

encouragement of imports of food.<sup>1</sup> Peisistratos, we know, was the leader of the *Diakrioi*, the herdsmen and crofters of the uplands, and was "accounted the most thorough democrat" as against the landlords of the plains (*Pediaioi*), led by Lycurgos, and the traders of the coast (*Paraloi*), led by Megacles.<sup>2</sup> The presumption is that by this time the fertile plain-lands were largely owned by rich men, who worked them by hired labour; but the nature of the conflicting forces is not now to be clearly ascertained. The credit given afterwards to Peisistratos for maintaining the Solonian laws points to an understanding between him and the people;<sup>3</sup> and their acceptance of him in Solon's despite suggests that they even identified the latter with the failure of his laws to secure them against further aristocratic oppression.

Nonetheless, Solon's recasting of the political structure of the State determined the future evolution. As Athens grew more and more of an industrial and trading city, her people reverted more and more surely to the self-governing ideal; albeit the Solonian constitution preserved the unity of the State, keeping all the people of Attica "Athenians." The rule of Peisistratos was twice upset, and that of his house in all did not last much above fifty years. When the last member was driven out by Kleisthenes (510 B.C.), the constitution was re-established in a more democratic form than the Solonian; all freemen of Attica became burghers of Athens; and thousands of unenfranchised citizens and emancipated slaves obtained full rights of citizenship. For better and for worse, republican Athens was made—a new thing in the ancient world, for hitherto "democratical government was a thing unknown in Greece—all Grecian governments were either oligarchical or despotic, the mass of the freemen having not yet tasted of constitutional privilege."<sup>4</sup>

What followed was an evolution of the old conflicting forces on a new constitutional basis, the balance of power and prestige being on the side of the demos and its institutions, no longer on that of a land-owning and dominant aristocracy. But the strife never ceased. Kleisthenes himself found "the Athenian people excluded from everything" once more, and, "being vanquished in the party contest with his rival, took the people into partnership."<sup>5</sup> The economic

<sup>1</sup> See below, pt. ii, ch. ii, § 1.

<sup>2</sup> Plutarch, *Solon*, 13, 29.

<sup>3</sup> As to his tactic in building up a party see Busolt, *Griech. Gesch.* 1885, i, 550-53. But the panegyric of Peisistratos as a ruler by Messrs. Mitchell and Caspari (abr. of Grote, p. 58) is extravagant. The tyrant is there extolled for the most primitive device of the ruler seeking popularity, the remission of taxes to individuals.

<sup>4</sup> Grote, ii, 468, 496.

<sup>5</sup> Herodotus, v, 66-69.

tendencies of all civic life reproduced the hostility again and again. One of the most remarkable of the laws of Solon was that which disfranchised any citizen who in a "stasis" or seditious feud stood aloof and took no side.<sup>1</sup> He had seen the risks of such apathy in the attempt of Kylon, in his youth, to become despot of Athens; and his fears were realised when Peisistratos seized power. The law may have helped to promote public-spirited action; but in the nature of things it was hardly necessary when once democracy was established. Again and again the demos had to fight for its own hand against the cliques who sought to restore oligarchy; and apathy was not likely to be common. The perpetual generation of fresh poverty through rapid increase of population, and the inevitable resort to innovating fiscal and other measures to relieve it, sufficed to provide grounds of class strife while free Athens endured.

Note

It lies on the face of Aristotle's *Politics*, however, that even if the population difficulty had been solved otherwise than by exodus, and even if the Athenians could have guarded against class strife among themselves, the fatality of war in the then civilised world would have sufficed to bring about political dissolution. As he profoundly observes, the training of a people to war ends in their ruin, even when they acquire supremacy, because their legislators have not "taught them how to rest."<sup>2</sup> Add the memorable testimony of Thucydides concerning the deep demoralisation wrought by the Peloponnesian War—a testimony supported by every page of the history of the time. Even the sinister virtue of uniting a people within itself was lacking to the perpetual warfare of the Greeks: the internal hatreds seemed positively to worsen in the atmosphere of the hatreds of the communities. But while the spirit of strife is universal, peoples are inevitably trained to war; and even if the Greek States could have so far risen above their fratricidal jealousies as to form a stable union, it must needs have turned to external conquest, and so run the downward course of the post-Alexandrian Hellenistic Empires, and of the Roman Empire, which in turn sank to dissolution before the assaults of newer militarisms.

## § 2

Nothing can save any democratic polity from the alternatives of insane strife and imperial subjection but a vital prosperous culture, going hand in hand with a sound economy of industry. The Greek

<sup>1</sup> Plutarch, *Solon*, c. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Bk. vii, c. 15.

note
Note
Note
democracies in their different way split on the rock that wrecked the Roman Republic: there was (1) no general mental development commensurate with the political problems which arose for solution, and (2) there was no approach to a sound economics. The first proposition will doubtless be denied by those who, nourished on the literature of Greece, have come to see in its relative excellence, the more confidently because of the abiding difficulty of mastering it, the highest reach of the faculties of thought and expression. But this judgment is fundamentally astray, because of the still subsisting separation, in the literary mind, of the idea of literary merit from the idea of scientific sanity. Men themselves too often vowed to the defence and service of a mythology are slow to see that it was not for nothing that the Athenian people bottomed its culture to the last on myth and superstition. Yet a little reflection might make it clear that the community which forced Socrates to drink the hemlock for an alleged and unproved scepticism, and Anaxagoras to fly for a materialistic hypothesis concerning the sun, could have no political enlightenment adequate to the Athenian needs. We see the superstitious Athenian demos playing the part of the ignorant multitude of all ages, eager for a master, incapable of steadfast self-rule, begging that the magnificent Alcibiades, who led the sacred procession to Eleusis in despite of the Spartans near at hand, shall put down his opponents and reign at Athens as king<sup>1</sup>—this after he had been exiled by the same demos on a charge of profane parody of the Eleusinian mysteries, and sacerdotally declared accursed for the offence.<sup>2</sup> A primitive people may stumble along in primitive conditions by dint of elementary political methods; but a civilised people with a complex political problem can solve it only by means of a correspondingly evolved science. And the Athenian people, with their purely literary and æsthetic culture, never as a body reached even a moderate height of ethical and scientific thought,<sup>3</sup> or even any such general æsthetic well-being as we are apt to credit them with. Moderns think of them, as the great song of Euripides has it, "lightly lifting their feet in the lucid air,"<sup>4</sup> and are indulgently ready to take by the letter the fine panegyric of the Athenian polity by Pericles,<sup>5</sup> forgetting that statesmen in all ages have glorified their State, always making out the best case, always shunning discouragement for their hearers, and making little account of evil. But Burckhardt, after his long survey, decides with Boeckh

<sup>1</sup> Plutarch, *Alcibiades*, c. 34.

<sup>3</sup> Cp. Meyer, *Geschichte des Alterthums*, iv, § 446.

<sup>4</sup> Rev. A. S. Way's translation of Euripides, *Medea*, 829-30.

<sup>2</sup> Grote, ch. 46.

<sup>5</sup> Thucydides, ii, 40.

that "the Hellenes were more unhappy than most men think;"<sup>1</sup> and the saying holds good of their political and intellectual life above all things.

Our more idealising scholars forget that the philosophy of the philosophers was a specialism, and that the chance of hearing a tragedy of Sophocles or a comedy of Aristophanes was no training in political conduct for a people whose greatest philosopher never learned to see the fatality of slavery. On the economic side, Periclean Athens was nearly as ill founded as aristocratic Rome. Citizens often with neither professions nor studies, with no ballasting occupation for head or hand; average men paid from the unearned tribute of allied States to attend to affairs without any fundamental study of political conditions; citizens whose work was paid for in the same fashion; citizens of merely empirical education, for whom politics was but an endless web of international intrigue, and who had no higher ideal than that of the supremacy of their own State in Hellenedom or their own faction in the State—such men, it is now easy to see, were incapable of saving Athens, much less of unifying Greece. They were politically raised to a situation which only wise and deeply instructed men could fill, and they were neither wise nor deeply instructed, however superior their experience might make them relatively to still worse trained contemporaries, or to populations living under a systematic despotism.

On some of the main problems of life the majority had thought no further than their ancestors of the days of the kings. The spell of religion had kept them ignorant and superstitious.<sup>2</sup> In applied ethics they had as a body made no progress: the extension of sympathy, which is moral advance, had gone no further than the extortion of civic status and power by some new classes, leaving a majority still enslaved. Above all, they could not learn the lesson of collective reciprocity; could not see the expediency of respecting in other communities the liberty they prized as their own chief good. Athens in her turn "became an imperial or despot city, governing an aggregate of dependent subjects all without their own active concurrence, and in many cases doubtless contrary to their own sense of political right.....But the Athenians committed the capital fault of taking the whole alliance into their own hands, and treating the allies purely as subjects, without seeking to attach them

<sup>1</sup> *Griechische Culturgeschichte*, i, 11; cp. ii, 386-88, 394, etc. And see Meyer, *Geschichte des Alterthums*, ii, 727-29, 734, etc. For an able counter-pleading, see the essay of Mr. Benn, "The Ethical Value of Hellenism," in *Intern. Jour. of Ethics*, April, 1902, rep. in his *Revaluations, Historical and Ideal*, 1909.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. Fustel de Coulanges, *La cité antique*, ed. 1880, pp. 260-64; E. Meyer, *Geschichte des Alterthums*, ii, 728.

by any form of political incorporation or collective meeting and discussion—without taking any pains to maintain community of feeling or idea of a joint interest—without admitting any control, real or even pretended, over themselves as managers. Had they attempted to do this, it might have proved difficult to accomplish—so powerful was the force of geographical dissemination, the tendency to isolated civic life, and the repugnance to any permanent extramural obligations, in every Grecian community. But they do not appear to have ever made the attempt. Finding Athens exalted by circumstances to empire, and the allies degraded into subjects, the Athenian statesmen grasped at the exaltation as a matter of pride as well as profit. Even Pericles, the most prudent and far-sighted of them, betrayed no consciousness that an empire without the cement of some all-pervading interest or attachment, although not practically oppressive, must nevertheless have a natural tendency to become more and more unpopular, and ultimately to crumble in pieces.”<sup>1</sup>

In fine, a democracy, the breath of whose nostrils is justice, systematically refused to do as it would be done by; and as was Athens, so were the rest of the Greek States. When the Athenians told the protesting Melians, in effect, that might is right,<sup>2</sup> they did even as Sparta and Thebes had done before them.<sup>3</sup> Hence the instinct of justice was feeble for all purposes, and the domestic strife of factions was nearly as malignant and animalised as in Borgian Italy. Mother cities and their colonies fought more destructively with each other than with aliens; Athens and Syracuse, Corinth and Corcyra, strove more malignantly than did Greek with barbarian. It was their rule after a victory to slay their prisoners.<sup>4</sup> Such men had not learned the secret of stable civic evolution; animal instinct was still enthroned against law and prudence. Unearned income, private and public; blindly tyrannous political aggression; ferocious domestic calumny; civic and racial disruption—these were the due phases and fruits of the handling of a great political problem by men who in the mass had no ideals of increasing knowledge, of growing tolerance, of widening justice, of fraternity.<sup>5</sup> Stoic and Epicurean wisdom and righteousness came too late to save free Hellas: they were the fruits of retrospect in decadence. The very art and literature which glorified Athens were in large

<sup>1</sup> Grote, iv, 489-90.

<sup>2</sup> Thucydides, v, 85 sq.

<sup>3</sup> Cp. Maisch, *Manual of Greek Antiquities*, Eng. tr. § 66.

<sup>4</sup> Grote, iv, 539. Cp. Thirlwall, i, 181-83.

<sup>5</sup> The view here set forth is fully borne out by the posthumous *Griechische Culturgeschichte* of Burckhardt. Cp. i, 249-57.

part the economic products of impolicy and injustice, being fostered by the ill-gotten wealth accruing to the city from her tributary allies and subject States, somewhat as the art of the great period in Italy was fed by the wealth of the Church and of the merchant princes who grew by the great river of trade. In the one case as in the other, there was no polity, no science, equal to the maintenance of the result when the originating conditions disappeared. Greek art and letters passed away because they were ill rooted. Nobly incorrupt for himself, Pericles thus fatally fostered a civic corruption that no leader's virtues could countervail, and his policy in this regard was probably the great force of frustration to his scheme for a pan-Hellenic congress at Athens, to promote free trade and intercourse.<sup>1</sup>

For various views on this matter cp. Heeren, Eng. tr. of *Researches on the Political History of Ancient Greece*, pp. 129-34; Thirlwall, *History of Greece*, ch. xviii (1st ed. iii, 62-70); Grote, iv, 490-504; Abbott, *History of Greece*, i, 405-9; Holm, *History of Greece*, Eng. tr. ii, 268, note 8 to ch. xvii (a vindication). Grote, who vindicates the policy of Pericles with much care, endorses the statesman's own plea that his use of the confederate treasure in ennobling the city gave her a valuable prestige. But even to the Athenian opposition this answer was indecisive, for, as Grote records, the argument of Thucydides was that Athens was "disgraced in the eyes of the Greeks" by her use of the treasure. This meant that her prestige was fully balanced by hatred, so that the civic gain was a new danger.

Not that matters would have gone a whit better if, as our Tory historians used retrospectively to prescribe, democracy had been permanently subverted by aristocracy. No other ideal then in vogue would have produced even so much "good life" as was actually attained. We know that the rich and the great in the Greek cities were the worst citizens, in the sense of being the least law-abiding; and that the lower-class Athenians who served in the fleet were the best disciplined; the middle-class hoplites less so; and the rich men who formed the cavalry the least orderly of all.<sup>2</sup> Above all, the aristocrats were cruel and rapacious when in power as the demos never were, even when they had overthrown the guiltiest of their tyrants.<sup>3</sup> The leading aristocrats were simply

<sup>1</sup> Plutarch, *Pericles*, c. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, iii, 5, 18. Cp. Grote, iv, 465. As Grote goes on to show, the same general statement holds good of Rome after her victory over Carthage, of the Italian Republics, and of the feudal baronage in England and elsewhere.

<sup>3</sup> Grote, vi, 315-17, 518, rightly insists on the moderation of the people after the expulsions of the Four Hundred and the Thirty Tyrants.

weaker versions of the demagogues, making up for their weakness by their cruelty; and nothing can be more misleading than to take the account given of Kleon by Aristophanes for even a semblance of the truth. The great humorist saw nothing as it really was: his very genius was as it were a many-faceted mirror that could reflect no whole, and left his practical judgment worth less than that of any of the men he ridiculed. Kleon is to be conceived as a powerful figure of the type of a New York Tammany "Boss," without culture or philosophy, but shrewd, executive, and abounding in energy. The aristocrats were but slighter egoists with a varnish of education, as far as he from a worthy philosophy. And the philosophers *par excellence*, Plato and Aristotle, were equally incapable of practical statesmanship. The central truth of the entire process is that free Greece fell because her children never transcended, in conception or in practice, that primary ethic of egoism in which even love for one's country is only a reflex of hate for another people. This is clear in the whole play of the astounding hatreds of Athenians for Athenians through every struggle of Athens for her life. The treasons of Alcibiades are evoked and amply balanced by the murderous plots of his fellows against him: every figure in the line of leaders, from Solon's self, is hated by some hetairia; the honest Anytus, the perfect type of brainless conservatism sitting in the chair of sociological judgment, can be appeased only by the slaying of Socrates; and to the end the egoisms of Demosthenes, Æschines, and Isocrates are at grapple, with the national assassin in sight.

And it is the prevailing consciencelessness, the universal lust to tyrannise, that really consummates the political dissolution. It was not the battle of Chæronea that made an end of Greek independence. That disaster would have been retrieved like others if only the Greeks had persistently cared to retrieve it. They fell because they took the bribe of empire. Philip held it out at once by his offer of facile terms to Athens: he was planning in his own way what the pragmatic Isocrates took for the ideal Hellenic course, a Hellenic war of conquest against Persia; and it was that very war, made by Alexander, that transformed the Greeks into a mere diluvium of fortune-hunters, turning away from every ideal of civic stability and dignity to the overrunning of alien populations and the getting of alien gold. Given the process of historic determination, moral bias becomes a fatality; and when it is fixed, "'tis in ourselves that we are thus or thus." Republican Greece passed away because there were no more republican Greeks, but only a rabble of imperialists. Here again appears the fatality of their past: it was the sombre

memory of unappeasable civil strife, of eternal inequality and envy and class attrition, that made the new promise so dazzling; any future seemed fairer than the recent past. But it was through the immediate bait to their cupidity that the Greeks were led out of their old man-making life of turbulent counterpoise, the sphere of free equals, into the new unmanning life of empire, the sphere of slaves. They were easy victims. The men of Aristotle's day had once more before their eyes, in the squalid drama of Philip's house—in the spectacle of alienated wife and son deriding and hating the laurelled conqueror and exulting in his murder—the old lesson of autocracy, its infallible dishonour, its depravation, its dissolution of the inmost ties of cordial life. But any countervailing ideal that still lived among them was overborne by the tide of triumphant conquest; and, with Aristotle and Plato in her hand, Greece turned back to the social ethic of the Heraclidæ.

And when once the Circean cup of empire had been drained by the race, there was no more returning to the status of republican manhood. The new self-governing combination of cities which arose in Achaia after the disintegration of Alexander's empire might indeed conceivably have reached a high civilisation in time; but the external conditions, as summed up in the existence of Rome, were now overwhelmingly unfavourable. The opportunity for successful federalism was past. As it was, the Achaian and Ætolian Leagues were but politic unions as much for aggression as for defence, even as the Spartan reformers, Agis and Cleomenes, could never rise above the ideal of Spartan self-assertion and domination. Thus we have on one hand the Spartan kings, concerned for the well-being of the mass of the people (always excepting the helots) as a means to restore Spartan pre-eminence; and on the other hand the Achaian federation of oligarchies, hating the doctrine of sympathy for the demos as much as they hated Sparta—the forces of union and strife always repelling the regimen of peace, to say nothing of fraternity. The spectacle of Cleomenes and Philopœmen at deadly odds is the dramatic summary of the situation; the ablest men of the later Greek age could not transcend their barbarian heredity.

The statement of Freeman (*History of Federal Government in Greece and Italy*, ed. 1893, p. 184) that a federal system in Greece was "utterly impossible," is true in the bare philosophic sense that that was impossible which did not happen; but such a proposition would hold equally true of anything else that did not happen at a given time; and it merely creates confusion to affirm it of one item in particular. Pericles schemed some-

thing like a federal union;<sup>1</sup> and had his practice been in accord with his ideal, it might conceivably have been at least tried. M. Fustel de Coulanges well points out how the primary religious conception of the ancient City-State expelled and negatived that of a composite State (*La Cité antique*, l. iii, ch. xiv, p. 239); that is a process of rational explanation. But unless we conceive the "failures" of the past as lessons to be profited by, there can be neither a social nor a moral science. Freeman, however, actually proceeds to say that Greek federation was utterly undesirable—an extraordinary doctrine in a treatise devoted to studying and advocating federalism. On the principles thus laid down, Dr. Freeman's denunciation of Austria and France in modern times is irrational, since that which has happened in these countries is that which alone was possible; and the problem as to the desirable is hopelessly obscured.

To say that "Greece united in a federal bond could never have become the Greece" we admire (*id.* p. 184), is only to vary the verbalism. Granted that Hellenic greatness *as we know it* was "inseparably limited to the system of independent city commonwealths," it remains a rational proposition that had the Greek cities federated they could have developed their general culture further than they actually did, though the special splendour of Periclean Athens could not in that case have been so quickly attained. And as the *fall* of Greece is no less "inseparably linked" with the separateness of the States, Dr. Freeman's proposition suggests or implies an assertion of the desirableness of that fall. Mr. T. Whittaker, in his notable essay on *The Liberal State* (1907, pp. 70-72), rightly puts it as a fatality of the Greek State that it could neither enter into nor absorb a larger community, but recognises this as a failure to solve the great problem. When, however, he writes that "the free development of Athens as an autonomous State would have been restricted by a real federation in which other States had a voice of their own," he partly sets up the difficulty created by Freeman. Wherein would Athens have suffered as to freedom?

Note

The lesson for modern democracies from the story of the ancient is thus clear enough. To flourish, they must have peace; they must sooner or later practise a scientific and humane restraint of population—the sooner the better, as destruction of surplus population is always going on, even with emigration; they must check inequality, which is the fountain of domestic dispeace; and they must maintain a progressive and scientific culture. And the lesson is one that may now be acted on as it never could have been before. There is no longer a reserve of fecund barbarism ready to overwhelm a civilisation

<sup>1</sup> Plutarch, *Pericles*, c. 17; Grote, iv, 510; T. Davidson, *The Parthenon Frieze*, 1882, pp. 82-128.

that ceases to be pugnacious; and the civilised States have it in their own power to submit their quarrels to bloodless arbitrament. The inveterate strifes of the Greeks belong to a past stage of civilisation, and were in any case the product of peculiar geographical conditions, Greece being physically divided, externally among islands, and internally into a multitude of glens, which in the days of City-State life and primitive means of communication preserved a state of cantonal separateness and feud, just as did the physical conditions of the Scottish Highlands in the days before effective monarchic rule.

This permanent dissociation of the City-States was only a more intractable form of the primary divisions of the districts. Thus in Attica itself the divisions of party largely followed the localities: "There were as many parties among them as there were different tracts of land in their country"—the mountain-dwellers being democratic, while the plain-dwellers were for an oligarchy, and the coast-dwellers sought a mixed government. (Plutarch, *Solon*, cc. 13, 29; Aristotle, *Polity of Athens*, c. 13. See the question further discussed below, ch. iv, § 2 (c).

N.

Indeed, the fulness of the autonomous life attained by the separate cities was a psychological hindrance to their political union, given the primary geographical sunderance. Thus we have in the old Amphictyonic councils the evidence of a measure of peaceful political attraction among the tribes before the cities were developed;<sup>1</sup> yet on those ancient beginnings there was no political advance till the rise of formal federalism in the Ætolian and Achaian Leagues after the death of Alexander. And that federalism was not ethically higher than the spirit of the ancient Amphictyonic oath, preserved by Æschines. The balance of the forces of separateness and political wisdom is to be conceived in terms of a given degree of culture relatively to a given set of physical conditions. Happily the deadlock in question no longer subsists for civilised States.

Again, there is now possible a scientific control of population, without infanticide, without vice, without abortion. There has been attained a degree of democratic stability and enlightenment which given peace, permits of a secure gradual extension of the principle of equality by sound machinery. And there is now accumulated a treasury of seminal knowledge which makes possible an endless intellectual progress, the great antiseptic of political decay, provided only that the foregoing conditions are secured. This is, in brief, the programme of progressive democracy.

ex.

<sup>1</sup> Grote, pt. ii, ch. ii (ed. 1888, ii, 173-78); Freeman, *History of Federal Government*, ed. 1893, p. 103.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE LAWS OF SOCIO-POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

#### § 1

THE word "progressive," however, raises one of the most complex issues in sociology. It would be needless to point out, were it not well to anticipate objection, that the foregoing summaries are not offered as a complete theory of progress even as commonly conceived, much less as sufficing to dismiss the dispute<sup>1</sup> as to what progress is, or what basis there is for the modern conceptions bound up with the word. Our generalisations proceed on the assumption—not of course that human affairs must constantly improve in virtue of some cosmic law, but—that by most men of any education a certain advance in range of knowledge, of reflection, of skill, of civic amenity, of general comfort, is held to be attainable and desirable; that such advances have clearly taken place in former periods; and that the due study of these periods and of present conditions may lead to a further and indefinitely prolonged advance. Conceiving progress broadly as occurring by way of rise in the quantity and the quality of pleasurable and intelligent life, we beg the question, for the purposes of this inquiry, as against those who may regard such a tendency with aversion, and those who may deny that such increase ever takes place. Taking as proved the evolution of mankind from lower forms of animal life, we conceive such evolution as immeasurably slow in the period before the attainment of agriculture, which may serve as the stage at which what we term "civilisation" begins. Only with agriculture begins the "civitas," as distinct from the horde or tribe. Thenceforth all advance in arts and ethics, no less than in political co-ordination, counts as "civilisation." The problem is, how to diagnose advance.

All of us, roughly speaking, understand by progress the moving of things in the way we want them to go; and the ideals underlying

<sup>1</sup> On this may be consulted a suggestive paper by Mr. Lowes Dickinson in the *Free Review*, April, 1894, and an instructive study by Mr. T. Whittaker, "A Critical Essay on the Philosophy of History," in his *Essays and Notices*, 1895. Cp. Spencer, "Progress: Its Law and Cause," in *Essays*, vol. i.

the present treatise are easily seen, though it does not aim at an exhaustive survey of the conditions and causes of what it assumes to be progressive forms or phases of civilisation. To reach even a working theory, however, we have to make, as it were, cross-sections in our anatomy, and to view the movement of civilisation in terms of the conditions which increase men's stock of knowledge and extend their imaginative art. To lay a foundation, we have to subsume Buckle's all-important generalisation as to the effect of food and life conditions in differentiating what we may broadly term the primary from the secondary civilisation. Thus we think from "civilisation" to a civilisation.

Buckle drew his capital distinction, so constantly ignored by his critics, between "European" and "non-European" civilisations. This broadly holds good, but is a historical rather than a sociological proposition. The process of causation is one of life conditions; and the first great steps in the higher Greek civilisation were made in Asia Minor, in contact with Asiatic life, even as the earlier civilisations, such as the "Minoan" of Crete, now being traced through recovered remains, grew up in contact with both Egypt and the East. (Cp. Prof. Burrows, *The Discoveries in Crete*, 1907, chs. v, ix.) The distinction here made between "primary" and "secondary" civilisations is of course merely relative, applying as it does only to the historic period. We can but mark off the known civilisations as standing in certain relations one to another. Thus the Roman civilisation was in reality complex before the conquest of Greece, inasmuch as it had undergone Italo-Greek and Etruscan influences representing a then ancient culture. But the Roman militarist system left the Roman civilisation in itself unprogressive, and prevented it from being durably fertilised by the Greek.

Proceeding from general laws to particular cases, we may roughly say that:—

(1) Primary civilisations arise in regions specially favourable to the regular production of abundant food, and lying inland, so as not to offer constant temptation to piratical raids. (Fertile coast land is defensible only by a strong community.)

(2) Such food conditions tend to maintain an abundant population, readily lending itself to exploitation by rulers, and so involving despotism and subordination. They also imply, as a rule, level territories, which facilitate conquest and administration, and thus also involve military autocracy.

The general law that facile food conditions, supporting large populations in a primary civilisation, generate despotisms, was

MB | explicitly put in the eighteenth century by Walckenaer (*Essai sur l'histoire de l'espèce humaine*, 1798, l. v, ch. iv, p. 198). Montesquieu, whose reasonings on climate and soil tend to be fanciful and non-economic (cp. Volney, *Leçons d'Histoire*, 6ième séance; and Buckle, Routledge's ed. pp. 24, 468-69), noted the fact that sterile Attica was relatively democratic, and fertile Lakedaïmon aristocratic; and further (following Plutarch) decides that mountaineers tend to be democratic, plain-dwellers subject to rulers, and coast-dwellers something midway between (*Esprit des Lois*, l. xviii, ch. i). He is right in his facts, but misses the economic explanation. The fact that mountaineers as such are not easy to conquer, doubtless counts for a good deal. See it touched on in Gray's unfinished poem on the *Alliance between Government and Education*, written before the appearance of the *Esprit des Lois*, and stopped by Gray on the ground that "the Baron had forestalled some of his best thoughts" (Gray's *Works*, ed. 1821, p. 274). The point is discussed more fully in Dr. Dunbar's *Essays on the History of Mankind*, 1780, Essay vi.

(3) If the nation with such conditions is well aloof from other nations, in virtue of being much more civilised than its near neighbours, and of being self-sufficing as regards its produce, its civilisation (as in the cases of China and Incarial Peru and ancient Egypt) is likely to be extremely conservative. Above all, lack of racial interbreeding involves lack of due variation. No "pure" race ever evolved rapidly or highly. Even the conservative primary civilisations (as the Egyptian, Chinese, and Akkadian) rested on much race mixture.

Note | As Dr. Draper has well pointed out (*Intellect. Develop. of Europe*, ed. 1875, i, 84-88), the peculiar regularity of Egyptian agriculture, depending as it did on the Nile overflow, which made known in advance the quantity of the crops, lent itself especially to a stable system of life and administration. The long-lasting exclusion of foreigners there, as in China and in Sparta, would further secure sameness of culture; and only by such causes can special unprogressiveness anywhere arise. Sir Henry Maine's formula, marking off progressive and unprogressive civilisations as different species, is merely verbal, and is not adhered to by himself. (The point is discussed at some length by the present writer in *Buckle and his Critics*, pp. 402-8.) Maine's distinction was drawn long ago by Eusèbe Salverte (*De la Civilisation depuis les premiers temps*, 1813, p. 22, seq.), who philosophically goes on to indicate the conditions which set up the differentiation; though in later references (*Essai sur les noms d'hommes*, 1824, préf. p. ii; *Des Sciences occultes*, 1829, préf. p. vi) he recurs to the

empirical form of his proposition, which is that adhered to by Maine.

(4) When an old civilisation comes in steady contact with that of a race of not greatly inferior but less ancient culture, physically so situated as to be much less amenable to despotism (that is, in a hilly or otherwise easily defensible region), it is likely so to fecundate the fresher civilisation that the latter, if not vitiated by a bad political system, will soon surpass it,<sup>1</sup> provided that the latter community in turn is duly crossed as regards its stock, and that the former has due resources.

(5) In other words, a primitive but not barbarous people, placed in a region not highly fruitful but not really unpropitious to human life, is the less likely to fall tamely under a despotism because its population is not so easily multiplied and maintained;<sup>2</sup> and such a people, when physiologically variated by a mixture of stocks, and when mentally fecundated by contact with older civilisations, tends to develop what we term a secondary civilisation, higher in all respects than those which have stimulated it.<sup>3</sup>

(6) A very great disparity in the culture-stages of meeting races, however, is as unfavourable to the issue of a higher civilisation from their union as to a useful blending of their stocks.<sup>4</sup> Thus it fares ill with the contact of higher and lower races even in a climate equally favourable to both; and where it is favourable to the latter only, there is likely to be no immediate progress in the lower race, while in the terms of the case the higher will deteriorate or disappear.<sup>5</sup>

(7) Where a vigorous but barbarian race overruns one much more civilised, there is similarly little prospect of immediate gain to progress, though after a period of independent growth the newer civilisation may be greatly fecundated by intelligent resort to the remains of the older.

The cases of China and the Roman Empire may serve as illustrations. They were, however, different in that the northern invasion of Rome was by relatively considerable

<sup>1</sup> This also is posited by Dunbar, *Essays* cited, pp. 230, 233.

<sup>2</sup> This again, as well as the general importance of culture-contacts, is noted by Walckenaer, *Essai* cited, pp. 202-3.

<sup>3</sup> This was seen in antiquity. Julian, at least, pointed to the fashion in which the Greeks had perfected studies the rudiments of which they had received from other peoples (*apud* Cyrill. v, 8); and Celsus had said it before him (Origen, *Contra Celsum*, i, 2).

<sup>4</sup> See some just remarks by Bagehot in *Physics and Politics*, pp. 67-69, proceeding on Quatrefages, as to the varying success of given race-mixtures in different regions, in terms of the difference of the physical environment. Compare Schäffle, *Bau und Körper de Socialen Lebens*, 1875-8, ii, 468.

<sup>5</sup> Cp. Dunbar, as cited, p. 211, and Bagehot, as cited, p. 71. In such cases as those of British India and French Algiers the exception is only apparent, the European control being kept up by annual drafts of new men.

masses, while the Tartar conquerors of China were easily absorbed in the vast native population.

(8) Where, again, independent States at nearly the same stage of civilisation, whether speaking the same or different languages, stand in a position of commerce and rivalry, but without desperate warfare, the friction and cross-fertilisation of ideas, together with the mixture of stocks, will develop a greater and higher intellectual and artistic life than can conceivably arise in one great State without great or close rivals, since there one set of ideals or standards is likely to overbear all others, with the result of partly stereotyping taste and opinion.

This point is well put by Hume as to Greece, in his essay *Of the Rise of the Arts and Sciences* (1752); and after him by Gibbon, ch. 53, Bohn ed. vi, 233. Cp. Heeren, *Pol. Hist. of Ancient Greece*, Eng. tr. p. 42; Walckenaer, *Essai* cited, p. 338; Ferguson, *Essay on the History of Civil Society*, 1767, pp. 182, 183; Dunbar, *Essays on the History of Mankind*, 1780, pp. 257, 271; Goguet, *De l'origine des lois, des arts, et des sciences*, 1758, iii. Epoque, L. ii, ch. 2; Salverte, *De la Civilisation*, 1813, pp. 83-88; Grote, *History of Greece*, pt. ii, ch. i, ed. 1888, ii, 156; Cunningham, *Western Civilisation*, i, 75. Grote brings out very clearly the "mutuality of action and reaction" in the case of the maritime Greeks as compared with the others and with other nations. See also Hegel, *Philos. der Geschichte*, Th. ii, Absch. i (ed. 1840, p. 275). Hegel, besides noting the abstract element of geographical variety, points to the highly mixed character of the Greek stocks, especially in Attica. So Salverte, as cited. The same principle is rightly put by Guizot (*Hist. de la civilisation en France*, i, leçon 2), and accepted by J. S. Mill (*On Liberty*, ch. iii, end), as a main explanation of the intellectual progress of modern Europe. It is therefore worth weighing as regards given peoples, by those who, like Mr. Bryce, see nothing but harm in the subdivision of Germany after the Thirty Years' War (*Holy Roman Empire*, 8th ed. p. 346). Against the undoubted evils connected with the partition system ought to be set the intellectual gains which latterly arose from it when the intellectual life of Germany had, as it were, recovered breath.

(9) Thus, while an empire with a developed civilisation may communicate it to uncivilised conquered peoples not too far below its own anthropological level, the secondary civilisation thus acquired is in its nature less "viable," less capable of independent evolution, than one set up by the free commerce of trading peoples. The most rapid growths of civilisation appear always to have

occurred by way of the multiplying of free contacts among trading communities, and among the free colonies of such.<sup>1</sup> The "money economy" they introduced was a great instrument of social and industrial evolution;<sup>2</sup> and on such city civilisations the ancient empires themselves seem always to have proceeded.<sup>3</sup>

(10) Every phase of civilisation has its special drawbacks, so that great retrogression may follow on great development, especially when adventitious sources of wealth are the foundation of a luxurious culture. In some cases a great development may be dependent on an exhaustible source of wealth, as in the case of Britain's coal supply, the empire of ancient Rome, the primacy of the Pope before the Reformation, or even the Periclean empire of Athens, and the trade monopolies of Venice, the Hansa Towns, and the Dutch Republic.

(11) The expression "decay" as applied to a people, however, has only a relative significance: used absolutely, it stands for a delusion. Economic conditions may worsen, and military power decline; but such processes imply no physiological degeneration. All the "dead" civilisations of the past were *overthrown or absorbed by military violence*; and there is no known case of a nation physically well placed dying out.

Professor W. D. Whitney, who is usually so well worth listening to, fails to recognise this fact in his interesting essay on "China and the Chinese" (*Oriental and Linguistic Studies*, 2nd series). He declares that "according to the ordinary march of events in human history, the Chinese empire should have perished from decay, and its culture either have become extinct or have passed into the keeping of another race, more than two thousand years ago. It had already reached the limit to its capacity of development" (p. 88). Similarly Ratzel pronounces (*History of Mankind*, Eng. tr. 1896, i, 26) that "Voltaire hits the point when he says Nature has given the Chinese the organ for discovering all that is *useful* to them, but not for going *any further*." Voltaire never penned such a "bull." He wrote (*Essai sur les mœurs*, Avant-Propos, ch. i), "Il semble que la Nature ait donné," and "*nécessaire*," not "useful." Even that has a touch of paralogism; but the great

<sup>1</sup> E.g. the ancient Ægean civilisation, as seen in "Minoan" Crete; the colonies of the Phœnicians; those of the Greeks in Asia Minor, Italy, and Sicily; the medieval Italian Republics; the Hansa towns; those of the Netherlands; and the United States.

<sup>2</sup> See Dr. Cunningham, *Western Civilisation*, pp. 73, 74, 83-86, 94-97, etc., for an interesting development of this principle. Cp. Prof. Ashley, *Introduction to Economic History*, 1888-93, i, 43, and Hildebrand, as there cited. The originality of Hildebrand's ideas on this point has perhaps been overrated by Ochenkowski and others. Smith recognised the main facts (*Wealth of Nations*, bk. i, c. iv). See also the passage from Torrens cited by M'Culloch in his essay on "Money," *Treatises*, ed. 1859, pp. 9, 10.

<sup>3</sup> E.g. Babylonia, Egypt, Alexander's empire, and Rome.

essayist goes on to suggest two causes for Chinese conservatism—their ancestral piety and the nature of their method of writing. The first is a pseud-explanation; the second is a *vera causa*, though only one of those involved. The German specialist of to-day is really further from the scientific point of view than the French wit of the middle of the eighteenth century, going on as he does to decide that “defect in their endowments” causes the mediocrity of the Chinese, and “also is the sole cause of the rigidity in their social system.”

This is a vain saying; and it is no less vain to go on to ask, as Professor Whitney does, what has become of Egypt, of the Phœnicians and Hebrews, of the Persians, of Greece and Rome, and of Spain. The answer is easy. Egypt was conquered, and the old race still reproduces itself, in vassalage. The “Pelagic” civilisation of ancient Greece was absorbed by the Greek invaders. The “Mycenæan” and “Minoan” civilisations, as seen in ancient Troy and “Minoan” Crete, were conquered and partly absorbed. The Phœnicians and Hebrews were destroyed or absorbed. The Persians are at present retrograde, but may rise again.<sup>1</sup> Rome and Greece were successively overrun by barbarism. Spain, like Italy, retrograded, but, like Italy, is on the path of regeneration. In all these cases the process of causation is obvious. No nation dies or disappears save by violence; and, given the proper conditions, all races are capable of progress indefinitely. China, though unprogressive in comparison with a European State, has changed in many respects within two thousand years—nay, within twenty.<sup>2</sup> Professor Whitney adopts an empirical convention, and accordingly misses any real elucidation of the problem of Chinese sociology, which he assumes to solve (p. 87) by saying we must look for our explanations “deep in the foundations of the national character itself.” That is to say, the national character is determined by the national character.

It is surely time that this palæo-theological fashion of explaining human affairs were superseded by the more fruitful method of positive science, even as regards China, which is perhaps the worst explained of all sociological cases. Like others, it had been intelligently taken up by sociologists of the eighteenth century before the conservative reaction (see the *Esprit des Lois*, vii, 6; viii, 21; x, 15; xiv, 8; xviii, 6; xix, 13–20; Dunbar's *Essays*, as cited, pp. 257, 258, 262, 263, 321; and Walckenaer, *Essai* cited, pp. 175, 176); but that impetus seems to have been thus far almost entirely lost. Voltaire's fallacy is remembered and his truth ignored; and the methods of theology continue to be applied to many questions of moral science after they have been wholly cast out of physics and

<sup>1</sup> This was written before the recent revolution.

<sup>2</sup> Since this was written China has undergone her new birth.

biology. The old "falsisms" of empirical politics are repeated even by professed biologists when they enter on the field of social science. Thus we have seen them accepted by Dr. Draper, and we find Professor Huxley (*Evolution and Ethics*, Romanes Lecture for 1893, p. 4) rhetorically putting "that successive rise, apogee, and fall of dynasties and states which is the most prominent topic of civil history," as scientifically analogous to the process of growth and decay and death in the human organism. Any comparative study of history shows the analogy to be spurious. Professor Whitney was doubtless influenced, like Dr. Draper, by the American habit of regarding European and ancient civilisations as necessarily decrepit because "slow" and "old." Cp. Draper as cited, ii, 393-98.

In the cases above dealt with, however, and in many others, there is seen to have been *intellectual* decay, in the sense of, first, a cessation of forward movement, and, next, a loss of the power to appreciate ideas once current. A common cause of such paralysis of the higher life is the malignant action of dogmatic religious systems, as in the cases of Persia, Jewry, Byzantium, Islam, Spain under Catholicism, and Scotland for two centuries under Protestantism. Such paralysis by religion may arise alike in a highly-organised but isolated State like Byzantium, and in a semi-civilised country like Anglo-Saxon England.<sup>1</sup> The special malignity of dogma in these cases is itself of course a matter for analysis and explanation. Other cases are partly to be explained by (a) the substitution of systematic militarism, always fatal to progressive culture, for a life of only occasional warfare, favourable to study among the leisured class.<sup>2</sup> But (b) there is reason to surmise a further and profoundly important cause of intellectual retrogression in the usage which develops the culture of a people for the most part in one sex only. The thesis may be ventured that whereas vigorous and creative brains may arise in abundance in a young civilisation, where the sexes are physiologically not far removed from the approximate equality of the semi-barbarous stage, the psychological divergence set up by mentally and physically training the males and not the females is likely to be unfavourable to the breeding of mentally energetic types.

(12) Whether or not the last hypothesis be valid, it is clear that the co-efficient or constituent of intellectual progress in a people, given the necessary conditions of peace and sufficient food, is multiplication of ideas; and this primarily results from international

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Pearson's *History of England during the Early and Middle Ages*, i, 312, and H. W. C. Davis, *England under the Normans and Angevins*, 1905, pp. 1, 2, 47.

<sup>2</sup> Japan now runs a grave risk of such retrogression.

contact, or the contact of wholly or partly independent communities of one people. Multiplication of arts and crafts is of course included under the head of ideas. But unless the stock of ideas is not merely in constant process of being added to among the studious or leisured class, but disseminated among the other classes, stagnation will take place among these, and will inevitably infect the educated class.

De Tocqueville, balancing somewhat inconclusively, because always *in vacuo*, the forces affecting literature in aristocratic and democratic societies, says decisively enough (*Démocratie en Amérique*, ed. 1850, ii, 62-63) that "Toute aristocratie qui se met entièrement à part du peuple devient impuissante. Cela est vrai dans les lettres aussi bien qu'en politique." This holds clearly enough of Italian literature in the despotic period. Mr. Godkin's criticism (*Problems of Modern Democracy*, p. 56) that "M. de Tocqueville and all his followers take it for granted that the great incentive to excellence, in all countries in which excellence is found, is the patronage and encouragement of an aristocracy," is hardly accurate. De Tocqueville puts the case judicially enough, so far as he goes; and Mr. Godkin falls into strange extravagance in his counter statement that there is "hardly a single historical work composed prior to the end of the last [eighteenth] century, except perhaps Gibbon's, which, judged by the standard that the criticism of our day has set up, would not, though written for the 'few,' be pronounced careless, slipshod, or superficial." Tillemont, by the testimony of Professor Bury, was a more thorough worker in his special line than Gibbon. It would be easy to name scores of writers in various branches of history in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries whom no good critic to-day would call careless or slipshod; and if Hume and Robertson, Clarendon and Burnet, be termed superficial, the "standard" will involve a similar characterisation of most historical writers of our own day. As regards present-day literary productions, De Tocqueville and Mr. Godkin alike omit the necessary economic analysis.

(13) In the intellectual infectiousness of all class degradation, properly speaking, lies the final sociological (as apart from the primary ethical) condemnation of slavery. The familiar argument that slavery first secured the leisure necessary for culture, even were it wholly instead of being merely partially true, would not rebut the censure that falls to be passed on slavery in later stages of civilisation. All the ancient States, before Greece, stood on slavery: then it was not slavery that yielded her special culture. What she gained from older civilisations was the knowledge and the arts developed by *specialisation* of pursuits; and such specialisation was not necessarily dependent on slavery, which could abound without

it. It was in the special employment, finally, of the exceptionally large *free* population of Athens that the greatest artistic output was reached.<sup>1</sup> In later periods, the slave population was the great nucleus of superstition and anti-culture.

Inasmuch, then, as education is in only a small degree compatible with toilsome poverty, the betterment of the material conditions of the toiling class is essential to progress in ideas. That is to say, continual progress implies gradual elimination of class inequality, and cannot subsist otherwise. At the same time, a culture-class must be maintained by new machinery when leisured wealth is got rid of.<sup>2</sup> ex.

(14) Again, it follows from the foregoing (4-10) that the highest civilisation will be that in which the greatest number of varying culture-influences meet,<sup>3</sup> in the most happily-crossed stock, under climatic conditions favourable to energy, on a basis of a civilisation sufficiently matured.<sup>4</sup> But in order to the effectual action of such various culture-influences through all classes of the nation in which they meet, there is needed a constant application of social or political regimen. In the lack of that, a great conflux of culture-forces may miss fruition. A mere fortuitous depression of the rich class, and elevation of the poor, will not suffice to place a society on a sound or even on an improved footing. Such a change occurred in ancient Athens after Salamis, when the poorer sort, who had constituted the navy, flourished<sup>5</sup> as against the richer, who had been the land soldiery, and whose lands had been ravaged. But the forces of disintegration played afresh. Yet again, transient financial conditions, such as those of Italy before the Reformation, of Holland until the decline of its fishing and trade, and of Venice until its final commercial decay, may sustain a great artistic life, art having always depended on private or public demand. Thus with a change in the geographical course of trade, a great phase of culture-life may dwindle. So many and so complex are the forces and conditions of progress in civilisation. ex.

## § 2

It will readily be seen that most of the foregoing propositions

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Cunningham's *Western Civilisation*, i, 109.

<sup>2</sup> The point is argued at greater length by the author in an article on "The Economics of Genius" in the *Forum*, April, 1898 (rep. in *Essays in Sociology*, vol. ii).

<sup>3</sup> Cp. Tiele, *Outlines of the History of Religion*, Eng. tr. pp. 205, 207, and the present writer's *Short History of Freethought*, 2nd ed. i, 122-24.

<sup>4</sup> The civilisations of North America and the English "dominions," while showing much diffusion of average culture, produce thus far relatively few of the highest fruits because of social immaturity and the smallness of their culture class.

<sup>5</sup> Aristotle, *Politics*, ii, 12; v, 4.

have direct reference to well-known facts of history. Thus (a) ancient Egypt represents a primary civilisation, marked indeed by some fluctuations connected with dynastic changes which involved mixture of stocks, but on the whole singularly fixed; while ancient Greek civilisation was emphatically a secondary one, the fruit of much race-mixture and many interacting culture-forces, all facilitated by the commercial position and coast-conformation of Hellas.

This view is partly rejected by Grote in two passages (pt. i, chs. xvi, xvii, ed. 1888, i, 326, 413) in which he gives to the "inherent and expansive force" of "the Greek mind" the main credit of Greek civilisation. But his words, to begin with, are confused and contradictory: "The transition of the Greek mind from its poetical to its comparatively positive stage was self-operated, accomplished by its own inherent and expansive force—*aided indeed, but by no means either impressed or provoked* from without." In the second place, there is no basis for the denial of "impression or provocation" from without. And finally, what is decisive, the historian himself has in other passages acknowledged that the Greeks received from Asia and Egypt just such "provocation" as is seen to take place in varying degrees in the culture-contacts of all nations (chs. xv, xvi, pp. 307, 329). Of the contact with Egypt he expressly says that it "enlarged the range of their thoughts and observations." His whole treatment of the rise of culture, however, is meagre and imperfect relatively to his ample study of the culture itself. Later students grow more and more unanimous as to the composite character of the Greek-speaking stock in the earliest traceable periods of Hellenic life (cp. Bury, *History of Greece*, ed. 1906, pp. 39–42, and Professor Burrows, *The Discoveries in Crete*, 1907, p. 144), and the consequent complexity of the entire Hellenic civilisation. The case is suggestively put by Eduard Meyer (*Geschichte des Alterthums*, ii, 155) in the observation that while the west coast of Greece had as many natural advantages as the eastern, it remained backward in civilisation when the other had progressed far. "*Here there lacked the foreign stimulus*: the west of Greece is away from the source of culture. Here, accordingly, primitive conditions continued to rule, while in the east a higher culture evolved itself.....Corinth in the older period played no part whatever, whether in story or in remains." The same proposition was put a generation ago by A. Bertrand, who pointed out that the coasts of Elis and Messenia are "incomparably more fertile" than those of Argolis and Attica (*Études de mythologie et d'archéologie grecques*, 1858, pp. 40–41); and again by Winwood Reade in *The Martyrdom of Man* (1872, p. 64): "A glance at the map is sufficient to explain why it was that Greece became civilised before the other European lands. It is

nearest to those countries in which civilisation first arose..... compelled to grow towards Asia as a tree grows towards the light." But to this generalisation should be put the qualifying clause (above, p. 55) that fertile coasts when developed are defensible only by a strongly organised community. Thus an early exploitation of Elis and Messenia would be checked by piracy.

The question as to the originality of Greek culture, it is interesting to note, was already discussed at the beginning of the eighteenth century. See Shaftesbury's *Characteristics*, Misc. iii, ch. i.

(b) The Greek land as a whole, especially the Attic, was only moderately fertile, and therefore not so cheaply and redundantly populated as Egypt.

The bracing effect of their relative poverty was fully recognised by the Greeks themselves. Cp. Herodotus, vii, 102, and Thucydides, i, 123. See on the same point Heeren, *Political History of Ancient Greece*, Eng. tr. pp. 24-33; Thirlwall, *History of Greece*, small ed. i, 12; Duncker, *Gesch. des Alterthums*, iii, ch. i, § 1; Wachsmuth, *Hist. Antiq. of the Greeks*, § 8; Duruy, *Hist. Grecque*, 1851, p. 7; Grote, part ii, ch. i (ed. 1888, ii, 160); Boeckh, *Public Economy of Athens*, B. i, c. 8; Niebuhr, *Lectures*, li (Eng. tr. 3rd ed. p. 265); Mahaffy, *Rambles and Studies in Greece*, 4th ed. pp. 137, 164-67. Dr. Grundy (*Thucydides and the History of his Age*, 1911, p. 58 sq.) lays stress on the fertility of the valleys, but recognises the smallness of the fertile areas.

(c) Hellas was further so decisively cut up into separate cantons by its mountain ranges, and again in respect of the multitude of the islands, that the Greek districts were largely foreign to each other,<sup>1</sup> and their cultures had thus the advantage of reacting and interacting, as against the disadvantage of their incurable political separateness—that disadvantage in turn being correlative with the advantage of insusceptibility to a despotism.

The effect of geographical conditions on Greek history is discussed at length in Conrad Bursian's essay, *Ueber den Einfluss des griechischen Landes auf den Charakter seiner Bewohner*, which I have been unable to procure or see; but I gather from his *Geographie von Griechenlands* that he takes the view here set forth. Cp. Senior's *Journal kept in Turkey and Greece*, 1859, p. 255, for a modern Greek's view of the state

<sup>1</sup> Grote (ii, 150) argues that the need to move the cattle between high and low grounds promoted communication between "otherwise disunited villages." But that would be a small matter. The essential point is that, whatever the contacts, the communities remained alien to each other.

of his nation, "divided into small districts by mountain ranges intersecting each other in all directions without a road or canal"; the deduction from the same perception made by the young Arthur Stanley (Prothero's *Life of Dean Stanley*, 1-vol. ed. p. 143); and the impression retained from his travels by M. Bertrand, *Études de mythologie et d'archéologie grecques*, 1858, p. 199.

The profound importance of the geographical fact has been recognised more or less clearly and fully by many writers—e.g., Hume, essay *Of the Rise and Progress of the Arts and the Sciences* (ed. 1825 of *Essays*, i, 115–16); Gillies, *History of Greece*, 1-vol. ed. p. 5; Heeren, as cited, pp. 35, 75; Duncker, as last cited, also ch. iii, § 12 (2te Aufl. 1860, p. 601); Duruy, ch. i; Cox, *General History of Greece*, bk. i, ch. i; Thirlwall, ch. x; Wachsmuth, Eng. tr. i, 87; Comte, *Cours de Philosophie Positive*, Leçon 53ième; Grote, pt. ii, ch. i (ii, 155); Finlay, *History of Greece*, Tozer's ed. i, 28; K. O. Müller, *Introd. to Scientific Mythology*, Eng. tr. p. 179; Hegel, as last cited; Hertzberg, *Geschichte von Hellas und Rom*, 1879 (in Oncken's series), i, 9; Winwood Reade, *The Martyrdom of Man*, 1872, p. 65 sq.; Bury, *History of Greece*, ed. 1906, pp. 2–4; Fyffe (very explicitly), *Primer of Greek History*, p. 8—but it is strangely overlooked by writers to whom one turns for a careful study of causes. Even Grote, after having clearly set forth (ii, 150) the predetermining influence of land-form, attributes Greek divisions to the "character of the race," which even in this connection, however, he describes as "splitting by natural fracture into a multitude of self-administering, indivisible cities" (pt. ii, ch. 28, beginning); and Sir George Cox, after specifying the geographical factor, speaks of it as merely "fostering" a love of isolation resulting from "political creed." Freeman (*History of Federal Government*) does not seem to apply the geographical fact to the explanation of any phase of Greek history, though he sees in Greece (ed. 1893, pp. 92, 554) "each valley and peninsula and island marked out by the hand of nature for an independent being," and quotes (p. 559) Cantù as to the effect of land-form on history in Italy. In so many words he pronounces (p. 101) that the love of town-autonomy was "inherent in the Greek mind." Mr. Warde Fowler (*City-State of the Greeks and Romans*) does not once give heed to the geographical conditions of causation, always speaking of the Greeks as lacking the "faculty" of union as compared with the Latins, though the Eastern Empire finally showed greater cohesive power than the Western. Even Mr. Fyffe (*Primer* cited, p. 127), despite his preliminary recognition of the facts, finally speaks of the Greeks as relatively lacking in the "gift for government."

The same assumption is made in Lord Morley's *Compromise* (ed. 1888, p. 108) in the allusion to "peoples so devoid of the sovereign faculty of political coherency as were the Greeks and

the Jews." Lord Morley's proposition is that such peoples may still evolve great civilising ideas; but though that is true, the implied thesis as to "faculty" weakens even the truth. The case of the Jews is to be explained in exactly the same way as that of the Greeks, the face of Palestine being disjunct and segregate in a peculiar degree. Other "Semites," living in great plains, were united in great monarchies. The sound view of the case as to Rome is put by Hertzberg: "Soll man im Gegensatze zu der hellenischen Geschichte es in kürzester Fassung bezeichnen, so kann man etwa sagen, die italische Landesnatur stellte der Ausbildung eines grossen *einheitlich* geordneten Staates durchaus nicht die gewaltigen Hindernisse entgegen, wie das in Griechenland der Fall war" (*Gesch. von Hellas und Rom*, ii, 7). Cp. Shuckburgh, *History of Rome*, 1894, p. 9, as to "the vast heights which effectually separate tribes." Dr. Cunningham puts it (*Western Civilisation*, i, 152, 160) that Roman expansion in Italy came of the need to reach a true frontier of defence, in the lack of physical barriers to the early States. (So Lord Cromer, *Anc. and Mod. Imperialism*, 1910, p. 19.) It seems more plausible to say that all of the States concerned were positively disposed to conquest, and that the physical conditions of Italy made possible an overrunning which in early Greece was impossible.

The theory of "faculty," consistently applied on Mr. Fowler's and Lord Morley's lines, would credit the French with an innate gift of union much superior to that of the Germans—at least in the modern period—and the Chinese with the greatest "faculty" of all. But the long maintenance of one rule over all China is clearly due in large part to the "great facility of internal intercourse" (Davis, *The Chinese*, Introd.) so long established. The Roman roads were half the secret of the cohesion of the Empire. Dr. Draper suggests, ingeniously but inaccurately, that Rome had strength and permanence because of lying east and west, and thus possessing greater racial homogeneity than it would have had if it lay north and south (*Intel. Devel. of Europe*, i, 11). On the other hand, mountainous Switzerland remains still cantonally separate, though the pressure of surrounding States, beginning with that of Austria, forced a political union. Compare the case of the clans of the Scottish Highlands down to the road-making period after the last Jacobite rising. See the principle discussed in Mr. Spencer's *Principles of Sociology*, i, § 17.

It may be well, before leaving the subject, to meet the important criticism of the geographical principle by Fustel de Coulanges (*La Cité antique*, liv. iii, ch. xiv, p. 238, édit. 1880). Noting that the incurable division of the Greeks has been attributed to the nature of their land, and that it has been said that the intersecting mountains established lines of natural demarcation among men, he goes on to argue: "But there are

N.B.

no mountains between Thebes and Platæa, between Argos and Sparta, between Sybaris and Crotona. There were none between the towns of Latium, or between the twelve cities of Etruria. Physical nature has doubtless some influence on the history of peoples, but the beliefs of men have a much greater. Between two neighbouring cities there was something more impassable than a mountain—to wit, the series of sacred limits, the difference of cults, the barrier which each city set up between the stranger and its Gods."

All this, so far as it goes, is substantially true, but it does not at all conflict with the principle as above set forth. Certainly all cities, like all tribes, were primarily separatist; though even in religious matters there was some measure of early peaceful inter-influence, and a certain tendency to syncretism as well as to separateness. (Cp. K. O. Müller, *Dorians*, Eng. tr. i, 228.) But the principle is not special to the cities of Greece? Cities and tribes were primarily separatist in Babylonia and in Egypt. How, then, were these regions nevertheless monarchised at an early period? Clearly by reason of the greater invitingness and feasibility of conquest in such territories—for their unification was forcible. The conditions had thus both an objective and a subjective, a suggestive and a permissive force, both lacking in Greece. Again, the twelve cities of Etruria *formed a league*. If they did so more readily and effectually than the Greeks, is not the level character of their territory, which made them collectively open to attack, and facilitated intercourse, one of the obviously probable causes? No doubt the close presence of hostile and alien races was a further unifying force which did not arise in Greece. Etruria, finally, like Latium, was unified by conquest; the question is, Why was not Greece? There is no answer save one—that in the pre-Alexandrian period no Greek State had acquired the military and administrative skill and resources needed to conquer and hold such a divided territory. Certainly the conditions conserved the ideal of separateness and non-aggression or non-assimilation, so that cities which had easy access to each other respected each other's ideal. But here again it was known that an attempt at conquest would probably lead to alliances between the attacked State and others; and the physical conditions prevented any State save Macedonia from becoming overwhelmingly strong. To these conditions, then, we always return, not as to sole causes, but as to determinants.

(d) In Egypt, again, culture was never deeply disseminated, and before Alexander was hardly at all fecundated by outside contact. In Greece there was always the great uncultured slave substratum; and the arrest of freedom, to say nothing of social ignorance, female subjection, and sexual perversion, ultimately kept vital culture

stationary. In Rome, militarism and the multiplication of the slave class, along with the deletion of the independent and industrious middle class, made progressive culture impossible, as surely as it broke down self-government. In all cases alike, overpopulation, not being met by science, either bred poverty or was obviated by crime and vice.

The so-called regeneration of Europe by the barbarian conquest, finally, was simply the beginning of a long period of corrupted and internecine barbarism, the old culture remaining latent; and not till after many centuries did the maturing barbaric civilisation in times of compulsory peace reach the capacity of being fecundated by the intelligent assimilation of the old. But after the Renaissance, as before, the diseases of militarism and class privilege and the political subjection caused a backthrow and intellectual stagnation, which was assisted by the commercial decline brought upon Italy; so that in the feudal period, in one State after another, we have the symptoms of, as it were, senile "decay" and retrogression.<sup>1</sup> In all cases this is to be set down proximately to the deficit of new ideas, and in some to excess of strife, which exhausted spare energy among the leisured class, deepened the misery of the toilers, and normally prevented the intelligent intercourse of peoples. It is become a commonplace of historical philosophy that the Crusades wrought for good inasmuch as they meant fresh communication between East and West. Yet it may be doubted whether much more was not done through the quiet contacts of peace between Saracen and Christian in Western Europe, and by the commerce with the East which preceded the Crusades,<sup>2</sup> than by the forced intercourse following on religious war. In any case, the transition from quasi-decay to progress in Christendom is clearly due to the entrance of new ideas of many species from many directions into the common stock; Greek letters, Saracen physics, and new geographical discovery all combining to generate thought.

The case of Japan, again, compares with both that of ancient Greece and that of modern Europe. Its separate civilisation, advantageously placed in an archipelago, drew stimulus early in the historic period from that of China; and, while long showing the Chinese unprogressiveness in other respects, partly in virtue of the peculiar burdensomeness of the Chino-Japanese system of ideograms, it made remarkable progress on the side of art. The recent rapid industrial development (injurious to the artistic life) is plainly a result of the

<sup>1</sup> See Stubbs, *Const. Hist. of England*, 4th ed. iii, 632-33, as to England in the fifteenth century; and Michelet, *Introd. to Renaissance* (vol. vii of *Hist. de France*).

<sup>2</sup> See below, pt. vi, ch. i, § 2.

European and American contact; and if only the mechanism of reading and writing be made manageable on the European lines, and the snare of militarism be escaped, the Japanese civilisation may develop mentally as much as it is doing industrially and in military organisation.

It suffices the practical political student, then, to note that progress is thus always a matter of intelligible causation; and, without concerning himself about predicting the future or estimating the sum of possibilities, to take up the tasks of contemporary politics as all other tasks are taken up by practical men, as a matter of adaptation of means to ends. The architect and engineer have nothing to do with calculating as to when the energy of the solar system will be wholly transmuted. As little has the politician to do with absolute estimates of the nature of progress. All alike have to do with the study of laws, forces, and economics.

### § 3

We may now, then, set forth the all-pervading biological forces or tendencies of attraction and repulsion in human affairs as the main primary factors in politics or corporate life, which it is the problem of human science to control by counteracting or guiding; and we may without further illustration set down the principal modes in which these instincts appear. They are, broadly speaking:—

- N. ex.*
- (a) Animal pugnacities and antipathies of States or peoples, involving combinations, sanctified from the first by religion, and surviving as racial aspirations in subject *ex.* peoples.
  - (b) Class divisions, economically produced, resulting in class combinations and hostilities within a State, and, in particular, popular desire for betterment.
  - (c) The tendency to despotism as a cure for class oppression or anarchy; and the spirit of conquest.
  - (d) The beneficent lure of commerce, promoting intercourse, countered by the commercial jealousies of States.
  - (e) Designs of rulers, giving rise to popular or aristocratic factions—complicated by questions of succession and loyalism.
  - (f) Religious combinations, antipathies, and ambitions, international or sectarian. In more educated communities, ideals of government and conduct.

In every one of these modes, be it observed, the instinct of repulsion correlates with the instinct of attraction. The strifes are the strifes of combinations, of groups or masses united in themselves by sympathy, in antipathy to other groups or masses. The *esprit de corps* arises alike in the species, the horde, the tribe, the community, the class, the faction, the nation, the trade or profession, the Church, the sect, the party. Always men unite to oppose; always they must love to hate, fraternise to struggle.

The analogies in physics are obvious, but need not here be dwelt upon. There is a risk of losing concrete impressions, which are here in view, in a highly generalised statement of cosmic analogies. But it may be well to point out that a general view will perfectly reconcile the superficially conflicting doctrines of recent biologists, as to "progress by struggle" and "progress by co-operation." Both statements hold good, the two phases being correlatives.

I have said that it is extremely difficult to imagine a state of society in which there shall be no public operation of any one of these forces. I am disposed to say it is impossible, but for scientific purposes prefer to put simply the difficulties of the conception. A cessation of war is not only easily conceivable, but likely; but a cessation of strife of aspiration would mean a state of biological equilibrium throughout the civilised world. Now, pure equilibrium is by general consent a state only momentarily possible; and the state of dissolution of unions, were that to follow, would involve strife of opinion at least up to a certain point. But just as evolution is now visibly towards an abandonment of brute strife among societies, so may it be reasonably expected that the strife of ideals and doctrines within societies, though now perhaps emotionally intense in proportion to the limitation of brute warfare, will gradually be freed of malevolent passion as organisms refine further. Passion, in any case, has hitherto been at once motive-power and hindrance—the omnipresent force, since all ideas have their correlative emotion. A perception of this has led to some needless dispute over what is called the "economic theory" of history; critics insisting that men are ruled by non-economic as well as economic motives.<sup>1</sup> The solution is perfectly simple. Men are proximately ruled by their passions or emotions; and the supremacy of the economic factor consists in its being, for the majority, the most permanent director

N.B.

<sup>1</sup> This discussion also goes back for at least two centuries. See Shaftesbury's *Characteristics*, Misc. iii, ch. i (vol. iii, pp. 137, 152).

or stimulant of feeling. Therefore, the great social rectification, if it ever come, must needs be economic.

Certainly, on the principle laid down, there is a likelihood that strife of ideals and doctrines may be for a time intensified by the very process of social reform, should that go to lessen the stress of the industrial struggle for existence. It is easy to see that England has in the past hundred and twenty years escaped the stress of domestic strife which in France wrought successive revolutions, not so much by any virtue in its partially democratic constitution as by the fact that on the one hand a war was begun with France by the English ruling classes at an early stage of the first revolution, and that on the other hand the animal energies of the middle and lower classes were on the whole freer than those of the French to run in the channels of industrial competition. People peacefully fighting each other daily in trade, not to speak of sports, were thereby partly safeguarded from carrying the instincts of attraction and repulsion in politics to the length of insurrection and civil war. When the strife of trade became congested, the spirit of political strife, fed by hunger, broke out afresh, to be again eased off when the country had an exciting foreign war on hand. So obvious is this that it may be the last card of Conservatism to play off the war spirit against the reform spirit, as was done with some temporary success in England by Beaconsfield, and as is latterly being done by his successors.<sup>1</sup> The climaxing movement of political rationalism is evidently dependent on the limitation of the field of industrial growth and the absence of brute warfare. And if, as seems conceivable, political rationalism attains to a scientific provision for the wellbeing of the mass of the people, we shall have attained a condition in which the forces of attraction and repulsion, no longer flowing freely in the old social channels, may be expected to dig new ones or deepen those lately formed. The future channels, generally speaking, would tend to lie in the regions of political, ethical, and religious opinion; and the partial disuse of any one of these will tend to bring about the deepening of the others.

But this is going far ahead; and it is our business rather to make clear, with the help of an analysis of analogous types of civilisation, what has happened in the modern past of our country. The simple general laws under notice are universal, and will be found to apply in all stages of history, though the interpretation of many phases of life by their means may be a somewhat complex matter.

<sup>1</sup> Note, in this connection, the tactic of Mr. Balfour in the election struggle of 1909-10.

curious.  
Note

For instance, the life of China<sup>1</sup> (above discussed) and that of India may at first sight seem to give little colour to the assumption of a constant play of social attraction and repulsion. The "unprogressiveness of Asia" is dwelt on alike by many who know Asia and many who do not. But this relative unprogressiveness is to be explained, like European progress, in terms of the conditions. China is simply a case of comparative culture-stability and culture-isolation. The capital condition of progress in civilisation has always been, as aforesaid, the contact of divergent races whose independent culture-elements, though different, are not greatly different in grade and prestige. Now, the outside contacts of China, down till the eighteenth century, had been either with races which had few elements of civilisation to give her, like the Mongols, or with a civilisation little different from or less vigorous than her own, like that of India. Even these contacts counted for much, and Chinese history has been full of political convulsions, despite—or in keeping with—the comparative stagnation of Chinese culture. (On this see Peschel, *Races of Men*, Eng. tr. pp. 361–74. Cp. Huc, *Chinese Empire*, Eng. tr. ed. 1859, p. xvii; Walckenaer, *Essai sur l'histoire de l'espèce humaine*, 1798, pp. 175, 176; and Maine, *Early History of Institutions*, pp. 226, 227). The very pigtail which for Europe is the symbol of Chinese civilisation is only two hundred years old, having come in with the Mantchoo dynasty; and the policy of systematically excluding foreigners dates from the same period (Huc, p. 236). "No one," writes Professor Flint, "who has felt interest enough in that singular nation to study the researches and translations of Remusat, Pauthier, Julien, Legge, Plath, Faber, Eitel, and others, will hesitate to dismiss as erroneous the commonplace that it has been an unprogressive nation" (*History of the Philosophy of History*, vol. i, 1893, p. 88).

China was in fact progressive while the variety of stocks scattered over her vast area reacted on each other in virtue of variety of government and way of life:<sup>2</sup> it was when they were reduced under one imperial government that unity of state-system, coupled with the exclusion of foreign contacts, imposed stagnation. But the stagnation was real, and other factors contributed to its continuance. The fecundity of the soil has always maintained a redundant and therefore a poor and ignorant population—a condition which we have described as fatal to progress in culture if not counteracted, and which further favours the utter subjection of women and the consequent arrest of half the sources of variation. Mencius, speaking to the rulers of his day (3rd c. B.C.), declared with simple

<sup>1</sup> This was written, of course, before the recent uprising.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. Professor Giles, *The Civilisation of China*, pp. 1–19, as to the little-recognised diversity of Chinese speech, stock, and climate.

profundity that "They are only men of education who, without a certain livelihood, are able to maintain a fixed heart. As to the people, if they have not a certain livelihood it follows that they will not have a fixed heart. And if they have not a fixed heart there is nothing they will not do in the way of self-abandonment, of moral deflection, of depravity, and of wild license" (Legge, *Life and Works of Mencius*, 1875, p. 49). That lesson the rulers of China could not learn, any more than their European congeners.

We cannot, therefore, accede to Professor Flint's further remark that "The development and filiation of thought is scarcely less traceable in the history and literature of China than of Greece"—that is, if it be meant that Chinese history down till our own day may be so compared with the history of pagan Greece. The forces of fixation in China have been too strong to admit of this. The same factors have been at work in India, where, further, successive conquests, down till our own, had results very similar to those of the barbarian conquest of the Roman Empire. Yet at length, next door to China, in Japan, there has rapidly taken place a national transformation that is not to be paralleled in the world's history; and in India the Congress movement has developed in a way that twenty years ago was thought impossible.<sup>1</sup> And while these things are actually happening before the world's eyes, certain Englishmen vociferate more loudly than ever the formula of the "unchangeableness of Asia." A saner, though still a speculative view, is put forth by Mr. C. H. Pearson in his work on *National Character*. It was anticipated by—among others—M. Philarète Chasles. See his *L'Angleterre politique*, édit. 1878, pp. 250, 251. And Walckenaer, over a hundred years ago (*Essai* cited, p. 368), predicted the future civilisation of the vast plains of Tartary.

<sup>1</sup> Since these words were written China in turn has had her new birth, vindicating the doctrine above set forth.

## PART II

# ECONOMIC FORCES IN ANCIENT HISTORY

---

### CHAPTER I

#### ROMAN ECONOMIC EVOLUTION

By singling out one set of the forces of aggregation and disintegration touched on in the foregoing general view, it is possible to get a more concrete idea of what actually went on in the Roman body politic. It is always useful in economic science, despite protests to the contrary, to consider bare processes irrespectively of ethical feeling; and the advantage accrues similarly in the "economic interpretation of history."<sup>1</sup> We have sufficiently for our purpose considered Roman history under the aspects of militarism and class egoism: it remains to consider it as a series of economic phenomena.

This has been facilitated by many special studies. Gibbon covers much of the ground in chapters 6, 14, 17, 18, 29, 35, 36 and 41; and Professor Guglielmo Ferrero sheds new light at some points in his great work, *The Greatness and Decline of Rome* (Eng. trans. 5 vols. 1907-1911), though his economics at times calls for revision. Cp. Alison on "The Fall of Rome," in *Essays*, 1850, vol. iii (a useful conspectus, though flawed by some economic errors); Spalding's *Italy and the Italian Islands*, 3rd ed. 1845, i, 371-400; Dureau de la Malle, *Économie politique des Romains*, 1840, t. ii; Robiou et Delaunay, *Les Institutions de l'ancienne Rome*, 1888, vol. iii, ch. 1; Fustel de Coulanges, *Le Colonat romain*, etc.; Finlay, *History of Greece from its Conquest by the Romans*, ed. 1877, ch. i, §§ 5-8; Long, *Decline of the Roman Republic*, vol. i, 1864, chs. xi, xii, xx (a work full of sound criticism of testimonies); W. T. Arnold, *Roman Provincial Administration*, 1879; Brooks Adams, *The Law of Civilisation and Decay*, 1897, ch. i; and Dr. Cunningham's *Western Civilisation*, vol. i, 1899. Among many learned and instructive German treatises may be noted the Preisschrift of

<sup>1</sup> The phrase of Professor Thorold Rogers, whose application of the principle, however, does not carry us far.

R. Pöhlmann, *Die Uebervölkerung der antiken Grossstädte*, Leipzig, 1884. Special notice is due to the recent work of W. R. Patterson, *The Nemesis of Nations*, 1907—a valuable study of slavery.

As we have first traced them, the Romans are a cluster of agricultural and pastoral tribes, chronically at war with their neighbours, and centring round certain refuge-fortresses on one or two of the "Seven Hills." Whether before or after conquest by monarchic Etruscans, these tribes tended normally to fall into social grades in which relative wealth and power tended to go together. The first source of subsistence for all was cattle-breeding and agriculture, and that of the richer was primarily slave labour, a secondary source being usury. Slaves there were in the earliest historic times. But from the earliest stages wealth was in some degree procured through war, which yielded plunder in the form of cattle,<sup>1</sup> the principal species of riches in the ages before the precious metals stood for the command of all forms of wealth. Thus the rich tended to grow richer even in that primitive community, their riches enabling them specially to qualify themselves for war, so getting more slaves and cattle, and to acquire fresh slave labour in time of peace, while in time of war the poor cultivator ran a special risk of being himself reduced to slavery at home, in that his farm was untilled, while that of the slave-owner went on as usual.<sup>2</sup> Long before the ages described as decadent, the lapse of the poor into slavery was a frequent event. "The law of debt, framed by creditors, and for the protection of creditors, was the most horrible that has ever been known among men."<sup>3</sup> When the poorer cultivator borrowed stock or seed from the richer, he had first to pay a heavy interest; and when in bad years he failed to meet that liability he could be at once sold up and finally enslaved with his family, so making competition all the harder for the other small cultivators. As against the plainly disintegrating action of such a system, however, wars of conquest and plunder became to some extent a means of popular salvation, the poorer having ultimately their necessary share in the booty, and, as the State grew, in the conquered lands. Military expansion was thus an economic need.

In such an inland community, commerce could grow but slowly, the products being little adapted for distant exchange. The primitive

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Cunningham overlooks this form of gain-getting by war, when he says that the early Romans had no direct profit from it (*Western Civilisation*, i, 154), but mentions it later (p. 157). Prof. Ferrero likewise overlooks it when (Eng. tr. i, 4) he specifies "timber for shipbuilding and salt" as practically the whole of the exportable products of the early Romans. Once more, who consumed their cattle?

<sup>2</sup> Cp. Bury, *History of the Later Roman Empire*, i, 26, following Von Ihering.

<sup>3</sup> Macaulay, *Lays of Ancient Rome*, pref. to *Virginia*. Cp. Gibbon, Bohn ed. v, 80-81.

prejudice of landholders against trade, common to Greece and Rome, left both handicraft and commerce largely to aliens and pariahs.<sup>1</sup> The traders, as apart from the agriculturists and vine- and olive-growers, would as a rule be foreigners, "non-citizens," having no political rights; and their calling was from the first held in low esteem by the richer natives, were it only because in comparison it was always apt to involve some overreaching of the agriculturist,<sup>2</sup> which as between man and man could be seen to be a bad thing by moralists who had no scruples about usury and enslavement for debt. And as the scope of the State increased from age to age, the patrician class found ready to its hand means of enrichment which yielded more return with much less trouble than was involved in commerce. The prejudice against trade was no bar to brigandage.

On the other hand, the first practical problem of all communities, taxation, was intelligently faced by the Roman aristocracy from the outset. The payment of the *tributum* or occasional special tax for military purposes was a condition of the citizen franchise, and so far the patricians were all burdened where the unenfranchised plebeians were not. But this contribution "was looked upon as a forced loan, and was repaid when the times improved."<sup>3</sup> And there were other compensations. The use of the public pastures (which seem at one time to have been the sole source of the State's revenue<sup>4</sup>), and the cultivation of public land, were operations which could be so conducted as to pay the individual without paying the State. It is clear that frauds in this connection were at all times common: the tithes and rents due on the *ager publicus* were evaded, and the land itself appropriated wherever possible by the more powerful, though still called public property.<sup>5</sup> "The poorer plebeian, therefore, always strove to have conquered lands divided, and not kept as *ager publicus*; while the landless men who got allotments at a distance were inclined to regard their migration as an almost equal grievance. If the rich men, they argued, had not monopolised the public pastures with their herds, and treated the lands which they leased at a nominal rental as their own, there would have been enough land at home to divide among those who had been ruined while serving their country in arms."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Dureau de la Malle, *Écon. polit. des Romains*, vol. ii, liv. iv, ch. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. Cicero, *De Officiis*, i, 42.

<sup>3</sup> Mommsen, B. i, ch. v. Eng. tr. i, 80.

<sup>4</sup> Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* xviii, 3.

<sup>5</sup> E. Meyer (*Geschichte des Alterthums*, ii, 518), alleges a common misconception as to the *ager publicus* being made a subject of class strife; but does not make the matter at all clearer. Cp. Niebuhr, *Lectures on the History of Rome*, Eng. tr. 1-vol. ed. pp. 153-54, 407, 503.

<sup>6</sup> Shuckburgh, *History of Rome*, pp. 93, 94. Cp. Long, *Decline of the Roman Republic*, ch. xii, and Pelham, pp. 187-89, as to the frauds of the rich in the matter of the public lands.

But as the sphere of conquest widened, another economic phase supervened. Where newly conquered territory was too distant to tempt any save the poorest citizens, or to be directly utilised by the rich, it could still be made *ager publicus* and rented to its own inhabitants; and the collection of this and other exactions from subject provinces gradually grew to be a main source of Roman wealth. For the mere cattle-looting of the early days there was substituted the systematic extortion of tribute. "In antiquity conquest meant essentially the power to impose a tribute upon the conquered";<sup>1</sup> and "until the time of Augustus the Romans had maintained their armies by seizing and squandering the accumulated [bullion] capital hoarded by all the nations of the world."<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile the upper classes were directly or indirectly supported by the annual tribute which from the time of the conquest of Greece was drawn solely from the provinces. Paulus Emilius brought from the sack of Hellas so enormous a treasure in bullion, as well as in objects of art, that the exaction of the *tributum* from Roman citizens, however rich, was felt to have become irrational; and henceforth, until Augustus re-imposed taxation to pay his troops, Italy sponged undisguisedly on the rest of the Empire.<sup>3</sup> Cæsar's expeditions were simply quests for plunder and revenue; and the reason for his speedy retreat from Britain, for which there have been framed so many superfluous explanations, is plainly given in the letter of Cicero in which he tells of the news sent him from Britain by his brother—"no hope of plunder."<sup>4</sup> But the supreme need was a regular annual tribute, preferably in bullion, but welcome as corn. On the one hand the exacted revenue supported the military and the bureaucracy; on the other hand, the business of collecting taxes and tribute was farmed out in the hands of companies of *publicani*, mainly formed of the so-called knights, the *equites* of the early days; in whose hands rich senators, in defiance of legal prohibition, placed capital sums for investment,<sup>5</sup> as they had previously used foreigners, who were free to take usury where a Roman was not. Of such money-makers Gallia Provincia was already full in the days of Cicero.<sup>6</sup> Roman administration was thus a matter of financially exploiting the Empire in the interest of the Roman moneyed classes;<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> W. T. Arnold, *Roman Provincial Administration*, 1879, p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> Finlay, *History of Greece*, Tozer's ed. i, 39.

<sup>3</sup> When Julius Cæsar abolished the public revenue from the lands of Campania by dividing them among 20,000 colonists, the only Italian revenue left was the small duty on the sale of slaves (Cicero, *Ep. ad Atticum*, ii, 16).

<sup>4</sup> *Ep. ad Atticum*, iv, 15 (16).

<sup>5</sup> Cp. Niebuhr, *Lectures on Roman History*, Eng. tr. 1-vol. ed. pp. 227, 449; Gibbon, Bohn ed. iii, 404; v, 74-75.

<sup>6</sup> *Orat. pro M. Fonteio*, v. Cp. Long, *in loc.* (*Orationes*, 1855, ii, 167).

<sup>7</sup> Dr. Cunningham, preserving the conception of Rome as an entity with choice and

and the ruthless skill with which the possibilities of the situation were developed is perhaps even now not fully realised. The Roman financier could secure a tribute upon tribute by lending to a subject city or State the money demanded of it by the government, and charge as much interest on the loan as the borrowers could well pay. We know that the notoriously conscientious Brutus, of sacred memory, thus lent, or backed a friend who lent, money to tribute-payers at 48 per cent., or at least demanded 48 per cent. on his loans, and sought to use the power of the executive to extort the usury.<sup>1</sup>

All this, we are to remember, went on without any furtherance of total domestic wealth-production. When corn-growing fell off, irrecoverably depressed by the unearned import from the richer soils of tributary provinces, there was a transference, partly economic, partly luxurious, of agricultural labour to vine- and olive-culture, and a wholesale turning of arable land to pasture. Some export of wine and olives followed, though the rich Romans tended to drink the wines of Greece. But Italy had ceased to be self-supporting. The produce she imported was far in excess of her power of export;<sup>2</sup> so that in sheer factitiousness the revenue of Rome is without parallel in history. Modern England, which has grown rich by burning up its coal in manufacture or selling it outright, but in the process has acquired a share in the national and municipal debts of all other countries—England is stable in comparison. While it lasts, the coal educes manufactures, which also earn imports and constitute loans. So with the recent exploitation of German iron; though in that case there has been much of sheer national waste in the wholesale export of iron at "dumping" prices in times of trade depression. But the history of Rome was a progressive paralysis of Italian production; and the one way in which the administration

volition, inclines to see a necessary self-protection in most Roman wars; yet his pages show clearly enough that the moneyed classes were the active power. He distinguishes (p. 161) "public neglect" (of conquered peoples) from "public oppression." But the public neglect was simply a matter of the control of the exploiting class, who were the effective "public" for foreign affairs. Compare his admissions as to their forcing of wars and their control of justice, pp. 163, 164.

<sup>1</sup> The fullest English account of the matter is given by Long, *Decline of the Roman Republic*, iv, 423-27, following Savigny. Cp. Plutarch's account of the doings of the *publicani* in Asia (*Lucullus*, cc. 7, 20). Lucullus gave deadly offence at Rome by his check on their extortions, as P. Rutilius Rufus had done before him (Pelham, *Outlines of Roman History*, 1893, pp. 198, 283; Ferrero, i, 183). The lowest rate of interest charged by the *publicani* seems to have been 12 per cent. (Niebuhr, *Lectures*, 1-vol. ed. p. 449). We shall find the same rates current in Renaissance Italy.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. R. Pöhlmann, *Die Uebervölkerung der antiken Grossstädte*, 1884, pp. 14-15, 29-30. Prof. Ferrero (*Greatness and Decline of Rome*, Eng. tr. i, 123-27; ii, 131-36) affirms a restoration of Italian "prosperity" from 80 B.C. onwards, by way first of a general cultivation of the vine and the olive by means of Oriental slaves used to such culture, and later of slave manufactures in the towns. But the evidence falls far short of the proposition. The main items are that about 52 B.C. Italy began to export olive oil, and that certain towns later won repute for pottery, textiles, arms, and so on. On the new agriculture cp. Dureau de la Malle, i, 426-27.

can be said to have counteracted the process—as apart from the spontaneous resort to vine- and olive-culture and to slave manufactures—was by forcing more-or-less unprofitable mining for gold and silver wherever any could be got, thus giving what stimulus can be given to demand by the mere placing of fresh bullion on the market. Roman civilisation was thus irrevocably directed to an illusory end, with inevitably fatal results. Bullion had come to stand for public wealth, and wars were made for mines as well as for tribute, Spain in particular being prized for her mining resources. As a necessary sequence, therefore, copper money was ousted by silver (B.C. 269), and silver finally, after a long transition period, by gold, about the time of Severus.<sup>1</sup> The silver had been repeatedly debased when the treasury was in difficulties;<sup>2</sup> and in the later days of the Empire it seems to have been base beyond all historic parallel,<sup>3</sup> though a large revenue was extorted till the end. Between revenue and tax-farming profits and the yield of the mines, the Roman moneyed class must indeed have spent a good deal, so long as the tributaries were not exhausted. But their economic demand was mainly for—(a) foods, spices, wines, cloths, gems, marbles, and wares produced by the more prosperous provinces; (b) expensive forms of food, fish, and fowl, raised chiefly on the estates run by their own class; (c) some wares of home production; and (d) *services*<sup>4</sup> from artists, architects, master craftsmen, slaves, mimes, parasites, and meretrices, whose economic demand in turn would as far as possible go in the same directions.

As for the mass of the town people, slave or free, which ought on common-sense principles to have been employed either in industry or on the land, it was by a series of hand-to-mouth measures on the part of the government, and by the operation of ordinary self-interest on the part of the rich class, made age by age more unproductive industrially and more worthless politically. Despite such a reform as the Licinian law of 367 B.C.,<sup>5</sup> which for a time seems to have restored a yeoman class to the State and greatly developed its fighting power, the forces of outside competition and of capitalism gradually ousted the yeomen cultivators all over Italy, leaving the land mainly in the hands of the patricians and financiers of the city, who exploited it either by slave labour or by grinding

<sup>1</sup> W. W. Carlile, *The Evolution of Modern Money*, 1901, pp. 46, 48.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. M'Culloch, *Essays and Treatises*, 2nd ed. pp. 58-64, and refs.

<sup>3</sup> Cp. Hodgkin, *The Dynasty of Theodosius*, 1889, pp. 19-20. From Severus onwards the silver coinage had in fact become "mere billon money," mostly copper. Carlile, as cited.

<sup>4</sup> On this cp. Pöhlmann, *Die Uebervölkerung der antiken Grossstädte*, p. 37, and Engel, as there cited.

<sup>5</sup> As to the probable nature of this much-discussed law see Long, *Decline of the Roman Republic*, i, chs. xi and xii. Cp. Niebuhr, *Lect.* 89.

down the former cultivators as tenants. Even on this footing, a certain amount of industry would be forced on the towns. But not only was that also largely in the hands of slave-masters, with the result that demotic life everywhere was kept on the lowest possible plane: the emperors gradually adopted on humane grounds a policy which demoralised nearly all that was left of sound citizenship.

As of old, monarchy in the hands of the more rational and conscientious men tended to seek for the mass of the people some protection as against the upper class; and the taxes and customs laid on by Augustus, to the disgust of the Senate, were an effort in this direction. But this was rather negative than positive protection, and the effort inevitably went further. In the last rally of what may be termed conscientious aristocratic republicanism, such as it was, we find Caius Gracchus, as tribune, helping the plebs by causing grain to be sold at a half or a fourth of its market value—an expedient pathetically expressive of the hopeless distance that then lay between public spirit and social science. Both of the Gracchi sought by violent legal measures to wring the appropriated public lands from the hands of the rich, with the inevitable result of raising against themselves a host of powerful enemies. The needed change could not be so effected. But even if it had been, it could not have endured. The Greek advisers of Tiberius Gracchus, Blossius of Cumæ and Diophanes of Mitylene,<sup>1</sup> looked solely to redistribution, taking for granted the permanence of slavery, the deadliest of all inequalities. The one way, if there were any, in which the people could be saved was by a raising of their social status; and that was impossible without an arrest of slavery and a cessation of extorted tribute. But no Roman thinker save the Gracchi and their predecessors and imitators seems ever to have dreamt of the former, and no one contemplated the latter remedy. Least of all were the Roman ruling class likely to think of either; and though Tiberius Gracchus did avowedly seek to substitute free for slave labour,<sup>2</sup> and wrought to that end; and though Caius Gracchus did in his time of power employ a large amount of free labour on public works, one such effort counted for nothing against the normal attitude of the patriciate. In order to fight the Senate he had to conciliate the *publicani* and money-lenders as well as the populace, and the reforms of the two brothers came to nothing.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Plutarch, *Tiberius Gracchus*, c. 8.

<sup>2</sup> As Long remarks (i, 171), it does not appear what Tiberius Gracchus proposed to do with the slaves when he had put freemen in their place. Cp. Cunningham, p. 150.

<sup>3</sup> Cp. Pelham, *Outlines*, pp. 191-92; Ferrero, ch. iii.

There is no record that in the contracts between the treasury and the companies of *publicani* any stipulation was ever made as to their employing free labour, or in any way considering the special needs of the populations among whom they acted.<sup>1</sup> Thus a mere cheapening of bread could do nothing to aid free labour as against capitalism using slaves. On the contrary, such aids would tend irresistibly to multiply the host of idlers and broken men who flocked to Rome from all its provinces, on the trail of the plunder. Industrial life in Rome was for most of them impossible, even were they that way inclined;<sup>2</sup> and the unceasing inward flow would have been a constant source of public danger had the multitude not been somehow pacified. The method of free or subsidised distribution of grain,<sup>3</sup> however, was so easy a way of keeping Rome quiet, in the period of rapidly spreading conquest and mounting tribute, that in spite of the resistance of the moneyed classes<sup>4</sup> it was adhered to. Sulla naturally checked the practice, but still it was revived; and Cæsar, after his triumph in Africa, found the incredible number of 320,000 citizens in receipt of regular doles of cheapened or gratis corn. He in turn, though he had been concerned in extending it,<sup>5</sup> took strong measures to check the corrosion, reducing the roll to 150,000;<sup>6</sup> but even that was in effect a confession that the problem was past solution by the policy, so energetically followed by him, of re-colonising in Italy, Corinth, Carthage, Spain, and Gaul. And if Cæsar sought to limit the gifts of bread, he seems to have outgone his predecessors in his provision of the other element in the popular ideal—the circus; his shows being bloodier as well as vaster than those of earlier days.<sup>7</sup> A public thus treated to sport must needs have cheap food as well.

Of this policy, the economic result was to carry still further the depression of Italian agriculture. The corn supplied at low rates or given away by the administration was of course bought or taken in the cheapest markets—those of Sardinia and Sicily, Egypt, Africa, and Gaul—and importation once begun would be carried to the utmost lengths of commercialism. Italian farms, especially those at

<sup>1</sup> Robiou et Delaunay, *Les institutions de l'ancienne Rome*, 1888, iii, 18.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. Juvenal, iii, 21 sq.; 162 sq.

<sup>3</sup> For the history of the practice, see the article "Frumentariae Leges," in Smith's *Dictionary of Antiquities*.

<sup>4</sup> The first step by Gracchus does not seem to have been much resisted (Merivale, *Fall of the Roman Republic*, p. 22; but cp. Long, *Decline of the Roman Republic*, i, 262), such measures having been for various reasons resorted to at times in the past (Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* xviii, 1; Livy, ii, 34); but in the reaction which followed, the process was for a time restricted (Merivale, p. 34).

<sup>5</sup> It seems to have been he who, as consul, first caused the distribution to be made gratuitous. See Cicero, *ad Attic.* ii, 19, and *De Domo Sua*, cc. 10, 15. The Clodian law, making the distribution gratuitous, was passed next year.

<sup>6</sup> Suetonius, *Julius*, c. 41.

<sup>7</sup> Dio Cassius, xliii, 24.

a distance from the capital,<sup>1</sup> could not compete with the provinces save by still further substituting large slave-tilled farms for small holdings, and grinding still harder the face of the slave. When finally Augustus,<sup>2</sup> definitely establishing the system of lowered prices and doles, subsidised the trade in the produce of conquered Egypt to feed his populace, and thus still further promoted the importation of the cheapest foreign grain, the agriculture of a large part of Italy, and even of parts of some provinces, was practically destroyed.

It has been argued by M'Culloch (*Treatises and Essays: History of Commerce*, 2nd ed. p. 287, note) that it is impossible that the mere importation of the corn required to feed the populace—say a million quarters or more—could have ruined the agriculture of Italy. This expresses a misconception of what took place. The doles were not universal, and the emperors naturally preferred to limit themselves as far as possible to paying premiums for the importation and cheap sale of corn. (Cp. Suetonius, *Claudius*, c. 19, and the Digest, iii, 4, 1; xiv, i, 1, 20; xlvii, ix, 3, 8; l, v, 3, etc.) All of the conquered provinces, practically, had to pay a tithe of their produce; and where corn was specially cheap it would be likely to come to Rome in that form. (Cp. Dureau de la Malle, *Écon. polit. des Romains*, ii, 424 sq.) Many of the patrician families, besides, owned great estates in Africa, and they would receive their revenues in produce. Egyptian, Sardinian, Sicilian, and African corn could thus easily undersell Italian for ordinary consumption. For the rest, the produce of Egypt would be a means of special revenue to the emperor. Cp. M'Culloch's own statement, p. 291.

Prof. Ferrero (*Greatness and Decline of Rome*, Eng. trans. ii, App. A) has independently (but in agreement with Weber and Salvioli) carried M'Culloch's thesis further, and has opposed the view that the "competition" of Sicilian and African wheat "was the cause of the agricultural depression from which Italy began to suffer in 150 B.C." His own theory is the singular one that the "depression" was caused by "the increased cost of living" arising out of luxurious habits! This untenable and indeed unintelligible conclusion he ostensibly reaches by a series of arguments that are alternately incoherent and rotatory, of propositions some of which are rebutted by himself, and of assumptions that are plainly astray. The dispute may be condensed thus:—

(1) "In antiquity," the Professor begins, "each district consumed its own wheat"; yet he goes on to mention that in

<sup>1</sup> It must have been the relative dearness of land transport that kept the price of corn so low in Cisalpine Gaul in the time of Polybius, who describes a remarkable abundance (ii, 15).

<sup>2</sup> Suetonius, *Aug.* cc. 40, 41.

the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. Attica was "obliged to import, even in good seasons, between 12,000,000 and 15,000,000 bushels." This contradiction he appears to think is saved by the addendum that "the amount in question is a very small one, compared with the figures of modern commerce." Naturally it is, Athens being a small State compared with those of to-day. But the contradiction stands unresolved. And it follows that larger towns, not placed in fruitful "districts," would have proportionally larger imports.

(2) "Moreover," writes the Professor, "while the industrial countries of to-day seek so far as possible to check the import of cereals by protective duties, Athens used every expedient of war and diplomacy to render the supply of imported corn both regular and abundant." It is startling to find a professor of history, a sociological historian, unaware that Britain, Belgium, and Holland have no import duties on corn. (The most exclusive State in that matter is Portugal, which, with no pretensions to be an industrial State, prohibits corn imports altogether.)

(3) More plausibly, Prof. Ferrero argues that the policy of Athens proves that "corn was not easily transported for sale beyond the local market." But the efforts of the Athenians "to obtain the mastery of the Black Sea, and especially of the Bosphorus, *in order to capture the corn trade for themselves*, or to entrust it, on their own conditions, to whom they pleased," proves that the difficulties of transport were mainly those set up by hostile States or pirates, and that—as the Professor admits—the fertile Crimea, with its sparse population, yielded an easy surplus for export.

(4) All this, however, is only partially relevant to the question of the supplies of Rome from Sicily, Sardinia, Africa, and Spain in the second century B.C. Did such supplies come, or did they not? As the Professor admits, they were "vital" to the Roman military policy; and "she had immense granaries at her disposal whenever she required them." But such sources of supply meant a certain large normal production; and this would enter Italy in time of peace. If it was purposely maintained in view of the needs of war-time, so much the more surely would it undersell Italian wheat, raised on a less fruitful soil. In no other way could Sicily and Africa yield either annual tribute to Rome or rents to Roman owners of land in those countries. The first effect of the importation would be to add the pressure of lowered prices to the discouragement already offered to private cultivators by the inducements of loot in war, fleecings in administration of newly conquered countries, commerce, and usury. Of this discouragement the sequel would be the attempt to run by slave labour the large estates in which the old farms were merged. But slave labour is apt to be bad labour, and agriculture could not thereby be restored.

(5) The thesis that agriculture was *depressed* by high cost of living (= high prices for agricultural products) it is not easy to treat with seriousness. The simple fact is that sea-carriage to Rome from Sicily, Spain, and Africa must have been cheaper than land carriage from most parts of Italy to the capital. As Prof. Ferrero notes, food prices in the valley of the Po were very low—obviously because cost of carriage either to Rome or to the southern seaports deterred export.

(6) Prof. Ferrero's fallacy is capped by his proposition that "the economic crisis from which Italy has been suffering during the last twenty years is due to the increased cost of living occasioned by the introduction, from 1848 onwards, of the industrial civilisation of England and France into an old agricultural society." The confusion here defies analysis. Suffice it to say that the high cost of living in modern Italy is due to tariffs and high taxation. Sugar is dear there not because Italians consume it luxuriously—they do not and cannot—but because a particularly unintelligent policy of Protection causes them to pay for beetroot sugar produced in a country ill-suited to the growth of beetroot. Living costs more in Germany, France, and the United States than in Britain, not because those countries have only recently become "luxurious," but because they heavily tax imports. Costs of living in Rome certainly rose as Romans raised their standards of consumption; but their importation of corn from conquered provinces kept food prices lower than they would have been otherwise; and Italian agriculture was largely abandoned in favour of easier ways of making money.

Prof. Ferrero supplies a partial confutation of his economic theory by his own account (i, 311) of how, in the time of Pompey, "once more the precious metals were *cheap and abundant*" after a time of scarcity, and the decadent slave system of agriculture was superseded by new forms of production. (See above, p. 79, *note*.) But abundant bullion means high prices for produce, which the Professor has declared to be a cause of depression! As to the new production, the process certainly cannot have taken place with the rapidity which his description suggests. "The hideous slave-shelters or compounds [*ergastula*], with their gangs of forced labourers, vanished from the scene, together with the huge desolate tracts of pasture where they had spent their days [?], to be replaced by vineyards, olive-groves, and orchards, now planted in all parts of the peninsula,.....estates on which the new slave immigrants contentedly cultivated the vine or the olive, or bred animals for the stable or transport, under the direction of a Greek or Oriental bailiff;.....pleasant cottages of landlords, who farmed their own holdings with the help of a few slaves." All this cannot have happened in the time of Pompey. But in any

case, inasmuch as bullion was rife, prices in general must have been high, yet without "depression"; and the new demand for wine and olives, in the terms of the case, made their cultivation remunerative. But "huge pastures" cannot have been "replaced" by vineyards and olive-groves; and Italian agriculture did not in imperial times become again the thing it had been.

It was not that, as Pliny put it in the perpetually quoted phrase,<sup>1</sup> the *latifundia*, the great estates, had ruined Italy and began to ruin the provinces; it was that, first, the fertile conquered provinces, notably Sicily, undersold Italy; whereafter the economically advantaged competition of Egypt, as imperially exploited, and of the African provinces, undersold the produce of most of the other regions, and would have done so equally had their agriculture remained in the hands of small farmers. The *latifundia* were themselves effects of the policy of conquest and annexation. The theory that "those large pastoral estates, and that slave-cultivation, which had so powerful and so deleterious an influence over Italian husbandry and population, may be principally ascribed to the confiscations and the military colonies of Sulla and his successors," is clearly wide of the mark.

So M'Culloch, *Treatises and Essays: Colonial System of the Ancients*, p. 426. No doubt agriculture went rapidly from bad to worse in the convulsions of Sulla's rule, when whole territories passed into the hands of his partisans. These would be bent on the use of slave labour, and would take to the forms of production which gave them the best money return. On the other hand, in an age of chronic confiscation of whole areas, steady men were not likely to be attracted to the land. See Prof. Pelham's *Outlines*, p. 213; Dureau de la Malle, *Écon. polit. des Romains*, vol. ii, liv. iii, ch. 22.

Large capitalistic estates were beginning to arise in Attica in the time of Solon, and were normal in the time of Xenophon.<sup>2</sup> In Carthage, where they likewise arose in due economic course, they do not seem to have hurt agriculture, though worked by slave labour;<sup>3</sup> and, on the other hand, the Roman military colonies were an attempt, albeit vain, to restore a free farming population. In Italy the disease was older than Sulla. When Tiberius Gracchus was passing through Etruria on his way from Spain, fifty years before the rule of

<sup>1</sup> *Hist. Nat.* xviii, 7 (6).

<sup>2</sup> Cp. his *Economicus*, chs. 5, 9, 11, 20, etc.

<sup>3</sup> Meyer, *Gesch. des Alterthums*, iii, 682 (§ 379).

Sulla, he saw no free labourers, but only slaves in chains.<sup>1</sup> The true account of the matter is this : that if Italy had not conquered Sicily, North Africa, Egypt, and the other fertile provinces, their competition could not have come to pass as it did ; for any imports in that case would have had to be paid for by exports, and Italy had nothing adequate to export. It was the power to exact tribute, or otherwise the appropriation of conquered territory as estates by the nobles,<sup>2</sup> that upset the economic balance. Not merely in order to support the policy of cheap or free food—which was extended to other large Italian cities—but because corn was the staple product of Sicily and Egypt and North Africa, the tribute came in large measure in the form of foods ; and in so far as it came in bullion, the coin had to be speedily re-exported to pay for further food and for the manufactures turned out by the provinces, and bought by the Italian rich. Save in so far as rich amateurs of agriculture went on farming at small profit or at a loss,<sup>3</sup> Italy produced little beyond olives and wine and cattle,<sup>4</sup> and ordinary wares for home consumption. Industrially considered, the society of the whole peninsula was thus finally a mere shell, doing its exchanges mainly in virtue of the annual income it extorted from provincial labour, and growing more and more worthless in point of character as its vital basis grew more and more strictly factitious. It would be accurate to say of the Empire, as represented by part of Italy and the capital, that it was a vast economic simulacrum. The paternal policy of the emperors,<sup>5</sup> good and bad, wrought to pretty much the same kind of result as the egoism of the upper classes had done ; and though their popular measures must have exasperated the Senate, that body had in general to tolerate their well-meaning deeds as it did their crimes.<sup>6</sup>

We may perhaps better understand the case by supposing a certain economic development to take place in England in the distant future. At present we remain, as we are likely long to remain, economically advantaged or benefited for manufacture by our

<sup>1</sup> Plutarch, *Tiberius Gracchus*, c. 8.

<sup>2</sup> E.g., in the provinces of Africa (Gibbon, Bohn ed. iii, 445) and Sicily (Pelham, *Outlines*, p. 121).

<sup>3</sup> Cp. Pliny, as last cited.

<sup>4</sup> The Italians consumed large quantities of pork, mainly raised in the north (Polybius ii, 15 ; xii, fr. 1). Aurelian began a pork as well as a wine and oil ration for the Romans (Vopiscus, *Aurelianus*, 35, 47) ; and under Valentinian III the annual consumption in the city of Rome was 3,628,000 lbs., there being then a free distribution to the poor during five months of the year. Gibbon calculates that it sold at less than 2d. per lb. (Bohn ed. iii, 417-18.)

<sup>5</sup> Cp. Spalding, *Italy and the Italian Islands*, i, 372-75, 392, 398 ; Merivale, *History*, c. 32 ; ed. 1873, iv, 42 ; McCulloch, as cited, pp. 286-92 ; Finlay, *History of Greece*, i, 43 ; Gibbon, Bohn ed. iii, 418 ; Dill, *Roman Society in the Last Years of the Roman Empire*, 2nd ed. p. 122 and refs. ; and Blanqui, *Histoire de l'économie politique*, 2e éd, i, 123, as to the progression of the policy of feeding the populace. Cp. also Suetonius, in *Aug.* c. 42.

<sup>6</sup> There is, however, reason to surmise that the murder of Pertinax was planned, not by the prætorians who did the deed, but by the official and moneyed class who detested his reforms. See them specified by Gibbon, ch. iv, *end.*

coalfields, which are unequalled in Europe, though Germany, through the invention which made her phosphoric iron workable, has a larger store of the chief industrial metal. In return for our coal and manufactures and our shipping services, we import foods and goods that otherwise we could not pay for; and the additional revenue from British investments in foreign debts and enterprises further swells the food and raw material import, thus depressing to a considerable extent *our* agriculture under a system of large farms. When in the course of centuries the coalfields are exhausted, unless it should be found that the winds and tides can be made to yield electric power cheaply enough, our manufacturing population will probably dwindle. Either the United States will supersede us with their stores of coal, or—if, as may well be, their stores are already exhausted by a vaster exploitation—China may take the lead. The chief advantage left us would be the skill and efficiency of our industrial population—an important but incalculable factor.<sup>1</sup> A “return to the land,” if not achieved beforehand, might in that case be assumed to be inevitable; but should Australian, Indian, and North and South American wheat-production continue (as it may or may not) to have the same relative advantages of soil, our remaining city populations would continue to buy foreign corn; and the land might still be largely turned to pasture. That remaining city population, roughly speaking, would in the terms of the case consist of (a) those persons drawing incomes from foreign investments; (b) those workmen, tradesmen, and professional people who could still be successfully employed in manufactures, or whom the interest-drawing classes employed to do their necessary home-work, as the Romans perforce employed to the last many workmen and doctors and scribes, slave or free; (c) those who might earn incomes by seafaring; and (d) the official class—necessarily reduced, like every other. Until the incomes from foreign investments had in some measure disappeared, the country could not gravitate down to an economically stable recommencement in agriculture.

We need not consider curiously whether things would or will happen in exactly this way: the actual presumption is that before coal is exhausted the whole social structure will be modified; and it is conceivable that the idle class may have been eliminated. But we are supposing a less progressive evolution for illustration's sake. Suffice it that such a development would be in a measure

<sup>1</sup> It is noteworthy that in the United States the New England region, producing neither coal nor iron, neither cotton nor (latterly) wheat, continues to retain a manufacturing primacy as against the South, in virtue of the (in part climatic) industry and skill of its population.

economically analogous to what took place in ancient Rome. If the upper-class population of such a hypothetical future in England, instead of receiving only dividends from foreign stocks and pensions from the revenue of India, were able to extort an absolute tribute from India and other dominions, the parallel would be so much the closer. What held together the Roman Empire so long was, on the one hand, the developed military and juridical organisation with its maintaining revenue, and on the other hand the absence of any competent antagonist. Could a Mithridates or an Alexander have arisen during the reign of one of the worse emperors, he might more easily have overrun the Roman world than Rome did Carthage. As it was, all the civilised parts of the Empire shared its political anæmia; and indeed the comparative comfort of the Roman peace, with all its burden of taxation, was in many of the provinces a sufficient though precarious ground for not returning to the old life of chronic warfare, at least for men who had lost the spirit of reasoned political self-assertion.

Under good emperors, the system worked imposingly enough; and Mommsen, echoing Gibbon, not unwarrantably bids us ask ourselves whether the south of Europe has ever since been better governed than it was under the Antonines.<sup>1</sup> The purely piratical plunder carried on by governors under the Republic was now, no doubt, in large measure restricted. But, to say nothing of the state of character and intellect, the economic evisceration was proceeding steadily alike under good emperors and bad, and the Stoic jurists did but frame good laws for a worm-eaten society. So long as the seat of empire remained at Rome, drawing the tribute thither, the imperial system would give an air of solidity to Italian life; but when the Roman population itself grew cosmopolitanised in all its classes, taking in all the races of the Empire, the provinces were in the terms of the case as Roman as the capital; and there was no special reason, save the principle of concentration, why the later emperors should reside there. Where of old the provincial governors had extorted from their subjects fortunes for themselves, to be spent in Rome like the public tribute, they would now tend to act as permanent dwellers in their districts.<sup>2</sup> Once the palace was set up elsewhere, the accessories of administration inevitably followed; and

<sup>1</sup> Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Eng. tr. large ed. v, 5 (*Provinces*, vol. i); Gibbon, ch. iii, near end (Bohn ed. i, 104); cp. Mahaffy, *The Greek World under Roman Sway*, p. 397; Milman, *History of Christianity*, Bk. I, ch. vi; Renan, *Les Apôtres*, ed. 1866, p. 312; and Hegewisch, as cited by Finlay (i, 80, note), who protests that the favourable view cannot be taken of the state of Greece and Egypt. Mr. Balfour (*Decadence*, 1908, p. 18) chimes in with Mommsen and the rest.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. Pelham, *Outlines*, p. 473.

the transference of official and other population would partly balance the restriction of food supply caused by the deflection of Egyptian corn-tribute to Constantinople—a loss that had to be made good by a drain on Libya and Carthage.<sup>1</sup> But when under Valentinian and Valens the Empire came to be definitely divided, the western section, whose main source of revenue was the African province, speedily fell into financial straits. Valentinian had on his hands in the ten years of his reign three costly wars—one to recover Britain, one to repel the Alemanni from Gaul, one to recover Africa from Firmus; and it was apparently the drain on revenue thus set up, aggravated by an African famine,<sup>2</sup> that drove Gratian on his accession to the step of confiscating the revenues of the pagan cults.<sup>3</sup> So great was the State's need that even the pagan Eugenius could not restore the pagan revenues. Thenceforth the financial decay headed the military; and we shall perhaps not be wrong in saying that the growth of medieval Italy, the new and better-rooted life which was to make possible the Renaissance, obscurely began when Italy, stripped of Gaul and Spain and Africa, and cut off from the East, which held Egypt, was deprived of its unearned income, and the populace had in part to turn for fresh life to agriculture and industry. The flight of the propertied families at each successive sack of Rome by Goth and Vandal must have left freedom to many, and room for new enterprise to the more capable, though in some districts there seems to have been absolute depopulation. And while Italy thus fell upon a wholesomer poverty,<sup>4</sup> the provinces would be less impoverished.

Some of the ruin, indeed, has not been remedied to this day. Part of the curse of conquest was the extension of the malarious area of Italian soil, always considerable. The three temples to the Goddess Fever in Rome were the recognition of a standing scourge, made active by every overflow of the Tiber; and pestilent areas were common throughout the land. But when the great plain of Latium was well peopled, the feverous area was in constant process of reduction by agriculture and drainage; and the inhabitants had

<sup>1</sup> Gibbon, ch. xvii; Bohn ed. ii, 194, and notes.

<sup>2</sup> Symmachus speaks of a famine about the time of the confiscation of the temple revenues. Ep. x, 54.

<sup>3</sup> Valentinian had resumed those temple revenues which had been restored by Julian, but went no further, though he vetoed the acquisition of legacies by his own church. That Gratian's step was rather financial than fanatical is proved by his having at the same time endowed the pagan rhetors and grammarians as a small religious *quid pro quo*. Beugnot, *Hist. de la destr. du paganisme en occident*, 1835, i, 478.

<sup>4</sup> There was a fresh relapse after Theodoric, in the ruinous wars between Justinian and the Goths and Franks. Revival began in the north under the Lombards, and was stimulated in the south after the revolt of Gregory II against Leo the Iconoclast, which made an end of the payment of Italian tribute to Byzantium. (Gibbon, Bohn ed. v, 127, 372, 377.)

become in large part immune to infection.<sup>1</sup> In the early, the "Social" and the later civil wars it was devastated and depopulated to such an extent that Pliny<sup>2</sup> could enumerate fifty-three utterly eliminated stocks or "peoples," and could cite the record of thirty-three towns which had stood where now were the Pontine marshes.<sup>3</sup> As early as 340 B.C. the land round Rome was counted unhealthy, so that veterans were loth to settle on it;<sup>4</sup> but population went back instead of forward. It is thus true that the malaria of the Campagna and other districts was an ancient trouble;<sup>5</sup> but it was the perpetual march of conquest, for ever sending forth to more attractive soils the stocks who might have re-peopled and recovered it, that made that and so much more of Italy fixedly pestilential down to modern times. Thus the paralysis of Italian production by conquest was a twofold process, direct and indirect.

In ancient as in later times, doubtless, attempts were made to bring back to human habitation the stricken deserts that stained Italy like a leprosy. Thus Cæsar sought early to repeople Campania from the idle populace of Rome.<sup>6</sup> But to maintain steady cultivation in unhealthy regions there was needed an immune stock, and that was reproducible only by the old way of savage, self-preserving persistence on the part of hardy and primitive rustics working their own land. The new imported stocks, slave or free, wilted away before the scourge of fever; and the "principle of population," weakened in the spring, failed to surmount the resistance of Nature. Under the early Empire the labour needed for the culture of the Campagna had to be brought in annually from distant districts; and when the invading Goths in the fifth century devastated the whole area there was no energy left to recover it.

[The theories once current as to ancient knowledge of prophylactics in the shape of perfumes and the habitual use of woollen clothing may be dismissed as fanciful. The rational conclusion is that the early races developed a relative immunity, which was possessed neither by the eastern stocks imported in the period of conquest nor by the later invading Teutons. It is noteworthy, however, that at all times the dwellers in the tainted areas learned something of the necessary hygiene. See Dureau de la Malle, as cited. His investigation is interesting as showing how, in the early decades of the nineteenth century, long before Pasteur, biology had reached the perception that

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Dureau de la Malle, *Écon. polit. des Romains*, ii, 24 sq.  
<sup>2</sup> *Hist. Nat.* iii, ix, 16. <sup>3</sup> *Id. ib.* 6. <sup>4</sup> Livy, vii, 38.  
<sup>5</sup> Mommsen, i, 36. Mommsen does not deny the deterioration.  
<sup>6</sup> Sueton. *Julius*, c. 20.

fevers come of an organic infection. It was doubtless such knowledge that led the Romans to burn their dead.]

There remains the question, What is the precise economic statement of the final collapse? It is easy to figure that in terms of (a) increasing barbarian enterprise, stimulated by the personal experience of the many barbarians who served the Empire, and of (b) increasing moral weakness on the part of the whole administrative system. And doubtless this change in the balance of military energy was decisive. When utter weaklings sat by heredity in the imperial chair, at best contemptuously tolerated by their alien officers, the end was necessarily near. The most incurable disease of empire was just empire; ages of parasitism had made the Roman ruling class incapable of energetic action; and the autocracy had long withheld from citizens the use of arms. But the long subsistence of the Eastern Empire as contrasted with the Western proves that not only had the barbarians an easier task against Italy in terms of its easiness of invasion, but the defence was there relatively weaker in terms of lack of resources. This lack has been wholly or partly explained by quite a number of writers<sup>1</sup> as a result of a failure in the whole supply of the precious metals—a proposition which may be understood of either a falling-off in the yield of the mines or a general withdrawal of bullion from the Empire. It is difficult to see how either explanation can stand. There was already an immense amount of bullion in the Empire, and a general withdrawal could take place only by way of export to the barbarian east in return for commodities.<sup>2</sup> But the eastern provinces of the Empire were still in themselves abundantly productive, and after the fall of Rome they continued to exhibit industrial solvency. No doubt the plunder of Rome by Alaric (409–10) greatly crippled the west, and the loss of Gaul and Spain was worse; but while the Empire retained Africa it had a source of real revenue. The beginning of the end, or rather the virtual end, came with the conquest of the African province by the Vandals (430–40). In 455 came the sack of Rome by the Vandals, whereafter there remains only a shadow of the Roman Empire, till Odoaker, dismissing Augustulus, makes himself king of Italy.

As for the falling-off in the yield of the Spanish mines, to which some writers seem to attribute the whole collapse, it could only mean that the Roman Government at length realised what had been

<sup>1</sup> E.g. Jacob, *Hist. Inq. into the Prod. and Consump. of the Precious Metals*, 1831, i, 221 sq.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* xii, 18 (41).

as true before and has been as true since, that *all* gold-mining, save in the case of the richest and easiest mines, separately considered, or of groups of mines which have been acquired at less cost than went to find and open them, is carried on at a loss as against the standing competition of the great mass of precious metal above-ground at any moment, the output of unknown barbarian toil and infinite slave labour, begun long before the age of written history.<sup>1</sup> When it was reluctantly realised that the cost of working either the gold or the silver mines was greater to the State than their product,<sup>2</sup> they would be abandoned; though under a free government private speculators would have been found ready to risk more money in reopening them immediately. As a matter of fact, the Spanish mines were actually worked by the Saracens in the Middle Ages, and have been since. The Romans had made the natural blunder of greed in taking all gold and silver mines into the hands of the State,<sup>3</sup> where speculative private enterprise would have gone on working them at a loss, and so adding—vainly enough—to the total bullion in circulation, on which the State could levy its taxes. Even as it was, when they were losing nothing, but rather checking loss, by abandoning the mines, a falling-off in revenue from one source could have been made good by taxation if the fiscal system had remained unimpaired, and if the former income of Italy had not been affected by other causes than a stoppage of mining output.

If the mere cessation of public gold-mining were the cause of a general weakening of the imperial power, and by consequence the cause of the collapse in Italy, it ought equally to have affected the Eastern Empire, which we know to have possessed a normal sufficiency of bullion all through the Dark and Middle Ages, though it had no mines left.<sup>4</sup> The fact is that, when Valentinian and Valens divided the Empire between them, the former chose the western half because he shared the delusion that the Spanish mines were a greater source of real wealth than the fruitful provinces of the east. Those could always procure the bullion they required, because they had produce to exchange for it. Gold mines even of average fertility could have availed no more; and if Italy had remained agriculturally productive she could have sustained herself without any mines.

Dr. Cunningham, in his study of the economic conditions of the declining Empire, appears to lay undue stress on the factor

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Del Mar, *History of the Precious Metals*, 1880, pref. p. vi; *Money and Civilisation*, 1886, introd. p. ix.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. Polybius, cited by Strabo, iii, ii, § 10; Jacob, *Hist. of the Precious Metals*, i, 176.

<sup>3</sup> Cp. Dureau de la Malle, *Econ. pol. des Romains*, ii, 441; Merivale, *History*, iv, 44.

<sup>4</sup> Jacob, as cited, i, 179.

of scarcity of bullion, and does not duly recognise the difference of progression between the case of Italy and that of the east. "The Roman Empire," he writes (p. 187, *note*), lacked both treasure and capital, "and it perished." When? The eastern seat of the Empire survived the western by a thousand years. "It seems highly improbable," he argues again (p. 185), "that the drain of silver to the east, which continued during the Middle Ages, was suspended at any period of the history of the Empire." But such a drain (which means a depletion) cannot go on for twelve hundred years; and it was certainly not a drain of silver to the east that ruined the Byzantine Empire. Finlay's dictum (i, 52) that the debasement of the currency between Caracalla and Gallienus "annihilated a great part of the trading capital in the Roman Empire and rendered it impossible to carry on commercial transactions, not only with foreign countries but even with distant provinces," is another erroneous theorem.

It seems clear that the Italian collapse occurred as it did because, after the fall of the three great possessions, Gaul, Spain, and Africa, there was left only the central State, made impotent by long parasitism to meet the growing barbarian pressure. Italy in the transition period can have yielded very little revenue, though Rome had for the barbarians plenty of hoarded plunder; and the country had long ceased to yield good troops. Gaul itself had been monstrously taxed; and it must have been no less a prudent than a benevolent motive that led Julian to reduce to £2,000,000 the revenue of £7,000,000 extorted by Constantine and Constantius.<sup>1</sup> The greater the depression in the sources of income, and the greater the costs of the frontier wars, the harder became the pressure of the fiscal system, till the burdens laid on the upper citizens who formed the *curia*<sup>2</sup> put them out of all heart for patriotic action, and drove many to flight, to slavery, or the cloister. Towards the end, indeed, there was set up a rapid process of economic change which substituted for slaves a class of serfs, *coloni*, *adscriptitii*, and so on, who though tied to the land paid a rent for it and could keep any surplus; but under this system agriculture was thus far no more a source of revenue than before. Latterly the very wine of Italy grew worthless, and its olives decayed;<sup>3</sup> so that in once fruitful Campania, "the orchard of the south," Honorius in the year 395 had to strike from the fiscal registers, as worthless, more than three hundred

<sup>1</sup> Gibbon, ch. xvii, Bohn ed. ii, 237. Cp. Prof. Bury's note in his ed., and Dureau de la Malle, *Econ. polit. des Romains*, i, 301 sq.

<sup>2</sup> On this form of oppression cp. Guizot, *Essais sur l'histoire de France*, i; his note on Gibbon, Bohn ed. ii, 234; Dill, *Roman Society in the Last Century of the Western Empire*, B. iii, ch. 2; and Cunningham, *Western Civilisation*, pp. 188, 189.

<sup>3</sup> Spalding, *Italy*, i, 398, following Symmachus.

thousand acres of land<sup>1</sup>—an eighth of the whole province. After the ruinous invasions of Rhadagast and Alaric, fresh remissions of taxation had to be given, so that as the danger neared the defence weakened.<sup>2</sup> In the east, again, there was no impulse to succour the falling west; and indeed there was not the ability. The fiscal power of the Emperor was inelastic; his revenues, extorted by cruel pressure, needed careful husbanding; his own world needed all his attention; and the eastern upper class of clerics and officials were not the people to strain themselves for the mere military retention of Britain or Gaul or Italy, as Rome would have done in the republican period, or as the emperors would have done before the period of decentralisation. For the rich agricultural provinces of Africa they did strive with success when Belisarius overthrew the Vandals; and in that age, when Italy had once more become revenue-yielding through the revival of her agriculture, it was worth the while of the east to reconquer Italy also; but the old spirit of resolute dominion and aggression was gone. Armies could still be enrolled and generalised if there was pay for them; but the pay failed, not because bullion was lacking, but because the will and power to supply and apply it in the old fashion was lacking. The new age, after Theodosius, looked at these matters in a different light—the light of commercial self-interest and Christian or eastern disregard for Roman tradition and prestige. The new religion, Christianity, was a direct solvent of imperial patriotism in the old sense, transferring as it did the concern of serious men from this world to the next, and from political theory to theological. In Italy, besides, the priesthood could count on making rather more docile Christians of the invaders than it had done of the previous inhabitants; so that Christian Rome, once overrun, must needs remain so.

[Finlay (ed. cited i, 294) suggests that “probably the knowledge which the Emperor Justin and his cabinet must have possessed of the impossibility of deriving any revenue from the agricultural districts of Italy offers the simplest explanation of the indifference manifested at Constantinople to the Lombard invasion.” But he had already noted (p. 236, *note*) that a great revival of agriculture took place in the reign of Theodoric. Then it could only be through the exhaustion of the subsequent wars that Italy was incapable of yielding a revenue. The true explanation of Justin’s inaction is probably not indifference but impotence, the Empire’s resources being then drained.

<sup>1</sup> Gibbon, ch. xvii, Bohn ed. ii, 237, citing *Cod. Theodos.* xi, 28, 2. Cp. Dill, pp. 259–60.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. Dill, as cited, p. 260.

After the invasion of the Lombards the clergy and Senate of Rome had to send a large sum in bullion to induce the Emperor Maurice to listen to their prayers for help. Still the help could not be given, though, save in the case of the coast towns (see below, p. 188), tribute was paid to Byzantium till the final breach between Rome and Leo the Iconoclast. (Gibbon, Bohn ed. v, 114.)

Guizot (*Histoire de la Civilisation en France*, 13e éd. i, 75, 76) notes the fundamental difference in the attitude of the Church under the old and eastern emperors and under the Teutonic rule. Symonds (*Renaissance in Italy*, 2nd ed. i, 43) thinks this was a result of Theodoric's not having made Rome his headquarters, and his having treated it with special respect. But the clergy of Gaul at once gained an ascendancy over the Frankish kings, and the popes would probably have done as well with resident emperors as with absentees. Their great resource was that of playing one Christian monarch against another—a plan not open to the patriarch of Constantinople.]

That the Empire could still at a push raise armies and find for them generals who could beat back the barbarians was sufficiently shown in the careers of Stilicho and Aetius and Belisarius; but the extreme parsimony with which Justinian supported his great commander in Italy is some proof of the economic difficulty of keeping up, even in a period of prudent administration,<sup>1</sup> a paid force along the vast frontiers of what had been Hadrian's realm. Only as ruled by one central system, inspired by an ideal of European empire, and using the finance and force of the whole for the defence of any part, could that realm have been preserved; and when Diocletian, while holding mechanically by the ideal of empire, began the disintegration of its executive, he began the ending of the ideal. The creation of an eastern capital was now inevitable; and when once the halving of the Empire had become a matter of course, the west, hollow at the core, was fated to fall. We should thus not be finally wrong in saying that "the Roman idea" died out before the Western Empire could fall; provided only that we recognise the economic and other sociological causation of the process.

It remains to note, finally, that the process cannot possibly be explained by the theory that the Eastern Empire was successfully unified by Christianity, and that the Western remained divided by

<sup>1</sup> Anastasius in his reign of twenty-seven years had saved an enormous treasure, whence it is arguable that Justinian's straits were due to bad management. But while he enlarged the expenditure, chiefly for military purposes, he also enlarged the revenue by very oppressive means, and practised some new economies. The fact remains that where Anastasius could hoard with a non-imperialist policy, Justinian, re-expanding the Empire, could not. See Gibbon, ch. 40, *passim*. Non-military expenditure could not account for the final deficit in Justinian's treasury. Even the great church of San Sofia does not seem to have cost above £1,000,000. *Id.* Bohn ed. iv, 335.