of a play, not to mention a cinema play. Surely a New England village maiden might find herself among the wigwams in the power of the formidable and fiendish 'Little Blue Bison,' merely through her mistaken sympathy with his financial failure as a

Film Star. The notion gives me glimpses of all sorts of dissolving views of primeval forests and flamboyant theatres; but this impulse of irrelevant theatrical production must be curbed. There is one example, however, of this complication of language actually used in contrary senses, about which the same figure can be used to illustrate a more serious fact.

Suppose that, in such an international interlude, an English girl and an American girl are talking about the fiancé of the former, who is coming to call. The English girl will be haughty and aristocratic (on the stage), the American girl will of course have short hair and skirts and will be cynical; Americans being more completely free from cynicism than any people in the world. It is the great glory of Americans that they are not cynical; for that matter, English aristocrats are hardly ever haughty; they understand the game much better than that. But on the stage, anyhow, the American girl may say, referring to her friend's fiancé, with a cynical wave of the cigarette, 'I suppose he's bound to come and see you.' And at this the blue blood of the Vere de Veres will boil over; the English lady will be deeply wounded and insulted at the suggestion that her lover only comes to see her because he is forced to do so. A staggering stage quarrel will then ensue, and things will go from bad to worse; until the arrival of an Interpreter who can talk both English and American. He stands between the two ladies waving two pocket dictionaries, and explains the error on which the quarrel turns. It is very simple; like the seed of all tragedies. In English 'he is bound to come and see you' means that he is obliged or constrained to come and see you. In American it does not. In American it means that he is bent on coming to see you, that he is irrevocably resolved to do so, and will surmount any obstacle to do it. The two young ladies will then embrace as the curtain falls.

Now when I was lecturing in America I was often told, in a radiant and congratulatory manner, that such and such a person was bound to come and hear me lecture. It seemed a very cruel form of conscription, and I could not understand what authority could have made it compulsory. In the course of discovering my error, however, I thought I began to understand certain American ideas and instincts that lie behind this American idiom. For as I have urged before, and shall often urge again, the road to international friendship is through really understanding jokes. It is in a sense through taking jokes seriously. It is quite legitimate to laugh at a man who walks down the street in three white hats and a green dressing gown, because it is unfamiliar; but after all the man has some reason for what he does; and until we know the reason we do not understand the story, or even understand the joke. So the outlander will always seem outlandish in custom or costume; but serious relations depend on our getting beyond the fact of difference to the things wherein it differs. A good symbolical figure for all this may be found among the people who say, perhaps with a self-revealing simplicity, that they are bound to go to a lecture.

If I were asked for a single symbolic figure summing up the whole of what seems eccentric and interesting about America to an Englishman, I should be satisfied to select that one lady who complained of Mrs. Asquith's lecture and wanted her money back. I do not mean that she was typically American in complaining; far from it. I, for one, have a great and guilty knowledge of all that amiable American audiences will endure without complaint. I do not mean that she was typically American in wanting her money; quite the contrary. That sort of American spends money rather than hoards it; and when we convict them of vulgarity we acquit them of avarice. Where she was typically American, summing up a truth individual and indescribable in any other way, is that she used these words: 'I've risen from a sick-bed to come and hear her, and I want my money back.'

The element in that which really amuses an Englishman is precisely the element which, properly analysed, ought to make him admire an American. But my point is that only by going through the amusement can he reach the admiration. The amusement is in the vision of a tragic sacrifice for what is avowedly a rather trivial object. Mrs. Asquith is a candid lady of considerable humour; and I feel sure she does not regard the experience of hearing her read her diary as an ecstasy for which the sick should thus suffer martyrdom. She also is English; and had no other claim but to amuse Americans and possibly to be amused by them. This being so, it is rather as if somebody said, 'I have risked my life in fire and pestilence to find my way to the music hall,' or, 'I have fasted forty days in the wilderness sustained by the hope of seeing Totty Toddles do her new dance.' And there is something rather more subtle involved here. There is something in an Englishman which would make him feel faintly ashamed of saying that he had fasted to hear Totty Toddles, or risen from a sick-bed to hear Mrs. Asquith. He would feel that it was undignified to confess that he had wanted mere amusement so much; and perhaps that he had wanted anything so much. He would not like, so to speak, to be seen rushing down the street after Totty Toddles, or after Mrs. Asquith, or perhaps after anybody. But there is something in it distinct from a mere embarrassment at admitting enthusiasm. He might admit the enthusiasm if the object seemed to justify it; he might perfectly well be serious about a serious thing. But he cannot understand a person being proud of serious sacrifices for what is not a serious thing. He does not like to admit that a little thing can excite him; that he can lose his breath in running, or lose his balance in reaching, after something that might be called silly.

Now that is where the American is fundamentally different. To him the enthusiasm itself is meritorious. To him the excitement itself is dignified. He counts it a part of his manhood to fast or fight or rise from a bed of sickness for something, or possibly for anything. His ideal is not to be a lock that only a worthy key can open, but a 'live wire' that anything can touch or anybody can

use. In a word, there is a difference in the very definition of virility and therefore of virtue. A live wire is not only active, it is also sensitive. Thus sensibility becomes actually a part of virility. Something more is involved than the vulgar simplification of the American as the irresistible force and the Englishman as the immovable post. As a fact, those who speak of such things nowadays generally mean by something irresistible something simply immovable, or at least something unalterable, motionless even in motion, like a cannon ball; for a cannon ball is as dead as a cannon. Prussian militarism was praised in that way--until it met a French force of about half its size on the banks of the Marne. But that is not what an American means by energy; that sort of Prussian energy is only monotony without repose. American energy is not a soulless machine; for it is the whole point that he puts his soul into it. It is a very small box for so big a thing; but it is not an empty box. But the point is that he is not only proud of his energy, he is proud of his excitement. He is not ashamed of his emotion, of the fire or even the tear in his manly eye, when he tells you that the great wheel of his machine breaks four billion butterflies an hour.

That is the point about American sport; that it is not in the least sportive. It is because it is not very sportive that we sometimes say it is not very sporting. It has the vices of a religion. It has all the paradox of original sin in the service of aboriginal faith. It is sometimes untruthful because it is sincere. It is sometimes treacherous because it is loyal. Men lie and cheat for it as they lied for their lords in a feudal conspiracy, or cheated for their chieftains in a Highland feud. We may say that the vassal readily committed treason; but it is equally true that he readily endured torture. So does the American athlete endure torture. Not only the self-sacrifice but the solemnity of the American athlete is like that of the American Indian. The athletes in the States have the attitude of the athletes among the Spartans, the great historical nation without a sense of humour. They suffer an ascetic régime not to be matched in any monasticism and hardly in any militarism. If any tradition of these things remains in a saner age, they will probably be remembered as a mysterious religious order of fakirs or dancing dervishes, who shaved their heads and fasted in honour of Hercules or Castor and Pollux. And that is really the spiritual atmosphere though the gods have vanished; and the religion is subconscious and therefore irrational. For the problem of the modern world is that it has continued to be religious when it has ceased to be rational. Americans really would starve to win a cocoa-nut shy. They would fast or bleed to win a race of paper boats on a pond. They would rise from a sick-bed to listen to Mrs. Asquith.

But it is the real reason that interests me here. It is certainly not that Americans are so stupid as not to know that cocoa-nuts are only cocoa-nuts and paper boats only made of paper. Americans are, on an average, rather more intelligent than Englishmen; and they are well aware that Hercules is a myth and that Mrs.

Asquith is something of a mythologist. It is not that they do not know that the object is small in itself; it is that they do really believe that the enthusiasm is great in itself. They admire people for being impressionable. They admire people for being excited. An American so struggling for some disproportionate trifle (like one of my lectures) really feels in a mystical way that he is right, because it is his whole morality to be keen. So long as he wants something very much, whatever it is, he feels he has his conscience behind him, and the common sentiment of society behind him, and God and the whole universe behind him. Wedged on one leg in a hot crowd at a trivial lecture, he has self-respect; his dignity is at rest. That is what he means when he says he is bound to come to the lecture.

Now the Englishman is fond of occasional larks. But these things are not larks; nor are they occasional. It is the essential of the Englishman's lark that he should think it a lark; that he should laugh at it even when he does it. Being English myself, I like it; but being English myself, I know it is connected with weaknesses as well as merits. In its irony there is condescension and therefore embarrassment. This patronage is allied to the patron, and the patron is allied to the aristocratic tradition of society. The larks are a variant of laziness because of leisure; and the leisure is a variant of the security and even supremacy of the gentleman. When an undergraduate at Oxford smashes half a hundred windows he is well aware that the incident is merely a trifle. He can be trusted to explain to his parents and guardians that it was merely a trifle. He does not say, even in the American sense, that he was bound to smash the windows. He does not say that he had risen from a sick-bed to smash the windows. He does not especially think he has risen at all; he knows he has descended (though with delight, like one diving or sliding down the banisters) to something flat and farcical and full of the English taste for the bathos. He has collapsed into something entirely commonplace; though the owners of the windows may possibly not think so. This rather indescribable element runs through a hundred English things, as in the love of bathos shown even in the sound of proper names; so that even the yearning lover in a lyric yearns for somebody named Sally rather than Salome, and for a place called Wapping rather than a place called Westermain. Even in the relapse into rowdiness there is a sort of relapse into comfort. There is also what is so large a part of comfort; carelessness. The undergraduate breaks windows because he does not care about windows, not because he does care about more fresh air like a hygienist, or about more light like a German poet. Still less does he heroically smash a hundred windows because they come between him and the voice of Mrs. Asquith. But least of all does he do it because he seriously prides himself on the energy apart from its aim, and on the will-power that carries it through. He is not 'bound' to smash the windows, even in the sense of being bent upon it. He is not bound at all but rather relaxed; and his violence is not only a relaxation but a laxity. Finally, this is shown in the fact that he only smashes windows when he is in the mood to smash windows; when some

fortunate conjunction of stars and all the tints and nuances of nature whisper to him that it would be well to smash windows. But the American is always ready, at any moment, to waste his energies on the wilder and more suicidal course of going to lectures. And this is because to him such excitement is not a mood but a moral ideal. As I note in another connection, much of the English mystery would be clear to Americans if they understood the word 'mood.' Englishmen are very moody, especially when they smash windows. But I doubt if many Americans understand exactly what we mean by the mood; especially the passive mood.

It is only by trying to get some notion of all this that an Englishman can enjoy the final crown and fruit of all international friendship; which is really liking an American to be American. If we only think that parts of him are excellent because parts of him are English, it would be far more sensible to stop at home and possibly enjoy the society of a whole complete Englishman. But anybody who does understand this can take the same pleasure in an American being American that he does in a thunderbolt being swift and a barometer being sensitive. He can see that a vivid sensibility and vigilance really radiate outwards through all the ramifications of machinery and even of materialism. He can see that the American uses his great practical powers upon very small provocation; but he can also see that there is a kind of sense of honour, like that of a duellist, in his readiness to be provoked. Indeed, there is some parallel between the American man of action, however vulgar his aims, and the old feudal idea of the gentleman with a sword at his side. The gentleman may have been proud of being strong or sturdy; he may too often have been proud of being thick-headed; but he was not proud of being thick-skinned. On the contrary, he was proud of being thin-skinned. He also seriously thought that sensitiveness was a part of masculinity. It may be very absurd to read of two Irish gentlemen trying to kill each other for trifles, or of two Irish-American millionaires trying to ruin each other for trash. But the very pettiness of the pretext and even the purpose illustrates the same conception; which may be called the virtue of excitability. And it is really this, and not any rubbish about iron will-power and masterful mentality, that redeems with romance their clockwork cosmos and its industrial ideals. Being a live wire does not mean that the nerves should be like wires; but rather that the very wires should be like nerves.

Another approximation to the truth would be to say that an American is really not ashamed of curiosity. It is not so simple as it looks. Men will carry off curiosity with various kinds of laughter and bravado, just as they will carry off drunkenness or bankruptcy. But very few people are really proud of lying on a door-step, and very few people are really proud of longing to look through a key-hole. I do not speak of looking through it, which involves questions of honour and self-control; but few people feel that even the desire is dignified. Now I fancy the American, at least by comparison with the Englishman, does feel that his

curiosity is consistent with his dignity, because dignity is consistent with vivacity. He feels it is not merely the curiosity of Paul Pry, but the curiosity of Christopher Columbus. He is not a spy but an explorer; and he feels his greatness rather grow with his refusal to turn back, as a traveller might feel taller and taller as he neared the source of the Nile or the North-West Passage. Many an Englishman has had that feeling about discoveries in dark continents; but he does not often have it about discoveries in daily life. The one type does believe in the indignity and the other in the dignity of the detective. It has nothing to do with ethics in the merely external sense. It involves no particular comparison in practical morals and manners. It is something in the whole poise and posture of the self; of the way a man carries himself. For men are not only affected by what they are; but still more, when they are fools, by what they think they are; and when they are wise, by what they wish to be.

There are truths that have almost become untrue by becoming untruthful. There are statements so often stale and insincere that one hesitates to use them, even when they stand for something more subtle. This point about curiosity is not the conventional complaint against the American interviewer. It is not the ordinary joke against the American child. And in the same way I feel the danger of it being identified with the cant about 'a young nation' if I say that it has some of the attractions, not of American childhood, but of real childhood. There is some truth in the tradition that the children of wealthy Americans tend to be too precocious and luxurious. But there is a sense in which we can really say that if the children are like adults, the adults are like children. And that sense is in the very best sense of childhood. It is something which the modern world does not understand. It is something that modern Americans do not understand, even when they possess it; but I think they do possess it.

The devil can quote Scripture for his purpose; and the text of Scripture which he now most commonly quotes is, 'The kingdom of heaven is within you.' That text has been the stay and support of more Pharisees and prigs and self-righteous spiritual bullies than all the dogmas in creation; it has served to identify self-satisfaction with the peace that passes all understanding. And the text to be quoted in answer to it is that which declares that no man can receive the kingdom except as a little child. What we are to have inside is the childlike spirit; but the childlike spirit is not entirely concerned about what is inside. It is the first mark of possessing it that one is interested in what is outside. The most childlike thing about a child is his curiosity and his appetite and his power of wonder at the world. We might almost say that the whole advantage of having the kingdom within is that we look for it somewhere else. The Spirit of England

Nine times out of ten a man's broad-mindedness is necessarily the narrowest thing about him. This is not particularly paradoxical; it is, when we come to think

of it, quite inevitable. His vision of his own village may really be full of varieties; and even his vision of his own nation may have a rough resemblance to the reality. But his vision of the world is probably smaller than the world. His vision of the universe is certainly much smaller than the universe. Hence he is never so inadequate as when he is universal; he is never so limited as when he generalises. This is the fallacy in the many modern attempts at a creedless creed, at something variously described as essential Christianity or undenominational religion or a world faith to embrace all the faiths in the world. It is that every sectarian is more sectarian in his unsectarianism than he is in his sect. The emancipation of a Baptist is a very Baptist emancipation. The charity of a Buddhist is a very Buddhist charity, and very different from Christian charity. When a philosophy embraces everything it generally squeezes everything, and squeezes it out of shape; when it digests it necessarily assimilates. When a theosophist absorbs Christianity it is rather as a cannibal absorbs Christian missionaries. In this sense it is even possible for the larger thing to be swallowed by the smaller; and for men to move about not only in a Clapham sect but in a Clapham cosmos under Clapham moon and stars.

But if this danger exists for all men, it exists especially for the Englishman. The Englishman is never so insular as when he is imperial; except indeed when he is international. In private life he is a good friend and in practical politics generally a good ally. But theoretical politics are more practical than practical politics. And in theoretical politics the Englishman is the worst ally the world ever saw. This is all the more curious because he has passed so much of his historical life in the character of an ally. He has been in twenty great alliances and never understood one of them. He has never been farther away from European politics than when he was fighting heroically in the thick of them. I myself think that this splendid isolation is sometimes really splendid; so long as it is isolation and does not imagine itself to be imperialism or internationalism. With the idea of being international, with the idea of being imperial, comes the frantic and farcical idea of being impartial. Generally speaking, men are never so mean and false and hypocritical as when they are occupied in being impartial. They are performing the first and most typical of all the actions of the devil; they are claiming the throne of God. Even when it is not hypocrisy but only mental confusion, it is always a confusion worse and worse confounded. We see it in the impartial historians of the Victorian Age, who now seem far more Victorian than the partial historians. Hallam wrote about the Middle Ages; but Hallam was far less mediaeval than Macaulay; for Macaulay was at least a fighter. Huxley had more mediaeval sympathies than Herbert Spencer for the same reason; that Huxley was a fighter. They both fought in many ways for the limitations of their own rationalistic epoch; but they were nearer the truth than the men who simply assumed those limitations as rational. The war of the controversionalists was a wider thing than the peace of the arbiters. And in the same way the Englishman

never cuts a less convincing figure before other nations than when he tries to arbitrate between them.

I have by this time heard a great deal about the necessity of saving Anglo-American friendship, a necessity which I myself feel rather too strongly to be satisfied with the ambassadorial and editorial style of achieving it. I have already said that the worst style of all is to be Anglo-American; or, as the more illiterate would express, to be Anglo-Saxon. I am more and more convinced that the way for the Englishman to do it is to be English; but to know that he is English and not everything else as well. Thus the only sincere answer to Irish nationalism is English nationalism, which is a reality; and not English imperialism, which is a reactionary fiction, or English internationalism, which is a revolutionary one.

For the English are reviled for their imperialism because they are not imperialistic. They dislike it, which is the real reason why they do it badly; and they do it badly, which is the real reason why they are disliked when they do it. Nobody calls France imperialistic because she has absorbed Brittany. But everybody calls England imperialistic because she has not absorbed Ireland. The Englishman is fixed and frozen for ever in the attitude of a ruthless conqueror; not because he has conquered such people, but because he has not conquered them; but he is always trying to conquer them with a heroism worthy of a better cause. For the really native and vigorous part of what is unfortunately called the British Empire is not an empire at all, and does not consist of these conquered provinces at all. It is not an empire but an adventure; which is probably a much finer thing. It was not the power of making strange countries similar to our own, but simply the pleasure of seeing strange countries because they were different from our own. The adventurer did indeed, like the third son, set out to seek his fortune, but not primarily to alter other people's fortunes; he wished to trade with people rather than to rule them. But as the other people remained different from him, so did he remain different from them. The adventurer saw a thousand strange things and remained a stranger. He was the Robinson Crusoe on a hundred desert islands; and on each he remained as insular as on his own island.

What is wanted for the cause of England to-day is an Englishman with enough imagination to love his country from the outside as well as the inside. That is, we need somebody who will do for the English what has never been done for them, but what is done for any outlandish peasantry or even any savage tribe. We want people who can make England attractive; quite apart from disputes about whether England is strong or weak. We want somebody to explain, not that England is everywhere, but what England is anywhere; not that England is or is not really dying, but why we do not want her to die. For this purpose the official and conventional compliments or claims can never get any farther than pompous

abstractions about Law and Justice and Truth; the ideals which England accepts as every civilised state accepts them, and violates as every civilised state violates them. That is not the way in which the picture of any people has ever been painted on the sympathetic imagination of the world. Enthusiasts for old Japan did not tell us that the Japs recognised the existence of abstract morality; but that they lived in paper houses or wrote letters with paint-brushes. Men who wished to interest us in Arabs did not confine themselves to saying that they are monotheists or moralists; they filled our romances with the rush of Arab steeds or the colours of strange tents or carpets. What we want is somebody who will do for the Englishman with his front garden what was done for the Jap and his paper house; who shall understand the Englishman with his dog as well as the Arab with his horse. In a word, what nobody has really tried to do is the one thing that really wants doing. It is to make England attractive as a nationality, and even as a small nationality.

For it is a wild folly to suppose that nations will love each other because they are alike. They will never really do that unless they are really alike; and then they will not be nations. Nations can love each other as men and women love each other, not because they are alike but because they are different. It can easily be shown, I fancy, that in every case where a real public sympathy was aroused for some unfortunate foreign people, it has always been accompanied with a particular and positive interest in their most foreign customs and their most foreign externals. The man who made a romance of the Scotch High-lander made a romance of his kilt and even of his dirk; the friend of the Red Indians was interested in picture writing and had some tendency to be interested in scalping. To take a more serious example, such nations as Serbia had been largely commended to international consideration by the study of Serbian epics, or Serbian songs. The epoch of negro emancipation was also the epoch of negro melodies. Those who wept over Uncle Tom also laughed over Uncle Remus. And just as the admiration for the Redskin almost became an apology for scalping, the mysterious fascination of the African has sometimes almost led us into the fringes of the black forest of Voodoo. But the sort of interest that is felt even in the scalp-hunter and the cannibal, the torturer and the devil-worshipper, that sort of interest has never been felt in the Englishman.

And this is the more extraordinary because the Englishman is really very interesting. He is interesting in a special degree in this special manner; he is interesting because he is individual. No man in the world is more misrepresented by everything official or even in the ordinary sense national. A description of English life must be a description of private life. In that sense there is no public life. In that sense there is no public opinion. There have never been those prairie fires of public opinion in England which often sweep over America. At any rate, there have never been any such popular revolutions since the popular revolutions

of the Middle Ages. The English are a nation of amateurs; they are even a nation of eccentrics. An Englishman is never more English than when he is considered a lunatic by the other Englishmen. This can be clearly seen in a figure like Dr. Johnson, who has become national not by being normal but by being extraordinary. To express this mysterious people, to explain or suggest why they like tall hedges and heavy breakfasts and crooked roads and small gardens with large fences, and why they alone among Christians have kept quite consistently the great Christian glory of the open fireplace, here would be a strange and stimulating opportunity for any of the artists in words, who study the souls of strange peoples. That would be the true way to create a friendship between England and America, or between England and anything else; yes, even between England and Ireland. For this justice at least has already been done to Ireland; and as an indignant patriot I demand a more equal treatment for the two nations.

I have already noted the commonplace that in order to teach internationalism we must talk nationalism. We must make the nations as nations less odious or mysterious to each other. We do not make men love each other by describing a monster with a million arms and legs, but by describing the men as men, with their separate and even solitary emotions. As this has a particular application to the emotions of the Englishman, I will return to the topic once more. Now Americans have a power that is the soul and success of democracy, the power of spontaneous social organisation. Their high spirits, their humane ideals are really creative, they abound in unofficial institutions; we might almost say in unofficial officialism. Nobody who has felt the presence of all the leagues and guilds and college clubs will deny that Whitman was national when he said he would build states and cities out of the love of comrades. When all this communal enthusiasm collides with the Englishman, it too often seems literally to leave him cold. They say he is reserved; they possibly think he is rude. And the Englishman, having been taught his own history all wrong, is only too likely to take the criticism as a compliment. He admits that he is reserved because he is stern and strong; or even that he is rude because he is shrewd and candid. But as a fact he is not rude and not especially reserved; at least reserve is not the meaning of his reluctance. The real difference lies, I think, in the fact that American high spirits are not only high but level; that the hilarious American spirit is like a plateau, and the humorous English spirit like a ragged mountain range.

The Englishman is moody; which does not in the least mean that the Englishman is morose. Dickens, as we all feel in reading his books, was boisterously English. Dickens was moody when he wrote Oliver Twist; but he was also moody when he wrote Pickwick. That is, he was in another and much healthier mood. The mood was normal to him in the sense that nine times out of ten he felt and wrote in that humorous and hilarious mood. But he was, if ever there was one, a man of moods; and all the more of a typical Englishman for being a man of moods. But it

was because of this, almost entirely, that he had a misunderstanding with America.

In America there are no moods, or there is only one mood. It is the same whether it is called hustle or uplift; whether we regard it as the heroic love of comrades or the last hysteria of the herd instinct. It has been said of the typical English aristocrats of the Government offices that they resemble certain ornamental fountains and play from ten till four; and it is true that an Englishman, even an English aristocrat, is not always inclined to play any more than to work. But American sociability is not like the Trafalgar fountains. It is like Niagara. It never stops, under the silent stars or the rolling storms. There seems always to be the same human heat and pressure behind it; it is like the central heating of hotels as explained in the advertisements and announcements. The temperature can be regulated; but it is not. And it is always rather overpowering for an Englishman, whose mood changes like his own mutable and shifting sky. The English mood is very like the English weather; it is a nuisance and a national necessity.

If any one wishes to understand the quarrel between Dickens and the Americans, let him turn to that chapter in Martin Chuzzlewit, in which young Martin has to receive endless defiles and deputations of total strangers each announced by name and demanding formal salutation. There are several things to be noticed about this incident. To begin with, it did not happen to Martin Chuzzlewit; but it did happen to Charles Dickens. Dickens is incorporating almost without alteration a passage from a diary in the middle of a story; as he did when he included the admirable account of the prison petition of John Dickens as the prison petition of Wilkins Micawber. There is no particular reason why even the gregarious Americans should so throng the portals of a perfectly obscure steerage passenger like young Chuzzlewit. There was every reason why they should throng the portals of the author of Pickwick and Oliver Twist. And no doubt they did. If I may be permitted the aleatory image, you bet they did. Similar troops of sociable human beings have visited much more insignificant English travellers in America, with some of whom I am myself acquainted. I myself have the luck to be a little more stodgy and less sensitive than many of my countrymen; and certainly less sensitive than Dickens. But I know what it was that annoyed him about that unending and unchanging stream of American visitors; it was the unending and unchanging stream of American sociability and high spirits. A people living on such a lofty but level tableland do not understand the ups and downs of the English temperament; the temper of a nation of eccentrics or (as they used to be called) of humorists. There is something very national in the very name of the old play of Every Man in His Humour. But the play more often acted in real life is 'Every Man Out of His Humour.' It is true, as Matthew Arnold said, that an Englishman wants to do as he likes; but it is not always true even that he likes what he likes. An Englishman can be friendly and yet not feel friendly. Or he can

be friendly and yet not feel hospitable. Or he can feel hospitable and yet not welcome those whom he really loves. He can think, almost with tears of tenderness, about people at a distance who would be bores if they came in at the door.

American sociability sweeps away any such subtlety. It cannot be expected to understand the paradox or perversity of the Englishman, who thus can feel friendly and avoid friends. That is the truth in the suggestion that Dickens was sentimental. It means that he probably felt most sociable when he was solitary. In all these attempts to describe the indescribable, to indicate the real but unconscious differences between the two peoples, I have tried to balance my words without the irrelevant bias of praise and blame. Both characteristics always cut both ways. On one side this comradeship makes possible a certain communal courage, a democratic derision of rich men in high places, that is not easy in our smaller and more stratified society. On the other hand the Englishman has certainly more liberty, if less equality and fraternity. But the richest compensation of the Englishman is not even in the word 'liberty,' but rather in the word 'poetry.' That humour of escape or seclusion, that genial isolation, that healing of wounded friendship by what Christian Science would call absent treatment, that is the best atmosphere of all for the creation of great poetry; and out of that came 'bare ruined choirs where late the sweet birds sang' and 'Thou wast not made for death, immortal bird.' In this sense it is indeed true that poetry is emotion remembered in tranquillity; which may be extended to mean affection remembered in loneliness. There is in it a spirit not only of detachment but even of distance; a spirit which does desire, as in the old English rhyme, to be not only over the hills but also far away. In other words, in so far as it is true that the Englishman is an exception to the great truth of Aristotle, it is because he is not so near to Aristotle as he is to Homer. In so far as he is not by nature a political animal, it is because he is a poetical animal. We see it in his relations to the other animals; his quaint and almost illogical love of dogs and horses and dependants whose political rights cannot possibly be defined in logic. Many forms of hunting or fishing are but an excuse for the same thing which the shameless literary man does without any excuse. Sport is speechless poetry. It would be easy for a foreigner, by taking a few liberties with the facts, to make a satire about the sort of silent Shelley who decides ultimately to shoot the skylark. It would be easy to answer these poetic suggestions by saying that he himself might be responsible for ruining the choirs where late the sweet birds sang, or that the immortal bird was likely to be mortal when he was out with his gun. But these international satires are never just; and the real relations of an Englishman and an English bird are far more delicate. It would be equally easy and equally unjust to suggest a similar satire against American democracy; and represent Americans merely as birds of a feather who can do nothing but flock together. But this would leave out the fact that at least it is not the white feather; that

democracy is capable of defiance and of death for an idea. Touching the souls of great nations, these criticisms are generally false because they are critical.

But when we are quite sure that we rejoice in a nation's strength, then and not before we are justified in judging its weakness. I am quite sure that I rejoice in any democratic success without arrière pensée; and nobody who knows me will credit me with a covert sneer at civic equality. And this being granted, I do think there is a danger in the gregariousness of American society. The danger of democracy is not anarchy; on the contrary, it is monotony. And it is touching this that all my experience has increased my conviction that a great deal that is called female emancipation has merely been the increase of female convention. Now the males of every community are far too conventional; it was the females who were individual and criticised the conventions of the tribe. If the females become conventional also, there is a danger of individuality being lost. This indeed is not peculiar to America; it is common to the whole modern industrial world, and to everything which substitutes the impersonal atmosphere of the State for the personal atmosphere of the home. But it is emphasised in America by the curious contradiction that Americans do in theory value and even venerate the individual. But individualism is still the foe of individuality. Where men are trying to compete with each other they are trying to copy each other. They become featureless by 'featuring' the same part. Personality, in becoming a conscious ideal, becomes a common ideal. In this respect perhaps there is really something to be learnt from the Englishman with his turn or twist in the direction of private life. Those who have travelled in such a fashion as to see all the American hotels and none of the American houses are sometimes driven to the excess of saying that the Americans have no private life. But even if the exaggeration has a hint of truth, we must balance it with the corresponding truth; that the English have no public life. They on their side have still to learn the meaning of the public thing, the republic; and how great are the dangers of cowardice and corruption when the very State itself has become a State secret.

The English are patriotic; but patriotism is the unconscious form of nationalism. It is being national without understanding the meaning of a nation. The Americans are on the whole too self-conscious, kept moving too much in the pace of public life, with all its temptations to superficiality and fashion; too much aware of outside opinion and with too much appetite for outside criticism. But the English are much too unconscious; and would be the better for an increase in many forms of consciousness, including consciousness of sin. But even their sin is ignorance of their real virtue. The most admirable English things are not the things that are most admired by the English, or for which the English admire themselves. They are things now blindly neglected and in daily danger of being destroyed. It is all the worse that they should be destroyed, because there is really nothing like them in the world. That is why I have suggested a note of

nationalism rather than patriotism for the English; the power of seeing their nation as a nation and not as the nature of things. We say of some ballad from the Balkans or some peasant costume in the Netherlands that it is unique; but the good things of England really are unique. Our very isolation from continental wars and revolutionary reconstructions have kept them unique. The particular kind of beauty there is in an English village, the particular kind of humour there is in an English public-house, are things that cannot be found in lands where the village is far more simply and equally governed, or where the vine is far more honourably served and praised. Yet we shall not save them by merely sinking into them with the conservative sort of contentment, even if the commercial rapacity of our plutocratic reforms would allow us to do so. We must in a sense get far away from England in order to behold her; we must rise above patriotism in order to be practically patriotic; we must have some sense of more varied and remote things before these vanishing virtues can be seen suddenly for what they are; almost as one might fancy that a man would have to rise to the dizziest heights of the divine understanding before he saw, as from a peak far above a whirlpool, how precious is his perishing soul. The Future of Democracy

The title of this final chapter requires an apology. I do not need to be reminded, alas, that the whole book requires an apology. It is written in accordance with a ritual or custom in which I could see no particular harm, and which gives me a very interesting subject, but a custom which it would be not altogether easy to justify in logic. Everybody who goes to America for a short time is expected to write a book; and nearly everybody does. A man who takes a holiday at Trouville or Dieppe is not confronted on his return with the question, 'When is your book on France going to appear?' A man who betakes himself to Switzerland for the winter sports is not instantly pinned by the statement, 'I suppose your History of the Helvetian Republic is coming out this spring?' Lecturing, at least my kind of lecturing, is not much more serious or meritorious than ski-ing or sea-bathing; and it happens to afford the holiday-maker far less opportunity of seeing the daily life of the people. Of all this I am only too well aware; and my only defence is that I am at least sincere in my enjoyment and appreciation of America, and equally sincere in my interest in its most serious problem, which I think a very serious problem indeed; the problem of democracy in the modern world. Democracy may be a very obvious and facile affair for plutocrats and politicians who only have to use it as a rhetorical term. But democracy is a very serious problem for democrats. I certainly do not apologise for the word democracy; but I do apologise for the word future. I am no Futurist; and any conjectures I make must be taken with the grain of salt which is indeed the salt of the earth; the decent and moderate humility which comes from a belief in free will. That faith is in itself a divine doubt. I do not believe in any of the scientific predictions about mankind; I notice that they always fail to predict any of the purely human developments of men; I also notice that even their successes prove the same truth as their

failures; for their successful predictions are not about men but about machines. But there are two things which a man may reasonably do, in stating the probabilities of a problem, which do not involve any claim to be a prophet. The first is to tell the truth, and especially the neglected truth, about the tendencies that have already accumulated in human history; any miscalculation about which must at least mislead us in any case. We cannot be certain of being right about the future; but we can be almost certain of being wrong about the future, if we are wrong about the past. The other thing that he can do is to note what ideas necessarily go together by their own nature; what ideas will triumph together or fall together. Hence it follows that this final chapter must consist of two things. The first is a summary of what has really happened to the idea of democracy in recent times; the second a suggestion of the fundamental doctrine which is necessary for its triumph at any time.

The last hundred years has seen a general decline in the democratic idea. If there be anybody left to whom this historical truth appears a paradox, it is only because during that period nobody has been taught history, least of all the history of ideas. If a sort of intellectual inquisition had been established, for the definition and differentiation of heresies, it would have been found that the original republican orthodoxy had suffered more and more from secessions, schisms, and backslidings. The highest point of democratic idealism and conviction was towards the end of the eighteenth century, when the American Republic was 'dedicated to the proposition that all men are equal.' It was then that the largest number of men had the most serious sort of conviction that the political problem could be solved by the vote of peoples instead of the arbitrary power of princes and privileged orders. These men encountered various difficulties and made various compromises in relation to the practical politics of their time; in England they preserved aristocracy; in America they preserved slavery. But though they had more difficulties, they had less doubts. Since their time democracy has been steadily disintegrated by doubts; and these political doubts have been contemporary with and often identical with religious doubts. This fact could be followed over almost the whole field of the modern world; in this place it will be more appropriate to take the great American example of slavery. I have found traces in all sorts of intelligent quarters of an extraordinary idea that all the Fathers of the Republic owned black men like beasts of burden because they knew no better, until the light of liberty was revealed to them by John Brown and Mrs. Beecher Stowe. One of the best weekly papers in England said recently that even those who drew up the Declaration of Independence did not include negroes in its generalisation about humanity. This is quite consistent with the current convention, in which we were all brought up; the theory that the heart of humanity broadens in ever larger circles of brotherhood, till we pass from embracing a black man to adoring a black beetle. Unfortunately it is quite inconsistent with the facts of American history. The facts show that, in this

problem of the Old South, the eighteenth century was more liberal than the nineteenth century. There was more sympathy for the negro in the school of Jefferson than in the school of Jefferson Davis. Jefferson, in the dark estate of his simple Deism, said the sight of slavery in his country made him tremble, remembering that God is just. His fellow Southerners, after a century of the world's advance, said that slavery in itself was good, when they did not go farther and say that negroes in themselves were bad. And they were supported in this by the great and growing modern suspicion that nature is unjust. Difficulties seemed inevitably to delay justice, to the mind of Jefferson; but so they did to the mind of Lincoln. But that the slave was human and the servitude inhuman--that was, if anything, clearer to Jefferson than to Lincoln. The fact is that the utter separation and subordination of the black like a beast was a progress; it was a growth of nineteenth-century enlightenment and experiment; a triumph of science over superstition. It was 'the way the world was going,' as Matthew Arnold reverentially remarked in some connection; perhaps as part of a definition of God. Anyhow, it was not Jefferson's definition of God. He fancied, in his far-off patriarchal way, a Father who had made all men brothers; and brutally unbrotherly as was the practice, such democratical Deists never dreamed of denying the theory. It was not until the scientific sophistries began that brotherhood was really disputed. Gobineau, who began most of the modern talk about the superiority and inferiority of racial stocks, was seized upon eagerly by the less generous of the slave-owners and trumpeted as a new truth of science and a new defence of slavery. It was not really until the dawn of Darwinism, when all our social relations began to smell of the monkey-house, that men thought of the barbarian as only a first and the baboon as a second cousin. The full servile philosophy has been a modern and even a recent thing; made in an age whose invisible deity was the Missing Link. The Missing Link was a true metaphor in more ways than one; and most of all in its suggestion of a chain.

By a symbolic coincidence, indeed, slavery grew more brazen and brutal under the encouragement of more than one movement of the progressive sort. Its youth was renewed for it by the industrial prosperity of Lancashire; and under that influence it became a commercial and competitive instead of a patriarchal and customary thing. We may say with no exaggerative irony that the unconscious patrons of slavery were Huxley and Cobden. The machines of Manchester were manufacturing a great many more things than the manufacturers knew or wanted to know; but they were certainly manufacturing the fetters of the slave, doubtless out of the best quality of steel and iron. But this is a minor illustration of the modern tendency, as compared with the main stream of scepticism which was destroying democracy. Evolution became more and more a vision of the break-up of our brotherhood, till by the end of the nineteenth century the genius of its greatest scientific romancer saw it end in the anthropophagous antics of the Time Machine. So far from evolution lifting us above the idea of enslaving men, it

was providing us at least with a logical and potential argument for eating them. In the case of the American negroes, it may be remarked, it does at any rate permit the preliminary course of roasting them. All this materialistic hardening, which replaced the remorse of Jefferson, was part of the growing evolutionary suspicion that savages were not a part of the human race, or rather that there was really no such thing as the human race. The South had begun by agreeing reluctantly to the enslavement of men. The South ended by agreeing equally reluctantly to the emancipation of monkeys.

That is what had happened to the democratic ideal in a hundred years. Anybody can test it by comparing the final phase, I will not say with the ideal of Jefferson, but with the ideal of Johnson. There was far more horror of slavery in an eighteenth-century Tory like Dr. Johnson than in a nineteenth-century Democrat like Stephen Douglas. Stephen Douglas may be mentioned because he is a very representative type of the age of evolution and expansion; a man thinking in continents, like Cecil Rhodes, human and hopeful in a truly American fashion, and as a consequence cold and careless rather than hostile in the matter of the old mystical doctrines of equality. He 'did not care whether slavery was voted up or voted down.' His great opponent Lincoln did indeed care very much. But it was an intense individual conviction with Lincoln exactly as it was with Johnson. I doubt if the spirit of the age was not much more behind Douglas and his westward expansion of the white race. I am sure that more and more men were coming to be in the particular mental condition of Douglas; men in whom the old moral and mystical ideals had been undermined by doubt but only with a negative effect of indifference. Their positive convictions were all concerned with what some called progress and some imperialism. It is true that there was a sincere sectional enthusiasm against slavery in the North; and that the slaves were actually emancipated in the nineteenth century. But I doubt whether the Abolitionists would ever have secured Abolition. Abolition was a by-product of the Civil War; which was fought for quite other reasons. Anyhow, if slavery had somehow survived to the age of Rhodes and Roosevelt and evolutionary imperialism, I doubt if the slaves would ever have been emancipated at all. Certainly if it had survived till the modern movement for the Servile State, they would never have been emancipated at all. Why should the world take the chains off the black man when it was just putting them on the white? And in so far as we owe the change to Lincoln, we owe it to Jefferson. Exactly what gives its real dignity to the figure of Lincoln is that he stands invoking a primitive first principle of the age of innocence, and holding up the tables of an ancient law, against the trend of the nineteenth century; repeating, 'We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator, etc.,' to a generation that was more and more disposed to say something like this: 'We hold these truths to be probable enough for pragmatists; that all things looking like men were evolved somehow, being endowed by heredity and

environment with no equal rights, but very unequal wrongs,' and so on. I do not believe that creed, left to itself, would ever have founded a state; and I am pretty certain that, left to itself, it would never have overthrown a slave state. What it did do, as I have said, was to produce some very wonderful literary and artistic flights of sceptical imagination. The world did have new visions, if they were visions of monsters in the moon and Martians striding about like spiders as tall as the sky, and the workmen and capitalists becoming two separate species, so that one could devour the other as gaily and greedily as a cat devours a bird. No one has done justice to the meaning of Mr. Wells and his original departure in fantastic fiction; to these nightmares that were the last apocalypse of the nineteenth century. They meant that the bottom had fallen out of the mind at last, that the bridge of brotherhood had broken down in the modern brain, letting up from the chasms this infernal light like a dawn. All had grown dizzy with degree and relativity; so that there would not be so very much difference between eating dog and eating darkie, or between eating darkie and eating dago. There were different sorts of apes; but there was no doubt that we were the superior sort.

Against all this irresistible force stood one immovable post. Against all this dance of doubt and degree stood something that can best be symbolised by a simple example. An ape cannot be a priest, but a negro can be a priest. The dogmatic type of Christianity, especially the Catholic type of Christianity, had riveted itself irrevocably to the manhood of all men. Where its faith was fixed by creeds and councils it could not save itself even by surrender. It could not gradually dilute democracy, as could a merely sceptical or secular democrat. There stood, in fact or in possibility, the solid and smiling figure of a black bishop. And he was either a man claiming the most towering spiritual privileges of a man, or he was the mere buffoonery and blasphemy of a monkey in a mitre. That is the point about Christian and Catholic democracy; it is not that it is necessarily at any moment more democratic, it is that its indestructible minimum of democracy really is indestructible. And by the nature of things that mystical democracy was destined to survive, when every other sort of democracy was free to destroy itself. And whenever democracy destroying itself is suddenly moved to save itself, it always grasps at rag or tag of that old tradition that alone is sure of itself. Hundreds have heard the story about the mediaeval demagogue who went about repeating the rhyme

When Adam delved and Eve span, Who was then the gentleman?

Many have doubtless offered the obvious answer to the question, 'The Serpent.' But few seem to have noticed what would be the more modern answer to the question, if that innocent agitator went about propounding it. 'Adam never delved and Eve never span, for the simple reason that they never existed. They are

fragments of a Chaldeo-Babylonian mythos, and Adam is only a slight variation of Tag-Tug, pronounced Uttu. For the real beginning of humanity we refer you to Darwin's Origin of Species.' And then the modern man would go on to justify plutocracy to the mediaeval man by talking about the Struggle for Life and the Survival of the Fittest; and how the strongest man seized authority by means of anarchy, and proved himself a gentleman by behaving like a cad. Now I do not base my beliefs on the theology of John Ball, or on the literal and materialistic reading of the text of Genesis; though I think the story of Adam and Eve infinitely less absurd and unlikely than that of the prehistoric 'strongest man' who could fight a hundred men. But I do note the fact that the idealism of the leveller could be put in the form of an appeal to Scripture, and could not be put in the form of an appeal to Science. And I do note also that democrats were still driven to make the same appeal even in the very century of Science. Tennyson was, if ever there was one, an evolutionist in his vision and an aristocrat in his sympathies. He was always boasting that John Bull was evolutionary and not revolutionary, even as these Frenchmen. He did not pretend to have any creed beyond faintly trusting the larger hope. But when human dignity is really in danger, John Bull has to use the same old argument as John Ball. He tells Lady Clara Vere de Vere that 'the gardener Adam and his wife smile at the claim of long descent'; their own descent being by no means long. Lady Clara might surely have scored off him pretty smartly by quoting from 'Maud' and 'In Memoriam' about evolution and the eft that was lord of valley and hill. But Tennyson has evidently forgotten all about Darwin and the long descent of man. If this was true of an evolutionist like Tennyson, it was naturally ten times truer of a revolutionist like Jefferson. The Declaration of Independence dogmatically bases all rights on the fact that God created all men equal; and it is right; for if they were not created equal, they were certainly evolved unequal.

There is no basis for democracy except in a dogma about the divine origin of man. That is a perfectly simple fact which the modern world will find out more and more to be a fact. Every other basis is a sort of sentimental confusion, full of merely verbal echoes of the older creeds. Those verbal associations are always vain for the vital purpose of constraining the tyrant. An idealist may say to a capitalist, 'Don't you sometimes feel in the rich twilight, when the lights twinkle from the distant hamlet in the hills, that all humanity is a holy family?' But it is equally possible for the capitalist to reply with brevity and decision, 'No, I don't,' and there is no more disputing about it further than about the beauty of a fading cloud. And the modern world of moods is a world of clouds, even if some of them are thunderclouds.

For I have only taken here, as a convenient working model, the case of negro slavery; because it was long peculiar to America and is popularly associated with it. It is more and more obvious that the line is no longer running between black

and white but between rich and poor. As I have already noted in the case of Prohibition, the very same arguments of the inevitable suicide of the ignorant, of the impossibility of freedom for the unfit, which were once applied to barbarians brought from Africa are now applied to citizens born in America. It is argued even by industrialists that industrialism has produced a class submerged below the status of emancipated mankind. They imply that the Missing Link is no longer missing, even from England or the Northern States, and that the factories have manufactured their own monkeys. Scientific hypotheses about the feeble-minded and the criminal type will supply the masters of the modern world with more and more excuses for denying the dogma of equality in the case of white labour as well as black. And any man who knows the world knows perfectly well that to tell the millionaires, or their servants, that they are disappointing the sentiments of Thomas Jefferson, or disregarding a creed composed in the eighteenth century, will be about as effective as telling them that they are not observing the creed of St. Athanasius or keeping the rule of St. Benedict.

The world cannot keep its own ideals. The secular order cannot make secure any one of its own noble and natural conceptions of secular perfection. That will be found, as time goes on, the ultimate argument for a Church independent of the world and the secular order. What has become of all those ideal figures from the Wise Man of the Stoics to the democratic Deist of the eighteenth century? What has become of all that purely human hierarchy of chivalry, with its punctilious pattern of the good knight, its ardent ambition in the young squire? The very name of knight has come to represent the petty triumph of a profiteer, and the very word squire the petty tyranny of a landlord. What has become of all that golden liberality of the Humanists, who found on the high tablelands of the culture of Hellas the very balance of repose in beauty that is most lacking in the modern world? The very Greek language that they loved has become a mere label for snuffy and snobbish dons, and a mere cock-shy for cheap and half-educated utilitarians, who make it a symbol of superstition and reaction. We have lived to see a time when the heroic legend of the Republic and the Citizen, which seemed to Jefferson the eternal youth of the world, has begun to grow old in its turn. We cannot recover the earthly estate of knighthood, to which all the colours and complications of heraldry seemed as fresh and natural as flowers. We cannot re-enact the intellectual experiences of the Humanists, for whom the Greek grammar was like the song of a bird in spring. The more the matter is considered the clearer it will seem that these old experiences are now only alive, where they have found a lodgment in the Catholic tradition of Christendom, and made themselves friends for ever. St. Francis is the only surviving troubadour. St. Thomas More is the only surviving Humanist. St. Louis is the only surviving knight.

It would be the worst sort of insincerity, therefore, to conclude even so hazy an

outline of so great and majestic a matter as the American democratic experiment, without testifying my belief that to this also the same ultimate test will come. So far as that democracy becomes or remains Catholic and Christian, that democracy will remain democratic. In so far as it does not, it will become wildly and wickedly undemocratic. Its rich will riot with a brutal indifference far beyond the feeble feudalism which retains some shadow of responsibility or at least of patronage. Its wage-slaves will either sink into heathen slavery, or seek relief in theories that are destructive not merely in method but in aim; since they are but the negations of the human appetites of property and personality. Eighteenth-century ideals, formulated in eighteenth-century language, have no longer in themselves the power to hold all those pagan passions back. Even those documents depended upon Deism; their real strength will survive in men who are still Deists; and the men who are still Deists are more than Deists. Men will more and more realise that there is no meaning in democracy if there is no meaning in anything; and that there is no meaning in anything if the universe has not a centre of significance and an authority that is the author of our rights. There is truth in every ancient fable, and there is here even something of it in the fancy that finds the symbol of the Republic in the bird that bore the bolts of Jove. Owls and bats may wander where they will in darkness, and for them as for the sceptics the universe may have no centre; kites and vultures may linger as they like over carrion, and for them as for the plutocrats existence may have no origin and no end; but it was far back in the land of legends, where instincts find their true images, that the cry went forth that freedom is an eagle, whose glory is gazing at the sun.

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