

deny having a servile reverence for anything—the equality of manhood asserts itself sometimes. Then again, there is the fume of envy—the ebullition of conceit, which depreciates without judging. Veneration, even if it be somewhat unreasonable, is much superior to it. “Those men are made too much of;” “A veritable ranter!” are the only words of praise which some of our brothers give to men who by some means or other stand so high above them.

Mr. Carlyle admires the Russian character. It is a standing lesson of submission to authority; it is a wonderful example of obedience, wherein Faith occupies a prominent place. His Czarship is certainly a conspicuous Actuality, and has no objections to becoming a demi-god, perhaps. But others will qualify their admiration for Russian character. “God and the Czar are angry with me,” said a Russ on being mercilessly whipped for a small offence, as he coolly put on his coat. An Englishman would have left God out of the question, and uttered an imprecation on the high-priest of the Law. When millions of men are willing to hurl themselves on hostile bayonets at the nod of a single man, without asking why, it indicates to us a very abnormal state of society. Of course every one is first a child, and submission belongs to childhood; but we admire the youngster whose spirit manifests itself in occasional rebellion and looks at the justice of things with a sceptical disposition. The military spirit encourages the tendency to hero-worship. Subordination is its *sine qua non*. It is inculcated as the primal virtue. A soldier should never think, but move with the precision of a machine at the word of command. The idolatry of the legions of the Cæsar and Napéleon is by no means unnatural, but is it healthy? Now, the English are not a nation of soldiers. There is an absence of the spirit of subordination; a want of blind submission to rank and throne. The feelings with which a Kaiser William is regarded by the mass of his kinder—his children as he affectionately calls them—is vastly different from the love a Briton bestows on Victoria. The former is patriarchal and primitive; the latter may be an appreciation of personal excellence or a respect for the representative of the Monarchy.

In either case the latter has its foundation chiefly in the understanding—the former in the emotions. In proportion as a man's nature becomes republicanized does he become incapable of hero-worship. So it is with nations. Russia, Germany, England and the United States show the different gradations of the Democratic feeling and the corresponding stages of hero-worship. Our age and our side of the water are certainly iconoclastic. The big gods and little gods we used to worship are being broken up, and we are in danger of becoming faithless and creedless.

Liberty and Fraternity are great levellers, and they are almost peculiar to the last two centuries. The French not only destroyed reverence in society and politics, to rank, but cut away the old intellectual landmarks. They ridiculed the traditional superiority of the Greek writers. They asserted the superiority of the Moderns over the Ancients, but in this case, as in most others, they only relinquished one deity to set up another. Instead of Homer they crowned Voltaire with the Epic wreath; instead of Eschylus and Sophocles, they bowed before Voltaire still. The Encyclopedists spoke with as much authority as the divine voice of Delphi, and were heard with as much credulity as ever a Christian of the early ages gave to the inspired Sibylline oracles proclaiming the downfall of a Pagan Empire. So too, when they ceased to respect Faith, they unduly exalted Reason. They degraded the symbols of Religion but adored a beautiful woman as a symbol of reason.

There is doubtless a medium of wisdom where greatness is neither servilely worshipped nor blindly depreciated. While different ages, displaying different types of culture, different standards of excellence, and different modes of thought, oscillate now to this extreme and now to that, nature preserves itself through considerable periods of time, in an equipoise approximately just. As Reason works forth into proper supremacy and assumes the mastery over passion, as men emerge from the swaddling bands of infancy, and the self-reliant spirit takes the place of the old feeling of dependency, reverence, though by no means extinct, will be tinged less with the emotions, more with the un-