

## THE AMERICAN POPULATION

### Sec. 1

The social conditions and social future of America constitute a system of problems quite distinct and separate from the social problems of any other part of the world. The nearest approach to parallel conditions, and that on a far smaller and narrower scale, is found in the British colonies and in the newly settled parts of Siberia. For while in nearly every other part of the world the population of to-day is more or less completely descended from the prehistoric population of the same region, and has developed its social order in a slow growth extending over many centuries, the American population is essentially a transplanted population, a still fluid and imperfect fusion of great fragments torn at this point or that from the gradually evolved societies of Europe. The European social systems grow and flower upon their roots, in soil which has made them and to which they are adapted. The American social accumulation is a various collection of cuttings thrust into a new soil and respiring a new air, so different that the question is still open to doubt, and indeed there are those who do doubt, how far these cuttings are actually striking root and living and growing, whether indeed they are destined to more than a temporary life in the new hemisphere. I

propose to discuss and weigh certain arguments for and against the belief that these ninety million people who constitute the United States of America are destined to develop into a great distinctive nation with a character and culture of its own.

Humanly speaking, the United States of America (and the same is true of Canada and all the more prosperous, populous and progressive regions of South America) is a vast sea of newly arrived and unstably rooted people. Of the seventy-six million inhabitants recorded by the 1900 census, ten and a half million were born and brought up in one or other of the European social systems, and the parents of another twenty-six millions were foreigners. Another nine million are of African negro descent. Fourteen million of the sixty-five million native-born are living not in the state of their birth, but in other states to which they have migrated. Of the thirty and a half million whites whose parents on both sides were native Americans, a high proportion probably had one if not more grand-parents foreign-born. Nearly five and a half million out of thirty-three and a half million whites in 1870 were foreign-born, and another five and a quarter million the children of foreign-born parents. The children of the latter five and a quarter million count, of course, in the 1900 census as native-born of native parents. Immigration varies enormously with the activity of business, but in 1906 it rose for the first time above a million.

These figures may be difficult to grasp. The facts may be seen in a more concrete form by the visitor to Ellis Island, the receiving station for

the immigrants into New York Harbour. One goes to this place by tugs from the United States barge office in Battery Park, and in order to see the thing properly one needs a letter of introduction to the commissioner in charge. Then one is taken through vast barracks littered with people of every European race, every type of low-class European costume, and every degree of dirtiness, to a central hall in which the gist of the examining goes on. The floor of this hall is divided up into a sort of maze of winding passages between lattice work, and along these passages, day after day, incessantly, the immigrants go, wild-eyed Gipsies, Armenians, Greeks, Italians, Ruthenians, Cossacks, German peasants, Scandinavians, a few Irish still, impoverished English, occasional Dutch; they halt for a moment at little desks to exhibit papers, at other little desks to show their money and prove they are not paupers, to have their eyes scanned by this doctor and their general bearing by that. Their thumb-marks are taken, their names and heights and weights and so forth are recorded for the card index; and so, slowly, they pass along towards America, and at last reach a little wicket, the gate of the New World. Through this metal wicket drips the immigration stream--all day long, every two or three seconds, an immigrant with a valise or a bundle, passes the little desk and goes on past the well-managed money-changing place, past the carefully organised separating ways that go to this railway or that, past the guiding, protecting officials--into a new world. The great majority are young men and young women between seventeen and thirty, good, youthful, hopeful peasant stock. They stand in a long string, waiting to go through that wicket, with bundles, with little tin boxes, with cheap portmanteaus

with odd packages, in pairs, in families, alone, women with children, men with strings of dependents, young couples. All day that string of human beads waits there, jerks forward, waits again; all day and every day, constantly replenished, constantly dropping the end beads through the wicket, till the units mount to hundreds and the hundreds to thousands.... In such a prosperous year as 1906 more immigrants passed through that wicket into America than children were born in the whole of France.

This figure of a perpetual stream of new stranger citizens will serve to mark the primary distinction between the American social problem and that of any European or Asiatic community.

The vast bulk of the population of the United States has, in fact, only got there from Europe in the course of the last hundred years, and mainly since the accession of Queen Victoria to the throne of Great Britain. That is the first fact that the student of the American social future must realise. Only an extremely small proportion of its blood goes back now to those who fought for freedom in the days of George Washington. The American community is not an expanded colonial society that has become autonomous. It is a great and deepening pool of population accumulating upon the area these predecessors freed, and since fed copiously by affluents from every European community. Fresh ingredients are still being added in enormous quantity, in quantity so great as to materially change the racial quality in a score of years. It is particularly noteworthy that each accession of new blood seems to

sterilise its predecessors. Had there been no immigration at all into the United States, but had the rate of increase that prevailed in 1810-20 prevailed to 1900, the population, which would then have been a purely native American one, would have amounted to a hundred million--that is to say, to approximately nine million in excess of the present total population. The new waves are for a time amazingly fecund, and then comes a rapid fall in the birth-rate. The proportion of colonial and early republican blood in the population is, therefore, probably far smaller even than the figures I have quoted would suggest.

These accesses of new population have come in a series of waves, very much as if successive reservoirs of surplus population in the Old World had been tapped, drained and exhausted. First came the Irish and Germans, then Central Europeans of various types, then Poland and Western Russia began to pour out their teeming peoples, and more particularly their Jews, Bohemia, the Slavonic states, Italy and Hungary followed and the latest arrivals include great numbers of Levantines, Armenians and other peoples from Asia Minor and the Balkan Peninsula. The Hungarian immigrants have still a birth-rate of forty-six per thousand, the highest birth-rate in the world.

A considerable proportion of the Mediterranean arrivals, it has to be noted, and more especially the Italians, do not come to settle. They work for a season or a few years, and then return to Italy. The rest come to stay.

A vast proportion of these accessions to the American population since 1840 has, with the exception of the East European Jews, consisted of peasantry, mainly or totally illiterate, accustomed to a low standard of life and heavy bodily toil. For most of them the transfer to a new country meant severance from the religious communion in which they had been bred and from the servilities or subordinations to which they were accustomed. They brought little or no positive social tradition to the synthesis to which they brought their blood and muscle.

The earlier German, English and Scandinavian incomers were drawn from a somewhat higher social level, and were much more closely akin in habits and faith to the earlier founders of the Republic.

Our inquiry is this: What social structure is this pool of mixed humanity developing or likely to develop?

## Sec. 2

If we compare any European nation with the American, we perceive at once certain broad differences. The former, in comparison with the latter, is evolved and organised; the latter, in comparison with the former, is aggregated and chaotic. In nearly every European country there is a social system often quite elaborately classed and defined; each class with a sense of function, with an idea of what is due to it and what is expected of it. Nearly everywhere you find a governing class,

aristocratic in spirit, sometimes no doubt highly modified by recent economic and industrial changes, with more or less of the tradition of a feudal nobility, then a definite great mercantile class, then a large self-respecting middle class of professional men, minor merchants, and so forth, then a new industrial class of employees in the manufacturing and urban districts, and a peasant population rooted to the land. There are, of course, many local modifications of this form: in France the nobility is mostly expropriated; in England, since the days of John Bull, the peasant has lost his common rights and his holding, and become an "agricultural labourer" to a newer class of more extensive farmer. But these are differences in detail; the fact of the organisation, and the still more important fact of the traditional feeling of organisation, remain true of all these older communities.

And in nearly every European country, though it may be somewhat despoiled here and shorn of exclusive predominance there, or represented by a dislocated "reformed" member, is the Church, custodian of a great moral tradition, closely associated with the national universities and the organisation of national thought. The typical European town has its castle or great house, its cathedral or church, its middle-class and lower-class quarters. Five miles off one can see that the American town is on an entirely different plan. In his remarkable "American Scene," Mr. Henry James calls attention to the fact that the Church as one sees it and feels it universally in Europe is altogether absent, and he adds a comment as suggestive as it is vague. Speaking of the appearance of the Churches, so far as they do appear amidst American urban scenery, he

says:

"Looking for the most part no more established or seated than a stopped omnibus, they are reduced to the inveterate bourgeois level (that of private, accommodated pretensions merely), and fatally despoiled of the fine old ecclesiastical arrogance, ... The field of American life is as bare of the Church as a billiard-table of a centre-piece; a truth that the myriad little structures 'attended' on Sundays and on the 'off' evenings of their 'sociables' proclaim as with the audible sound of the roaring of a million mice....

"And however one indicates one's impression of the clearance, the clearance itself, in its completeness, with the innumerable odd connected circumstances that bring it home, represents, in the history of manners and morals, a deviation in the mere measurement of which hereafter may well reside a certain critical thrill. I say hereafter because it is a question of one of those many measurements that would as yet, in the United States, be premature. Of all the solemn conclusions one feels as 'barred,' the list is quite headed in the States, I think, by this particular abeyance of judgment. When an ancient treasure of precious vessels, overscored with glowing gems and wrought artistically into wondrous shapes, has, by a prodigious process, been converted through a vast community into the small change,



the simple circulating medium of dollars and 'nickels,' we can only say that the consequent permeation will be of values of a new order. Of what order we must wait to see."

America has no Church. Neither has it a peasantry nor an aristocracy, and until well on in the Victorian epoch it had no disproportionately rich people.

In America, except in the regions where the negro abounds, there is no lower stratum. There is no "soil people" to this community at all; your bottom-most man is a mobile freeman who can read, and who has ideas above digging and pigs and poultry-keeping, except incidentally for his own ends. No one owns to subordination As a consequence, any position which involves the acknowledgment of an innate inferiority is difficult to fill; there is, from the European point of view, an extraordinary dearth of servants, and this endures in spite of a great peasant immigration. The servile tradition will not root here now; it dies forthwith. An enormous importation of European serfs and peasants goes on, but as they touch this soil their backs begin to stiffen with a new assertion.

And at the other end of the scale, also, one misses an element. There is no territorial aristocracy, no aristocracy at all, no throne, no legitimate and acknowledged representative of that upper social structure of leisure, power and State responsibility which in the old

European theory of Society was supposed to give significance to the whole. The American community, one cannot too clearly insist, does not correspond to an entire European community at all, but only to the middle masses of it, to the trading and manufacturing class between the dimensions of the magnate and the clerk and skilled artisan. It is the central part of the European organism without either the dreaming head or the subjugated feet. Even the highly feudal slave-holding "county family" traditions of Virginia and the South pass now out of memory. So that in a very real sense the past of the American nation is in Europe, and the settled order of the past is left behind there. This community was, as it were, taken off its roots, clipped of its branches, and brought hither. It began neither serf nor lord, but burgher and farmer; it followed the normal development of the middle class under Progress everywhere and became capitalistic. The huge later immigration has converged upon the great industrial centres and added merely a vast non-servile element of employees to the scheme.

America has been and still very largely is a one-class country. It is a great sea of human beings detached from their traditions of origin. The social difference from Europe appears everywhere, and nowhere more strikingly than in the railway carriages. In England the compartments in these are either "first class," originally designed for the aristocracy, or "second class," for the middle class, or "third class," for the populace. In America there is only one class, one universal simple democratic car. In the Southern States, however, a proportion of these simple democratic cars are inscribed with the word "White," whereby nine

million people are excluded. But to this original even-handed treatment there was speedily added a more sumptuous type of car, the parlour car, accessible to extra dollars; and then came special types of train, all made up of parlour cars and observation cars and the like. In England nearly every train remains still first, second and third, or first and third. And now, quite outdistancing the differentiation of England, America produces private cars and private trains, such as Europe reserves only for crowned heads.

The evidence of the American railways, then, suggests very strongly what a hundred other signs confirm, that the huge classless sea of American population is not destined to remain classless, is already developing separations and distinctions and structures of its own. And monstrous architectural portents in Boston and Salt Lake City encourage one to suppose that even that churchless aspect, which so stirred the speculative element in Mr. Henry James, is only the opening formless phase of a community destined to produce not only classes but intellectual and moral forms of the most remarkable kind.

### Sec. 3

It is well to note how these ninety millions of people whose social future we are discussing are distributed. This huge development of human appliances and resources is here going on in a community that is still, for all the dense crowds of New York, the teeming congestion of East

Side, extraordinarily scattered. America, one recalls, is still an unoccupied country across which the latest developments of civilisation are rushing. We are dealing here with a continuous area of land which is, leaving Alaska out of account altogether, equal to Great Britain, France, the German Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Italy, Belgium, Japan, Holland, Spain and Portugal, Sweden and Norway, Turkey in Europe, Egypt and the whole Empire of India, and the population spread out over this vast space is still less than the joint population of the first two countries named and not a quarter that of India.

Moreover, it is not spread at all evenly. Much of it is in undistributed clots. It is not upon the soil; barely half of it is in holdings and homes and authentic communities. It is a population of an extremely modern type. Urban concentration has already gone far with it; fifteen millions of it are crowded into and about twenty great cities, another eighteen millions make up five hundred towns. Between these centres of population run railways indeed, telegraph wires, telephone connections, tracks of various sorts, but to the European eye these are mere scratchings on a virgin surface. An empty wilderness manifests itself through this thin network of human conveniences, appears in the meshes even at the railroad side.

Essentially, America is still an unsettled land, with only a few incidental good roads in favoured places, with no universal police, with no wayside inns where a civilised man may rest, with still only the crudest of rural postal deliveries, with long stretches of swamp and

forest and desert by the track side, still unassailed by industry. This much one sees clearly enough eastward of Chicago. Westward it becomes more and more the fact. In Idaho, at last, comes the untouched and perhaps invincible desert, plain and continuous through the long hours of travel. Huge areas do not contain one human being to the square mile, still vaster portions fall short of two....

It is upon Pennsylvania and New York State and the belt of great towns that stretches out past Chicago to Milwaukee and Madison that the nation centres and seems destined to centre. One needs but examine a tinted population map to realise that. The other concentrations are provincial and subordinate; they have the same relation to the main axis that Glasgow or Cardiff have to London in the British scheme.

#### Sec. 4

When I speak of this vast multitude, these ninety millions of the United States of America as being for the most part peasants de-peasant-ised and common people cut off from their own social traditions, I do not intend to convey that the American community is as a whole traditionless. There is in America a very distinctive tradition indeed, which animates the entire nation, gives a unique idiom to its press and all its public utterances, and is manifestly the starting point from which the adjustments of the future must be made.

The mere sight of the stars and stripes serves to recall it; "Yankee" in the mouth of a European gives something of its quality. One thinks at once of a careless abandonment of any pretension, of tireless energy and daring enterprise, of immense self-reliance, of a disrespect for the past so complete that a mummy is in itself a comical object, and the blowing out of an ill-guarded sacred flame, a delightful jest. One thinks of the enterprise of the sky-scraper and the humour of "A Yankee at the Court of King Arthur," and of "Innocents Abroad." Its dominant notes are democracy, freedom, and confidence. It is religious-spirited without superstition consciously Christian in the vein of a nearly Unitarian Christianity, fervent but broadened, broadened as a halfpenny is broadened by being run over by an express train, substantially the same, that is to say, but with a marked loss of outline and detail. It is a tradition of romantic concession to good and inoffensive women and a high development of that personal morality which puts sexual continence and alcoholic temperance before any public virtue. It is equally a tradition of sporadic emotional public-spiritedness, entirely of the quality of gallantry, of handsome and surprising gifts to the people, disinterested occupation of office and the like. It is emotionally patriotic, hypothericating fighting and dying for one's country as a supreme good while inculcating also that working and living for oneself is quite within the sphere of virtuous action. It adores the flag but suspects the State. One sees more national flags and fewer national servants in America than in any country in the world. Its conception of manners is one of free plain-spoken men revering women and shielding them from most of the realities of life, scornful of

aristocracies and monarchies, while asserting simply, directly, boldly and frequently an equal claim to consideration with all other men. If there is any traditional national costume, it is shirt-sleeves. And it cherishes the rights of property above any other right whatsoever.

Such are the details that come clustering into one's mind in response to the phrase, the American tradition.

From the War of Independence onward until our own times that tradition, that very definite ideal, has kept pretty steadily the same. It is the image of a man and not the image of a State. Its living spirit has been the spirit of freedom at any cost, unconditional and irresponsible. It is the spirit of men who have thrown off a yoke, who are jealously resolved to be unhampered masters of their "own," to whom nothing else is of anything but secondary importance. That was the spirit of the English small gentry and mercantile class, the comfortable property owners, the Parliamentarians, in Stuart times. Indeed even earlier, it is very largely the spirit of More's "Utopia." It was that spirit sent Oliver Cromwell himself packing for America, though a heedless and ill-advised and unforeseeing King would not let him go. It was the spirit that made taxation for public purposes the supreme wrong and provoked each country, first the mother country and then in its turn the daughter country, to armed rebellion. It has been the spirit of the British Whig and the British Nonconformist almost up to the present day. In the Reform Club of London, framed and glazed over against Magna Charta, is the American Declaration of Independence, kindred trophies

they are of the same essentially English spirit of stubborn insubordination. But the American side of it has gone on unchecked by the complementary aspect of the English character which British Toryism expresses.

The War of Independence raised that Whig suspicion of and hostility to government and the freedom of private property and the repudiation of any but voluntary emotional and supererogatory co-operation in the national purpose to the level of a religion, and the American Constitution with but one element of elasticity in the Supreme Court decisions, established these principles impregnably in the political structure. It organised disorganisation. Personal freedom, defiance of authority, and the stars and stripes have always gone together in men's minds; and subsequent waves of immigration, the Irish fleeing famine, for which they held the English responsible, and the Eastern European Jews escaping relentless persecutions, brought a persuasion of immense public wrongs, as a necessary concomitant of systematic government, to refresh without changing this defiant thirst for freedom at any cost.

In my book, "The Future in America," I have tried to make an estimate of the working quality of this American tradition of unconditional freedom for the adult male citizen. I have shown that from the point of view of anyone who regards civilisation as an organisation of human interdependence and believes that the stability of society can be secured only by a conscious and disciplined co-ordination of effort, it is a tradition extraordinarily and dangerously deficient in what I have



called a "sense of the State." And by a "sense of the State" I mean not merely a vague and sentimental and showy public-spiritedness--of that the States have enough and to spare--but a real sustaining conception of the collective interest embodied in the State as an object of simple duty and as a determining factor in the life of each individual. It involves a sense of function and a sense of "place," a sense of a general responsibility and of a general well-being overriding the individual's well-being, which are exactly the senses the American tradition attacks and destroys.

For the better part of a century the American tradition, quite as much by reason of what it disregards as of what it suggests, has meant a great release of human energy, a vigorous if rough and untidy exploitation of the vast resources that the European invention of railways and telegraphic communication put within reach of the American people. It has stimulated men to a greater individual activity, perhaps, than the world has ever seen before. Men have been wasted by misdirection no doubt, but there has been less waste by inaction and lassitude than was the case in any previous society. Great bulks of things and great quantities of things have been produced, huge areas brought under cultivation, vast cities reared in the wilderness.

But this tradition has failed to produce the beginnings or promise of any new phase of civilised organisation, the growths have remained largely invertebrate and chaotic, and, concurrently with its gift of splendid and monstrous growth, it has also developed portentous

political and economic evils. No doubt the increment of human energy has been considerable, but it has been much less than appears at first sight. Much of the human energy that America has displayed in the last century is not a development of new energy but a diversion. It has been accompanied by a fall in the birth-rate that even the immigration torrent has not altogether replaced. Its insistence on the individual, its disregard of the collective organisation, its treatment of women and children as each man's private concern, has had its natural outcome. Men's imaginations have been turned entirely upon individual and immediate successes and upon concrete triumphs; they have had no regard or only an ineffectual sentimental regard for the race. Every man was looking after himself, and there was no one to look after the future. Had the promise of 1815 been fulfilled, there would now be in the United States of America one hundred million descendants of the homogeneous and free-spirited native population of that time. There is not, as a matter of fact, more than thirty-five million. There is probably, as I have pointed out, much less. Against the assets of cities, railways, mines and industrial wealth won, the American tradition has to set the price of five-and-seventy million native citizens who have never found time to get born, and whose place is now more or less filled by alien substitutes. Biologically speaking, this is not a triumph for the American tradition. It is, however, very clearly an outcome of the intense individualism of that tradition. Under the sway of that it has burnt its future in the furnace to keep up steam.

The next and necessary evil consequent upon this exaltation of the

individual and private property over the State, over the race that is and over public property, has been a contempt for public service. It has identified public spirit with spasmodic acts of public beneficence. The American political ideal became a Cincinnatus whom nobody sent for and who therefore never left his plough. There has ensued a corrupt and undignified political life, speaking claptrap, dark with violence, illiterate and void of statesmanship or science, forbidding any healthy social development through public organisation at home, and every year that the increasing facilities of communication draw the alien nations closer, deepening the risks of needless and disastrous wars abroad.

And in the third place it is to be remarked that the American tradition has defeated its dearest aims of a universal freedom and a practical equality. The economic process of the last half-century, so far as America is concerned has completely justified the generalisations of Marx. There has been a steady concentration of wealth and of the reality as distinguished from the forms of power in the hands of a small energetic minority, and a steady approximation of the condition of the mass of the citizens to that of the so-called proletariat of the European communities. The tradition of individual freedom and equality is, in fact, in process of destroying the realities of freedom and equality out of which it rose. Instead of the six hundred thousand families of the year 1790, all at about the same level of property and, excepting the peculiar condition of seven hundred thousand blacks, with scarcely anyone in the position of a hireling, we have now as the most striking, though by no means the most important, fact in American social

life a frothy confusion of millionaires' families, just as wasteful, foolish and vicious as irresponsible human beings with unlimited resources have always shown themselves to be. And, concurrently with the appearance of these concentrations of great wealth, we have appearing also poverty, poverty of a degree that was quite unknown in the United States for the first century of their career as an independent nation. In the last few decades slums as frightful as any in Europe have appeared with terrible rapidity, and there has been a development of the viler side of industrialism, of sweating and base employment of the most ominous kind.

In Mr. Robert Hunter's "Poverty" one reads of "not less than eighty thousand children, most of whom are little girls, at present employed in the textile mills of this country. In the South there are now six times as many children at work as there were twenty years ago. Child labour is increasing yearly in that section of the country. Each year more little ones are brought in from the fields and hills to live in the degrading and demoralising atmosphere of the mill towns...."

Children are deliberately imported by the Italians. I gathered from Commissioner Watchorn at Ellis Island that the proportion of little nephews and nieces, friends' sons and so forth brought in by them is peculiarly high, and I heard him try and condemn a doubtful case. It was a particularly unattractive Italian in charge of a dull-eyed little boy of no ascertainable relationship....

In the worst days of cotton-milling in England the conditions were hardly worse than those now existing in the South. Children, the tiniest and frailest, of five and six years of age, rise in the morning and, like old men and women, go to the mills to do their day's labour; and, when they return home, "wearily fling themselves on their beds, too tired to take off their clothes." Many children work all night--"in the maddening racket of the machinery, in an atmosphere insanitary and clouded with humidity and lint."

"It will be long," adds Mr. Hunter in his description, "before I forget the face of a little boy of six years, with his hands stretched forward to rearrange a bit of machinery, his pallid face and spare form already showing the physical effects of labour. This child, six years of age, was working twelve hours a day."

From Mr. Spargo's "Bitter Cry of the Children" I learn this much of the joys of certain among the youth of Pennsylvania:

"For ten or eleven hours a day children of ten and eleven stoop over the chute and pick out the slate and other impurities from the coal as it moves past them. The air is black with coal dust, and the roar of the crushers, screens and rushing mill-race of coal is deafening. Sometimes one of the children falls into the machinery and is terribly mangled, or slips into the chute and is smothered to death. Many children are killed in this way. Many others, after a time, contract coal-miners asthma and consumption, which gradually undermine their health. Breathing

continually day after day the clouds of coal dust, their lungs become black and choked with small particles of anthracite...."

In Massachusetts, at Fall River, the Hon. J.F. Carey tells how little naked boys, free Americans, work for Mr. Borden, the New York millionaire, packing cloth into bleaching vats, in a bath of chemicals that bleaches their little bodies like the bodies of lepers....

Altogether it would seem that at least one million and a half children are growing up in the United States of America stunted and practically uneducated because of unregulated industrialism. These children, ill-fed, ill-trained mentally benighted, since they are alive and active, since they are an active and positive and not a negative evil, are even more ominous in the American outlook than those five and sixty million of good race and sound upbringing who will now never be born.

Sec. 5

It must be repeated that the American tradition is really the tradition of one particular ingredient in this great admixture and stirring up of peoples. This ingredient is the Colonial British, whose seventeenth century Puritanism and eighteenth century mercantile radicalism and rationalism manifestly furnished all the stuff out of which the American tradition is made. It is this stuff planted in virgin soil and inflated to an immense and buoyant optimism by colossal and unanticipated

material prosperity and success. From that British middle-class tradition comes the individualist protestant spirit, the keen self-reliance and personal responsibility, the irresponsible expenditure, the indiscipline and mystical faith in things being managed properly if they are only let alone. "State-blindness" is the natural and almost inevitable quality of a middle-class tradition, a class that has been forced neither to rule nor obey, which has been concentrated and successfully concentrated on private gain.

This middle-class British section of the American population was, and is to this day, the only really articulate ingredient in its mental composition. And so it has had a monopoly in providing the American forms of thought. The other sections of peoples that have been annexed by or have come into this national synthesis are silent so far as any contribution to the national stock of ideas and ideals is concerned. There are, for example, those great elements, the Spanish Catholics, the French Catholic population of Louisiana, the Irish Catholics, the French-Canadians who are now ousting the sterile New Englander from New England, the Germans, the Italians the Hungarians. Comparatively they say nothing. From all the ten million of coloured people come just two or three platform voices, Booker Washington, Dubois, Mrs. Church Terrell, mere protests at specific wrongs. The clever, restless Eastern European Jews, too, have still to find a voice. Professor Münsterberg has written with a certain bitterness of the inaudibility of the German element in the American population. They allow themselves, he remonstrates, to count for nothing. They did not seem to exist, he

points out, even in politics until prohibitionist fury threatened their beer. Then, indeed, the American German emerged from silence and obscurity, but only to rescue his mug and retire again with it into enigmatical silence.

If there is any exception to this predominance of the tradition of the English-speaking, originally middle-class, English-thinking northerner in the American mind, it is to be found in the spread of social democracy outward from the festering tenement houses of Chicago into the mining and agrarian regions of the middle west. It is a fierce form of socialist teaching that speaks throughout these regions, far more closely akin to the revolutionary Socialism of the continent of Europe than to the constructive and evolutionary Socialism of Great Britain. Its typical organ is *The Appeal to Reason*, which circulates more than a quarter of a million copies weekly from Kansas City. It is a Socialism reeking with class feeling and class hatred and altogether anarchistic in spirit; a new and highly indigestible contribution to the American moral and intellectual synthesis. It is remarkable chiefly as the one shrill exception in a world of plastic acceptance.

Now it is impossible to believe that this vast silence of these imported and ingested factors that the American nation has taken to itself is as acquiescent as it seems. No doubt they are largely taking over the traditional forms of American thought and expression quietly and without protest, and wearing them; but they will wear them as a man wears a misfit, shaping and adapting it every day more and more to his



natural form, here straining a seam and there taking in a looseness. A force of modification must be at work. It must be at work in spite of the fact that, with the exception of social democracy, it does not anywhere show as a protest or a fresh beginning or a challenge to the prevailing forms.

How far it has actually been at work is, perhaps, to be judged best by an observant stroller, surveying the crowds of a Sunday evening in New York, or read in the sheets of such a mirror of popular taste as the Sunday edition of the New York American or the New York Herald. In the former just what I mean by the silent modification of the old tradition is quite typically shown. Its leading articles are written by Mr. Arthur Brisbane, the son of one of the Brook Farm Utopians, that gathering in which Hawthorne and Henry James senior, and Margaret Fuller participated, and in which the whole brilliant world of Boston's past, the world of Emerson, Longfellow, Thoreau, was interested. Mr. Brisbane is a very distinguished man, quite over and above the fact that he is paid the greatest salary of any journalist in the world. He writes with a wit and directness that no other living man can rival, and he holds up constantly what is substantially the American ideal of the past century to readers who evidently need strengthening in it. It is, of course, the figure of a man and not of a State; it is a man, clean, clean shaved and almost obtrusively strong-jawed, honest, muscular, alert, pushful, chivalrous, self-reliant, non-political except when he breaks into shrewd and penetrating voting--"you can fool all the people some of the time," etc.--and independent--independent--in a world which is therefore

certain to give way to him.

His doubts, his questionings, his aspirations, are dealt with by Mr. Brisbane with a simple direct fatherliness with all the beneficent persuasiveness of a revivalist preacher. Millions read these leaders and feel a momentary benefit, en route for the more actual portions of the paper. He asks: "Why are all men gamblers?" He discusses our Longing for Immortal Imperfection, and "Did we once live on the moon?" He recommends the substitution of whisky and soda for neat whisky, drawing an illustration from the comparative effect of the diluted and of the undiluted liquid as an eye-wash ("Try whisky on your friend's eyeball!" is the heading), sleep ("The man who loses sleep will make a failure of his life, or at least diminish greatly his chances of success"), and the education of the feminine intelligence ("The cow that kicks her weaned calf is all heart"). He makes identically the same confident appeal to the moral motive which was for so long the salvation of the Puritan individualism from which the American tradition derives. "That hand," he writes, "which supports the head of the new-born baby, the mother's hand, supports the civilisation of the world."

But that sort of thing is not saving the old native strain in the population. It moves people, no doubt, but inadequately. And here is a passage that is quite the quintessence of Americanism, of all its deep moral feeling and sentimental untruthfulness. I wonder if any man but an American or a British nonconformist in a state of rhetorical excitement ever believed that Shakespeare wrote his plays or Michael

Angelo painted in a mood of humanitarian exaltation, "for the good of all men."

"What shall we strive for? Money?

"Get a thousand millions. Your day will come, and in due course the graveyard rat will gnaw as calmly at your bump of acquisitiveness as at the mean coat of the pauper.

"Then shall we strive for power?

"The names of the first great kings of the world are forgotten, and the names of all those whose power we envy will drift to forgetfulness soon. What does the most powerful man in the world amount to standing at the brink of Niagara, with his solar plexus trembling? What is his power compared with the force of the wind or the energy of one small wave sweeping along the shore?

"The power which man can build up within himself, for himself, is nothing. Only the dull reasoning of gratified egotism can make it seem worth while.

"Then what is worth while? Let us look at some of the men who have come and gone, and whose lives inspire

us. Take a few at random:

"Columbus, Michael Angelo, Wilberforce, Shakespeare, Galileo, Fulton, Watt, Hargreaves--these will do.

"Let us ask ourselves this question: 'Was there any one thing that distinguished all their lives, that united all these men, active in fields so different?'

"Yes. Every man among them, and every man whose life history is worth the telling, did something for the good of other men....

"Get money if you can. Get power if you can; Then, if you want to be more than the ten thousand million unknown mingled in the dust beneath you, see what good you can do with your money and your power.

"If you are one of the many millions who have not and can't get money or power, see what good you can do without either:

"You can help carry a load for an old man. You can encourage and help a poor devil trying to reform. You can set a good example to children. You can stick to the men with whom you work, fighting honestly for their

welfare.

"Time was when the ablest man would rather kill ten men than feed a thousand children. That time has gone. We do not care much about feeding the children, but we care less about killing the men. To that extent we have improved already.

"The day will come when we shall prefer helping our neighbour to robbing him--legally--of a million dollars.

"Do what good you can now, while it is unusual, and have the satisfaction of being a pioneer and an eccentric."

It is the voice of the American tradition strained to the utmost to make itself audible to the new world, and cracking into italics and breaking into capitals with the strain. The rest of that enormous bale of paper is eloquent of a public void of moral ambitions, lost to any sense of comprehensive things, deaf to ideas, impervious to generalisations, a public which has carried the conception of freedom to its logical extreme of entire individual detachment. These tell-tale columns deal all with personality and the drama of personal life. They witness to no interest but the interest in intense individual experiences. The engagements, the love affairs, the scandals of conspicuous people are given in pitiless detail in articles adorned with vigorous portraits and

sensational pictorial comments. Even the eavesdroppers who write this stuff strike the personal note, and their heavily muscular portraits frown beside the initial letter. Murders and crimes are worked up to the keenest pitch of realisation, and any new indelicacy in fashionable costume, any new medical device or cure, any new dance or athleticism, any new breach in the moral code, any novelty in sea bathing or the woman's seat on horseback, or the like, is given copious and moving illustration, stirring headlines, and eloquent reprobation. There is a coloured supplement of knock-about fun, written chiefly in the quaint dialect of the New York slums. It is a language from which "th" has vanished, and it presents a world in which the kicking by a mule of an endless succession of victims is an inexhaustible joy to young and old. "Dat ole Maud!" There is a smaller bale dealing with sport. In the advertisement columns one finds nothing of books, nothing of art; but great choice of bust developers, hair restorers, nervous tonics, clothing sales, self-contained flats, and business opportunities....

Individuality has, in fact, got home to itself, and, as people say, taken off its frills. All but one; Mr. Arthur Brisbane's eloquence one may consider as the last stitch of the old costume--mere decoration. Excitement remains the residual object in life. The New York American represents a clientele to be counted by the hundred thousand, manifestly with no other solitudes, just burning to live and living to burn.

Sec. 6

The modifications of the American tradition that will occur through its adoption by these silent foreign ingredients in the racial synthesis are not likely to add to it or elaborate it in any way. They tend merely to simplify it to bare irresponsible non-moral individualism. It is with the detail and qualification of a tradition as with the inflexions of a language; when another people takes it over the refinements disappear. But there are other forces of modification at work upon the American tradition of an altogether more hopeful kind. It has entered upon a constructive phase. Were it not so, then the American social outlook would, indeed, be hopeless.

The effectual modifying force at work is not the strangeness nor the temperamental maladjustment of the new elements of population, but the conscious realisation of the inadequacy of the tradition on the part of the more intelligent sections of the American population. That blind national conceit that would hear no criticism and admit no deficiency has disappeared. In the last decade such a change has come over the American mind as sometimes comes over a vigorous and wilful child. Suddenly it seems to have grown up, to have begun to weigh its powers and consider its possible deficiencies. There was a time when American confidence and self-satisfaction seemed impregnable; at the slightest qualm of doubt America took to violent rhetoric as a drunkard resorts to drink. Now the indictment I have drawn up harshly, bluntly and unflatteringly in Sec. 4 would receive the endorsement of American after American. The falling birth-rate of all the best elements in the State,

the cankering effect of political corruption, the crumbling of independence and equality before the progressive aggregation of wealth--he has to face them, he cannot deny them. There has arisen a new literature, the literature of national self-examination, that seems destined to modify the American tradition profoundly. To me it seems to involve the hope and possibility of a conscious collective organisation of social life.

If ever there was an epoch-marking book it was surely Henry Demarest Lloyd's "Wealth against Commonwealth." It marks an epoch not so much by what it says as by what it silently abandons. It was published in 1894, and it stated in the very clearest terms the incompatibility of the almost limitless freedom of property set up by the constitution, with the practical freedom and general happiness of the mass of men. It must be admitted that Lloyd never followed up the implications of this repudiation. He made his statements in the language of the tradition he assailed, and foreshadowed the replacement of chaos by order in quite chaotic and mystical appeals. Here, for instance, is a typical passage from "Man, the Social Creator".

"Property is now a stumbling-block to the people, just as government has been. Property will not be abolished, but, like government, it will be democratised.

"The philosophy of self-interest as the social solution was a good living and working synthesis in the days when



civilisation was advancing its frontiers twenty miles a day across the American continent, and every man for himself was the best social mobilisation possible.

"But to-day it is a belated ghost that has overstayed the cock-crow. These were frontier morals. But this same, everyone for himself, becomes most immoral when the frontier is abolished and the pioneer becomes the fellow-citizen and these frontier morals are most uneconomic when labour can be divided and the product multiplied. Most uneconomic, for they make closure the rule of industry, leading not to wealth, but to that awful waste of wealth which is made visible to every eye in our unemployed--not hands alone, but land, machinery, and, most of all, hearts. Those who still practise these frontier morals are like criminals, who, according to the new science of penology, are simply reappearances of old types. Their acquisitiveness once divine like Mercury's, is now out of place except in jail. Because out of place, they are a danger. A sorry day it is likely to be for those who are found in the way when the new people rise to rush into each other's arms, to get together, to stay together and to live together. The labour movement halts because so many of its rank and file--and all its leaders--do not see clearly the golden thread of love on which have been strung together all the past glories of human association, and which is to serve for

the link of the new Association of Friends who Labour,  
whose motto is 'All for All.'

The establishment of the intricate co-operative commonwealth by a rush of eighty million flushed and shiny-eyed enthusiasts, in fact, is Lloyd's proposal. He will not face, and few Americans to this day will face, the cold need of a great science of social adjustment and a disciplined and rightly ordered machinery to turn such enthusiasms to effect. They seem incurably wedded to gush. However, he did express clearly enough the opening phase of American disillusionment with the wild go-as-you-please that had been the conception of life in America through a vehement, wasteful, expanding century. And he was the precursor of what is now a bulky and extremely influential literature of national criticism. A number of writers, literary investigators one may call them, or sociological men of letters, or magazine publicists--they are a little difficult to place--has taken up the inquiry into the condition of civic administration, into economic organisation into national politics and racial interaction, with a frank fearlessness and an absence of windy eloquence that has been to many Europeans a surprising revelation of the reserve forces of the American mind. President Roosevelt, that magnificent reverberator of ideas, that gleam of wilful humanity, that fantastic first interruption to the succession of machine-made politicians at the White House, has echoed clearly to this movement and made it an integral part of the general intellectual movement of America.

It is to these first intimations of the need of a "sense of the State" in America that I would particularly direct the reader's attention in this discussion. They are the beginnings of what is quite conceivably a great and complex reconstructive effort. I admit they are but beginnings. They may quite possibly wither and perish presently; they may much more probably be seized upon by adventurers and converted into a new cant almost as empty and fruitless as the old. The fact remains that, through this busy and immensely noisy confusion of nearly a hundred millions of people, these little voices go intimating more and more clearly the intention to undertake public affairs in a new spirit and upon new principles, to strengthen the State and the law against individual enterprise, to have done with those national superstitions under which hypocrisy and disloyalty and private plunder have sheltered and prospered for so long.

Just as far as these reform efforts succeed and develop is the organisation of the United States of America into a great, self-conscious, civilised nation, unparalleled in the world's history, possible; just as far as they fail is failure written over the American future. The real interest of America for the next century to the student of civilisation will be the development of these attempts, now in their infancy, to create and realise out of this racial hotchpotch, this human chaos, an idea, of the collective commonwealth as the datum of reference for every individual life.

## Sec. 7

I have hinted in the last section that there is a possibility that the new wave of constructive ideas in American thought may speedily develop a cant of its own. But even then, a constructive cant is better than a destructive one. Even the conscious hypocrite has to do something to justify his pretences, and the mere disappearance from current thought of the persuasion that organisation is a mistake and discipline needless, clears the ground of one huge obstacle even if it guarantees nothing about the consequent building.

But, apart from this, are there more solid and effectual forces behind this new movement of ideas that makes for organisation in American medley at the present time?

The speculative writer casting about for such elements lights upon four sets of possibilities which call for discussion. First, one has to ask: How far is the American plutocracy likely to be merely a wasteful and chaotic class, and how far is it likely to become consciously aristocratic and constructive? Secondly, and in relation to this, what possibilities of pride and leading are there in the great university foundations of America? Will they presently begin to tell as a restraining and directing force upon public thought? Thirdly, will the growing American Socialist movement, which at present is just as anarchistic and undisciplined in spirit as everything else in America, presently perceive the constructive implications of its general

propositions and become statesmanlike and constructive? And, fourthly, what are the latent possibilities of the American women? Will women as they become more and more aware of themselves as a class and of the problem of their sex become a force upon the anarchistic side, a force favouring race-suicide, or upon the constructive side which plans and builds and bears the future?

The only possible answer to each one of these questions at present is guessing and an estimate. But the only way in which a conception of the American social future may be reached lies through their discussion.

Let us begin by considering what constructive forces may exist in this new plutocracy which already so largely sways American economic and political development. The first impression is one of extravagant and aimless expenditure, of a class irresponsible and wasteful beyond all precedent. One gets a Zolaesque picture of that aspect in Mr. Upton Sinclair's "Metropolis," or the fashionable intelligence of the popular New York Sunday editions, and one finds a good deal of confirmatory evidence in many incidental aspects of the smart American life of Paris and the Riviera. The evidence in the notorious Thaw trial, after one has discounted its theatrical elements, was still a very convincing demonstration of a rotten and extravagant, because aimless and functionless, class of rich people. But one has to be careful in this matter if one is to do justice to the facts. If a thing is made up of two elements, and one is noisy and glaringly coloured, and the other is quiet and colourless, the first impression created will be that the

thing is identical with the element that is noisy and glaringly coloured. One is much less likely to hear of the broad plans and the quality of the wise, strong and constructive individuals in a class than of their foolish wives, their spendthrift sons, their mistresses, and their moments of irritation and folly.

In the making of very rich men there is always a factor of good fortune and a factor of design and will. One meets rich men at times who seem to be merely lucky gamblers, who strike one as just the thousandth man in a myriad of wild plungers, who are, in fact, chance nobodies washed up by an eddy. Others, again, strike one as exceptionally lucky half-knaves. But there are others of a growth more deliberate and of an altogether higher personal quality. One takes such men as Mr. J.D. Rockefeller or Mr. Pierpont Morgan--the scale of their fortunes makes them public property--and it is clear that we are dealing with persons on quite a different level of intellectual power from the British Colonel Norths, for example, or the South African Joels. In my "Future in America" I have taken the former largely at Miss Tarbell's estimate, and treated him as a case of acquisitiveness raised in Baptist surroundings. But I doubt very much if that exhausts the man as he is to-day. Given a man brought up to saving and "getting on" as if to a religion, a man very acquisitive and very patient and restrained, and indubitably with great organising power, and he grows rich beyond the dreams of avarice. And having done so, there he is. What is he going to do? Every step he takes up the ascent to riches gives him new perspectives and new points of view.

It may have appealed to the young Rockefeller, clerk in a Chicago house, that to be rich was itself a supreme end; in the first flush of the discovery that he was immensely rich, he may have thanked Heaven as if for a supreme good, and spoken to a Sunday school gathering as if he knew himself for the most favoured of men. But all that happened twenty years ago or more. One does not keep on in that sort of satisfaction; one settles down to the new facts. And such men as Mr. Rockefeller and Mr. Pierpont Morgan do not live in a made and protected world with their minds trained, tamed and fed and shielded from outside impressions as royalties do. The thought of the world has washed about them; they have read and listened to the discussion of themselves for some decades; they have had sleepless nights of self-examination. To succeed in acquiring enormous wealth does not solve the problem of life; indeed, it reopens it in a new form. "What shall I do with myself?" simply recurs again. You may have decided to devote yourself to getting on, getting wealthy. Well, you have got it. Now, again, comes the question: "What shall I do?"

Mr. Pierpont Morgan, I am told, collected works of art. I can understand that satisfying a rich gentleman of leisure, but not a man who has felt the sensation of holding great big things in his great big hands. Saul, going out to seek his father's asses, found a kingdom--and became very spiritedly a king, and it seems to me that these big industrial and financial organisers, whatever in their youth they proposed to do or be, must many of them come to realise that their

organising power is up against no less a thing than a nation's future. Napoleon, it is curious to remember once wanted to run a lodging-house, and a man may start to corner oil and end the father of a civilisation.

Now, I am disposed to suspect at times that an inkling of such a realisation may have come to some of these very rich men. I am inclined to put it among the possibilities of our time that it may presently become clearly and definitely the inspiring idea of many of those who find themselves predominantly rich. I do not see why these active rich should not develop statesmanship, and I can quite imagine them developing very considerable statesmanship. Because these men were able to realise their organising power in the absence of economic organisation, it does not follow that they will be fanatical for a continuing looseness and freedom of property. The phase of economic liberty ends itself, as Marx long ago pointed out. The American business world becomes more and more a managed world with fewer and fewer wild possibilities of succeeding. Of all people the big millionaires should realise this most acutely, and, in fact, there are many signs that they do. It seems to me that the educational zeal of Mr. Andrew Carnegie and the university and scientific endowments of Mr. Rockefeller are not merely showy benefactions; they express a definite feeling of the present need of constructive organisation in the social scheme. The time has come to build. There is, I think, good reason for expecting that statesmanship of the millionaires to become more organised and scientific and comprehensive in the coming years. It is plausible at least to maintain that the personal quality of the American plutocracy



has risen in the last three decades, has risen from the quality of a mere irresponsible wealthy person towards that of a real aristocrat with a "sense of the State." That one may reckon the first hopeful possibility in the American outlook.

And intimately connected with this development of an attitude of public responsibility in the very rich is the decay on the one hand of the preposterous idea once prevalent in America that politics is an unsuitable interest for a "gentleman," and on the other of the democratic jealousy of any but poor politicians. In New York they talk very much of "gentlemen," and by "gentlemen" they seem to mean rich men "in society" with a college education. Nowadays, "gentlemen" seem more and more disposed towards politics, and less and less towards a life of business or detached refinement. President Roosevelt, for example, was one of the pioneers in this new development, this restoration of virility to the gentlemanly ideal. His career marks the appearance of a new and better type of man in American politics, the close of the rule of the idealised nobody.

The prophecy has been made at times that the United States might develop a Caesarism, and certainly the position of president might easily become that of an emperor. No doubt in the event of an acute failure of the national system such a catastrophe might occur, but the more hopeful and probable line of development is one in which a conscious and powerful, if informal, aristocracy will play a large part. It may, indeed, never have any of the outward forms of an aristocracy or any

definite public recognition. The Americans are as chary of the coronet and the known aristocratic titles as the Romans were of the word King. Octavius, for that reason, never called himself king nor Italy a kingdom. He was just the Caesar of the Republic, and the Empire had been established for many years before the Romans fully realised that they had returned to monarchy.

## Sec. 8

The American universities are closely connected in their development with the appearance and growing class-consciousness of this aristocracy of wealth. The fathers of the country certainly did postulate a need of universities, and in every state Congress set aside public lands to furnish a university with material resources. Every State possesses a university, though in many instances these institutions are in the last degree of feebleness. In the days of sincere democracy the starvation of government and the dislike of all manifest inequalities involved the starvation of higher education. Moreover, the entirely artificial nature of the State boundaries, representing no necessary cleavages and traversed haphazard by the lines of communication, made some of these State foundations unnecessary and others inadequate to a convergent demand. From the very beginning, side by side with the State universities, were the universities founded by benefactors; and with the evolution of new centres of population, new and extremely generous plutocratic endowments appeared. The dominant universities of America

to-day, the treasure houses of intellectual prestige, are almost all of them of plutocratic origin, and even in the State universities, if new resources are wanted to found new chairs, to supply funds for research or publication or what not, it is to the more State-conscious wealthy and not to the State legislature that the appeal is made almost as a matter of course. The common voter, the small individualist has less constructive imagination--is more individualistic, that is, than the big individualist.

This great network of universities that is now spread over the States, interchanging teachers, literature and ideas, and educating not only the professions but a growing proportion of business leaders and wealthy people, must necessarily take an important part in the reconstruction of the American tradition that is now in progress. It is giving a large and increasing amount of attention to the subjects that bear most directly upon the peculiar practical problems of statecraft in America, to psychology, sociology and political science. It is influencing the press more and more directly by supplying a rising proportion of journalists and creating an atmosphere of criticism and suggestion. It is keeping itself on the one hand in touch with the popular literature of public criticism in those new and curious organs of public thought, the ten-cent magazines; and on the other it is making a constantly more solid basis of common understanding upon which the newer generation of plutocrats may meet. That older sentimental patriotism must be giving place under its influence to a more definite and effectual conception of a collective purpose. It is to the moral and intellectual influence of

sustained scientific study in the universities, and a growing increase of the college-trained element in the population that we must look if we are to look anywhere for the new progressive methods, for the substitution of persistent, planned and calculated social development for the former conditions of systematic neglect and corruption in public affairs varied by epileptic seizures of "Reform."

## Sec. 9

A third influence that may also contribute very materially to the reconstruction of the American tradition is the Socialist movement. It is true that so far American Socialism has very largely taken an Anarchistic form, has been, in fact, little more than a revolutionary movement of the wages-earning class against the property owner. It has already been pointed out that it derives not from contemporary English Socialism but from the Marxist social democracy of the continent of Europe, and has not even so much of the constructive spirit as has been developed by the English Socialists of the Fabian and Labour Party group or by the newer German evolutionary Socialists. Nevertheless, whenever Socialism is intelligently met by discussion or whenever it draws near to practicable realisation, it becomes, by virtue of its inherent implications, a constructive force, and there is no reason to suppose that it will not be intelligently met on the whole and in the long run in America. The alternative to a developing Socialism among the labouring masses in America is that revolutionary Anarchism from which

it is slowly but definitely marking itself off. In America we have to remember that we are dealing with a huge population of people who are for the most part, and more and more evidently destined under the present system of free industrial competition, to be either very small traders, small farmers on the verge of debt, or wages-earners for all their lives. They are going to lead limited lives and worried lives--and they know it. Nearly everyone can read and discuss now, the process of concentrating property and the steady fixation of conditions that were once fluid and adventurous goes on in the daylight visibly to everyone. And it has to be borne in mind also that these people are so far under the sway of the American tradition that each thinks himself as good as any man and as much entitled to the fullness of life. Whatever social tradition their fathers had, whatever ideas of a place to be filled humbly and seriously and duties to be done, have been left behind in Europe. No Church dominates the scenery of this new land, and offers in authoritative and convincing tones consolations hereafter for lives obscurely but faithfully lived. Whatever else happens in this national future, upon one point the patriotic American may feel assured, and that is of an immense general discontent in the working class and of a powerful movement in search of a general betterment. The practical forms and effects of that movement will depend almost entirely upon the average standard of life among the workers and their general education. Sweated and ill-organised foreigners, such as one finds in New Jersey living under conditions of great misery, will be fierce, impatient and altogether dangerous. They will be acutely exasperated by every picture of plutocratic luxury in their newspaper, they will readily resort to

destructive violence. The western miner, the western agriculturist, worried beyond endurance between the money-lender and railway combinations will be almost equally prone to savage methods of expression. The Appeal to Reason, for example, to which I have made earlier reference in this chapter, is furious to wreck the present capitalistic system, but it is far too angry and impatient for that satisfaction to produce any clear suggestion of what shall replace it.

To call this discontent of the seething underside of the American system Socialism is a misnomer. Were there no Socialism there would be just as much of this discontent, just the same insurgent force and desire for violence, taking some other title and far more destructive methods. This discontent is a part of the same planless confusion that gives on the other side the wanton irresponsible extravagances of the smart people of New York. But Socialism alone, of all the forms of expression adopted by the losers in the economic struggle, contains constructive possibilities and leads its adherents towards that ideal of an organised State, planned and developed, from which these terrible social stresses may be eliminated, which is also the ideal to which sociology and the thoughts of every constructive-minded and foreseeing man in any position of life tend to-day. In the Socialist hypothesis of collective ownership and administration as the social basis, there is the germ of a "sense of the State" that may ultimately develop into comprehensive conceptions of social order, conceptions upon which enlightened millionaires and unenlightened workers may meet at last in generous and patriotic co-operation.

The chances of the American future, then, seem to range between two possibilities just as a more or less constructive Socialism does or does not get hold of and inspire the working mass of the population. In the worst event--given an emotional and empty hostility to property as such, masquerading as Socialism--one has the prospect of a bitter and aimless class war between the expropriated many and the property-holding few, a war not of general insurrection but of localised outbreaks, strikes and brutal suppressions, a war rising to bloody conflicts and sinking to coarsely corrupt political contests, in which one side may prevail in one locality and one in another, and which may even develop into a chronic civil war in the less-settled parts of the country or an irresistible movement for secession between west and east. That is assuming the greatest imaginable vehemence and short-sighted selfishness and the least imaginable intelligence on the part of both workers and the plutocrat-swayed government. But if the more powerful and educated sections of the American community realise in time the immense moral possibilities of the Socialist movement, if they will trouble to understand its good side instead of emphasising its bad, if they will keep in touch with it and help in the development of a constructive content to its propositions, then it seems to me that popular Socialism may count as a third great factor in the making of the civilised American State.

In any case, it does not seem to me probable that there can be any national revolutionary movement or any complete arrest in the

development of an aristocratic phase in American history. The area of the country is too great and the means of communication between the workers in different parts inadequate for a concerted rising or even for effective political action in mass. In the worst event--and it is only in the worst event that a great insurrectionary movement becomes probable--the newspapers, magazines, telephones and telegraphs, all the apparatus of discussion and popular appeal, the railways, arsenals, guns, flying machines, and all the material of warfare, will be in the hands of the property owners, and the average of betrayal among the leaders of a class, not racially homogeneous, embittered, suspicious united only by their discomforts and not by any constructive intentions, will necessarily be high. So that, though the intensifying trouble between labour and capital may mean immense social disorganisation and lawlessness, though it may even supply the popular support in new attempts at secession, I do not see in it the possibility and force for that new start which the revolutionary Socialists anticipate; I see it merely as one of several forces making, on the whole and particularly in view of the possible mediatory action of the universities, for construction and reconciliation.

Sec. 10

What changes are likely to occur in the more intimate social life of the people of the United States? Two influences are at work that may modify this profoundly. One is that spread of knowledge and that accompanying



change in moral attitude which is more and more sterilising the once prolific American home, and the second is the rising standard of feminine education. There has arisen in this age a new consciousness in women. They are entering into the collective thought to a degree unprecedented in the world's history, and with portents at once disquieting and confused.

In Sec. 5 I enumerated what I called the silent factors in the American synthesis, the immigrant European aliens, the Catholics, the coloured blood, and so forth. I would now observe that, in the making of the American tradition, the women also have been to a large extent, and quite remarkably, a silent factor. That tradition is not only fundamentally middle-class and English, but it is also fundamentally masculine. The citizen is the man. The woman belongs to him. He votes for her, works for her, does all the severer thinking for her. She is in the home behind the shop or in the dairy at the farmhouse with her daughters. She gets the meal while the men talk. The American imagination and American feeling centre largely upon the family and upon "mother." American ideals are homely. The social unit is the home, and it is another and a different set of influences and considerations that are never thought of at all when the home sentiment is under discussion, that, indeed, it would be indelicate to mention at such a time, which are making that social unit the home of one child or of no children at all.

That ideal of a man-owned, mother-revering home has been the prevalent

American ideal from the landing of the Mayflower right down to the leader writing of Mr. Arthur Brisbane. And it is clear that a very considerable section among one's educated women contemporaries do not mean to stand this ideal any longer. They do not want to be owned and cherished, and they do not want to be revered. How far they represent their sex in this matter it is very hard to say. In England in the professional and most intellectually active classes it is scarcely an exaggeration to say that all the most able women below five-and-thirty are workers for the suffrage and the ideal of equal and independent citizenship, and active critics of the conventions under which women live to-day. It is at least plausible to suppose that a day is approaching when the alternatives between celibacy or a life of economic dependence and physical subordination to a man who has chosen her, and upon whose kindness her happiness depends, or prostitution, will no longer be a satisfactory outlook for the great majority of women, and when, with a newly aroused political consciousness, they will be prepared to exert themselves as a class to modify this situation. It may be that this is incorrect, and that in devotion to an accepted male and his children most women do still and will continue to find their greatest satisfaction in life. But it is the writer's impression that so simple and single-hearted a devotion is rare, and that, released from tradition--and education, reading and discussion do mean release from tradition--women are as eager for initiative, freedom and experience as men. In that case they will persist in the present agitation for political rights, and these secured, go on to demand a very considerable reconstruction of our present social order.

It is interesting to point the direction in which this desire for independence will probably take them. They will discover that the dependence of women at the present time is not so much a law-made as an economic dependence due to the economic disadvantages their sex imposes upon them. Maternity and the concomitants of maternity are the circumstances in their lives, exhausting energy and earning nothing, that place them at a discount. From the stage when property ceased to be chiefly the creation of feminine agricultural toil (the so-called primitive matriarchate) to our present stage, women have had to depend upon a man's willingness to keep them, in order to realise the organic purpose of their being. Whether conventionally equal or not, whether voters or not, that necessity for dependence will still remain under our system of private property and free independent competition. There is only one evident way by which women as a class can escape from that dependence each upon an individual man and from all the practical inferiority this dependence entails, and that is by so altering their status as to make maternity and the upbringing of children a charge not upon the husband of the mother but upon the community. The public Endowment of Maternity is the only route by which the mass of women can reach that personal freedom and independent citizenship so many of them desire.

Now, this idea of the Endowment of Maternity--or as it is frequently phrased, the Endowment of the Home--is at present put forward by the modern Socialists as an integral part of their proposals, and it is

interesting to note that there is this convergent possibility which may bring the feminist movement at last altogether into line with constructive Socialism. Obviously, before anything in the direction of family endowment becomes practicable, public bodies and the State organisation will need to display far more integrity and efficiency than they do in America at the present time. Still, that is the trend of things in all contemporary civilised communities, and it is a trend that will find a powerful reinforcement in men's solitudes as the increasing failure of the unsupported private family to produce offspring adequate to the needs of social development becomes more and more conspicuous. The impassioned appeals of President Roosevelt have already brought home the race-suicide of the native-born to every American intelligence, but mere rhetoric will not in itself suffice to make people, insecurely employed and struggling to maintain a comfortable standard of life against great economic pressure, prolific. Presented as a call to a particularly onerous and quite unpaid social duty the appeal for unrestricted parentage fails. Husband and wife alike dread an excessive burthen. Travel, leisure, freedom, comfort, property and increased ability for business competition are the rewards of abstinence from parentage, and even the disapproval of President Roosevelt and the pride of offspring are insufficient counterweights to these inducements. Large families disappear from the States, and more and more couples are childless. Those who have children restrict their number in order to afford those they have some reasonable advantage in life. This, in the presence of the necessary knowledge, is as practically inevitable a consequence of individualist competition and

the old American tradition as the appearance of slums and a class of millionaires.

These facts go to the very root of the American problem. I have already pointed out that, in spite of a colossal immigration, the population of the United States was at the end of the nineteenth century over twenty millions short of what it should have been through its own native increase had the birth-rate of the opening of the century been maintained. For a hundred years America has been "fed" by Europe. That feeding process will not go on indefinitely. The immigration came in waves as if reservoir after reservoir was tapped and exhausted. Nowadays England, Scotland, Ireland, France and Scandinavia send hardly any more; they have no more to send. Germany and Switzerland send only a few. The South European and Austrian supply is not as abundant as it was. There may come a time when Europe and Western Asia will have no more surplus population to send, when even Eastern Asia will have passed into a less fecund phase, and when America will have to look to its own natural increase for the continued development of its resources.

If the present isolated family of private competition is still the social unit, it seems improbable that there will be any greater natural increase than there is in France.

Will the growing idea of a closer social organisation have developed by that time to the possibility of some collective effort in this matter? Or will that only come about after the population of the world has

passed through a phase of absolute recession? The peculiar constitution of the United States gives a remarkable freedom of experiment in these matters to each individual state, and local developments do not need to wait upon a national change of opinion; but, on the other hand, the superficial impression of an English visitor is that any such profound interference with domestic autonomy runs counter to all that Americans seem to hold dear at the present time. These are, however, new ideas and new considerations that have still to be brought adequately before the national consciousness, and it is quite impossible to calculate how a population living under changing conditions and with a rising standard of education and a developing feminine consciousness may not think and feel and behave in a generation's time. At present for all political and collective action America is a democracy of untutored individualist men who will neither tolerate such interference between themselves and the women they choose to marry as the Endowment of Motherhood implies, nor view the "kids" who will at times occur even in the best-regulated families as anything but rather embarrassing, rather amusing by-products of the individual affections.

I find in the London New Age for August 15th, 1908, a description by Mr. Jerome K. Jerome of "John Smith," the average British voter. John Smith might serve in some respects for the common man of all the modern civilisations. Among other things that John Smith thinks and wants, he wants:

"a little house and garden in the country all to himself.

His idea is somewhere near half an acre of ground. He would like a piano in the best room; it has always been his dream to have a piano. The youngest girl, he is convinced, is musical. As a man who has knocked about the world and has thought, he quite appreciates the argument that by co-operation the material side of life can be greatly improved. He quite sees that by combining a dozen families together in one large house better practical results can be obtained. It is as easy to direct the cooking for a hundred as for half a dozen. There would be less waste of food, of coals, of lighting. To put aside one piano for one girl is absurd. He sees all this, but it does not alter one little bit his passionate craving for that small house and garden all to himself. He is built that way. He is typical of a good many other men and women built on the same pattern. What are you going to do with them? Change them--their instincts, their very nature, rooted in the centuries? Or, as an alternative, vary Socialism to fit John Smith? Which is likely to prove the shorter operation?"

That, however, is by the way. Here is the point at issue:

"He has heard that Socialism proposes to acknowledge woman's service to the State by paying her a weekly wage according to the number of children that she bears and rears. I don't propose to repeat his objections to the idea;

they could hardly be called objections. There is an ugly look comes into his eyes; something quite undefinable, prehistoric, almost dangerous, looks out of them.... In talking to him on this subject you do not seem to be talking to a man. It is as if you had come face to face with something behind civilisation, behind humanity, something deeper down still among the dim beginnings of creation...."

Now, no doubt Mr. Jerome is writing with emphasis here. But there is sufficient truth in the passage for it to stand here as a rough symbol of another factor in this question. John Smithism, that manly and individualist element in the citizen, stands over against and resists all the forces of organisation that would subjugate it to a collective purpose. It is careless of coming national cessation and depopulation, careless of the insurgent spirit beneath the acquiescences of Mrs. Smith, careless of its own inevitable defeat in the economic struggle, careless because it can understand none of these things; it is obstinately muddle-headed, asserting what it conceives to be itself against the universe and all other John Smiths whatsoever. It is a factor with all other factors. The creative, acquisitive, aggressive spirit of those bigger John Smiths who succeed as against the myriads of John Smiths who fail, the wider horizons and more efficient methods of the educated man, the awakening class-consciousness of women, the inevitable futility of John Smithism, the sturdy independence that makes John Smith resent even disciplined co-operation with Tom Brown to



achieve a common end, his essential incapacity, indeed, for collective action; all these things are against the ultimate triumph, and make for the ultimate civilisation even of John Smith.

## Sec. 11

It may be doubted if the increasing collective organisation of society to which the United States of America, in common with all the rest of the world, seem to be tending will be to any very large extent a national organisation. The constitution is an immense and complicated barrier to effectual centralisation. There are many reasons for supposing the national government will always remain a little ineffectual and detached from the full flow of American life, and this notwithstanding the very great powers with which the President is endowed.

One of these reasons is certainly the peculiar accident that has placed the seat of government upon the Potomac. To the thoughtful visitor to the United States this hiding away of the central government in a minute district remote from all the great centres of thought, population and business activity becomes more remarkable more perplexing, more suggestive of an incurable weakness in the national government as he grasps more firmly the peculiarities of the American situation.

I do not see how the central government of that great American nation of

which I dream can possibly be at Washington, and I do not see how the present central government can possibly be transferred to any other centre. But to go to Washington, to see and talk to Washington, is to receive an extraordinary impression of the utter isolation and hopelessness of Washington. The National Government has an air of being marooned there. Or as though it had crept into a corner to do something in the dark. One goes from the abounding movement and vitality of the northern cities to this sunny and enervating place through the negligently cultivated country of Virginia, and one discovers the slovenly, unfinished promise of a city, broad avenues lined by negro shanties and patches of cultivation, great public buildings and an immense post office, a lifeless museum, an inert university, a splendid desert library, a street of souvenir shops, a certain industry of "seeing Washington," an idiotic colossal obelisk. It seems an ideal nest for the tariff manipulator, a festering corner of delegates and agents and secondary people. In the White House, in the time of President Roosevelt, the present writer found a transitory glow of intellectual activity, the spittoons and glass screens that once made it like a London gin palace had been removed, and the former orgies of handshaking reduced to a minimum. It was, one felt, an accidental phase. The assassination of McKinley was an interruption of the normal Washington process. To this place, out of the way of everywhere, come the senators and congressmen, mostly leaving their families behind them in their states of origin, and hither, too, are drawn a multitude of journalists and political agents and clerks, a crowd of underbred, mediocre men. For most of them there is neither social nor intellectual life. The thought

of America is far away, centred now in New York; the business and economic development centres upon New York; apart from the President, it is in New York that one meets the people who matter, and the New York atmosphere that grows and develops ideas and purposes. New York is the natural capital of the United States, and would need to be the capital of any highly organised national system. Government from the district of Columbia is in itself the repudiation of any highly organised national system.

But government from this ineffectual, inert place is only the most striking outcome of that inflexible constitution the wrangling delegates of 1787-8 did at last produce out of a conflict of State jealousies. They did their best to render centralisation or any coalescence of States impossible and private property impregnable, and so far their work has proved extraordinarily effective. Only a great access of intellectual and moral vigour in the nation can ever set it aside. And while the more and more sterile millions of the United States grapple with the legal and traditional difficulties that promise at last to arrest their development altogether, the rest of the world will be moving on to new phases. An awakened Asia will be reorganising its social and political conceptions in the light of modern knowledge and modern ideas, and South America will be working out its destinies, perhaps in the form of a powerful confederation of states. All Europe will be schooling its John Smiths to finer discipline and broader ideas. It is quite possible that the American John Smiths may have little to brag about in the way of national predominance by A.D. 2000. It is quite

possible that the United States may be sitting meekly at the feet of at present unanticipated teachers.

## THE POSSIBLE COLLAPSE OF CIVILISATION

(New Year, 1909.)

The Editor of the New York World has asked me to guess the general trend of events in the next thirty years or so with especial reference to the outlook for the State and City of New York. I like and rarely refuse such cheerful invitations to prophesy. I have already made a sort of forecast (in my "Anticipations") of what may happen if the social and economic process goes on fairly smoothly for all that time, and shown a New York relieved from its present congestion by the development of the means of communication, and growing and spreading in wide and splendid suburbs towards Boston and Philadelphia. I made that forecast before ever I passed Sandy Hook, but my recent visit only enhanced my sense of growth and "go" in things American. Still, we are nowadays all too apt to think that growth is inevitable and progress in the nature of things; the Wonderful Century, as Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace called the nineteenth, has made us perhaps over-confident and forgetful of the ruins of great cities and confident prides of the past that litter the