

suggestion and origin to imitation is a point which has never been fully considered." The first canoe was made in imitation of a rotten log which had served as a ferry boat. The first pillar was constructed in the likeness of an erect tree, and the gothic arch was made to represent the overarching boughs in a forest glade, suggestive of how the imitation of the objects in nature underlies all the various arts and products of human labor. Now the absence of this faculty of imitation would produce a stagnation in human society, because each man and each generation of men would derive no benefit from what their forefathers had learned. The presence of no other principle of life must and does equally produce stagnation. A really healthy and progressive state of society is only consistent with free thought and effort. It is difficult in this nineteenth century to realize a society which is really stationary, with our greedy appetite for new ideas, new things, reforms and improvements. We can scarcely credit that a great part of the human race knows none of these, and feels no such appetite, that it has gone on for centuries in the same way as it goes on to-day, and that it regards any attempt to introduce new thought or new modes of life, not merely as an impertinence but an impiety.

But with all our development and progress, we must be warned by the fate of Egypt, Greece, Rome and all other great nations of the past, lest on reaching the zenith of our fame and prosperity, we relapse into a state of apathy, indifference and luxury, and commit that most fatal error of living on the reputation we have gained and the successes we have achieved. When most obstacles have been overcome, and when the struggle for existence and greatness has been triumphantly concluded, nations are apt to give way to a longing for rest, the accumulation of wealth, and the enjoyment of luxury. Politics and commerce doubtless rule, to a great extent, the destiny of nations, but there are other influences as well, and chief among these are the social conditions of the people. The two great examples of the Roman empire and the French monarchy stand out in history as a warning, the social conditions of the people in both cases being the downfall of each. What facts attest, the people cannot afford to despise, and a timely warning may avert many a danger threatening the public welfare.