

lessen the Antichrist's joy that, like Nicodemus, most of his disciples are such secretly, and repair to his shrine only by night.

Few men think it articulately, fewer avow it loudly, but very many are in fact now cherishing a notion quite akin to that of slavery's defenders before the Civil War, that God has organized society aristocratically, the multitude being ordained to live ignorant, poor, in servitude to the elect. The victory of civilization, so many a contemporary argument implies, is to be judged by its consummate flower rather than by the number and distribution of its flowers, the state and fate of the common man being of little consequence if only wealth is adequate to the perfecting of culture in however few individuals.

In churches, and generally outside of clubs, the stock phrase still is, that the utmost good of men ought to be sought. Whatever our philosophy of ethics, if we have any, when we come to formulate the task of philanthropy, to say what we are bound to do in external act for the human race, most of us admit in words the duty of working for the greatest possible good of all. But how is this phrase to be taken? Should our thought of the greatest good emphasize compass or degree the more? Is extension of good the great thing, or intension? One country has herds of paupers and half paupers, yet wealth enough to give it a high average of comfort. Another enjoys the same average, with no very poor people and few millionaires. Is the highest good realized equally in the two? If not, is that end approached the more closely in the one whose grade of comfort is an

average of far extremes, or in that whose average is widely representative?

There is a strong tendency to regard solely the height of the average weal, ignoring the character of that average. Upper-class liberalism itself is rapidly drifting to this position. It is curious that *laissez faire*, which was at first the cry of social liberty, a plea on behalf of the masses for free career, has shifted to be mostly the watchword of those who care nothing for men one by one. People identify good with conspicuous economic and æsthetic good. The social wreckage occurring all about they mind no more than they would the flying sawdust in seeing rough logs turned into the fair wainscoting of a millionaire's best room. If of such as actually compete, we refrain from saying "the devil take the hindmost;" the thriftless and the worthless we certainly consign to him without compunction, if not with positive glee. The survival of the strongest is referred to as always the survival of the fittest, and praised as a beneficent law.

Peculiar gloom is in the sky because most of democracy's official guides seem unaware of the changed conditions which the cause now confronts. A distinct source of democracy's present illness is an evil drug administered by its own leeches, the extract of antediluvianism.

Curiously, in proportion as men have forgotten the old meaning of democracy there has arisen an abject reverence for old watchwords and a servile clinging to old policies, no regard being had to altered times and circumstances. Often when measures proposed are good the logic used to support them is drivel.