

mind. Apart from demagogism there has certainly been a religious desire in the minds of the possessors of power to share it, as well as other advantages, with their brethren, which is traceable to the influence of the gospel.

It is significant, and I would call Sir Henry Maine's attention to the fact, that with the advent of democracy there has certainly been a great advance in humanity generally, and especially in the domain of criminal law. This seems to be connected with the feeling that all the members of a community are of equal value in its eyes. The criminal law of aristocratic England was lavish of the unvalued life of the poor. Even lynching in the United States arises partly from the dislike of inflicting capital punishment in a legal way. Nobody was put to death or very severely punished for the Rebellion. Democratic humanity has even extended its action to theology, and protested with success against the belief in Eternal Punishment. All the legislation in favour of popular education, health, and amusement, or for the protection of the working class against neglect or maltreatment by employers, will surely be admitted by Sir Henry Maine to be the characteristic product of the democratic era.

To talk of popular government as divine, and of its gradual approach through the ages as the coming of a political kingdom of heaven, is of course absurd and mischievous. But I must venture to differ from Sir Henry Maine if he thinks that the tendency of civilisation has not been towards democracy. The republics of antiquity, the national polity of Judea, the free cities of the Middle Ages, the Swiss Federation, the United Netherlands, the memorable though short-lived Commonwealth of England, the popular part of the British Constitution, were so many forestallments and presages of that which was in the womb of time, though many centuries and repeated efforts were required to bring it forth. They have been intimately connected with the general progress of civilisation, moral, intellectual, and industrial, as well as political. "Mr. Grote," says Sir Henry Maine, "did his best to explain away the poor opinion of the Athenian democracy entertained by the philosophers who filled the schools of Athens; but the fact remains that the founders of political philosophy found themselves in presence of democracy in its pristine vigour, and thought it a bad form of government." I doubt whether it can be said with truth that Aristotle thought democracy comparatively a bad form of government, though it may not, formally at least, have been his ideal. But, at all events, it was democratic Athens that produced the philosophers, not aristocratic Bœotia, monarchical Macedon, or despotic Persia. The same remark may be made with respect to Dante's condemnation of Florence. A relapse from a popular form of government into one less popular, such as that of the Italian tyrants or the restored Stuarts, has usually been a general relapse, and has marked, not an effort to rise to a better political state, but the lassitude which ensues upon overstrained effort and premature aspiration. Sir Henry Maine has, however, himself indicated the principal cause of the extinction of mediæval liberties, in pointing out that they succumbed to the power and prestige of the great military monarchies. The centres of a precocious civilisation, in short, were crushed by the overwhelming forces of the comparative barbarism by which they were surrounded. That the Roman Empire, the Italian tyrannies, the Tudor aristocracy, the French centralised Monarchy were all hailed with acclamation, is a proposition which I venture to think must be taken with some abatement as to the quantity of the acclamation and still more as to its quality. But in each case it was some special disorder—the overgrowth of the Roman Empire, the turbulence of factions in the Italian cities, the Wars of the Roses, the local tyranny of the French nobles—which made the change at the moment welcome. If, after the military anarchy which ensued upon the death of the Protector, the Restoration came in with "cheering," it went out again with hissing as soon as the nation had recovered its tone. There has at the same time been a decay, now apparently complete and definitive, of the belief in hereditary right upon which kingship and aristocracy are based. The Italian tyrants, who, Sir Henry Maine says, founded modern government, were not heaven-descended kings like those of Homer or those of the Teutonic tribes, but dictators, and their power was partly popular in its origin, though it tended to become dynastic. At last, hereditism expired in America, not, as Sir Henry Maine seems to think, merely because there was no king to be had (for a king might have been imported from France), but because the people were determined not to have a king, and were animated by republican aspirations. Democracy now prevails in all highly civilised nations, either in its own name or under monarchical forms. Thé Bonapartes thought it necessary to found their dynasty on a plebiscite, and the last phase of Toryism styles itself democratic. We are in presence of a fact which, though not divine, is universal, and imposes a universal task.

On the other hand, it seems fallacious to speak of Greek democracy as "democracy in its pristine vigour," and to say that monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy "were alike plainly discernible" at the dawn of history. The ancient Republics were municipal, slave-owning, and military. Their militarism, which was that of the ancient world, was hardly less baneful to them than were slavery and their exclusively urban character, at once narrow and unbalanced. The Italian Republics, though not slave-owning, were municipal and military: in subjugating Pisa, Florence sealed her own doom. But the American Republic is national and industrial. Its people, though they fought well at need for their Union, have no military tendency whatever. We cannot read its destiny in the annals of the Republican past.

Before, even with reference to the past, we set down republics as specially ephemeral, we must take into account not only monarchies tempered by public opinion, but monarchies untempered, like those of the East, the history of which, as Pym said, is "full of combustions and of the tragical ends of princes." The Roman Republic, though it fell at last under the weight of military empire, was not ephemeral; and we cannot tell that those of Greece would have perished by their own vices had they not been

crushed by the arms of Macedon. The French centralised Monarchy was founded by Richelieu. It lasted through three reigns, and in the fourth fell by its own corruption. Since the Revolution, if the Republics have been ephemeral the Monarchies have been not less so.

I regard the French Revolution as the greatest calamity in history, and hate Jacobinism and the worship of Jacobins as heartily as M. Taine, though I cannot forget that the Jacobin Republic was, as Sir Henry Maine says, the French King turned upside down, and from the Monarchy inherited its arbitrariness, its cruelty, and its belief that all property belonged to the State, while from the Church it inherited its intolerance. But let us bear in mind what happened. By the collapse of the monarchy through its own vices, the tremendous task of founding a Constitution was thrown, at a moment of general excitement and distress, into inexperienced though patriotic hands. Yet a Constitutional Monarchy would probably have been founded, and the fatal crash at all events would have been avoided, had not the Queen and her coterie in their madness brought up the army to crush the Assembly. The army broke; but in the meantime the Assembly had been fain to put itself under the protection of armed Paris, of which from that hour it became the slave. Thus the worst mob in the world got possession of the administrative centre and the whole machinery of a despotism which had extinguished in the provinces all power, moral or material, of resistance to its decrees. There naturally ensued a reign of Bedlamites and devils. Thus was generated one of the two forces which have ever since disturbed the course of popular government in France; while the other, military Imperialism, was generated by the inevitable reaction. Each has apparently at last received its quietus, Imperialism at Sedan, Jacobinism in the defeat of the Commune; and the Republic has now lasted nearly as long as any Monarchy since the Revolution. Its Executive, it is true, is fatally unstable; but this in France as in other countries is the result of the fatal system of Cabinet and party government, which, as the example of the United States proves, is no necessary concomitant of democracy. Militarism, the deadly foe, as Sir Henry Maine himself sees, of popular government, has apparently declined under the Republic.

Popular government in America, where alone, I must repeat, it has been fairly tried, though it has many faults, the worst of which arise from Party, shows at present no sign of instability. On the contrary, it has come forth from the furnace of the most tremendous of civil wars without even the smell of fire upon its garments. The predictions current here of a military usurpation were ludicrously belied, and the suggestion of an Empire to be founded by the successful general was received as a sorry joke.

I am surprised that Sir Henry Maine should found any inference on Mexico and the South American Republics. Republicanism was in this case thrust upon a population consisting partly of the dregs of Spain, partly of uncivilised Indians, and having in it not a spark of political life. The disturbing force here has been mere brigandage, with a political ribbon in its bandit's hat. Yet Chili and the Argentine Republic are much better than anything was under Spanish dominion, and even Mexico is improving at last.

In Spain itself the disturbing force once more is the army, while political life has not recovered from the trance into which it was thrown by centuries of despotism and the Inquisition. But Spain is, to say the least, in a more hopeful state now than it was under Ferdinand, though it lacks, like France, an executive government independent of legislative parties and cabals.

What has been said of France and Spain may be said of Europe generally. War, or the constant imminence of war, standing armies, and conscriptions are the enemies of popular government. One need not be a peacemonger, or blind to the political services rendered by soldiers as preservers of order, and by military discipline, to say that difficulties thus generated are different from the difficulties inherent in the particular form of government.

Again, I cannot help demurring to Sir Henry Maine's position that the masses of mankind are inherently unprogressive, and that consequently where the masses have power progress will probably cease. His eyes are fixed on Hindostan, in the languid East, and outside the pale of Christianity, the historical connection of which with development, political and general, I would again suggest, deserves, altogether apart from theology, a place in Sir Henry Maine's field of speculation. Yet even in Hindostan the case seems one not so much of inherent immobility as of progress arrested, like that of ancient Egypt, by a dominant priesthood. Buddhism was, in its way, progress, to which the victory of Brahminism put an end. Till yesterday it might have been said that Japan was inherently unprogressive. The leading shoot is always slender, though the tree grows. Immobility is certainly not in any sphere the characteristic of the American democracy, upon which science and every other agency of progress operate with full force. Even the power of amending the constitution, restricted as it is by legal checks, has been exercised perhaps about as often as it was required; at least I have not heard American statesmen complain of excessive conservatism in this respect on the part of the people. Want of respect for intelligence certainly is not the defect of the Americans. Intellectual eminence, on the contrary, is the one thing which they almost worship, though they may not be infallible in their discernment of it. If the people and popular government are by nature conservative, a large part of our fears may be laid aside, but the danger appears to me to be in another quarter.

The rich and privileged have hitherto had things their own way; they will henceforth be obliged to exert themselves in order to have things the right way, and perhaps they will be none the worse or the less happy for the change. Envy is about the most dangerous of all the disturbing forces in a democracy; it has as much to do with socialism as cupidity; and it may be allayed by avoiding ostentation of wealth. There are various engines of influence and leaderships of different kinds. "The ruling multitude," says Sir Henry Maine, "will only form an opinion by following the