

both so dangerous—so apart and so intense: Judæa changed in inward thought, just as Rome changed in exterior power. Each change was continuous, gradual, and good. In early times every sort of advantage tends to become a military advantage; such is the best way, then, to keep it alive. But the Jewish advantage never did so; beginning in religion, contrary to a thousand analogies, it remained religious. For that we care for them; from that have issued endless consequences. But I cannot deal with such matters here, nor are they to my purpose. As respects this essay, Judæa is an example of combined variability and legality not investing itself in warlike power, and so perishing at last, but bequeathing nevertheless a legacy of the combination in imperishable mental effects.

It may be objected that this principle is like saying that men walk when they do walk, and sit when they do sit. The problem is, why do men progress? And the answer suggested seems to be that they progress when they have a certain sufficient amount of variability in their nature. This seems to be the old style of explanation by occult qualities. It seems like saying that opium sends men to sleep because it has a soporific virtue, and bread feeds because it has an alimentary quality. But the explanation is not so absurd. It says: "The beginning of civilization is marked by an intense legality; that legality is the very condition of its existence, the bond which ties it together; but that legality—that tendency to impose a settled customary yoke upon all men and all actions—if it goes on, kills out the variability implanted by nature, and makes different men and different ages fac-similes of other men and other ages, as we see them so often. Progress is only possible in those happy cases where the force of legality has gone far enough to bind the nation together, but not far enough to kill out all varieties and destroy nature's perpetual tendency to change." The point of the solution is not the invention of an imaginary agency, but an assignment of comparative magnitude to two known agencies.

Part III

This advantage is one of the greatest in early civilization—one of the facts which give a decisive turn to the battle of nations; but there are many others. A little perfection in political institutions may do it. Travellers have noticed that among savage tribes those seemed to answer best in which the monarchical power was most predominant, and those worst in which the "rule of many" was in its vigor. So long as war is the main business of nations, temporary despotism—despotism during the campaign—is indispensable. Macaulay justly said that many an army has prospered under a bad commander, but no army has ever prospered under a "debating society;" that many-headed monster is then fatal. Despotism grows in the first societies, just as democracy grows in more modern societies; it is the government answering the primary need, and congenial to the whole spirit of the time. But despotism is unfavorable to the principle of variability, as all history shows. It tends to keep men in the customary stage of civilization; its very fitness for that age unfits it for the next. It prevents men from passing into the first age of progress—the very slow and very gradually improving age. Some "standing system" of semi-free discussion is as necessary to break the thick crust of custom and begin progress as it is in later ages to carry on progress when begun; probably it is even more necessary. And in the most progressive races we find it. I have spoken already of the Jewish prophets, the life of that nation, and the principle of all its growth. But a still more progressive race—that by which secular civilization was once created, by which it is now mainly administered—had a still better instrument of progression. "In the very earliest glimpses," says Mr. Freeman, "of Teutonic political life we find the monarchic, the aristocratic, and the democratic elements already clearly marked. There are leaders with or without the royal title; there are men of noble birth, whose noble birth (in whatever the original nobility may have consisted) entitles them to a pre-eminence in every way; but beyond these there is a free and armed people, in whom it is clear that the ultimate sovereignty resides. Small matters are decided by the chiefs alone; great matters are submitted by the chiefs to the assembled nation.

Such a system is far more than Teutonic; it is a common Aryan possession; it is the constitution of the Homeric Achaians on earth and of the Homeric gods on Olympus." Perhaps, and indeed probably, this constitution may be that of the primitive tribe which Romans left to go one way, and Greeks to go another, and Teutons to go a third. The tribe took it with them, as the English take the common law with them, because it was the one kind of polity which they could conceive and act upon; or it may be that the emigrants from the primitive Aryan stock only took with them a good aptitude—an excellent political nature, which similar circumstances in distant countries were afterwards to develop into like forms. But anyhow it is impossible not to trace the supremacy of Teutons, Greeks, and Romans in part to their common form of government. The contests of the assembly cherished the principle of change; the influence of the elders insured sedateness and preserved the mould of thought; and, in the best cases, military discipline was not impaired by freedom, though military intelligence was enhanced with the general intelligence. A Roman army was a free body, at its own choice governed by a peremptory despotism.

The mixture of races was often an advantage, too. Much as the old world believed in pure blood, it had very little of it. Most historic nations conquered pre-historic nations, and though they massacred many, they did not massacre all. They enslaved the subject men, and they married the subject women. No doubt the whole bond of early society was the bond of descent; no doubt it was essential to the notions of a new nation that it should have had common ancestors; the modern idea that vicinity of habitation is the natural cement of civil union would have been repelled as an impiety if it could have been conceived as an idea. But by one of those legal fictions which Sir Henry Maine describes so well, primitive nations contrived to do what they found convenient, as well as to adhere to what they fancied to be right. When they did not beget they adopted; they solemnly made believe that new persons were descended from the old stock, though everybody knew that in flesh and blood they were not. They made an artificial unity in default of a real unity; and, what it is not easy to understand now, the sacred sentiment requiring unity of race was somehow satisfied: what was made did as well as what was born. Nations with these sort of max-

ims are not likely to have unity of race in the modern sense, and as a physiologist understands it. What sorts of unions improve the breed, and which are worse than both the father-race and the mother, it is not very easy to say. The subject was reviewed by M. Quatrefages in an elaborate report upon the occasion of the French Exhibition, of all things in the world. M. Quatrefages quotes from another writer the phrase that South America is a great laboratory of experiments in the mixture of races, and reviews the different results which different cases have shown. In South Carolina the mulatto race is not very prolific, whereas in Louisiana and Florida it decidedly is so. In Jamaica and in Java the mulatto cannot reproduce itself after the third generation; but on the continent of America, as everybody knows, the mixed race is now must numerous, and spreads generation after generation without impediment. Equally various likewise in various cases has been the fate of the mixed race between the white man and the native American; sometimes it prospers, sometimes it fails. And M. Quatrefages concludes his description thus: "*En acceptant comme vraies toutes les observations qui tendent à faire admettre qu'il en sera autrement dans les localités dont j'ai parlé plus haut, quelle est la conclusion à tirer de faits aussi peu semblables? Evidemment, on est obligé de reconnaître que le développement de la race mulâtre est favorisé, retardé, ou empêché par des circonstances locales; en d'autres termes, qu'il dépend des influences exercées par l'ensemble des conditions d'existence, par le milieu.*" By which I understand him to mean that the mixture of race sometimes brings out a form of character better suited than either parent form to the place and time; that in such cases, by a kind of natural selection, it dominates over both parents, and perhaps supplants both, whereas in other cases the mixed race is not as good then and there as other parent forms, and then it passes away soon and of itself.

Early in history the continual mixtures by conquest were just so many experiments in mixing races as are going on in South America now. New races wandered into new districts, and half killed, half mixed with the old races. And the result was doubtless as various and as difficult to account for then as now; sometimes the crossing answered, sometimes it failed. But when the mixture was at its best it must have excelled both parents in

that of which so much has been said; that is, variability, and consequently progressiveness. There is more life in mixed nations. France, for instance, is justly said to be the mean term between the Latin and the German races. A Norman, as you may see by looking at him, is of the north; a Provençal is of the south, of all that there is most southern. You have in France Latin, Celtic, German, compounded in an infinite number of proportions: one as she is in feeling, she is various not only in the past history of her various provinces, but in their present temperaments. Like the Irish element and the Scotch element in the English House of Commons, the variety of French races contributes to the play of the polity; it gives a chance for fitting new things which otherwise there would not be. And early races must have wanted mixing more than modern races. It is said, in answer to the Jewish boast that "their race still prospers, though it is scattered and breeds in-and-in," "You prosper because you are so scattered; by acclimatization in various regions your nation has acquired singular elements of variety; it contains within itself the principle of variability which other nations must seek by intermarriage." In the beginning of things there was certainly no cosmopolitan race like the Jews; each race was a sort of "parish race," narrow in thought and bounded in range, and it wanted mixing accordingly.

But the mixture of races has a singular danger as well as a singular advantage in the early world. We know now the Anglo-Indian suspicion or contempt for "half-castes." The union of the Englishman and the Hindoo produces something not only between races, but between moralities. They have no inherited creed or plain place in the world; they have none of the fixed traditional sentiments which are the stays of human nature. In the early world many mixtures must have wrought many ruins; they must have destroyed what they could not replace—an inbred principle of discipline and of order. But if these unions of races did not work thus; if, for example, the two races were so near akin that their morals united as well as their breeds, if one race by its great numbers and prepotent organization so presided over the other as to take it up and assimilate it, and leave no separate remains of it, then the admixture was invaluable. It added to the probability of variability, and therefore of improvement; and if that improvement even in part took the military

line, it might give the mixed and ameliorated state a study advantage in the battle of nations, and a greater chance of lasting in the world.

Another mode in which one state acquires a superiority over competing states is by provisional institutions, if I may so call them. The most important of these—slavery—arises out of the same early conquest as the mixture of races. A slave is an unasimilated, an undigested atom; something which is in the body politic, but yet is hardly part of it. Slavery, too, has a bad name in the later world, and very justly. We connect it with gangs in chains, with laws which keep men ignorant, with laws that hinder families. But the evils which we have endured from slavery in recent ages must not blind us to, or make us forget, the great services that slavery rendered in early ages. There is a wonderful presumption in its favor; it is one of the institutions which, at a certain stage of growth, all nations in all countries choose and cleave to. "Slavery," says Aristotle, "exists by the law of nature," meaning that it was everywhere to be found—was a rudimentary universal point of polity. "There are very many English colonies," said Edward Gibbon Wakefield, as late as 1848, "who would keep slaves at once if we would let them," and he was speaking not only of old colonies trained in slavery, and raised upon the products of it, but likewise of new colonies started by freemen, and which ought, one would think, to wish to contain freemen only. But Wakefield knew what he was saying; he was a careful observer of rough societies, and he had watched the minds of men in them. He had seen that leisure is the great need of early societies, and slaves only can give men leisure. All freemen in new countries must be pretty equal; everyone has labor, and everyone has land; capital, at least in agricultural countries (for pastoral countries are very different), is of little use; it cannot hire labor; the laborers go and work for themselves. There is a story often told of a great English capitalist who went out to Australia with a shipload of laborers and a carriage; his plan was that the laborers should build a house for him, and that he would keep his carriage, just as in England. But (so the story goes) he had to try to live in his carriage, for his laborers left him, and went away to work for themselves.

In such countries there can be few gentlemen and no ladies.

Refinement is only possible when leisure is possible; and slavery first makes it possible. It creates a set of persons born to work that others may not work, and not to think in order that others may think. The sort of originality which slavery gives is of the first practical advantage in early communities; and the repose it gives is a great artistic advantage when they come to be described in history. The patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob could not have had the steady calm which marks them if they had themselves been teased and hurried about their flocks and herds. Refinement of feeling and repose of appearance have indeed no market value in the early bidding of nations; they do not tend to secure themselves a long future or any future. But originality in war does, and slave-owning nations, having time to think, are likely to be more shrewd in policy, and more crafty in strategy.

No doubt this momentary gain is bought at a ruinous after-cost. When other sources of leisure become possible, the one use of slavery is past. But all its evils remain, and even grow worse. "Retail" slavery—the slavery in which a master owns a few slaves, whom he well knows and daily sees—is not at all an intolerable state; the slaves of Abraham had no doubt a fair life, as things went in that day. But wholesale slavery, where men are but one of the investments of large capital, and where a great owner, so far from knowing each slave, can hardly tell how many gangs of them he works, is an abominable state. This is the slavery which has made the name revolting to the best minds, and has nearly rooted the thing out of the best of the world. There is no out-of-the-way marvel in this. The whole history of civilization is strewn with creeds and institutions which were invaluable at first, and deadly afterwards. Progress would not have been the rarity it is if the early food had not been the late poison. A full examination of these provisional institutions would need half a volume, and would be out of place and useless here. Venerable oligarchy, august monarchy, are two that would alone need large chapters. But the sole point here necessary is to say that such preliminary forms and feelings at first often bring many graces and many refinements, and often tend to secure them by the preservative military virtue.

There are cases in which some step in intellectual progress gives an early society some gain in war; more obvious cases are

when some kind of moral quality gives some such gain. War both needs and generates certain virtues; not the highest, but what may be called the preliminary virtues, as valor, veracity, the spirit of obedience, the habit of discipline. Any of these, and of others like them, when possessed by a nation, and no matter how generated, will give them a military advantage, and make them more likely to stay in the race of nations. The Romans probably had as much of these efficacious virtues as any race of the ancient world,—perhaps as much as any race in the modern world too. And the success of the nations which possess these martial virtues has been the great means by which their continuance has been secured in the world, and the destruction of the opposite vices insured also. Conquest is the missionary of valor, and the hard impact of military virtues beats meanness out of the world.

In the last century it would have sounded strange to speak, as I am going to speak, of the military advantage of religion. Such an idea would have been opposed to ruling prejudices, and would hardly have escaped philosophical ridicule. But the notion is but a commonplace in our day, for a man of genius has made it his own. Mr. Carlyle's books are deformed by phrases like "infinities" and "verities," and altogether are full of faults, which attract the very young, and deter all that are older. In spite of his great genius, after a long life of writing, it is a question still whether even a single work of his can take a lasting place in high literature. There is a want of sanity in their manner which throws a suspicion on their substance (though it is often profound); and he brandishes one or two fallacies, of which he has himself a high notion, but which plain people will always detect and deride. But whatever may be the fate of his fame, Mr. Carlyle has taught the present generation many lessons, and one of these is that "God-fearing" armies are the best armies. Before this time people laughed at Cromwell's saying, "Trust in God, and keep your powder dry." But we now know that the trust was of as much use as the powder, if not of more. That high concentration of steady feeling makes men dare everything and do anything.

This subject would run to an infinite extent if anyone were competent to handle it. Those kinds of morals and that kind of religion which tend to make the firmest and most effectual

character are sure to prevail, all else being the same; and creeds or systems that conduce to a soft, limp mind tend to perish, except some hard extrinsic force keep them alive. Thus Epicureanism never prospered at Rome, but Stoicism did; the stiff, serious character of the great prevailing nation was attracted by what seemed a confirming creed, and deterred by what looked like a relaxing creed. The inspiriting doctrines fell upon the ardent character, and so confirmed its energy. Strong beliefs win strong men, and then make them stronger. Such is no doubt one cause why monotheism tends to prevail over polytheism; it produces a higher, steadier character, calmed and concentrated by a great single object; it is not confused by competing rites, or distracted by miscellaneous deities. Polytheism is religion in commission, and it is weak accordingly. But it will be said the Jews, who were monotheist, were conquered by the Romans, who were polytheist. Yes, it must be answered, because the Romans had other gifts; they had a capacity for politics, a habit of discipline, and of these the Jews had not the least. The religious advantage was an advantage, but it was counter-weighed.

No one should be surprised at the prominence given to war. We are dealing with early ages; nation-making is the occupation of man in these ages, and it is war that makes nations. Nation-changing comes afterwards, and is mostly effected by peaceful revolution, though even then war, too, plays its part. The idea of an indestructible nation is a modern idea; in early ages all nations were destructible, and the further we go back the more incessant was the work of destruction. The internal decoration of nations is a sort of secondary process, which succeeds when the main forces that create nations have principally done their work. We have here been concerned with the political scaffolding; it will be the task of other papers to trace the process of political finishing and building. The nicer play of finer forces may then require more pleasing thoughts than the fierce fights of early ages can ever suggest. It belongs to the idea of progress that beginnings can never seem attractive to those who live far on; the price of improvement is that the unimproved will always look degraded.

But how far are the strongest nations really the best nations? how far is excellence in war a criterion of other excellence? I cannot answer this now fully, but three or four considerations are

very plain. War, as I have said, nourishes the "preliminary" virtues, and this is almost as much as to say that there are virtues which it does not nourish. All which may be called "grace" as well as virtue it does not nourish; humanity, charity, a nice sense of the rights of others, it certainly does not foster. The insensibility to human suffering which is so striking a fact in the world, as it stood when history first reveals it, is doubtless due to the warlike origin of the old civilization. Bred in war, and nursed in war, it could not revolt from the things of war, and one of the principal of these is human pain. Since war has ceased to be the moving force in the world, men have become more tender one to another, and shrink from what they used to inflict without caring; and this not so much because men are improved (which may or may not be in various cases), but because they have no longer the daily habit of war—have no longer formed their notions upon war, and therefore are guided by thoughts and feelings which soldiers as such—soldiers educated simply by their trade—are too hard to understand.

Very like this is the contempt for physical weakness and for women which marks early society too. The non-combatant population is sure to fare ill during the ages of combat. But these defects, too, are cured or lessened; women have now marvellous means of winning their way in the world; and mind without muscle has far greater force than muscle without mind. These are some of the after-changes in the interior of nations, of which the causes must be scrutinized, and I now mention them only to bring out how many softer growths have now half-hidden the old and harsh civilization which war made.

But it is very dubious whether the spirit of war does not still color our morality far too much. Metaphors from law and metaphors from war make most of our current moral phrases, and a nice examination would easily explain that both rather vitiate what both often illustrate. The military habit makes man think far too much of definite action, and far too little of brooding meditation. Life is not a set campaign, but an irregular work, and the main forces in it are not overt resolutions, but latent and half-involuntary promptings. The mistake of military ethics is to exaggerate the conception of discipline, and so to present the moral force of the will in a barer form than it ever ought to take.

Military morals can direct the axe to cut down the tree, but it knows nothing of the quiet force by which the forest grows.

What has been said is enough, I hope, to bring out that there are many qualities and many institutions of the most various sort which give nations an advantage in military competition; that most of these and most warlike qualities tend principally to good; that the constant winning of these favored competitors is the particular mode by which the best qualities wanted in elementary civilization are propagated and preserved.

CHAPTER III

NATION-MAKING

IN the last essay I endeavored to show that in the early age of man—the “fighting age” I called it—there was a considerable, though not certain, tendency towards progress. The best nations conquered the worst; by the possession of one advantage or another the best competitor overcame the inferior competitor. So long as there was continual fighting there was a likelihood of improvement in martial virtues, and in early times many virtues are really “martial”—that is, tend to success in war—which in later times we do not think of so calling, because the original usefulness is hid by their later usefulness. We judge of them by the present effects, not by their first. The love of law, for example, is a virtue which no one now would call martial, yet in early times it disciplined nations, and the disciplined nations won. The gift of “conservative innovation”—the gift of matching new institutions to old—is not now-a-days a warlike virtue, yet the Romans owed much of their success to it. Alone among ancient nations they had the deference to usage which combines nations, and the partial permission of selected change which improves nations; and therefore they succeeded. Just so in most cases, all through the earliest times, martial merit is a token of real merit: the nation that wins is the nation that ought to win. The simple virtues of such ages mostly make a man a soldier if they make him anything. No doubt the brute force of number may be too potent even then (as so often it is afterwards): civilization may be thrown back by the conquest of many very rude men over a few less rude men. But the first elements of civilization are great military advantages, and, roughly, it is a rule of the first times that you can infer merit from conquest, and that progress is promoted by the competitive examination of constant war.