

reason of the obstinate adherence of the Roman aristocracy to Paganism. The framer of this theory confutes it by affirming that in Greece "the popular element.....by its alliance with Christianity, infused into society the energy which saved the Eastern Empire," while admitting that in Italy also the "great body of the [city] population" had embraced Christianity. Surely the popular Christian element ought to have saved Italy also if it were the saving force. Italy was essentially Christian in the age of Belisarius: if there was any special element of disunion it was the mutual hatred of Arians and Athanasians and other sects, which had abundantly existed also in the east, where it finally furthered the Saracen conquest of the Asiatic provinces and Egypt,¹ but as regarded the central part of the Empire was periodically got rid of by the suppression of all heresy.² Eastern unification, such as it was, had thus been the work, not of "Christianity," or of any sudden spirit of unity among the Greeks, but of the Imperial Government, which in the East had sufficient command of, and needed for its own sake to use, the resources that we have seen lost to Italy.³ As for the established religion, it was the insoluble conflict of doctrine as to images that finally, in the reign of Leo the Iconoclast, arrayed the Papacy against the Christian Emperor, and completed the sunderance of Greek and Latin Christendom; while in the East the patriarch of Jerusalem became the minister of the Moslem conquerors in the seventh century, as did the patriarch of Constantinople in the fifteenth.

¹ "Here [in Egypt], as in Palestine, as in Syria, as in the country about the Euphrates, the efforts of the Persians could never have been attended with such immediate and easy success but for the disaffection of large masses of the population. This disaffection rested chiefly on the religious differences" (Bury, *History of the Later Roman Empire*, ii, 214). Compare Gibbon, ch. 47, Bohn ed. v, 275; and Mosheim, *Eccles. Hist.*, 5 Cent, pt. ii, ch. ii, §§ 2, 4, 5 (Reid's ed. pp. 179-81). As to the welcoming of the Saracens in Egypt by the Monophysites, see Gibbon, ch. 51, Bohn ed. vi, 59-60. Cp. Sharpe, *Hist. of Egypt*, 6th ed. ii, 371; Milman, *Latin Christianity*, 4th ed. ii, 213; Finlay, i, 370-71.

² E.g. the *tome* of St. Leo, the *Laws of Marcian*, the *Henoticon* of Zeno, and the laws of Justinian; and the *ecthesis* and *typus* of Heraclius and Constans II—all retailed by Gibbon, ch. 47.

³ Finlay immediately afterwards (p. 139) declares of the choice of Byzantium by Constantine as his capital that "its first effect was to preserve the unity of the Eastern Empire." The admission is repeated on p. 140, where the whole credit of the stand made by the East is given to the administration. Cp. also the explanations as to Italy on p. 235, and as to Byzantium on p. 184. The theory of p. 138 is utterly unsupported, and on p. 289 it is practically repudiated once for all. Cp. finally, pp. 217, 276, 298, 309, 328, 329, 347, 348, and pp. 361 and 371. On p. 276 we have the explicit admission that the hostility to the Roman Government throughout the East [in the sixth century] was everywhere connected with an opposition to the Greek "clergy."

CHAPTER II

GREEK ECONOMIC EVOLUTION

§ 1

IN republican Greece, as in republican Rome, we have already seen the tendency to the accumulation of wealth in few hands, as proved by the strifes between rich and poor in most of the States. A world in which aristocrats were finally wont to take an oath to hate and injure the demos¹ was on no very hopeful economic footing, whatever its glory in literature and art. Nor did the most comprehensive mind of all the ancient world see in slavery anything but an institution to be defended against ethical attack as a naturally right arrangement.² In view of all this, we may reasonably hold that even if there had been no Macedonian dominance and no Roman conquest, Greek civilisation would not have gone on progressing indefinitely after the period which we now mark as its zenith—that the evil lot of the lower strata must in time have infected the upper. What we have here briefly to consider, however, is the actual economic course of affairs.

For the purposes of such a generalisation, we may rank the Greek communities under two classes: (1) those whose incomes, down through the historic period, continued to come from land-owning, whether with slave or free labour, as Sparta; and (2) those which latterly flourished chiefly by commerce, whether with or without military domination, as Athens and Corinth. In both species alike, in all ages, though in different degrees as regards both time and place, there were steep divisions of lot between rich and poor, even among the free. Nowhere, not even in early "Lycurgeoan" Sparta, was there any system aiming at the methodical prevention of large estates, or the prevention of poverty, though the primitive basis was one of military communism, and though certain sumptuary laws and a common discipline were long maintained.

Grote's examination (pt. ii, ch. vi; ed. cited, ii, 308-30) of Thirlwall's hypothesis (ch. viii; 1st ed. i, 301, 326) as to an

¹ Aristotle, *Politics*, v, 9.

² *Id.* i, 2.

of the class-
rivalries in our
times.

NOTE.

equal division of lands by Lycurgus, seems to prove that, as regards rich and poor, the legendary legislator "took no pains either to restrain the enrichment of the former or to prevent the impoverishment of the latter"—this even as regards born Spartans. As to the early military communism of Sparta and Crete, see Meyer, *Geschichte des Alterthums*, ii, § 210; and as to the economic process see Fustel de Coulanges, *Nouvelles recherches sur quelques problèmes d'histoire*, 1891, pp. 99–118.

Athens, on the other hand, was so situated as to become a place of industry and commerce; and from about the time of her great land-crisis, solved by Solon, her industrial and commercial interests determined her economic development. It follows from the success of Peisistratos that the mass of the people, blind to the importance of the political rights conferred upon them, were conscious of no such betterment from Solon's "shaking-off-of-burdens" as could make them averse to the rule of a "tyrant" who even laid upon them a new tax. The solution may perhaps lie in points of fiscal policy to which we have now no clear clue. Of Solon it is recorded¹ that he made a law against the export of any food produce of Attica save oil—the yield of the olive. This implied that of that product only was there in his opinion a redundancy; and we have it from the same source that he "saw that the soil was so poor that it could only suffice for the farmers," and so "gave great honour to trade," and "made a law that a son was not obliged to support his father if his father had not taught him a trade."² Himself a travelled merchant, he further recognised that "merchants are unwilling to despatch cargoes to a country which has nothing to export"; and we are led to infer that he encouraged on the one hand the export of manufactures, *plus* oil, and on the other the importation of corn and other food. In point of fact, grain was already being imported in increasing quantity from the recently colonised lands of Sicily and the Crimea;³ and if the imports were free or lightly taxed the inland cultivators would have a local grievance in the depression of the prices of their produce.

The town and coast-dwellers, on the other hand, found their account in the carriage and development of manufactures—vases, weapons, objects of art—which, with the oil, and latterly the wine export, bought them their food from afar. Athens could thus go on growing in a fashion impossible to an agricultural community on the

¹ Plutarch, *Solon*, c. 24.

² *Id.* c. 22. Cp. Dr. Grundy, *Thucydides and the History of his Age*, 1911, p. 66, as to Solon's evident purpose of promoting manufactures.

³ Maisch, *Manual of Greek Antiquities*, Eng. tr. p. 38. Cp. Meyer, ii, 644.

same soil; and could so escape that fate of shrinkage in the free class which ultimately fell upon purely agricultural Sparta. The upshot was that, after as before Solon, Athens had commercial interests among her pretexts for war, and so widened the sphere of her hostilities, escaping the worst forms of "stasis" in virtue of the expansibility of commerce and the openings for new colonisation which commerce provided and widened. But colonisation there had to be. Precisely by reason of her progressiveness, her openness to the alien, her trade and her enterprise, Attica increased in population at a rate which enforced emigration, while the lot of the rural population did not economically improve, and the probable change from corn-growing to olive-culture¹ would lessen the number of people employed on the land. Even apart from the fact of the popular discontent which welcomed the *tyrannis* of Peisistratos, we cannot doubt that Solon's plans had soon failed to exclude the old phenomena of poverty. The very encouragement he gave to artisans to immigrate,² while it made for the democratic development and naval strength of Athens, was a means of quickening the approach of a new economic crisis. And yet he seems to have recognised the crux of population. The traditional permission given by the sage to parents to expose infants, implicitly avows the insoluble problem—the "cursed fraction" in the equation, which will not disappear; and in the years of the approach of Peisistratos to power we find Athens sending to Salamis (about 570) its first *kleruchie*, or civic colony-settlement on subject territory—this by way of providing for landless and needy citizens.³ It was the easiest compromise; and nothing beyond compromise was dreamt of.

[The statement that Solon by law permitted the exposure of infants is made by Malthus, who gives no authority, but is followed by Lecky. The law in question is not mentioned by Plutarch, and I do not find it noticed by any of the historians. It is stated, however, by Sextus Empiricus (*Hypotyp.* iii, 24) that Solon made a law by which a parent could put his child to death; and this passage, which is cited by Hume in his *Essay on the Populousness of Ancient Nations*, is doubtless Malthus's authority. Nothing nearer to the purpose is cited by Meursius in his monograph on Solon; but this could very well stand as a permission of infanticide, especially seeing that the practice is

¹ Cp. Cunningham, *Western Civilisation*, i (1898), 100-2.

² Grote, ii, 504. Hitherto Athens was far behind other cities, as Corinth, in trade. The industrial expansion seems to begin in Solon's time (Plutarch, *Solon*, c. 22; Busolt, *Griechische Geschichte*, i, 501).

³ Busolt, as cited, i, 549-50. The details, many of them from lately recovered inscriptions, are full of interest. Cp. Grote, ii, 462.

presumptively prehistoric. Petit writes: "Quemadmodum liberos tollere in patris erat positum potestate, ita etiam necare et exponere, idque, meo iudicio, non tam moribus quam lege receptum fuit Athenis" (*Leges Atticæ*, fol. 219, ed. Wesseling, 1742). Grote (ii, 470, *note*) pronounces that the statement of Sextus "cannot be true, and must be copied from some untrustworthy authority," seeing that Dionysius the Halicarnassian (ii, 26) contrasts the large scope of the *patria potestas* among the Romans with the restrictions which all the Greek legislators, Solon included, either found or introduced. Dr. Mahaffy (*Social Life in Greece*, 3rd ed. p. 165) believes "the notion of exposing infants from *economical* motives not to have prevailed till later times" than the seventh century B.C., but he gives no reason for fixing any date. We may take it as certain that while the laws of Lycurgus, like the Roman Twelve Tables, enjoined or permitted the destruction of sickly or deformed infants, the general Greek usage allowed exposure. The express prohibition of it at Thebes (Ælian, Var. Hist. ii, 7) implies its previous normality there and elsewhere (cp. however, Aristotle, *Pol.* vii, 16); and the *sale* of children by their (free) parents was further permitted, except in Attica (Ingram, *History of Slavery*, p. 16); while even there a freeman's children by a slave concubine were slaves.]

On the other hand, the laws even of Sparta, framed with a view to the military strength of the State considered as the small free population, were ultimately evaded in the interests of property-holding, till the number of "pure Spartans" dwindled to a handful.¹ Under a system of primogeniture, with a rigid severance between the upper class and the lower, there could in fact be no other outcome. Here, apart from the revolts of the helots and the chronic massacres of these by their lords, which put such a stamp of atrocity on Spartan history,² the stress of class strife seems to have been limited among the aristocracy, not only by systematic infanticide, but by the survival of polyandry, several brothers often having one wife in common.³ Whether owing to infanticide, or to in-breeding, or to preventives, families of three and four were uncommon and considered large, and special privileges offered to the fathers.⁴ As

¹ Plutarch, *Agis*, c. 5; Aristotle, *Politics*, ii, 9; Thirlwall, viii, 133.

² The arguments of K. O. Müller (*Dorians*, Eng. tr. b. iii, c. 3, §§ 3-5) in discredit of the received view, though not without weight, have never carried general conviction. Cp. Maisch, *Manual of Greek Antiquities*, Eng. tr. p. 17.

³ See the recovered passage of Polybius (xii, 6, ed. Hultsch) cited (from Mai, *Nov. Collect. Vet. Scriptor.* ii, 384) by Müller (*Dorians*, Eng. tr. ii, 205). Cp. M'Lennan, *Kinship in Ancient Greece*, § 2.

⁴ Aristotle, *Politics*, ii, c. 9. On Aristotle's unhesitating assumption (ii, 10) as to the normality and the effects of pæderasty, cp. the refutation of Müller, *Dorians*, Eng. tr. b. iv, c. 4, §§ 6-8; and as to the real causes of decline of population, see b. iii, c. 10, § 2. Primogeniture was a main factor. As the propertied class, of whom Aristotle speaks, became small through accumulations, which often went to heiresses, the whole statistic

always, such devices failed against the pressures of the main social conditions. All the while, of course, the *perioikoi* and the enslaved helots multiplied freely; hence the policy of specially thinning down the latter by over-toil¹ as well as massacre. In other States, where the polity was more civilised, many observers perceived that the two essential conditions of stability were (a) absolute or approximate equality of property, and (b) restraint of population, the latter principle being a notable reaction of reason against the normal practice of encouraging or compelling marriage.² Aristotle said in so many words that to let procreation go unchecked "is to bring certain poverty on the citizens; and poverty is the cause of sedition and evil";³ and he cites previous publicists who had sought to solve the problem. Socrates and Plato had partly contemplated it; and the idealist, as usual, had proposed the more brutal methods;⁴ but Aristotle, seeing more clearly the population difficulty, perhaps on that account is the less disposed towards communism.

As medical knowledge advanced, it seems certain, the practice of abortion must have been generally added to that of infanticide in Greece, as later in Rome. See Aristotle, *Politics*, vii, 16; Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, c. 3; and Plato, *Theætetus*, p. 149 (Jowett's trans. iv, 202), as to the normal resort to abortion. The Greeks must have communicated to the Romans the knowledge of the arts of abortion, as they did those of medicine generally. But it does not appear that with all these checks population really fell off in Greece until after the time of Alexander. Before that time it may very well have fallen off in Athens when she lost her position as sovereign and tribute-drawing State. The tribute would tend to maintain a population in excess of the natural amount. Dr. Mahaffy (*Rambles and Studies in Greece*, 4th ed. p. 11—a passage not squared with the data in *Greek Life and Thought*, pp. 328, 558) accepts the old view of a general and inexplicable depopulation. One of the *loci classici* on that head, in the treatise *On the Cessation of Oracles* (viii) attributed to Plutarch but probably not by him, is searchingly examined by Hume at the close of his essay *Of the Populousness of Ancient Nations*, and the critic comes to the conclusion that the extreme decay there asserted cannot have taken place. He was in all probability right in arguing that the number of slaves in Attica

as to births is narrow and dubious. But it is safe to decide that the decline of the pure Spartan population was not a result of vice, any more than the normal dwindling of the numbers of modern aristocracies. It should be remembered that younger sons would be likely to have illegitimate offspring among the helots, if not among the *perioikoi*. The selfish aristocracy thus wrought for its own class extinction.

¹ Plutarch, *Solon*, c. 22.

² See refs. in Fustel de Coulanges, *La cité antique*, l. iii, ch. xviii, p. 265.

³ Aristotle, *Politics*, ii, 6.

⁴ Cp. the *Republic*, v, and the *Laws* (bks. v, xi; Jowett's tr. 3rd ed. v, pp. 122, 313) with the *Politics*, vii, 16.

had been enormously exaggerated in the figures of Athenæus (cp. Cunningham, *Western Civilisation*, i, 109, note). There is reason to conclude, however, that Hume was unduly incredulous on some points. Strabo (refs. in Thirlwall, viii, 460) had found an immense decay of population in Greece more than a century before Plutarch; and his details prove a process of shrinkage which must have lasted long. In any case, a relative depopulation took place after the conquests of Alexander, from the operation of socio-economic causes, which are indicated by Finlay (*History of Greece*, Tozer's ed. i, 15; cp. Mahaffy, *Greek Life and Thought*, p. 328, and *The Greek World under Roman Sway*, 1890, p. 218). Broadly speaking, the Greeks went to lands where wealth was more easily acquired than in their own. Further depopulation took place under the Romans, partly from direct violence and deportation, partly from fiscal pressure, partly from the economic causes already noted.

Thirlwall, in his closing survey, proceeding on Polybius,¹ confidently decides that the main cause of depopulation was domestic and moral. Such a theory cannot be sustained. Polybius evidently had no clear idea of the facts, since he asserts that "in our time" and "rapidly" there took place in Greece a "failure of offspring" (or "dearth of children"), which left cities desolate and land waste; and goes on to ascribe it to habits of luxury, which either kept men from marrying or made them refuse to rear more than a few of their children. The whole theorem is haphazard. Cities and lands could not have been so depopulated.² There must have been, in addition to slaughter, a drain of population to lands where the conditions were more advantageous. Nor is there any good reason for believing that child-exposure had suddenly and immensely increased. Thirlwall says that marriages were "unfruitful"; but this is not the statement of Polybius. It is true that pæderasty would count for much in lowering character; but it had been common in Greece centuries before the time of Polybius, and had not affected fecundity. As we have seen,³ fecundity fell in Sparta for other reasons.

As between Sparta and Athens, the main difference was that Athenian life was for a long period more or less expansive, while that of Sparta, even in the period of special vigour, was steadily contractive, as regarded quantity and quality of "good life." At Sparta, as above noted, the normal play of self-interest in the governing class brought about a continuous shrinkage in the number of enfranchised

N. B.

¹ *Fr. Vat.* xxxvii, 9.

² Cp. Hume, essay cited, as to the slight effect of the exposure check in China.

³ Above, p. 101.

ex. citizens and of those holding land, till there were only 700 of the former and 100 of the latter—this when there were still 4,500 adult Spartans of “pure” descent, and 15,000 Laconians capable of military service. Even of the hundred landowners many were women, the estates having thus evidently aggregated by descent through heiresses.¹ It mattered little that this inner ring of rich became, after the triumph over Athens and in the post-Alexandrian period, as luxurious as the rest of Greece:² the evil lay not in the mode of their expenditure, but in the mode of their revenue. Agis IV and his successor Cleomenes thought to put the community on a sound footing by abolition of debts and forcible division of the land; but even had Agis triumphed at home or Cleomenes maintained himself abroad, the expedient could have availed only for a time. Accumulation would instantly recommence in the absence of a scientific and permanent system.

Schemes for promoting equality had been mooted in Greece from an early period (see Aristotle, *Politics*, ii, 6, 7, 8). Thus, “Pheidon the Corinthian, one of the oldest of legislators, thought that the families and number of citizens ought to continue the same.” Phaleas of Chalcedon proposed to keep fortunes and culture equal; and Hippodamus the Milesian had a system of equality for a State of 10,000 persons. Some States, too, put restraints on the accumulation of land. But, save for transient successes, such as that of Solon at Athens, and of the compromise at Tarentum (see Aristotle, v, 5; and Müller, *Dorians*, Eng. tr. ii, 184–86), there was no adequate adjustment of means to ends, as indeed there could not be. Aristotle’s own practical suggestions show the hopelessness of the problem.

In the commercial cities, where industry was encouraged and wealth tended to take the form of invested capital, it could not readily get into so few hands; and as commerce developed and the investments were more and more in that direction, there would arise an idle rich class which could be best got at by way of taxation. In such communities, though the division and hostility of rich and poor were as unalterable as in Sparta, there was more elasticity of adjustment; so that we see maritime and trading communities like Heracleia and Rhodes maintaining their oligarchic government, with vicissitudes, down into the Roman period,³ somewhat as Venice in a

¹ Aristotle, *Politics*, ii, 9; Plutarch, *Agis*, c. 7.

² Athenæus, citing Phylarchus, iv, 20.

³ Grote, x, 402; Mahaffy, *Greek Life and Thought*, p. 457; *Greek World under Roman Sway*, p. 237; M’Culloch, *Treatises and Essays*, ed. 1859, pp. 276–78.

later age outlasted the other chief republics of Italy. The ruin of Corinth, though indirectly promoted by class strifes,¹ need not have occurred but for the Roman overthrow.²

As regards Athens, it is necessary to guard against some misconceptions concerning the life conditions even of the Periclean period. Public buildings apart, it was not a rich or rich-looking city; on the contrary, partly by reason of the force of democratic sentiment, its houses were mostly mean, the well-to-do people presumably having their better houses in the country, where the land was now mostly owned by them. After the destruction of the city by Xerxes (480 B.C.), the first need was felt to be its refortification on a larger scale, even sepulchres as well as the remains of private houses being made to yield materials for the walls.³ At the same time the Piræus and Munychia were walled on a still greater scale—the whole constituting a public work of extraordinary scope, rapidly carried through by the co-operation of the whole of the citizens. The further gradual rebuilding of the city, as well as the fresh flocking of the foreign trading population to the now safe Piræus, would help, with the public works of Pericles, to set up the conditions of general prosperity which prevailed before the Peloponnesian war.⁴ According to Demosthenes, the public men of the generation of Salamis had houses indistinguishable from those of ordinary people, whereas in the orator's own day the statesmen had houses actually finer than the public buildings.⁵ This would be the natural result of the control of the confederate treasure resulting from the Athenian supremacy. But Dicaearchus belongs to the same period, and his account represents the mass of the city as poor in appearance, the houses small and with projecting stairways, and the streets crooked.⁶ We know further from Xenophon that there were many empty spaces, some of them doubtless made by the customary destruction of the houses of those ostracised. There was thus a considerable approach to a rather straitened equality among the mass of the town-dwelling free citizens, who, despite the meanness of their houses, had luxuries in the form of the public baths and gymnasia.

Before Salamis, again, the revenue drawn from the leases of the silver mines of Laurium had been equally divided among the enfranchised citizens—an arrangement which had yielded only a

¹ Mahaffy, *Greek Life and Thought*, p. 452.

³ Thucydides, i, 93.

⁵ Citations in Boeckh, bk. i, ch. 12.

⁶ Boeckh, bk. i, ch. 12. Cp. De Pauw, *Recherches philosophiques sur les Grecs*, 1787, i, 55-60.

² M'Culloch, as cited, p. 275.

⁴ Grote, iv, 341, 342.

small sum to each, but which represented a notable adumbration of a communal system, with the fatal implication of a basis in slavery.¹ The devotion of this fund² to the building of a navy was the making of the Athenian maritime power; whence in turn came the ability of Athens to extort tribute from the allied States, and therewith to achieve relatively the greatest and most effective expenditure on public works³ ever attempted by any government. It was this specially created demand for and endowment of the arts and the drama that raised Athens to the artistic and literary supremacy of the ancient world, and, by so creating a special intellectual soil, prepared the ensuing supremacy of Athenian philosophy.⁴ But the Periclean policy of endowment went far beyond even the employment of labour by the State on the largest scale; it set up the principle of supplying something like an income to multitudes of poorer free citizens—an experiment unique in history. The main features of the system were: (1) Payments for service to the members of the Council of Five Hundred; (2) payments to all jurors, an order numbering some six thousand; (3) the *theorikon* or allowance of theatre money to all the poorer citizens; (4) regular payments to the soldiers and sailors; (5) largesses of corn, or sales at reduced prices; (6) sacrificial banquets, shared in by the common people; (7) the sending out of "kleruchies," or bodies of quasi-colonists, who were billeted on the confederate cities, to the number of five or six thousand in ten years. Without taking the *a priori* hostile view of the aristocratic faction, who bitterly opposed all this—a view endorsed later by Plato and Socrates—the common-sense politician must note the utter insecurity of the whole development, depending as it did absolutely on military predominance.⁵ The mere cessation of the expenditure on public works at the fall of Athens in the Peloponnesian war was bound to affect class

¹ See E. Ardaillon, *Les mines du Laurion dans l'antiquité*, 1897, ch. v.

² The mines of Laurium, though anciently worked by the "Pelasgi," do not figure in Athenian history till the beginning of the fifth century B.C. Ardaillon, pp. 126-27.

³ As to the enormous cost in labour and money of such buildings as the Propylæa and the Parthenon, cp. Mahaffy, *Survey of Greek Civilisation*, p. 143, and M'Cullagh, *Industrial History of the Free Nations*, 1846, i, 166, 167.

⁴ "Before the Persian war Athens had contributed less than many other cities, her inferiors in magnitude and in political importance, to the intellectual progress of Greece. She had produced no artists to be compared with those of Argos, Corinth, Sicyon, Ægina, Laconia, and of many cities both in the eastern and western colonies. She could boast of no poets so celebrated as those of the Ionian and Æolian Schools. But.....in the period between the Persian and the Peloponnesian wars both literature and the fine arts began to tend towards Athens as their most favoured seat" (Thirlwall, vol. iii, ch. xviii, pp. 70, 71). "Never before or since has life developed so richly" (Abbott, ii, 415). Cp. Holm, Eng. tr. ii, 156, 157.

⁵ This view appears to be substantially at one with the reasoning of Dr. Cunningham (*Western Civilisation*, pp. 112-23). I must dissent, however, from his apparent position (pp. 119-21) that it was the *mode* of the expenditure that was wrong, and that Athens might have employed her ill-gotten capital "productively" in the modern economic sense. The cases of Miletus and Tyre, cited by him, seem to be beside the argument.

relations seriously; and parties, already bitter, were henceforth more decisively so divided.¹

In the second period of Athenian ascendancy, after the fall of the Thirty Tyrants and of Sparta, when the virtual pensioning of citizens begun by Pericles had been carried to still further lengths,² we find Xenophon, the typical Greek of culture and military experience, proposing a financial plan³ whereby Athens, instead of keeping up the renewed practice of oppressing the confederate cities in order to pay pensions to its own poorer citizens, should derive a sufficient revenue from other sources. In particular he proposed (1) the encouraging of foreigners to settle in the city in larger numbers, by exempting them from military service and from all forms of public stigma, and by giving them the waste grounds to build on. The taxes they would have to pay as aliens would serve as revenue to maintain the citizens proper. (2) A fund should be established for the encouragement of trade which in some unexplained way should yield a high interest, paid by the State, to all investors. (3) The State should build inns, shops, warehouses, and exchanges, chiefly for the use of the foreigners, and so further increase its revenue. (4) It should build ships for the merchant trade, and charter them out upon good security. (5) Above all, it should develop by slave labour the silver mines of Laurium, to the yield of which there was no limit. The public, in fact, might there employ thrice as many slaves as the number of citizens; and it should further set about finding new mines.

We have here the measure of the Athenian faculty to solve the democratic problem as then recognised. The polity of Pericles was bound to perish, alike because it negated international ethics and because it had no true economic basis. The comparatively well-meaning plan of Xenophon could not even be set in motion, so purely fanciful is its structure. The income of the poorer citizens is to come from the taxes and rents paid by foreigners, and from mines worked by slave labour; the necessary army of slaves has to be bought as a State investment. It is as if the Boers of the Transvaal had proposed to live idly in perpetuity on the dues paid by the immigrants, all the while owning all the mines and drawing all the profits. It is hardly necessary to say, with Boeckh,⁴ that the thesis as to the yield of the mines was a pure delusion; and that the idea of living on the taxation of foreigners was suicidal.⁵ The old method,

¹ Plutarch, *Pericles*, c. 11.

³ *On the Revenues*.

⁵ Boeckh's arguments, denounced by Lewis, need not be adhered to; but the whole theorem is so fantastic that Lewis's general vindication of it is puzzling (*Trans.* pref. xv, *note*).

² Cp. Thirlwall, small ed. iii, 67.

⁴ As cited, bk. iv, ch. xxi.

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supplemented perforce by some regular taxation of the taxable citizens, and by the special exaction of "liturgies" or payments for the religious festival drama and other public services from the rich, was maintained as long as might be; industry tending gradually to decay, though the carrying trade and the resumed concourse of foreigners for a time kept Athens a leading city. Never very rich agriculturally, the middle and upper classes had for the rest only their manufactures and their commerce as sources of income; and as the manufactures were mostly carried on by slave labour, and were largely dependent on the State's control of the confederate treasure, the case of the poorer free citizens must necessarily worsen when that control ceased. About 400 B.C. the Athenians had still a virtual monopoly of the corn trade of Bosphorus, on which basis they could develop an extensive shipping, which was a source of many incomes; but even these would necessarily be affected by the new regimen which began with the Macedonian conquest.

The attempt of Boeckh (bk. i, ch. viii) to confute the ordinary view as to the poverty of the Attic soil cannot be maintained. (See above, p. 99.) Niebuhr (*Lectures on Roman History*, Eng. tr. 3rd ed. p. 264) doubtless goes to the other extreme in calling the Greeks bad husbandmen. Compare the contrary view of Cox, *General History*, 2nd ed. p. 4. But even good husbandry on a poor soil could not compete with the output of Bosphorus and Egypt. And in the Peloponnesian war Attic agriculture sank to a low level (Curtius' *History*, Eng. tr. iv, 71; bk. v, ch. ii).

As to the incomes made in the Bosphorus corn-trade, cp. Grote, x, 410, 412, 413. When it became possible thus to draw a revenue from investment, the Athenian publicists rapidly developed the capitalist view that the lending of money capital is the support of trade. See Demosthenes, as cited by Boeckh, bk. i, ch. ix.

§ 2

In the economic readjustments, finally, which followed on the rise and subdivision of the empire of Alexander, Greece as a whole took a secondary place in the Hellenistic world, though Macedonia kept much of its newly acquired wealth. While commerce passed with industry and population to the new eastern cities, the remaining wealth of Greece proper would tend to pass into fewer hands,¹

¹ See Hertzberg, *Geschichte Griechenlands unter der Herrschaft der Römer*, Theil ii, Kap. 2, p. 200, as to the vast estates now acquired by a few.

thus *pro tanto* narrowing more than ever the free and cultured class, and relatively enlarging that of the slaves.

[Boeckh (bk. i, ch. viii) dwells on the variety of manufactures, and here gives a juster view than does Dr. Mahaffy, who (*Social Life in Greece*, 3rd ed. p. 406) oddly speaks of the lack of machinery as making "any large employment of hands in manufacture impossible." But the main manufacture, that of arms, was peculiarly dependent on the Athenian command of the confederate treasure; and it does not appear that the other manufactures were a source of much revenue till just before the period of political decline, when other causes combined to check Athenian trade. By that time the aristocratic class had weakened in their old prejudice against all forms of commerce (Mahaffy, as cited; Boeckh, as cited), which had hitherto kept it largely in the hands of aliens, this long after the time when, at Corinth and other ports, the ruling class had been constituted of the rich traders; and after the special efforts of Solon to encourage and enforce industry. Apart from this prejudice, which in many States put a political disability on traders, commerce had always been hampered by war and bad policy. Dr. Mahaffy (*Social Life*, p. 405) somewhat over-confidently follows Heeren and Boeckh in deciding that none of the Greek trade laws were in the interests of particular trades or traders; but even if they were not, they none the less hampered all commerce. Cp. Boeckh, bk. i, ch. ix. As Hume observed, the high rates of profit and interest prevailing in Greece show an early stage of commerce. Cp. Boeckh, bk. i, chs. ix, xxii.]

Those who had not shared in the plunder of Asia, to begin with, would find themselves badly impoverished, for the new influx of bullion would raise all prices. It is notable, on the other hand, that philosophy, formerly the study of men with, for the most part, good incomes, and thence always associated more or less with the spirit of aristocracy,¹ was now often cultivated by men of humble status.² The new rich then appear to have already fallen away somewhat from the old Athenian standards; while the attraction of poorer men was presumably caused in part by the process of endowment of the philosophic schools begun by Plato in his will—an example soon followed by others.³ It is probable that as much weight is due to this economic cause as to that of political restraint in the explanation of the prosperity of philosophy at Athens at a time when literature was relatively decaying.

¹ In Magna Graecia, in particular, the whole Pythagorean movement had such associations in a high degree. Note the frequency of names beginning *αρχ* (= king or chief) in the history of early Greek philosophy.

² Mahaffy, *Greek Life and Thought*, p. 136.

³ *Idem*, pp. 145-49; Gibbon, Bohn ed. iv, 352.

The Roman conquest, again, further depressed Greek fortunes by absolute violence, hurling whole armies of the conquered into slavery,¹ and later setting up a new foreign attraction to the Greeks of ready wit and small means. They presumably began to flock to Rome or Egypt or Asia Minor as the conditions in Greece worsened; and that process in turn would be promoted by the gradual worsening of the Roman financial pressure. It is notable that a rebellion of Attic slaves occurred in 133 B.C., synchronously with the first slave-rising in Sicily—a proof of fresh oppression all round.² The Romans had retained the Greek systems of municipal government, and had begun by putting on light taxes.³ But these surely increased;⁴ and the Mithridatic war, in which Athens had taken the anti-Roman side, changed all for the worse. Sulla took the city after a difficult siege, massacred most of the citizens, and entirely destroyed the Piræus; whereafter Athens practically ceased for centuries to be a commercial centre. Corinth, which had been razed to the ground by Mummius, was ultimately reconstructed by Cæsar as a Roman colony, and secured most of what commerce Greece retained. Twenty years before, Pompey had put down the Cilician pirates, a powerful community of organised freebooters that had arisen out of the disbanding of the hired forces of Mithridates and other Eastern monarchs on the triumph of the Romans, and was further swelled by a large inflow of poverty-stricken Greeks. While it lasted, it greatly multiplied the number of slaves for the Roman market by simple kidnapping.

[The great mart for such sales was Delos, which was practically a Roman emporium (Strabo, bk. xiv, c. v, § 1). Mahaffy (*Greek World under Roman Sway*, p. 154) regards the pirates as largely anti-Roman, especially in respect of their sacking of Delos. But previously they sold their captives there; and Dr. Mahaffy (p. 7) recognises the connection. The pirates, in short, became anti-Roman when the Romans, who had so long tolerated them as slave-traders (as the rulers of Cyprus and Egypt had done before), were driven to keep them in check as pirates.]

Thus all the conditions deteriorated together; and the suppression of the pirate state found Greece substantially demoralised, the prey of greedy proconsuls, poor in men, rich only in ancient art and in

¹ *E.g.*, the whole population of Corinth; and 150,000 inhabitants of Epirus.

² Cp. Finlay, i, 23.

³ They exacted from Macedonia only half the tribute it had paid to its kings; but there is a strong presumption that it was too impoverished after the war to pay more.

⁴ "The extraordinary payments levied on the provinces soon equalled, and sometimes exceeded, the regular taxes" (Finlay, i, 39). Cp. Mahaffy, *Greek World under Roman Sway*, pp. 145, 156, 159, 161, 162.

wistful memories. In the civil wars before and after Cæsar's fall, Greece was harried by both sides in turn; and down to the time of Augustus depopulation and impoverishment seem to have steadily proceeded under Roman rule.¹ Every special contribution laid on the provinces by the rulers was made an engine of confiscation; citizens unable to pay their taxes were sold as slaves; property owners were forced to borrow at usurious rates in the old Roman fashion; and the parasitic class of so-called Roman citizens, as such free of taxation, tended to absorb the remaining wealth.² This wealth in turn tended to take the shape of luxuries bought from the really productive provinces; and the fatality of the unproductive communities, lack of the bullion which they in a double degree required, for the time overtook Greece very much as it overtook Italy. Both must have presented a spectacle of exterior splendour as regarded their monuments and public buildings, and as regarded the luxury that was always tending to concentrate in fewer hands, usurers plundering citizens and proconsuls plundering usurers; but the lot of the mass of the people must have been depressed to the verge of endurance if depopulation had not spontaneously yielded relief. As it was, the Greek populations would tend to consist more and more of the capitalistic, official, and parasitic classes on the one hand, and of slaves and poor on the other.³

The general depopulation of subject Greece is thus perfectly intelligible. The "race" had not lost reproductive power; and even its newer artificial methods of checking numbers were not immeasurably more active than simple infanticide or exposure had been in the palmy days. In the ages of expansion the whole Hellenic world in nearly all its cities and all its islands swarmed with a relatively energetic population, who won from conditions often in large part unpropitious a sufficiency of subsistence on which to build by the hands of slaves a wonderful world of art. To these conditions they were limited by racial hostilities; everywhere there was substantial though convulsive equipoise among their own warring forces, and between those of their frontier communities and the surrounding "barbarians." The conquest of Alexander (heralded and invited by the campaign of the Ten Thousand) at one blow broke up this equipoise: organised Greek capacity, once forcibly unified, triumphed over the now lower civilisations of Egypt and the East, and Greek

¹ Cp. Hertzberg, *Gesch. Griechenlands unter der Herrsch. der Römer*, Th. i, Kap. 5, pp. 486-91.

² Finlay, i, 45, 46, 74.

³ "We stand [1st c. A.C.] before a decayed society of very rich men and slaves" Mahaffy, *Greek World*, p. 268).

population at once began to find its economic level in the easier conditions of some of the conquered lands. They flocked to Egypt and elsewhere in the Mediterranean basin as they do at the present time, for similar economic reasons. Nothing could now restore the old conditions; but the Roman conquest and tyranny forced on the disintegration till Greece proper was but the glorious shell of the life of the past, inhabited by handfuls of a semi-alien population, grown in a sense psychically degenerate under evil psychic conditions. In the lower strata of this population began the spread of Christianity, passing sporadically from Syria to the Greek cities, as at the same time to Egypt and Rome. A new conception of life was generated on the plane that typified it.

§ 3

It is a great testimony to the value of sheer peace that in the Roman Empire of the second century, with an incurable economic malady, as it were, eating into its nerve centres, and with no better provision for the higher life than the schools of rhetoric and the endowments of the Greek philosophic chairs, there was yet evolved a system of law and administration which, even under the frightful chances of imperial succession, sustained for centuries a vast empire, and imposed itself as a model on the very barbarism that overthrew it. And it is this system which connects for us the life conditions of Greece as the Romans held it, with its artistic shell almost intact despite all the Roman plunder,¹ and those of the strangely un-Hellenic Greek-speaking world which we know as Byzantium, with its capital at Constantinople.

The economic changes in this period can be traced only with difficulty and uncertainty; but they must have been important. The multiplication of slaves, which was a feature of the ages of the post-Alexandrian empires, the Roman conquest, and the Cilician pirate state, would necessarily be checked at a certain stage, both in town and country, by the continued shrinkage of the rich class. Agriculture in Greece, as in Italy, could not compete with that of Egypt; and slave-farming, save in special cultures, would not be worth carrying on. In the towns, again, the manufactures carried on by means of slaves had also dwindled greatly; and the small wealthy class could not and would not maintain more than a certain number of slaves for household purposes. The records of the

¹ Finlay, i, 73. But cp. Frazer, *Pausanias*, 1900, p. 4, as to the decay in the second century.

religious associations, too, as we shall see, seem to prove that men who were slaves in status had practical freedom of life, and the power of disposing of part of their earnings; whence it may be inferred that many owners virtually liberated their slaves, though retaining a legal claim over them. In this state of things population would gradually recover ground, albeit on a low plane. The type of poor semi-Greek now produced would live at a lower standard of comfort than had latterly been set for themselves by the more educated, who would largely drift elsewhere; and a home-staying population living mainly on olives and fish could relatively flourish, both in town and country. On that basis, in turn, commerce could to some extent revive, especially when Nero granted to the Greeks immunity from taxation.¹ We are prepared then, in the second century, under propitious rulers like Hadrian and the Antonines, to find Greek life materially improved.² The expenditure of Hadrian on public works, and the new endowments of the philosophic schools at Athens by the Antonines, would stimulate such a revival; and the Greek cities would further regain ground as Italy lost it, with the growth of cosmopolitanism throughout the Empire. While domestic slavery would still abound, the industries in Athens under the imperial rule would tend to be carried on by freedmen.

A further stimulus would come from the overthrow of the Parthian empire of the Arsacidæ by Artaxerxes, 226 A.C. The Arsacidæ, though often at war with the Romans, still represented the Hellenistic civilisation, whereas the Sassanidæ zealously returned to the ancient Persian religion, the exclusiveness of which would serve as a barrier to Western commerce,³ even while the cult of Mithra, Hellenised to the extent of being specially associated with image-worship, was spreading widely in the West. Commerce would now tend afresh to concentrate in Greece, the Indian and Chinese trade passing north and south of Persia.⁴ The removal of the seat of government from Rome by Diocletian, greatly lessening the Italian drain on the provinces, would still further assist the Greek revival after the Gothic invasion had come and gone. Thus we find the

¹ This was soon withdrawn by Vespasian, but apparently with circumspection. In the first century A.C. the administration seems to have been unoppressive (Mahaffy, *Greek World*, pp. 233, 237).

² Hertzberg (*Gesch. Griechenlands unter der Herrschaft der Römer*, Th. ii, Kap. 2, p. 189) rejects the statement of Finlay that Greece reached the lowest degree of misery and depopulation under the Flavian emperors ("about the time of Vespasian" is the first expression in the revised ed. i, 80). But Finlay contradicts himself: cp. p. 66. Hertzberg again (iii, 116) speaks of a "furchtbar zunehmende sociale Noth des dritten Jahrhunderts" at Athens, without making the fact clear. See below.

³ This is noted by Finlay (i, 143) in regard to the later surrender of a large Mesopotamian territory by Jovian to Shapur II, when the whole Greek population of the ceded districts was forced to emigrate.

⁴ Cp. Finlay, i, 264, 267-69.

larger Greek world in the time of Constantine grown once more so important that in the struggle between him and Licinius his great naval armament, composed chiefly of European Greeks, was massed in the restored Piræus. The fleet of Licinius, made up chiefly by Asiatic and Egyptian Greeks, already showed a relative decline on that side of the Empire's resources.¹ When, finally, Constantine established the new seat of empire at Byzantium, he tended to draw thither all the streams of Greek commerce, and to establish there, as the centre of the revenues of the Eastern Empire, some such population as had once flourished in Rome; with, however, a definite tendency to commerce and industry in the lower class population as well as in the middle class. To the government of this population was brought the highly developed organisation of the later Pagan Empire, joined with an ecclesiastical system from which heresy was periodically eliminated by the imperial policy, aided by the positive intellectual inferiority of the new Greek-speaking species. There was prosperity enough for material life; and the political and religious system was such as to prevent the normal result of prosperity, culture, from developing independently. The much-divided Greek world had at last, after countless convulsions, been brought to a possibility of quasi-inert equilibrium, an equilibrium which enabled it to sustain and repel repeated and destructive irruptions of northern barbarism,² and on the whole to hold at bay, with a shrunken territory, its neighbouring enemies for a thousand years.

§ 4

We have passed, then, through a twilight age, to find a new civilised empire ruled on the lines of the old, but with a single, albeit much-divided religion, and that the Christian, all others having been extirpated not by persuasion but by governmental force, after the new creed, adapting itself to its economic conditions, had secured for itself and its poor adherents, mainly from superstitious rich women, an amount of endowment such as no cult or priesthood possessed in the days of democracy. This process of endowment itself originated, however, in pagan practice; for in the days of substitution of emotional Eastern cults for the simpler worships of

¹ Finlay, i, 141. See p. 142 as to the recognition of the military importance of Greece by Julian.

² Cp. Finlay, i, 161, as to the ruin wrought at the end of the fourth century by Alaric; and pp. 253, 297, 303, 316, as to that wrought in the sixth century by Huns, Slavonians, and Avars.

early Hellas, there had grown up a multitude of voluntary societies for special semi-religious, semi-festival purposes—*thiasoi*, *eranoi*, and *orgeones*, all cultivating certain alien sacrifices and mysteries, as those of Dionysos, Adonis, Sabazios, Sarapis, Cotytto, or any other God called "Saviour."¹ These societies, unlike the older Hellenic associations of the same names² for the promotion of native worships, were freely open to women, to foreigners, and even to slaves;³ they were absolutely self-governing; the members subscribed according to their means; and we find them flourishing in large numbers in the age of the Antonines,⁴ when the old state cults were already deserted, though still endowed. They represent, as has been said, the reappearance of the democratic spirit and the gregarious instinct in new fields and in lower strata when general and practical democracy has been suppressed. In some such fashion did the Christian Church begin, employing the attractions and the machinery of many rival cults. Its final selection and establishment by the Empire represented in things religious a process analogous to that which had forcibly unified the competing republics of Greece in one inflexible and unprogressive organisation. Nothing but governmental force could have imposed doctrinal unity on the chaos of sects into which Christianity was naturally subdividing; but the power of conferring on the State Church special revenues was an effective means of keeping it practically subordinate.

N.B.

The historian who has laid down the proposition that religious unity was the cause of the survival of the Eastern Empire when the Western fell,⁵ has made the countervailing admission that between Justinian and Heraclius there was an almost universal centrifugal tendency in the Byzantine State, which was finally overcome only by "the inexorable principle of Roman centralisation,"⁶ at a time when it was nearly destroyed by its enemies and its own dissentient forces.⁷ Province after province had been taken by the Persians in the East; Slavs and Avars were driving back the population from the northern frontiers, even harrying the Peloponnesus; discontent enabled Phocas to dethrone and execute Maurice (602 A.C.); and Phocas in turn was utterly defeated by the Persian foe; when Heraclius appeared, to check the continuity of disaster, and to place the now circumscribed Empire on a footing of possible permanence. But it is important to realise how far the economic and external

¹ *Σωτηριασταί* is one of the group-names preserved.

² They are already seen established in the laws of Solon.

³ Foucart, *Des associations religieuses chez les Grecs*, 1873, pp. 5-10.

⁴ They may have begun as early as the Peloponnesian war (Foucart, p. 66).

⁵ Finlay, i, 85-86, notes.

⁶ *Id.* i, 289.

⁷ *Id.* p. 309; cp. pp. 328, 329.

conditions conduced to his success, such as it was. Hitherto the populace of Constantinople had been supported, like that of imperial Rome, by regular allowances of bread to every householder, provided from the tributary grain supplies of Egypt. The Persian conquest of Egypt in the year 616 stopped that revenue; and the emperor's inability to feed the huge semi-idle populace became a cause of regeneration, inasmuch as the State was forcibly relieved of the burden, and many of the idlers became available for the army about to be led by the emperor against the menacing Persians. He was reduced, however, to the expedient of offering to continue the supply on a payment of three pieces of gold from each claimant, and finally to breaking that contract; whereafter, on his proposing to transfer his capital to Carthage to escape the discontent, the populace and the clergy implored him to remain, and thus enabled him to exact a large loan from the latter,¹ and to dominate the nobility who had hitherto hampered his action. The victories of Heraclius over the Persians, however, only left the eastern and Egyptian provinces to fall under the Arabs; the first financial result of his successes having been to tax to exasperation the recovered lands in order to repay the ecclesiastical loan with usury; and the circumscribed Empire under his successors could not, even if the emperors wished, resume the feeding of the mass of the citizens. Constantinople, though still drawing some tribute from the remaining provinces in Italy, was thus perforce reduced to a safe economic basis, even as the people in general had been coerced into united effort by the imminent danger from Persia.

From this time forward, with many vicissitudes of military fortune, the contracted Byzantine State endured in virtue of its industrial and commercial basis and its consequent maritime and military strength, managed with ancient military science against enemies less skilled. The new invention of "Greek fire," like all advances in the use of missiles in warfare, counted for much; but the decisive condition of success was the possession of continuous resources. Justinian, among many measures of mere oppression and restriction, had contrived to introduce from the far East the silk manufacture, which for the ancient and medieval European world was of enormous mercantile importance. Such a staple, and

¹ A fair idea of the facts may be had by combining the narratives of Gibbon, Finlay, and Mr. Oman (*The Byzantine Empire*, ch. x). Gibbon and Mr. Oman ignore the threat to make Carthage the capital; Gibbon ignores the point as to the stoppage of the grain supply; Finlay ignores the Church loan; Mr. Oman (p. 133) represents it as voluntary, whereas Gibbon shows it to have been compulsory (ch. 46, Bohn ed. v, 179, *note*). Mr. Bury alone (*History of the Later Roman Empire*, 1889, ii, 217-21) gives a fairly complete view of the situation. He specifies a famine and a pestilence as following on the stoppage of the grain supply.

the virtual control of the whole commerce between northern and western Europe and the East, kept Byzantium the greatest trading power in Christendom until the triumph of the Italian republics. Even the Saracen conquests in Asia and Africa did not seriously affect this source of strength; for the Saracen administration, though often wise and energetic, was in Egypt too often convulsed by civil wars to permit of trade flourishing there in any superlative degree. The Byzantines continued to trade with India by the Black Sea and Central Asian route; and their monopolies and imposts, however grievous, were relatively bearable compared with the afflictions of commerce under other powers. As of old, the Greeks or Greek-speaking folk were the traders of the Mediterranean, the Saracen navy never reaching sufficient power to check them; and when finally its remnants took to piracy, they served rather to cut off all weaker competition than to affect the preponderating naval power of the Empire.

In this period of prevailing commercial vigour, from the sixth to the eleventh century, the life of the Greek Empire was substantially civic, the rural districts remaining desolate, and agriculture extremely feeble,¹ though the Slavonian immigrants who now inhabited the Peloponnesus² must have lived by that means. Under such circumstances the towns would be fed by imported grain, presumably that of the Crimea; but as they did not grow in size, at least in the case of the capital, their industrial prosperity must have largely depended on the restriction of population, whether by vice, preventive checks, misery, or the sheer unhealthiness of city life, which at the present day prevents so many Eastern cities from maintaining themselves save by influx from the country.³ It is misleading to point to the legal veto on infanticide as a great Christian reform without taking these things into account. The presumption is that misery, vice, child-exposure, and abortion, rather than prudence, kept the poor population within the limits of subsistence.

Mr. Oman (*Byzantine Empire*, p. 145) takes the popular view as to the reformative effect of Christianity. He goes on to describe Constantine as providing for the children of the destitute to prevent their exposure, but does not mention that the same thing had been done under the Antonines, and that Constantine permitted the finder of an exposed child to enslave it. The punishment of all exposure as infanticide, under Valentinian, was only an adoption of the pagan practice at Thebes (*Ælian, Var. Hist.* ii, 7). But in spite of all enactments,

¹ Finlay, i, 425.

² *Id.* ii, 37.

³ Robertson Smith, *Religion of the Semites*, p. 12.

under Christian as under pagan rule, exposure and positive infanticide continued, though Christian sentiment never gave it the toleration exhibited in the drama of Menander. As to the historic facts, cp. Lecky, *Hist. of European Morals*, 6th ed. ii, 24-33.

Broadly speaking, it was inevitable that in such a population as is pictured for us by Chrysostom—a multitude profoundly ignorant, superstitious, excitable, sensuous—all the vices of the Græco-Roman period should habitually flourish, while poverty must have been normally acute after the stoppage of regular free bread. On the general moral environment, cp. the author's *Short History of Freethought*, 2nd ed. i, 249-50.

It is necessary, in the same way, to substitute an accurate for a conventional view as to the treatment of slaves under the Christian Empire. We are still told¹ that the Christian doctrine or implication of religious equality had the effect first of greatly modifying the evils of slavery and finally of abolishing it. Research proves that the facts were otherwise. We have already seen how economic causes partially limited slavery before Christianity was heard of; and in so far as the limitation was maintained,² the efficient causes remain demonstrably economic.³ Indeed, no other causes can be shown to have existed. Not only is slavery endorsed in the Gospels,⁴ and treated by Paul as not merely compatible with but favourable to Christian freedom on the part of the slave,⁵ but the early Christians, commonly supposed to have been the most incorrupt, held slaves as a matter of course.⁶ In the laws of Justinian not a word is said as to slavery being opposed to either the spirit or the letter of Christianity; and the only expressions that in any degree deprecate it are in terms of the Stoic doctrine of the "law of nature,"⁷ which we know to have been already current in the time of Aristotle,⁸ and to

¹ Oman, as cited, pp. 147, 148. The conventional claim, as made by Robertson and echoed by Guizot, was partly disallowed even by Milman, and countered by the clerical editor of the Bohn ed. of Gibbon (ii, 50-54). But such conventional formulas are always subject to resuscitation.

² Finlay (i, 81) writes that "at this favourable conjuncture Christianity stepped in to prevent avarice from ever recovering the ground which humanity had gained." This clearly did not happen, and his later chapters supply the true explanation.

³ Finlay later says so in so many words (ii, 23, 220), explicitly rejecting the Christian theory (see also p. 321). This historian's views seem to have modified as his studies proceeded, but without leading him to recast his earlier text.

⁴ Luke xvii, 7-10, Gr. The translation "servant" is, of course, an entire perversion.

⁵ 1 Cor. vii, 21-24. The phrase unintelligibly garbled as "use it rather" clearly means "rather remain a slave," "even" being understood in the previous clause. This was the interpretation of Chrysostom and most of the Fathers. See the Variorum Teacher's Bible, *ad loc.* Cp. the whole first chapter of Larroque, *De l'esclavage chez les nations chrétiennes*, 2nd édit. 1864; and the forcible passage of Frédéric Morin, *Origines de la Démocratie*, 3e édit. 1865, pp. 384-86. As Morin points out, the Church has never passed a theological condemnation of slavery. On the other hand, it was expressly justified by Augustine (*De Civ. Dei*, l. xix, c. 15) as a divinely ordained punishment for sin; and by Thomas Aquinas (*De regimine principum*, ii, 10) as being further a stimulus to bravery in soldiers. He cannot have seen the Histories of Tacitus, where (ii, 4) civil wars are declared to have been the most bloody, because prisoners were not to be enslaved.

⁶ Athenagoras, *Apology for Christianity*, c. 35; Chrysostom, *passim*.

⁷ *Instit. Justin.* I, iii, § 2, 4; v.

⁸ *Politics*, i, 3.

have become widespread in the age of the Antonines, under Stoic auspices. That "law of nature," however, was never allowed to override a definite law of society; and the Christian influence on the other hand set up a new set of arguments for slavery.¹ Among the Christian Visigoths, slaves who married without authority from their masters were forcibly separated; and the slave who dared to marry a free-woman was burnt alive with his wife; while "the bishops were among the largest slave-holders in the realm; and baptised Christians were bought and sold without a blush by the successors of St. Paul and Santiago."² It cannot even be said of the Byzantines, any more than of the Protestants of the southern United States of fifty years ago, that they were more humane to their slaves than the earlier pagans had been; for we find Christian Byzantine matrons causing their slave-girls to be tied up and brutally flogged;³ even as we have the testimony of Salvian to the atrocities committed by Christian slave-owners in Gaul.⁴ The admission that the Church, even when encouraging laymen to free their slaves, insisted on retaining its own,⁵ is the proof that the urging force was not even then doctrinal, but the perception that the Church's secular interests were served by the growth of an independent population outside its own lands.⁶ The spirit of the Justinian code, despite its allusion to the law of nature, and the spirit of the enactments of the early Councils of the Church, are alike opposed to any idea of spiritual equality between bond and free.

On the other hand, the simple restriction of conquest limited the possibilities of slavery for Byzantium. Captives were enslaved to the last,⁷ but of these there was no steady supply. In the rural districts, again, the fiscal conditions made for at least nominal freedom, as is shown by the historian who has most closely analysed the conditions:—

"The Roman financial administration, by depressing the higher classes and impoverishing the rich, at last burdened the small proprietors and cultivators of the soil with the whole weight of the land-tax. The labourer of the soil then became an object of great interest to the treasury, and.....obtained almost as important a position in the eyes of the fisc as the landed

¹ Cp. Michelet, *Hist. de France*, vol. vii, *Renaissance*, note du § v, Introd. (ed. 1857, pp. 155-57). Michelet argues that the Christian influence was substantially anti-liberationist.

² U. R. Burke, *History of Spain*, Hume's ed. i, 116, 407.

³ Chrysostom, 15th Hom. in Eph. (iv, 31); cp. 11th Hom. in 1 Thess. (v, 28).

⁴ "Cum occidunt servos suos, jus putant esse, non crimen. Non solum hoc, sed eodem privilegio etiam in execrando impudicitiae cæno abutuntur" (*De gubernatione Dei*, iv).

⁵ See below, pt. iv, ch. ii.

⁶ Cp. the whole of Larroque's second chapter.

⁷ So Mr. Oman admits, p. 148.

proprietor himself. The first laws which conferred any rights on the slave are those which the Roman government enacted to prevent the landed proprietors from transferring their slaves, engaged in the cultivation of lands assessed for the land-tax, to other employments which, though more profitable to the proprietor of the slave, would have yielded a smaller or less permanent return to the imperial treasury.¹ The avarice of the imperial treasury, by reducing the mass of the free population to the same degree of poverty as the slaves, had removed one cause of the separation of the two classes. The position of the slave had lost most of its moral degradation, and [he] occupied precisely the same political position in society as the poor labourer from the moment that the Roman fiscal laws compelled any freeman who had cultivated lands for the space of thirty years to remain for ever attached, with his descendants, to the same estate.² The lower orders were from that period blended into one class; the slave rose to be a member of this body; the freeman descended, but his descent was necessary for the improvement of the great bulk of the human race, and for the extinction of slavery. *Such was the progress of civilisation in the Eastern Empire.* The measures of Justinian which, by their fiscal rapacity, tended to sink the free population to the same state of poverty as the slaves, really prepared the way for the rise of the slaves *as soon as any general improvement took place in the condition of the human race.*³

For the rest, it cannot be supposed that the "freedom" thus constituted had much actuality. Sons of soldiers and artisans were held bound to follow their father's profession, as in the hereditary castes of the East,⁴ and none of the fruits of freedom are to be traced in Byzantine life. Still, the fact remains that the commercial and industrial life sustained the political, and that the political began definitely to fail when the commercial did. Constantinople could hardly have collapsed as it did before the Crusaders if its commerce had not already begun to dwindle through interception by Venice and the Italian trading cities. As soon as these were able to trade directly with the East they did so, thus withdrawing a large part of the stream of commerce from Byzantium; and when, finally, they acquired the secret of her silk manufacture, her industrial revenue was in turn undermined. On the economic weakening, the political followed; and the Eastern Empire finally fell before the Turks, very much as the Western had fallen before the Goths.

¹ *Cod. Theod.* xi, 3. 1, 2; *Cod. Justin.* xi, 47.

² *Cod. Justin.* xi, 47, 13 and 23. [A clear retrogression to quasi-slavery for the freemen.]

³ Finlay, i, 200, 201. Cp. p. 153.

⁴ *Id.* ii, 27, and note. Cp. Dill, as cited, p. 233.

PART III
CULTURE FORCES IN ANTIQUITY

CHAPTER I

G R E E C E

§ 1

IT is still common, among men who professedly accept the theory of evolution, to speak of special culture developments, notably those of sculpture and literature in Greece, art in medieval Italy, and theocratic religion in Judea, as mysteries beyond solution. It may be well, then, to consider some of these developments as processes of social causation, in terms of the general principles above outlined.

[A rational view was reached by the sociologists of the eighteenth century, by whom the question of culture beginnings was much discussed—*e.g.*, Goguet's *De l'origine des lois, des arts, et des sciences*, 1758; Ferguson's *Essay on the History of Civil Society*, 1767; and Hume's essay on the *Rise and Progress of the Arts and Sciences*. At the end of the century we find the solution scientifically put by Walckenaer: "Ainsi le germe de génie et des talens existe dans tous les tems, mais tous les tems ne sont pas propres à le faire éclore" (*Essai sur l'histoire de l'espèce humaine*, 1798, l. vi, ch. xx, *Des siècles les plus favorables aux productions de génie*, pp. 348, 349). In England forty years later we find Hallam thus exemplifying the obscurantist reaction: "There is only one cause for the want of great men in any period—nature does not think fit to produce them. They are no creatures of education and circumstances" (*Literature of Europe*, pt. i, ch. iii, § 35). A kindred though much less crude view underlies Sir Francis Galton's argument in *Hereditary Genius*. Cp. the present writer's paper on "The Economics of Genius," in *The Forum*, April, 1898 (rep. in *Essays in Sociology*, vol. ii), and the able essay of Mr. Cooley, there cited. My esteemed friend, Mr. Lester Ward (*Dynamic Sociology*, ii, 600, 601), seems to me, as does Mill (*System of*

Logic, bk. vi, ch. iv, § 4; cp. Bain, *J. S. Mill*, p. 146), to err somewhat on the opposite side to that of Hallam and Galton, in assuming that faculty is nearly equal in all, given only opportunity.]

And first as to Greece. As against the common conception of the Hellenic people as "innately" artistic, it may be well to cite the judgment of an artist who, if not more scientific in his method of reaching his opinion, has on the whole a better right to it in this case than has the average man to his. It is a man of genius who writes¹: "A favourite faith, dear to those who teach, is that certain periods were especially artistic, and that nations, readily named, were notably lovers of art. So we are told that the Greeks were, as a people, worshippers of the beautiful, and that in the fifteenth century art was ingrained in the multitude.....Listen! There never was an artistic period. There never was an Art-loving nation." This, which was sometime a paradox, is when interpreted one of the primary truths of sociology.

Our theorist goes on to describe the doings of the first artist, and the slow contagion of his example among men similarly gifted, till the artistic species had filled the land with beautiful things, which were uncritically used by the non-artistic; "and the Amateur was unknown—and the Dilettante undreamed of." Such is the artist's fairy tale of explanation. The probable fact is that the "first artists" in historic Greece were moved to imitative construction by samples of the work of foreigners. If, on the other hand, we decide that the "race" had evolved relatively high artistic capacities before it reached its Greek or Asian home,² it will still hold good that the early Ægean evolution owed much to ancient Oriental and Egyptian example. The Greeks as we know them visibly passed from primitive to high art in all things. Having first had fetish Gods of unshapen stone, they made Gods in crudely human shape, at first probably of wood, later of stone. So with vases, goblets, tables, furniture, and ware of all sorts, all gradually developing in felicity of form up to a certain point, whereafter art worsened. What we require to know is the why of both processes.

Pace the artist, it is clear that artistic objects were multiplied mainly because they were in steady economic demand. The shaping impulse is doubtless special, and in its highest grades rare; but there must also have been special conditions to develop it in one country

¹ Whistler, *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies*, 1890, pp. 138, 139.

² Cp. Prof. Burrows, *The Discoveries in Crete*, 1907, ch. xi; Bury, *History of Greece*, 1906, p. 65. "The supreme inspiration," says Bury, "came to their minstrels on Asiatic soil."

in the special degree. That is to say, the faculty for shaping, for design, was oftener appealed to in Greece than elsewhere, and was allowed more freedom in the response, thus reaching new excellence. The early Greeks can have had no very delicate taste, satisfied as they were with statues as primitive as the conventional Assyrian types they copied.

Prof. Burrows, in his valuable work on *The Discoveries in Crete* (1907), somewhat confuses one of his problems by assuming that, on a given chronological view, the creators of the early Ægean civilisation were "the most progressive and artistic part of the race" (p. 193). No such assumption can be valid on any chronology. Every "part" of a race, broadly speaking, has the same total potentialities. The determinants are the special *evocative* conditions, which may be either culture contacts or economic fostering. A rational view of the growth of Greek art is put by Dr. Mahaffy, despite his endorsement of Mr. Freeman's extravagant estimate of Athenian intelligence:—"However national and diffused it [art] became, this was due to careful study, and training, and legislation, and not to a sort of natural compulsion.....As natural beauty was always the exception among Greek men, so artistic talent was also rare and special" (*Social Life in Greece*, 3rd ed. p. 430). All the remains, as well as every principle of sociological science, go to support this view of the case. When Reber asserts (*Hist. of Ancient Art*, Eng. tr. 1883, p. 264) that "the very first carvings of Greece had a power of development which was wanting in all the other nations of that period," he is setting up an occult principle and obscuring the problem. The other nations of *that period* were not in progressive stages; but some of them had progressed in art in their time. And many of the "very first" Greek works—that is, of the "historic" period, as distinguished from the "Minoan"—are enormously inferior to some very ancient Egyptian work.

The development of taste was itself the outcome of a thousand steps of comparison and specialisation, art growing "artistic" as children grow in reasonableness and in nervous co-ordination. And the special conditions of historic Greece were roughly these:—

(1) The great primary stimulus to Greek art, science, and thought, through the contact of the early settlers in Asia Minor with the remains of the older Semitic civilisation,¹ and the further stimuli from Egypt.

¹ E. Meyer, *Geschichte des Alterthums*, ii, 533-36; A. R. Hall, *The Oldest Civilisation of Greece*, 1901, pp. 31, 32. Cp. the author's *Short History of Freethought*, i, 122-27; and Von Ihering's *Vorgeschichte der Indo-Europäer*, Eng. trans. ("The Evolution of the Aryan"), p. 73. Von Ihering's dictum is the more noteworthy because it counters his primary assumption of race-characters.

(2) Multitude of autonomous communities, of which the members had intercourse as kindred yet critical strangers, emulous of each other, but mixing their stocks, and so developing the potentialities of the species.

(3) Multitude of religious cults, each having its local temples, its local statues, and its local ritual practices.

(4) The concourse in Athens, and some other cities, of alert and capable men from all parts of the Greek-speaking world,¹ and of men of other speech who came thither to learn.

(5) The special growth of civic and peaceful population in Attica by the free incorporation of the smaller towns in the franchise of Athens. Athens had thus the largest number of free citizens of all the Greek cities to start with,² and the maximum of domestic peace.

(6) The maintenance of an ideal of cultured life as the outcome of these conditions, which were not speedily overridden either by (a) systematic militarism, or (b) industrialism, or (c) by great accumulation of wealth.

(7) The special public expenditure of the State, particularly in the age of Pericles, on art, architecture, and the drama, and in stipends to the poorer of the free citizens.

N.B. Thus the culture history of Greece, like the political, connects vitally from the first with the physical conditions. The disrupted character of the mainland; the diffusion of the people through the Ægean Isles; the spreading of colonies on east and west, set up a multitude of separate City-States, no one of which could decisively or long dominate the rest. These democratic and equal communities reacted on each other, especially those so placed as to be sea-faring. Their separateness developed a multitudinous mythology; even the Gods generally recognised being worshipped with endless local particularities, while most districts had their special deities. For each and all of these were required temples, altars, statues, sacred vessels, which would be paid for by the public³ or the temple revenues, or by rich devotees; and the countless myths, multiplied on all hands because of the absence of anything like a general priestly organisation, were an endless appeal to the imitative arts.

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¹ Cp. Galton, *Hereditary Genius*, ed. 1892, p. 329. The contrast between the policy of Athens, before and after Solon, and that of Megara, which boasted of never having given the citizenship to any stranger save Hercules (Wachsmuth, Eng. tr. i, 248), goes far to explain the inferiority of Megarean culture.

² "No other Greek city possessed so large an immediate territory" [as distinct from subject territory, like Laconia] "or so great a number of free and equal citizens" (Freeman, *History of Federal Government*, ed. 1893, p. 22, note). And the number was greatly swelled "after Athens had in 477 taken the lead in the Delian Maritime League" (Maisch, *Greek Antiquities*, § 28), so that in 451 it was felt necessary again to limit citizenship to men born of Athenian parents.

³ Cicero (*in Verrem* ii, 59) testifies to the zeal of Greek cities in buying paintings and statues in his day, and their unwillingness to sell.

Nature, too, had freely supplied the ideal medium for sculpture and for the finest architecture—pure marble. And as the political dividedness of Hellenedom prevented even an approach to organisation among the scattered and independent priests, so the priesthood had no power and no thought of imposing artistic limitations on the shapers of the art objects given to their temples. In addition to all this, the local patriotism of the countless communities was constantly expressed in statues to their own heroes, statesmen, and athletes. And in such a world of sculpture, formative art must needs flourish wherever it could ornament life.

We have only to compare the conditions in Judea, Persia, Egypt, and early Rome to see the enormous differentiation herein implied. In Mazdean Persia and Yahwistic Judea there was a tabu on all divine images, and by consequence on all sculpture that could lend itself to idolatry.¹ (This tabu, like the monotheistic idea, was itself the outcome of political and social causation, which is in large part traceable and readily intelligible.) In Italy, in the early historic period, outside of Etruria, there had been no process of culture-contact sufficient to develop any of the arts in a high degree; and the relation of the Romans to the other Italian communities in terms of situation and institutions² was fatally one of progressive conquest. Their specialisation was thus military or predaceous; and the formal acceptance of the deities of the conquered communities could not prevent the partial uniformation of worship. Thus Rome had nearly everything to learn from Greece in art as in literature. In Egypt, again, where sculpture had at more than one time, in more than one locality, reached an astonishing excellence,³ the easily maintained political centralisation⁴ and the commercial isolation made fatally for uniformity of ideal; and the secure dominion of the organised priesthood, cultured only sacerdotally, always strove to impose one stolid conventional form on all sacred and ritual sculpture,⁵ which was copied in the secular, in order that kings should as much as possible resemble Gods. Where the bulk of Greece was "servile to all the skyey influences," physically as well as mentally, open on all sides to all cultures, all pressures, all stimuli, Egypt and Judea and Persia were relatively iron-bound, and early Rome relatively inaccessible.

¹ The result is a marked poverty of power in such sculpture as the Persians had. It is in every respect inferior to the Assyrian which it copies. See Reber, *History of Ancient Art*, Eng. tr. 1883, pp. 121-28.

² See above, p. 28.

³ See Maspero, *Manual of Egyptian Archæology*, Eng. tr. 1895, pp. 215, 226, 235, 236, 240, etc.

⁴ See above, p. 56.

⁵ See Maspero, as cited, pp. 212, 214, 231, etc., as to the religious influence. M. Maspero recognises several movements of renaissance and reaction through the ages.

Finally, as militarism never spread Spartan-wise over pre-Alexandrian Greece, and her natural limitations prevented any such exploitation of labour as took place in Egypt, the prevailing ideal in times of peace, at least in Attica, was that of the cultured man, *καλοκάγαθος*, supported by slave labour but not enormously rich, who stimulated art as he was stimulated by it. Assuredly he was in many cases a dilettante, if not an amateur, else had art been in a worse case.

It is to be remembered that in later Greece, from about the time of Apelles, all free children were taught to draw (Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* xxxv, 36, 15); and long before, the same authority tells us, art was taken up by men of rank. The introduction of painting into the schools at Sicyon took place about 350 B.C., and thence the practice spread all over Hellas. Aristotle, too (*Politics*, v [viii], 3), commends the teaching of drawing to children, noting that it enables men to judge of the arts and avoid blunders in picture-buying—though he puts this as an inferior and incidental gain. Thus the educated Greeks were in a fairly good sense all dilettanti and amateurs. On the whole subject see K. J. Freeman, *Schools of Hellas*, 1908, pp. 114–17.

§ 2

In literature Greek development is as clearly consequent as in art. The Homeric poems are the outcome of a social state in which a class of bards could find a living by chanting heroic tales to aristocratic households. Lyric genius is indeed something specially incalculable; and it is startling to realise that about the time of the rude rule of Peisistratos at Athens, Sappho in Lesbos was not merely producing the perfect lyrics which to this day men reckon unmatched, but was the centre of a kind of school of song. But Lesbos was really the home of an ancient culture—"the earliest of all the Æolic settlements, anterior even to Kymê"¹—and Sappho followed closely upon the lyrists Pittakos and Alkaios. So that here too there is intelligible causation in environment as well as genius. In other directions it is patent. The drama, tragic and comic alike, was unquestionably the outcome of the public worship of the Gods, first provided for by the community, later often exacted by it from rich aspirants to political power. Greek drama is a clear evolution, on the tragic side, from the primitive ritual of Dionysos, Beer-God or Wine-God; individual genius and communal fostering combining to develop a primitive rite into a literary florescence.²

¹ Grote, iii, 21–22.

² Cp. Haigh, *The Tragic Drama of the Greeks*, 1896, ch. i; Miss Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*, 2nd ed. 1908, ch. viii.

For all such developments special genius is as a matter of course required, but potential genius occurs in all communities in given forms at a given culture stage; and what happened in Athens was that the special genius for drama was specially appealed to, evoked, and maintained. Æschylus in Egypt and Aristophanes in Persia must have died with all their drama in them. Further, as Grote has so luminously shown,¹ the juridical life of Athens, with its perpetual play of special pleading in the dikasteries, was signally propitious to the spirit of drama. The constant clashing and contrast of ethical points of view, the daily play of eristic thought, was in itself a real drama which educated both dramatists and audience, and which inevitably affected the handling of moral problems on the stage. Athens may thus be said to have cultivated discussion as Sparta cultivated "Laconism"; and both philosophy and drama in Greece are steeped in it. Myths thus came to be handled on the stage with a breadth of reflection which was nowhere else possible.

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Historiography, science, and philosophy, again, were similarly fostered by other special conditions. Abstract and physical science began for Greece in the comparison and friction of ideas among leisured men, themselves often travelled, living in inquisitive communities often visited by strangers. What Egypt and Syria and Phœnicia had to give in medical lore, in geometry, and in astronomy, was assimilated and built upon, in an atmosphere of free thought and free discussion, whence came all manner of abstract philosophy, analytical and ethical. Plato and Aristotle are the peaks of immense accumulations of more primitive thought beginning on the soil laid by Semitic culture in Asia Minor; Socrates was stimulated and drawn out by the Athenian life on which he didactically reacted; Hippocrates garnered the experience of many medical priests. History was cultivated under similar conditions of manifold intercourse and intelligent inquisitiveness. Herodotus put down the outcome of much questioning during many travels, and he had an appreciative public with similar tastes.² The manifold life of Hellas and her neighbours, Egypt, Persia, Syria, was an endless ground for inquiry and anecdote. The art of writing, acquired long before from Phœnicia, was thus put to unparalleled uses; and at length the theme of the Peloponnesian war, in which all the political passions

¹ Pt. ii, ch. 67.

² See Holm's suggestion, cited by Mahaffy, *Problems of Greek History*, p. 92, note, as to the value of Herodotus to the *traders* of his day. Holm also suggests, however, that the political service rendered by Herodotus to the Athenians was felt by them to be important, as giving them new light on Egypt and the East (Eng. tr. ii, 290, 291). The reward paid to Herodotus would greatly stimulate further historical research.

of Hellas were embroiled for a generation, found in Thucydides a historian produced by and representative of all the critical judgment of the critical Athenian age. Plutarch, in a later period, condenses a library of lesser writers.

Thus in respect of every characteristic and every special attainment of Greek life we can trace external causation, from the geographical conditions upwards, without being once tempted to resort to the verbalist explanation of "race qualities" or "national genius." If Hellas developed otherwise than Phœnicia from any given date onwards, the causes lay either in the environment or in the set previously given to Phœnician life by its special antecedents, which in turn were determined by environment. To suppose that "the Greeks" started primordially with a unique connatural bent to a relatively "ideal" method of life, preferring culture to riches and art to luxury, is to entail the further assumption of a separate biological evolution from the pre-human stage. To put the problem clearly, let us say that if we suppose the ancestors of the Greeks three millenniums before Homer to have been planted in Australia, with none of the domesticable animals which have played so decisive a part in the development of human societies, there is no good reason to think that the "race" would have risen to any higher levels than had been reached by the Australian aborigines at the time of their discovery by Europeans. One of the most remarkable things about those aborigines is their disproportionately high cranial capacity, which seems compatible with a mental life that their natural environment has always precluded. Many plain traces of gross primeval savagery remain in Greek literature and religion; and to credit all Greek progress to a unique racial faculty is to turn the back upon all the accumulating evidence which goes to show that from the first entrance of the Greeks into Greece they blended with and assimilated the culture of the races whom they found there.¹ The futility of the whole racial thesis becomes evident, finally, the moment we reflect how unequal Greek culture was; how restricted in Hellas, how special to Athens was it on the intellectual side when once Athens had reached her stature; how blank of thought and science was all Hellenic life before the contact of Semitic survivals in Ionia; how backward were many sections of the pagan Hellenic stock to the last; and how backward they have been since the political overturn in antiquity.

The vitiating concept of racial genius appears incidentally,

¹ Cp. Bury, *History of Greece*, pp. 7, 33-34.

but definitely, in Dr. Cunningham's contrast of Phœnicians and Greeks as relatively wealth-seekers and culture-seekers, ingrained barbarians and ingrained humanists (*Western Civilisation*, pp. 72, 73, 98, 99, etc.), and in his phrase as to the persistent "principles which the Greek and the Phœnician respectively represented." The antithesis, it is here maintained, is spurious. Many Greeks were in full sympathy with the Phœnician norm; many Phœnicians must have been capable of delighting in the Greek norm had they been reared to it. At a given period the Phœnicians had a higher life than the Greeks; and had the Phœnicians evolved for ages in the Greek environment, with an equivalent blending of stocks and cross-fertilisation of cultures, they could have become all that the Greeks ever were. The assertion that when we see "the destruction and degradation of human life in the march of material progress, we see what is alien to the Greek spirit" (*id.* p. 99) will not bear examination. Greek slavery, like every other, was just such a degradation of human life. And to speak of a "consciousness of her mission" on the part of "Athens" (*id.* pp. 72, 73) is to set up a pseudo-entity and a moral illusion.

It is remarkable that even among students well abreast of evolutionary thought there is still a strong tendency to think of Greek civilisation in terms of some occult virtue of "Hellenic spirit," something unique in social phenomena, something not to be accounted for like the process of evolution in other races. Thus so accomplished and critical a thinker as Prof. Gilbert Murray seems to account for every Greek advance beyond savagery as a result of "Hellenism." *E.g.*, "Human sacrifice, then, is one of the barbarities which Hellenism successfully overcame" (*The Rise of the Greek Epic*, 1907, p. 16); "Solved by the progressive, or, I may say, by the Hellenic spirit" (*Id.* p. 25). In this way the discrediting and abandonment of the use of poisoned arrows in the "Homeric" period (*Id.* pp. 120-21) seems to be ascribed either to the Homeric or to the Hellenic "spirit."

Now, Mr. Murray himself incidentally notes (p. 121) that poisoned weapons are forbidden in the Laws of Manu; and it might be pointed out that even among the barbaric and ill-advantaged Somali, when visited by Burton fifty years ago, the use of poisoned arrows was already restricted to "the servile class" (*First Footsteps in East Africa*, ed. 1910, p. 45; cp. p. 74). The use of poisoned arrows, in short, is common in savagery, and is transcended by all races alike when they rise some way above that level. The "Hellenes," to start with, were savages like the rest, and rose like others in virtue of propitious conditions. So with human sacrifice. According to Herodotus, the Egyptians had abandoned it before the Greeks. Shall we describe the Egyptian progress as a matter of "Egypticism" or "the Egyptian spirit"?

Defences of the Greeks, such as that made so ably by Mr. Murray against the aspersions cast upon "Paganism" by uncritical Christians, are to be sympathetically received in the light of their purport; but the true historical method is surely not to exhibit the historic Greeks as "antitheses" to "the pagan man" of modern anthropology, but to show Christians how they and their creed have evolved from savagery even as did the Greeks. (Cp. the author's *Christianity and Mythology*, 2nd ed. p. 77 sq., as to the pro-Hellenic handling of Greek phenomena by other scholars.)

Should the general line of causation here set forth be challenged, it will suffice, by way of test, to turn to the special case of Sparta. If it were "Greek character" that brought forth Greek art, letters, and science, they ought to have flourished in Greek Sparta as elsewhere. It is, however, the notorious historic fact that during all the centuries of her existence, after the pre-Lycurgeoan period, Sparta contributed to the general deed of man virtually nothing, either in art or letters, in science or philosophy.

The grounds for holding that choral poetry flourished pre-eminently at Sparta (see K. O. Müller, *History of the Dorians*, Eng. tr. ii, 383) are not very strong. See Busolt, *Griechische Geschichte*, 1885, i, 158, 159, for what can be finally said on this head. Ernst Curtius (*Griechische Geschichte*, 1858, i, 240) writes on this subject as a romantic enthusiast. Burckhardt (*Griechische Culturgeschichte*, i, 116-19) examines the subject with his usual care, but decides only that the Spartans employed music with a special eye to military education. And Müller acknowledges that though many Spartan lyricists are named, "there has not been preserved a single fragment of Spartan lyric poetry, with the exception of Alkman's," the probable reason being "a certain uniformity and monotony in their productions, such as is perceived in the early works of art." On the whole question cp. K. J. Freeman's *Schools of Hellas*, chs. i and xi.

In the story of Hellas, Sparta stands almost alone among the peoples as yielding no foothold to the life of the mind, bare of nearly all memory of beauty,¹ indigent in all that belongs to the spirit, morally sterile as steel. Yet "the Dorians of Laconia are perhaps the only people in Greece who can be said to have preserved in any

¹ The Spartan women were indeed reputed the most beautiful, doubtless a result of their healthier life. As for the works of "art" claimed by Müller (*The Dorians*, ii, 25-26) for Sparta, they are simply objects of utility, and were by his own avowal (p. 24) the work of non-Spartan Laconians, aliens, or slaves, "since no Spartan, before the introduction of the Achæan constitution, was allowed to follow any trade." No one disputes that other Dorian cities, notably Sikyon, did much for art—another proof that "race" has nothing to do with the matter.

measure the purity of their Greek blood."¹ Before such a phenomenon the dogma of race-character instantly collapses, whereas in terms of the reaction of conditions the explanation is entirely adequate. As thus:—

1. Sparta was by situation one of the most secluded of the Greek States. In the words of Euripides, it was "hollow, surrounded by mountains, rugged, and difficult of access to an enemy."² Compared in particular with Athens, it was not only landward and mountain-walled, but out of the way of all traffic.³

2. From the first the Spartans were balanced in a peculiar degree by the strength of the Achaians, who were in the Peloponnesus before them, the hostilities between the invaders and the older inhabitants lasting longer in the valley of the Eurotas than anywhere else.⁴ The Spartan militarism was thus a special product of circumstances, not a result of Doric "character," since other Dorian communities did not develop it.

3. Being thus so little open to commercial influence, and so committed to a life of militarism, Sparta was susceptible of a rigidity of military constitution that was impossible elsewhere in the Hellenic world, save to some extent in the similarly aristocratic and undeveloped communities of Thessaly and Crete, each similarly noted for unintellectuality. Whatever be the political origins of these societies, it is clear that that of Sparta could not have been built up or maintained save under conditions of comparative isolation.

Grote, always somewhat inclined to racial explanations, argues (ed. 1888, ii, 262), as against K. O. Müller, who had still stronger leanings of the kind, that the Spartans were not the "true Doric type," in that their institutions were peculiar to themselves, distinguishing them "not less from Argos, Corinth, Megara, Epidaurus, Sikyôn, Korkyra, or Knidus, than from Athens or Thebes." This is doubtless true as against Müller (cp. Kopstadt, cited by Grote; Cox, *General History of Greece*, 1877, p. 28; and Ménard, *Histoire des Grecs*, 1884, pp. 218, 221), but the suggestion that the Spartans varied in respect of being *less* "Doric" is equally astray. Grote goes on to note that "Krête was the only other portion of Greece in which there prevailed institutions in many respects analogous, yet still dissimilar in those two attributes which form the real mark and pinch of

¹ Bury, *History of Greece*, ed. 1906, p. 59.

² Cited in Strabo, bk. viii, ch. v, § 6.

³ Cp. Müller, i, 80. Müller notes that the Corinthians were "nearly singular among the Doric States" in esteeming trade, their experience of its productiveness "having taught them to set a higher value upon it" (work cited, ii, 24).

⁴ Cp. Maisch, *Manual of Greek Antiquities*, Eng. tr. § 11; K. O. Müller, *The Dorians*, i, 105, 203.

Spartan legislation—viz., the military discipline and rigorous private training. There were doubtless Dorians in Krête, but we have no proof that these peculiar institutions belonged to them more than to the other inhabitants of the island." The argument cuts both ways. If it was not definitely "Dorian" to have such institutions, neither was it un-Dorian. As Cox observes (p. 30), the Spartan constitution in its earlier stages "much resembled the constitution of the Achaians as described in the *Iliad*." Equally arbitrary seems Grote's argument (i, 451) that "the low level of taste and intelligence among the Thesalians, as well as certain points of their costume, assimilates them more to Macedonians or Epirots than to Hellenes." He notes the equally low level of taste and intelligence among the Spartans, who as a rule could not read or write (ii, 307), and to whom he might as well have assimilated the Thesalians as to the Macedonians. In all cases alike culture conditions supply the true explanation. All through Greece, barring Sparta, stocks were endlessly mixed. M. Ménard well points out in reply to Müller that it is impossible to associate types of government with any of the special "races"—that as against Sparta there were "Ionian aristocracies at Marseilles and at Chalkis, and Dorian democracies at Tarentum and Syracuse," while most of the Greek cities had by turns aristocratic and democratic constitutions.

N. B. | 4. As regards Sparta, the specialisation of all life on the military side developed a spirit of peculiar separateness and arrogance,¹ which clinched the geographical influence. Where Greeks of all States were admitted to the Eleusinian festivals, Sparta kept hers for her own people.² This would limit her literary mythology, and by consequence her art.

Among the names of Greek sculptors only three belong to Sparta, and these are all of the sixth century B.C., the beginning of the historic period. After that, nothing. See Radford's *Ancient Sculpture*, Chron. List at end. Thus Sparta positively retrogressed into militarism. "There is evidence in the character of Alkman's poetry that he did not sing to a Sparta at all resembling the so-called Sparta of Lycurgus" (Mahaffy, *Problems in Greek History*, p. 77; cp. Burckhardt, *Griechische Culturgeschichte*, i, 117).

N. B. | 5. Not only does military specialism preclude, so far as it goes, more intellectual forms of activity: it develops in the highest degree

¹ The native Spartans were positively forbidden to go abroad without special leave, nor were strangers permitted to settle there (Grote, ii, 306; Wachsmuth, i, 248).

² Grote, iii, 294, and note.

the conservative spirit¹ when thoroughly rooted in law and custom. Nor is it any more favourable to moral feeling in general.² } N.B.

As offset to all this it may be urged that the middle unenfranchised class (the *Perioikoi*) in Sparta, the *Penestai* in Thessaly, and the ordinary citizens in Crete, were in some ways superior types to part of the similar classes of Attica; while the slaves, as having some military life, were, despite the flavour of the name "Helot," above the average.³ But even if that were so, it would not affect the problem as to culture development, and its solution in terms of the primary and secondary conditions of life for the given communities.

It is to be noted that in Crete, less isolated by nature and way of life than either Sparta or Thessaly, less rigidly militarised than they and more democratic in constitution, there were more stirrings of mind. Epimenides, the author of the famous saying that the Cretans were always "liars, evil beasts, idle gluttons," was himself a distinguished Cretan. But Crete on the whole counts for very little in Greek culture-history. Cp. K. J. Freeman, *Schools of Hellas*, p. 38.

§ 3

Such being, in brief, the process of the building up of culture for Greece, it remains to note the causes of the process of retrogression, which also connects broadly with the course of politics. Indeed, the mere expansion of Hellenistic life set up by the empire-making of Alexander might alone account for a complete change in the conditions and phases of Greek civilisation. In the new Hellenistic world wealth and power were to be won with ease and with amenity⁴ where of old there was only an alien barbarism, or at least a society which to the cultured Greek was barbaric. When such cities as Alexandria and Antioch beckoned the Greek scholar of

¹ Cp. Dr. Mahaffy's remark on post-Alexandrian Sparta, "where five ignorant old men were appointed to watch the close adherence of the State to the system of a fabulous legislator" (*Greek Life and Thought from the Age of Alexander to the Roman Conquest*, 1887, p. 3).

² Macaulay, in his youthful review of Mitford (*Miscellaneous Writings*, ed. 1868, p. 74), draws up a long indictment against the Spartans in the matter of bad faith and meanness. It is only fair to remember that some similar charges can be laid against others of the Greek States.

³ Grote, ii, 204. But cp. Aristotle (*Politics*, ii, 9) and Plutarch (*Lycurgus*, c. 27), who agrees with the saying of Plato and others (cp. Müller, *Dorians*, Eng. tr. ii, 43, note) that in Sparta a free man was most a freeman, and a slave most a slave. And see Schömann, *Alterthümer*, i, 362. Hume (*On Populousness*) cites Xenophon, Demosthenes, and Plautus as proving that slaves were exceptionally well treated at Athens, and this is borne out by the Athenian comedy in general (cp. Maisch, *Greek Antiquities*, Eng. tr. § 32). But the fact remains that at Athens slaves, male and female, were frequently tortured to make them give evidence against their masters, who in turn were free to kill them for doing so (Mahaffy, *Social Life in Greece*, pp. 240-41). And Aristotle takes for granted that they were substantially inferior in character to freemen.

⁴ Cp. Finlay, *History of Greece*, Tozer's ed. i, 15; Mahaffy, *Greek Life and Thought*, pp. 4, 105.

small means, impoverished Athens could hardly retain him. Her extorted revenue in her most powerful period,¹ as we saw, was the source of her highest flight of artistic splendour; and even after the Peloponnesian War, with greatly lessened power, Athens was the most desirable dwelling-place in Hellas. After Alexander, all this was insensibly changed: Athens, though for a time filled with Greeks enriched by the plunder of Persia, must needs gradually dwindle to the point at which the slight natural advantages of her soil, industry, and situation would maintain her; and the life of ideas, such as it finally was, passed inevitably to Alexandria, where it was systematically encouraged and protected, in the fashion in which well-meaning autocrats do such things. But while these new developments were not inconsiderable, and included some rare felicities, they were on the whole fatally inferior to the old, and this for reasons which would equally affect what intellectual life was left in Greece proper.

The forces of hindrance were political and psychological;² and they operated still more powerfully under the Romans than under the successors of Alexander. The dominance of the Greeks over the other races in the eastern provinces did not make them more than a class of privileged tools of Rome; and they deteriorated none the less.³ When for the stimulating though stormy life of factious self-government there was substituted the iron hand of a conqueror, governing by military force, there was need of a new and intelligent discipline if the mental atmosphere were not to worsen. All civilisation, in so far as it proceeds from and involves a "leisured class," sets up a perpetual risk of new morbid phases. Men must have some normal occupation if their life is to be sound; and where that occupation is not handicraft it can be kept sound and educative only by the perpetual free effort of the intelligence towards new truth, new conception, and new presentment.⁴ Nor can this effort conceivably take place on any wide scale, and with any continuity, save in a community kept more or less generally alert by the agitation of vital issues. For a generation or two after Alexander,

¹ Fifth century B.C.

² Holm (Eng. tr. iv, 595-98) misses half the problem when he argues that the Greek cities under the Romans were nearly as free and self-governing as are to-day those of Switzerland, the United States, or the German Empire. The last-named may perhaps approximate at some points; but in the other cases the moral difference is inexpressible. The Greek cities under the Romans were *provincialised*, and their inhabitants deprived of the powers of *State* government which they formerly possessed. Their whole outlook on life was changed.

³ Cp. Finlay, i, 76.

⁴ In artistic handicraft, of course, such daily renewal of creative intelligent effort is of great importance to mental health; and the complete lack of it, as in the conventional sculpture of Egypt, tells of utter intellectual stagnation. In the least artistic crafts, however, it is not so essential a condition of sound work.

it is true, there is no arrest in the production of good philosophic minds among the Greeks; indeed, the sudden forcing back of all the best remaining minds on philosophy, as the one mental employment left to self-respecting men of leisure,¹ raised the standards of the study, and led to the ethical systems of Epicurus and Zeno, certainly fit in their way to stand beside those of Plato and Aristotle. So, too, the thrusting back of the drama (which in the hands of Aristophanes had meddled audaciously with every public question) on the study of private life, developed in the highest degree the domestic and psychological bent of the later comedy,² very much as the autocracy has developed the novel in contemporary Russia. But the schools of Epicurus and Zeno, both of which outlasted in moral credit and in moral efficacy that of Plato,³ and the new comedy of Menander, alike represent the as yet unexhausted storage of the mental energy generated by the old political life; and the development is not prolonged in either case. Evidently something vital was lost: only a renewal of the freer life could make possible a continuous advance in intellectual power.

On this it is important to insist, as there are plausible grounds for contrary inferences, which are often drawn. All supposed exceptions to the law, however, will be found on analysis to be apparent only. A tyranny may indeed give economic encouragement to art and culture, and a republic may fail to do so; but the work of the tyranny is inevitably undone or kept within a fixed limit by its own character; while, if the free community be but fairly well guided, its potentialities are unlimited. This is the solution of much modern dispute between the schools of *laissez-faire* and protection. A Velasquez, who might otherwise have been condemned to seek his market with coarser wares, may develop to perfection at the court of an autocrat of fine taste; but even he partly depends for his progress on intelligent communion, which the autocrat in this case chances to yield him. And from Velasquez onward there is no progress. So, in autocratic Assyria, sculpture reaches a certain point and becomes for ever conventionalised. In Egypt it conforms more or less exactly to the general stereotyping of life. We may grant, with some emphatic qualifications, that in some cases "with the tyrant *began* the building of large temples,.....

¹ Cp. Mahaffy, *Greek Life and Thought*, pp. 4, 10, 15, 131-38, 144.

² The change was not so immediately dependent on the Alexandrian régime as Droysen implies (*Geschichte Alexanders des Grossen*, 3te Aufl. p. 367): the New Comedy had been led up to by the Middle Comedy, which already tended to withdraw from burning questions (cp. K. O. Müller, *Lit. of Ancient Greece*, Eng. tr. pp. 436-41); but the movement was clearly hastened.

³ Cp. Mackintosh, *On the Progress of Ethical Philosophy*, 4th ed. p. 29; Lecky, *History of European Morals*, 6th ed. i, 128.

the patronage of clever handicrafts, the promoting of all the arts,"¹ and that he may have patronised men of letters; but as regards the temples it is certain that in Hellas he was not the chief temple-builder; and it is also quite certain that the tyrant never evolved a single generation of important writers, thinkers, and artists, any more than of intelligent, self-respecting, and self-governing citizens. The latter constituted, in fact, the necessary nutritive soil for the former in the communities of antiquity.² It has been said³ that "at the end of the third century of Rome, when its inhabitants had hardly escaped from the hands of Porsena, Syracuse contained more men of high genius than any other city in the world. These were collected at the court of the first Hiero, during his short reign of ten years, and among them were the greatest poets of the age: Pindar.....Simonides.....Æschylus." This is true; but Hiero had not been the means of evolving the powers of any one of the three. Pindar is manifestly the product of the diversified life of the free States; Simonides, though much patronised by aristocrats, began to "find himself" as a chorus teacher at Carthea in Ceos, won countless prizes at the Greek festivals,⁴ and spent only the latter part of his life with Hiero; Æschylus is the product of the Attic theatre. Not the tyranny, but democracy, had been the *alma mater*. It is true that Athens after Æschylus played the "despot city" in finance, but she so far preserved at home the democratic atmosphere, in which, according to Demosthenes, slaves had more freedom of speech than citizens in many other places.⁵ Lesbos had her oscillations between oligarchy and despotism; but the group in which Sappho stood was that of Pittakos and Alkaios—the elected ten-years dictator who finally laid down his dictatorship, and the fierce singer who assailed him. Not in the "Roman peace" of a fixed despotism did Lesbian song reach its apex.

The old problem of the culture-value of the tyrant has been raised afresh by Messrs. Mitchell and Caspari, in their abridgment of Grote's *History of Greece*. Grote's enthusiasm for democracy, they contend, "undoubtedly prevented him from doing full justice to much that was good in the non-democratic

¹ Mahaffy, *Problems of Greek History*, p. 85; *Survey of Greek Civilisation*, pp. 87, 99, 117; *Social Life in Greece*, 3rd ed., pp. 83, 137, 440. Cp. the remark of Thirlwall, ch. xii (1st ed. ii, 125), that the tyrants "were the natural patrons of the lyrical poets, who cheered their banquets, extolled their success," etc.

² Holm on this head makes an admission (iii, 168) which countervails the remark last above cited from him. Noting the prosperity of art in Asiatic Greece, he writes: "Art as a rule flourishes—we do not say, reaches its highest point, *for that is impossible without freedom*—where wealth is to be found combined with good taste. And good taste is a gift which even tyrants may possess, and semi-barbarians acquire."

³ Professor Spalding, *Italy and the Italian Islands*, i, 117, 118.

⁴ K. O. Müller, *History of Greek Literature*, 1847, pp. 208, 210.

⁵ Schömann, *Griechische Alterthümer*, ii, 362.

governments of Greece," notably "in his estimate of the so-called 'tyrants' of the Greek world and in his attitude towards the Macedonian Empire" (pref. to work cited, p. xv). Part of their discussion is beside the case, and proves only their general hostility to Grote as "a rationalist," to whom "every problem was a matter for rational discussion" (p. xiii). They first assert that Grote's chapter heading, "Age of the Despots," is "subtly misleading," inasmuch as there were despots at various periods in Greek history—as has been insisted by Professor Mahaffy. Then they avow that "this fact is mentioned by Grote himself," and that he "quite properly distinguishes" between the early and the late tyrannies.

The counter-claim is first put in the propositions (1) that an early Greek "tyranny" was in effect "a union of one powerful personality with the poorer and hitherto unrepresented classes," favourable to individual life among the latter; and (2) that the tyrants by preserving peace and giving the people individual freedom of life promoted "the accumulation of wealth and the extension of trade at home and abroad, and enriched the Greek mind by familiarising it with the natural and artistic products of other lands" (p. xvii). There is really nothing here that Grote denied; nor do the critics attempt to show that he denies it. Grote actually said, before them, that "the demagogue despots are interesting as the first evidence of the growing importance of the people in political affairs. The demagogue stood forward as representing the feelings and interests of the people against the governing few.....Even the worst of the despots was more formidable to the rich than to the poor; and the latter may perhaps have gained by the change..." (*History*, pt. ii, ch. ix, ed. 1888, ii, 397). As regards the case of Peisistratos, on which Messrs. Mitchell and Caspari chiefly found their plea, Grote notes that his "was doubtless practically milder" than the average despotism, but that "cases of this character were rare." And to *this* thesis, which is backed by an overwhelming mass of Greek testimony, from Herodotos to Aristotle and Plato, the critics offer no kind of answer.

They do, however, claim for "the tyrants" in general that "in the first place their orderly government provided *for the first time* the conditions which are essential to artistic and literary production. Secondly, it was their policy to foster in all possible ways everything that contributed to the magnificence of the States." If it be meant to include under the head of *tyrannoi* the early feudal chieftains before whom the bards chanted, the issue is merely confused. If not, the proposition is untenable. If again it be argued that the Mausoleum was a finer thing than the Parthenon, or quite as well worth having, the real issue is missed.

It is significant that Grote's anti-rationalistic critics make no

attempt to gauge the respective effects of "tyrannic" and democratic or oligarchic rule on the *inner* life of men, which is what Grote chiefly considered. Neither is this, the vital issue, once faced in the essay of Hegewisch "On the Epoch of Roman History most Fortunate for the Human Race" (French trans. by Solvet, 1834), or in the encomiums of Gibbon, Mommsen, and Renan, before cited (p. 89, *note*). As has been shown above, there is no instance of a new and great intellectual development taking its rise or visibly going forward (save as at Alexandria under the Ptolemies) under the auspices of even a good despot in antiquity; though such a despot might at times usefully preserve the peace and cherish writers and artists. Here, then, is a sociological clue that should be followed. The reasonable inference seems to be that democratic conditions, other things being equal, tend most to elicit human faculty.

And where in modern times certain of the less democratic nations may be said to have developed certain forms of culture more widely and energetically than do certain of the more democratic States—as Germany her learned class, in comparison with France and England and the United States; or modern Russia in comparison with the States in the matter of the higher fiction—it can easily be shown (1) that these developments arise not in virtue of but in reaction against autocracy, and (2) that they were possible only in virtue of the evocative influence of communities living more freely. Modern communities differ vitally from the ancient in that printing has created a species of intercourse which overleaps all political and geographical restrictions, so that a politically tyrannised community can yet receive and respond to the stimulus of another. But the stimulus is still indispensable. Thus the intellectual expansion of France after the death of Louis XIV¹ drew germinally from the culture of the England of the day; and that of Germany later in the century was equally a sequence from that and from the ferment in France. Given the cluster of independent States, each with its court and its university, which made up the Germany of the period, the revived spirit of free thought bore the more and the better fruit because of the multitude of the reactions involved in the circumstances. For the time, the slackened and lightened petty autocracies counted for intellectual democracy, though even Kant was made to feel the pressure of censorship. It was not regal or ducal rule that made Lessing or Herder or Schiller or Goethe; and it was not mere

Note

¹ The questions of the previous expansion under Richelieu and Mazarin, and of the decay in the latter part of Louis's reign, are discussed, *à propos* of the *laissez-faire* argument of Buckle, in the author's *Buckle and his Critics*, pp. 324-39.

kingly encouragement that bred scholars like Hermann and Wachsmuth and Buttman and Bekker and Boeckh and Heeren and Otfried Müller. The school of Tübingen was the outcome of a movement that proximately began in English Deism; and even the personal bias of Frederick counted for much less in the evolution than the general contagion of European debate. In the University of Berlin, organised after Jena, the inspiring principle was that of intellectual freedom; and the moving spirits took express pains to guard against the tyranny of convention which they saw ruling in the universities of England. For the rest, the production of a very large class of scholarly specialists in Germany was made possible primarily by the number of universities set up in the days of separatism, and secondarily by the absence of such economic conditions (all resting on possession of coal and maritime situation) as drew English energy predominantly to industry and commerce. It is true that if a democratic society to-day does not make express economic provision for a scholarly and cultured class, it is likely to lack such, because the leisured or idle class in all countries grows less capable of, and less inclined to, such intellectual production as it contributed to the serious literature of England during the nineteenth century. But such economic provision has been still more necessary in monarchic communities. Finally, at every stage Germany has been reacted upon by France and England; and it is notable that while, in the last generation, under a strengthening militarism and imperialism, the number of trained German specialists was maintained, the number of Germans able to stir and lead European thought fell off.¹

ex.

In the same way the phenomenon of a group of great novelists in the autocratic Russia of our own age is no fruit of autocracy, save in the sense that autocratic government checks all other forms of criticism of life, all liberal discussion, and so drives men back on artistic forms of writing which offer no disturbing social doctrine. And the artistic development itself is made possible only by the

¹ An interesting corroboration of the above general view was presented in an article on the state of German art in the *Century Magazine* for July, 1898. The writer thus described the position of German art under the Kaiser's patronage: "Moved by the best of intentions, the Emperor is not very successful in his efforts to encourage art. They smack too much of personal tastes and one-man power. Menzel is perhaps a favourite, not because of his great Meissonnier-like skill in illustrations, but because he is the draftsman and painter of the period of Frederick the Great. The Emperor is really honouring his own line rather than the artist when he covers him with rewards.....It is not by making sketches for the Knackfusses to carry out that the Emperor will raise art in Prussia from its present stagnation, but by allowing the dangerous breath of liberty to blow through the art world. The fine arts are under the drill-sergeant, and produce recruits who have everything except art in them. It is too much to say that this is the Emperor's fault; but it is true that so long as he insists upon running things artistic, no one else can, or will—and the artists themselves least of all."

culture previously or contemporaneously accumulated in other and freer communities, from whose mental life the cultivated Russian draws his. It was to some extent a similar restrictive pressure that specially developed the drama in France under the Third Empire. Apart from the peculiar case of the Italian cities of the Renaissance, discussed hereinafter, the most that can be said for the "tyrant" in modern Europe is that Richelieu and Colbert promoted science in France; that the German principalities of the eighteenth century fostered music at their courts; that George III did much for Handel in England; and that the King of Bavaria did still more for Wagner. On the other hand, the system of national and municipal theatres on the Continent was an essential adjunct even in this regard; and the mere comparative freedom accorded to the drama in Elizabethan England, at a time when surplus intellectual energy lacked other stimuli, sufficed to develop that art in one generation to a degree never so speedily reached elsewhere, save in republican Athens. Where the "tyrant" is most useful is in such a civilisation as that of the Saracens, for which autocracy is the only alternative to anarchy, and where, on a basis of derived culture, he can protect and rapidly further the useful arts and all manner of special studies. But even he cannot command a great intellectual art, or an inwardly great literature.¹ It will hardly be pretended that the freethinking which went on in Moslem Persia and Spain in the eighth and later centuries was evoked by the Caliphs, though some of them for a time protected it. The Ptolemies for a while fostered science at Alexandria; but under Roman rule—surely as tyrannous—it died out. And even under the Ptolemies science was a hothouse plant which never thrived in the open.

It is clear, then, that first the rule of Alexander and his successors, and later the rule of Rome, over Greece and the Græcised East, put a check on the intellectual forces there, against which there was no counteractive in existence. There remained no other free communities whose culture could fecundate that of the Greek and other cities held in tutelage.

The city of Rhodes, which recovered its independence at the death of Alexander, and maintained its self-government down till the Roman period, was, in point of fact, latterly distinguished for its art (Mahaffy, *Greek Life and Thought*, pp. 334-38), thus illustrating afresh the value of free life as an art stimulus; but its pre-eminently commercial activity, as in the case of Corinth,

¹ Cp. Mill, *Liberty*, ch. iii, People's ed. p. 38.

and as later in the case of Venice, kept it relatively undistinguished in literature. Rich merchants commissioned pictures and statues, but not philosophies or books. Holm (Eng. trans. iv, 492) calls Rhodes a *seat* of philosophy, etc., naming Theophrastus and Eudemus. But they both studied and settled at Athens.

Corinth & Venice:
commercial and
non-artistic.

This is typical of
commercial leisure-
culture

From the whole history there emerges the demonstration of what might reasonably be put *a priori*—that for a whole community, once self-governing, to acquiesce in an all-embracing foreign despotism meant the settling of lethargy on half of its mental life.¹ What the thinkers left in Greece *could* do was to lend philosophic ideas and method to the jurists at work on the problem of adapting Roman law to the needs of a world-empire, and this was done to good purpose; but it was the last genuine task that the circumstances permitted of. To discuss vitally the problems of politics would have meant challenging the despotism. There remained, it is true, philosophy and the arts; and these were still cultivated; but they finally subsisted at the level of the spirit of a community which felt itself degenerate from its past, and so grew soon hopelessly imitative. No important work, broadly speaking, can ever be done save by men who, like the most gifted Greeks of the palmy days (innovating in drama and improving on the science of the foreigner), feel themselves capable of equalling or transcending the past;² and that feeling seems to have become impossible alike for the students and the sculptors of Greece soon after the Macedonian conquest, or at least after the Roman. Plato and Pheidias, Aristotle and Praxiteles, Æschylus and Epicurus, figured as heights of irrecoverable achievement; and the pupillary generations brooded dreamily over Plato or drew serenity from Epicurus as their bent lay, and produced statues of alien rulers, or of the deities of alien temples, where their ancestors had portrayed heroes for the cities and Gods for the shrines of Greece. Beneath the decadence of spirit there doubtless lay, not physiological decay, as is sometimes loosely assumed, but a certain arrest of psychological development—an arrest which, as above suggested, may be held to have set in when the life and culture of the “family women” in the Greek cities began decisively to conform to the Asiatic standard, the men

¹ Cp. J. S. Mill's analysis of “benevolent despotism” in ch. iii of his *Representative Government*.

² Prof. Mahaffy (*Greek Life and Thought*, p. 112) attributes the same sense of superiority to the men of the period of the earlier successors of Alexander. This could well be, and such a feeling would serve to inspire the great art works of the period in question. Cp. Thirlwall (vii, 120) as to the sense of new growth set up by the commercial developments of the Alexandrian world.

cultivating the mind, while the women were concerned only with the passive life of the body. In this one matter of the equal treatment of the sexes Sparta transcended the practice of Athens, her narrow intellectual life being at least the same for both; and to this element of equilibrium was probably due her long maintenance of vigour at the level of her ideal.

[As, however, the Spartan women, whatever their training, could not finally live the martial life of the men, the results of their chiefly animal training were not exemplary. See the question vivaciously discussed by De Pauw, *Recherches philosophiques sur les Grecs*, 1787, ptie. iv, sect. x, § 1—a work which contains many acute observations, as well as a good many absurdities. The Spartan women, it appears, were in a special degree carried away by the Bacchic frenzy. Aelian, *Var. Hist.* iii, 42. Cp. Aristotle, *Politics*, ii, 9 (and other testimonies cited by Hermann, *Manual of the Political Antiquities of Greece*, § 27, 12), as to their general licence.]

The arrested psychological development, it need hardly be added, would tend to mean not merely unoriginal thinking among those who did think, but finally a shrinkage of the small number of those who cared greatly for thinking. Even in the independent period, the mental life of Greece drew perforce from a relatively small class—chiefly the leisured middle class and the exceptional artificers or slaves who, in a democratic community, could win culture by proving their fitness for it. Under the Roman rule the endowed scholars (sophists) and artists alike would tend to minister to Roman taste, and as *that* deteriorated its ministers would. Rome, it is easy to see, went the downward intellectual way in the imperial age with fatal certainty; and her subject States necessarily did likewise at their relative distance. Finally, when Christianity became the religion of the Empire, all the sciences and all the fine arts save architecture and metal-work were rapidly stupefied, the Emperor vetoing free discussion in the fifth century, and the Church laying the dead hand of convention on all such art as it tolerated, even as the priesthood of Egypt had done in their day. It is positively startling to trace the decline of the fine arts after the second century. On the arch of Constantine, at Rome, all the best sculpture is an appropriation from the older arch of Trajan: under the first Christian emperor there are no artists capable of decently embellishing his monument in the ancient metropolis. All the forms of higher faculty seem to have declined together; and as the decay proceeded the official hostility to all forms of free thought strengthened.

[See Finlay, *History of Greece*, as cited, i, 284–85, as to the veto on discussion by Theodosius. In the next century Justinian suppressed the philosophic schools at Athens. Finlay, in one passage (i, 221), speaks of them as nearly extinct before suppression; but elsewhere (pp. 277–81) he gives an entirely contrary account. There are too many such contradictions in his pages. Cp. Hertzberg, *Geschichte Griechenlands seit dem Absterben des antiken Lebens*, 1876, i, 78–84.]

By the time of Constantine, even the coinage had come to look like that of a semi-barbarian State; and thought, of course, had already stagnated when Christianity conquered the “educated” classes. But these classes themselves were speedily narrowed nearly to those of the priests and the bureaucracy, save in so far as commerce maintained some semi-leisure. Barbarian invasion and imperial taxation combined in many districts to exterminate the former leisured and property-owning class. It is indeed an exaggeration to say that “the labourer and the artisan alone could find bread.....and, with the extinction of the wealthy and educated classes, the local prejudices of the lower orders became the law of society.”¹ But the last clause is broadly true. In this society the priest, with his purely pietistic tastes and knowledge, became the type and source of culture.

A cultured modern Greek apologist of the Byzantine Empire² has anxiously sought to combine with the thesis that Christianity is a civilising force, the unavoidable admission that Byzantine civilisation was intellectually stationary for a thousand years. It is right that every possible plea for that ill-famed civilisation should be carefully attended to, even when it takes the form of reminding us³ that after all the sixth century produced Procopius and Agathias; the seventh, George of Pisidia; the eighth, John of Damascus; the ninth, Photius; and so on—one man or two per century who contrived to be remembered without being annalised as emperor. Of rather more importance is the item that Christian Constantinople at one point, following Egyptian and Roman precedent, improved on the practice of heathen Athens, in that the women of the imperial court and of the upper classes seem to have received a fair share of what culture there was.⁴ It is further a matter of bare justice to note

¹ Finlay, *History of Greece*, i, 186. Cp. p. 185.

² D. Bikélas, *Seven Essays on Christian Greece*, translated by the Marquess of Bute, 1890.

³ Work cited, p. 103.

⁴ Work cited, pp. 97–98; Finlay, *History of Greece*, iv, 351–52. That this was no Christian innovation becomes clear when we compare the status of women in Egypt and imperial Rome. Cp. Mahaffy, *Greek Life and Thought*, pp. 173–74. And see his *Greek World under Roman Sway*, p. 328, as to pre-Christian developments.

that Byzantium had all along to maintain itself against the assaults of Persia, of Islam, of barbarism, heathen and Christian, and of Latin Christendom. But there must all the same be made the grieving admission that "We certainly do not find in the Byzantine authors the same depth and originality which mark the ancient writers whom they copied";¹ and that this imitation "was unhappily the essential weakness of Byzantine literature." That is to say, the intelligence of the Christian Empire, like that of the Greece of the post-Macedonian and the Roman domination, looked back to pagan Athens as to an irrecoverable greatness. In that case, if we are to assume comparative equality of culture between the sexes, there is no escape from the conclusion that Christianity was in itself a force of fixation or paralysis, the subsequent counteraction of which in Europe was a result of many causes—of any cause but the creed and lore itself. The creed, in fact, was a specific cause of isolation, and so of intellectual impoverishment. As was well said by Gibbon, the mental paralysis of the Byzantines was "the natural effect of their solitary and insulated state."² The one civilisation from which Byzantium might latterly have profited—the Saracen—was made tabu by creed, which was further the efficient cause of the sunderance of Byzantine and Italian life.

Had the external conditions, indeed, permitted of the maintenance of the earlier manifold Empire of Constantine, the mere conditions of social diversity which prepared the countless strifes of speculative sects in Egypt and Syria might have led to intellectual progress, were it only by arousing in the more rational minds that aversion to the madness of all the wrangling sects which we detect in Procopius.³ The disputes of the Christians were indeed the most absurd that had ever been carried on in the Greek tongue; and in comparing the competing insanities it is hard to imagine how from among themselves they could have evoked any form of rational thought. But as in Northern Europe in a later age, so in the Byzantine Empire, the insensate strifes of fanatics, after exhausting and decimating themselves, might have bred in a saner minority a conviction of the futility of all wars of creed—this if only external peace could have been secured. But the attacks, first of Persia and later of Islam, both determined religious enemies, with whom, on Christian principles, there could be no fruitful intercourse, shore away all the outlying and diversified provinces, leaving to Byzantium

¹ Bikélas, p. 104.

² Ch. 53, Bohn ed. vi, 233. Cp. Finlay, ii, 4, 217, as to the internal forces of routine.

³ *De bello Gothico*, i, 3. Cp. Gibbon, ch. 47, note, Bohn ed. v, 243; and Prof. Bury's App. to his ed. of Gibbon, iv, 516.

finally only its central and most homogeneous section, where the power of the organised Church, backed by a monarchy bent on spiritual as on political unity, could easily withstand the slight forces of intellectual variation that remained. The very misfortunes of the Empire, connected as they were with so many destructive earthquakes and pestilences,¹ would, on the familiar principle of Buckle, deepen the hold of superstition on the general mind. On the other hand, the final Christianising of the Bulgarian and Slav populations on the north, while safeguarding the Empire there, yielded it only the inferior and retarding culture-contact of a new pietistic barbarism, more childish in thought than itself. We can see the fatality of the case when we contemplate the great effort of Leo the Isaurian in the eighth century to put down image-worship by the arm of the executive. No such effort could avail against the mindless superstition of the ignorant mass, rich² and poor, on whom the clerical majority relied for their existence. A Moslem conqueror, with outside force to fall back upon, might have succeeded; but Leo was only shaking the bough on which he sat.³ It seems clear that the Iconoclastic emperors were politically as well as intellectually progressive in comparison with the orthodox party. The worshipped images which they sought to suppress were artistically worthless, and they aimed at an elevation of the people. "If the Iconoclastic reformers had had their way, perhaps the history of the agricultural classes would have been widely different. The abolition of the principle which the first Christian emperors had adopted, of nailing men to the clod, was part of the programme which was carried out by the Iconoclastic emperors and reversed by their successors."⁴ Thus did it come about that Christian Byzantium found the rigid intellectual equilibrium in which it outlasted, at a lower level of mental life, the Caliphate which sought its destruction, but only to fall finally before the more vigorous barbarism of the Turks.

¹ Finlay, *History of Greece*, i, 224-25; Gibbon, ch. 43, end.

² "The degrading feature of the end of the seventh century.....was the ignorant credulity of the richer classes" (Bury, *History of the Later Empire*, ii, 387). Cp. Gibbon, ch. 54, Bohn ed. vi, 235.

³ Cp. Bury, as cited, ii, 521.

⁴ Bury, App. 12 to ed. of Gibbon, v, 531.

CHAPTER II

THE SARACENS

WHILE Byzantine civilisation thus stagnated, the Saracen civilisation for a time actually gained by contact with it, inasmuch as Byzantium possessed, if it could not employ, the treasures of old Hellenic science and philosophy. The fact that such a fructification of an alien civilisation could take place while the transmitting community showed no similar gain, is tolerably decisive as to (a) the constrictive force of religious systems under certain conditions, and (b) the nullity of the theory of race genius. Yet these very circumstances have been made the ground of a preposterous impeachment of the "Semitic" character in general, and of the Arab in particular.

Concerning no "race" save the Celtic has there been more unprofitable theorising than over the Semitic. One continental specialist after another¹ has explained Semitic "faculty" in terms of Semitic experience, always to the effect that a nation has a genius for becoming what it becomes, but only when it has become so, since what it does not do it has, by implication, no faculty for doing.² The learned Spiegel, for instance, in his work on the antiquities of Iran, inexpensively accounts for the Jewish opposition to sculpture as a matter of race taste,³ without even asking how a practice to which the race was averse had to be forbidden under heavy penalties, or why the same course was held in Aryan Persia. Connecting sculpture with architecture, he pronounces the Semites averse to that also; and as regards the undeniable building tendencies of the Babylonians, he argues that we know not "how far entirely alien models were imitated by the Semites."⁴ Only for music does he admit them to have any independent inclination; and their lack of epos and drama as such is explained, not by the virtual inclusion of their epopees and early dramatic writings in their Sacred Books, and the later tabu on secular literature, but by primordial lack of faculty

¹ Cp. the author's criticism of Dr. Pulszky, in *Buckle and his Critics*, p. 509.

² Thus Milman decides that the Mahomedan civilisation is "the highest, it should seem, attainable by the Asiatic type of mind" (*Latin Christianity*, 4th ed. ii, 222). This in the century which was to witness the renaissance of Japan.

³ *Eránische Alterthumskunde*, 1871, i, 387.

⁴ *Id.* p. 388.

for epos and drama. The vast development of imaginative fiction in the *Arabian Nights* is credited bodily to the "Indo-Germanic" account, because it has Hindu affinities, and took place in Persia; and, of course, the Semites are denied a mythology, as by M. Renan, no question being raised as to what is redacted myth in the Sacred Books. For the rest, "the Semite" is not fitted to shine in science, being in all his branches "almost totally devoid of intellectual curiosity," so that what philosophy and science he has are not "his own"; and he is equally ill-fitted for politics, wherein, having no political idea save that of the family, he oscillates between "unlimited despotism and complete anarchy."¹ Apart from music, his one special faculty is for religion.

Contemporary anti-Semitism may fairly be surmised to underlie in part such performances in pseudo-sociology, which, taken by themselves, set up a depressing suspicion that numbers of deeply learned specialists contrive to spend a lifetime over studies in departments of the history of civilisation without learning wherein the process of civilisation consists. On Spiegel's method—which is that of Mommsen in dealing with the early culture-history of Rome—the Germanic nations must be adjudged to be naturally devoid of faculty for art, architecture, drama, philosophy, science, law, and order, since they had none of those things till they got them in the Middle Ages through the reviving civilisation of the Mediterranean and France. And as the Greeks certainly received their first impulse to philosophy and science through contact with the survivals of the old Semitic civilisations in Ionia, they in turn must be pronounced to have "neither a philosophy nor a science of their own"; while the Spartans were no less clearly devoid of all faculty for the epic and the drama. It is the method of Molière's doctors, with their *virtus dormitivus* of opium, applied to sociology.

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The method, nevertheless, is steadily popular, and is no less freely applied to the phenomena of Arab retrogression than to those of imperfect development in the Semitic life of antiquity, with some edifying results as regards consistency. Says a French medical writer:—

"There is no such thing as an original Arab medical science. Arab medical science was a slavish imitation from the Greek. And the same remark is true of all the sciences. The Arabs have never been inventors. They are enthusiasts, possessed with a passion for anything new, which renders their enthusiasm itself evanescent. And in consequence of this incapacity for

¹ *Erânische Alterthumskunde*, p. 389.

perseverance, they soon forgot the lessons in medical science which they had once acquired from the Greeks, and have fallen back into a state of the most absolute ignorance."¹

The method by which Arab defects are here demonstrated from the arrest of Arab civilisation is a simple extension of that by which Spiegel demonstrates the original deficiencies of the ancient Semites, and Mommsen the incapacity of the Latins to do what they did not do. A certain race or nation, having at one time attained a considerable degree of civilisation, and afterwards lost it, is held to have thus shown a collective incapacity for remembering what "it" or "they" had learned. The "they" here is the correlative of M. Taine's "we"—a pseud-entity, entirely self-determining and strictly homogeneous. The racial misfortune is set down to a fault pervading the whole national character or intellect, and peculiar to it in comparison with other national characters. Conditions count for nothing; totality of inherited character, acting *in vacuo*, is at once the summary and the judgment. Anyone who has followed the present argument with any assent thus far will at once grant the futility of such doctrine. "The Arabs" had neither more nor less collective faculty of appreciation and oblivion than any other equally homogeneous people at the same culture-stage. It is quite true that they had not an "original medical science." But neither have any other historical "they" ever had such. The Greeks certainly had not. The beginnings of medical knowledge for all mankind lay of necessity in the primeval lore of the savage; and the nations which carried it furthest in antiquity were just those who learned what others had to give, and improved upon it. The Greeks must have learned from Asia, from Egypt,² from Phœnicia; and the Romans learned from the Greeks. The Arabs, coming late into the sphere of the higher civilisation, and crossing their stock in the East with those of Persia, in the West with the already much-mixed stocks of Spain, passed quite as rapidly as the Greeks had done from the stage of primitive thought in all things to one of comparative

¹ Dr. Daremberg, writing on Cairo, "Impressions médicales," in the *Journal des Débats*, December 13, 1882, quoted by the K. Bikélas, as cited, tr. p. 100. Cp. Renan's language as to "l'esprit sémitique, sans étendue, sans diversité, sans arts plastiques, sans philosophie, sans mythologie, sans vie politique, sans progrès" (*Études d'histoire religieuse*, 1862, p. 67).

² This has been disputed; cp. Berdoe, *Origin of the Healing Art*, 1893, p. 72; Withington, *Medical History from the Earliest Times*, 1894, pp. 21-22. But the Greeks could hardly have resorted to the Egyptians so much as they admittedly did for mathematical and astronomical teaching in the early period without learning something of their medicine. Cp. Berdoe, bk. ii, ch. i, and Kenrick, *Ancient Egypt*, 1850, i, 345-48, as to Egyptian medicine. The passage in the *Odyssey*, iv, 227-32, is decisive as to its repute in early Greece. Certainly it was stationary, like everything Egyptian. Whether the Indian and Egyptian medicine found "neue Bedeutung" in Greek hands, after the fresh contacts made under Alexander, as is claimed by Droysen (*Geschichte Alexanders des Grossen*, 3te Aufl. pp. 367-68), is another question.

rationality as regards medicine and the exact sciences; and this not in virtue of any special "enthusiasm" for new ideas, but by the normal way of gradual collection of observations and reflection upon them, in communities kept alert by variety of intercourse, and sufficiently free on the side of the intellectual life. Such was the state of the Saracens in Persia and Spain in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries; and their social evolution before and after is all a matter of natural sequence, not proceeding upon any peculiarity of collective character, but representing the normal reactions of character at a given culture-stage in special political circumstances.

What is peculiar to the Saracen civilisation is its sudden origin (taking Islam as a history by itself)¹ under conditions reached elsewhere only as climax in a long evolution. The rise of Islam has the twofold aspect of a barbarian campaign of plunder and a crusade of fanaticism; and though the prospect and the getting of plunder were needed to ripen the fanaticism to full bloom,² the latter was ultimately a part of the cementing force that turned a horde into a community. The great facilitating conditions for both were the feeble centralised system maintained by the Christianised Empire, and the disintegrating force of Christianity as a sectarian ferment. In Egypt, for instance, the hatred between rival schools of Christian metaphysic secured for the Arabs an unresisted entrance into Alexandria.³ It needed only a few generations of contact with higher culture in a richer environment to put the Saracens, as regards art and science, very much on a level with the stagnating Byzantines; and where the latter, possessed of their scientific and philosophical classics, but imprisoned by their religion, made no intellectual progress whatever, the former, on the same stimulus, progressed to a remarkable degree. There has been much dispute as to the exact measure of their achievements; but three things are clear: (1) that they carried the mathematics of astronomy beyond the point at which it had been left by the Greeks; (2) that they laid the foundations of chemistry; and (3) that they intelligently carried on surgery and medicine when the Byzantines, having early in the Christian period destroyed the Asklepians, which were in

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¹ As to the inferred development of pre-Islamic civilisation in Arabia, see Deutsch, *Literary Remains*, pp. 91, 123, 124, 313, 314; and Nöldeke, *Sketches from Eastern History*, Eng. tr. pp. 18, 19.

² The first Islamites, apart from the inner circle, were the least religious. See Renan, *Études d'histoire religieuse*, pp. 257-65; and Van Vloten, *Recherches sur la domination arabe*, Amsterdam, 1894, pp. 1, 2, 4, 7. Nöldeke (p. 15) speaks in the conventional way of the "wonderful intellectual outburst" which made possible the early triumphs of Islam. The case is really on all fours with that of the French Revolution—"la carrière ouverte aux talens." Cp. Milman, *Latin Christianity*, 4th ed. ii, 204, as to the readiness with which the followers of Moseilama turned to Mahomedanism.

³ See above, p. 97, note 1.