

of equable to violent enjoyment, the abiding capacity to prefer, if required, the future to the present, the mental pre-requisites without which civilization could not begin to exist, and without which it would soon cease to exist even had it begun. The primitive man, like the present savage, had not these pre-requisites, but, unlike the present savage, he was capable of acquiring them and of being trained in them, for his nature was still soft and still impressible, and possibly, strange as it may seem to say, his outward circumstances were more favorable to an attainment of civilization than those of our present savages. At any rate, the pre-historic times were spent in making men capable of writing a history, and having something to put in it when it is written, and we can see how it was done.

Two preliminary processes indeed there are which seem inscrutable. There was some strange preliminary process by which the main races of men were formed; they began to exist very early, and except by intermixture no new ones have been formed since. It was a process singularly active in early ages, and singularly quiescent in later ages. Such differences as exist between the Aryan, the Turanian, the negro, the red man, and the Australian are differences greater altogether than any causes now active are capable of creating in present men, at least in any way explicable by us. And there is, therefore, a strong presumption that (as great authorities now hold) these differences were created before the nature of men, especially before the mind and the adaptive nature of men had taken their existing constitution. And a second condition precedent of civilization seems, at least to me, to have been equally inherited, if the doctrine of evolution be true, from some previous state or condition. I at least find it difficult to conceive of men, at all like the present men, unless existing in something like families, that is, in groups avowedly connected, at least on the mother's side, and probably always with a vestige of connection, more or less, on the father's side, and unless these groups were like many animals, gregarious, under a leader more or less fixed. It is almost beyond imagination how man, as we know man, could by any sort of process have gained this step in civilization. And it is a great advantage, to say the least of it, in the evolution theory that it enables us to remit this difficulty to a pre-existing period in nature, where other instincts and powers than our present ones may

perhaps have come into play, and where our imagination can hardly travel. At any rate, for the present I may assume these two steps in human progress made, and these two conditions realized.

The rest of the way, if we grant these two conditions, is plainer. The first thing is the erection of what we may call a custom-making power, that is, of an authority which can enforce a fixed rule of life, which, by means of that fixed rule, can in some degree create a calculable future, which can make it rational to postpone present violent but momentary pleasure for future continual pleasure, because it insures, what else is not sure, that if the sacrifice of what is in hand be made, enjoyment of the contingent expected recompense will be received. Of course I am not saying that we shall find in early society any authority of which these shall be the motives. We must have travelled ages (unless all our evidence be wrong) from the first men before there was a comprehension of such motives. I only mean that the first thing in early society was an authority of whose action this shall be the result, little as it knew what it was doing, little as it would have cared if it had known.

The conscious end of early societies was not at all, or scarcely at all, the protection of life and property, as it was assumed to be by the eighteenth-century theory of government. Even in early historical ages—in the youth of the human race, not its childhood—such is not the nature of early states. Sir Henry Maine has taught us that the earliest subject of jurisprudence is not the separate property of the individual, but the common property of the family group; what we should call private property hardly then existed; or if it did, was so small as to be of no importance: it was like the things little children are now allowed to call their own, which they feel it very hard to have taken from them, but which they have no real right to hold and keep. Such is our earliest property-law, and our earliest life-law is that the lives of all members of the family group were at the mercy of the head of the group. As far as the individual goes, neither his goods nor his existence were protected at all. And this may teach us that something else was lacked in early societies besides what in our societies we now think of.

I do not think I put this too high when I say that a most important if not the most important object of early legislation was

the enforcement of lucky rites. I do not like to say religious rites, because that would involve me in a great controversy as to the power, or even the existence, of early religions. But there is no savage tribe without a notion of luck; and perhaps there is hardly any which has not a conception of luck for the tribe as a tribe, of which each member has not some such a belief that his own action or the action of any other member of it—that he or the others doing anything which was unlucky or would bring a “curse”—might cause evil not only to himself, but to all the tribe as well. I have said so much about “luck” and about its naturalness before, that I ought to say nothing again. But I must add that the contagiousness of the idea of “luck” is remarkable. It does not at all, like the notion of desert, cleave to the doer. There are people to this day who would not permit in their house people to sit down thirteen to dinner. They do not expect any evil to themselves particularly for permitting it or sharing in it, but they cannot get out of their heads the idea that some one or more of the number will come to harm if the thing is done. This is what Mr. Tylor calls survival in culture. The faint belief in the corporate liability of these thirteen is the feeble relic and last dying representative of that great principle of corporate liability to good and ill fortune which has filled such an immense place in the world.

The traces of it are endless. You can hardly take up a book of travels in rude regions without finding, “I wanted to do so and so. But I was not permitted, for the natives feared it might bring ill luck on the ‘party,’ or perhaps the tribe.” Mr. Galton, for instance, could hardly feed his people. The Damaras, he says, have numberless superstitions about meat which are very troublesome. In the first place, each tribe, or rather family, is prohibited from eating cattle of certain colors, savages “who come from the sun” eschewing sheep spotted in a particular way, which those “who come from the rain” have no objection to. “As,” he says, “there are five or six eandas or descents, and I had men from most of them with me, I could hardly kill a sheep that everybody would eat,” and he could not keep his meat, for it had to be given away because it was commanded by one superstition, nor buy milk, the staple food of those parts, because it was prohibited by another. And so on without end. Doing anything unlucky is in their idea what putting on something that

attracts the electric fluid is in fact. You cannot be sure that harm will not be done, not only to the person in fault, but to those about him too. As in the Scriptural phrase, doing what is of evil omen is “like one that letteth out water.” He cannot tell what are the consequences of his act, who will share them, or how they can be prevented.

In the earliest historical nations I need not say that the corporate liabilities of states is to a modern student their most curious feature. The belief is indeed raised far above the notion of mere “luck,” because there is a distinct belief in gods or a god whom the act offends. But the indiscriminate character of the punishment still survives; not only the mutilator of the *Hermæ*, but all the Athenians—not only the violator of the rites of the *Bona dea*, but all the Romans—are liable to the curse engendered; and so all through ancient history. The strength of the corporate anxiety so created is known to every one. Not only was it greater than any anxiety about personal property, but it was immeasurably greater. Naturally, even reasonably we may say, it was greater. The dread of the powers of nature, or of the beings who rule those powers, is properly, upon grounds of reason, as much greater than any other dread as the might of the powers of nature is superior to that of any other powers. If a tribe or a nation have, by a contagious fancy, come to believe that the doing of any one thing by any number will be “unlucky,” that is, will bring an intense and vast liability on them all, then that tribe and that nation will prevent the doing of that thing more than anything else. They will deal with the most cherished chief who even by chance should do it, as in a similar case the sailors dealt with Jonah.

I do not of course mean that this strange condition of mind as it seems to us was the sole source of early customs. On the contrary, man might be described as a custom-making animal with more justice than by many of the short descriptions. In whatever way a man has done anything once, he has a tendency to do it again: if he has done it several times he has a great tendency so to do it, and what is more, he has a great tendency to make others do it also. He transmits his formed customs to his children by example and by teaching. This is true now of human nature, and will always be true, no doubt. But what is peculiar in early societies is that over most of these customs

there grows sooner or later a semi-supernatural sanction. The whole community is possessed with the idea that if the primal usages of the tribe be broken, harm unspeakable will happen in ways you cannot think of, and from sources you cannot imagine. As people now-a-days believe that "murder will out," and that great crime will bring even an earthly punishment, so in early times people believed that for any breach of sacred custom certain retribution would happen. To this day many semi-civilized races have great difficulty in regarding any arrangement as binding and conclusive unless they can also manage to look at it as an inherited usage. Sir H. Maine, in his last work, gives a most curious case. The English Government in India has in many cases made new and great works of irrigation, of which no ancient Indian Government ever thought; and it has generally left it to the native village community to say what share each man of the village should have in the water; and the village authorities have accordingly laid down a series of most minute rules about it. But the peculiarity is that in no case do these rules "purport to emanate from the personal authority of their author or authors, which rests on grounds of reason, not on grounds of innocence and sanctity; nor do they assume to be dictated by a sense of equity; there is always, I am assured, a sort of fiction under which some customs as to the distribution of water are supposed to have emanated from a remote antiquity, although, in fact, no such artificial supply had ever been so much as thought of." So difficult does this ancient race—like, probably, in this respect so much of the ancient world—find it to imagine a rule which is obligatory, but not traditional.

The ready formation of custom-making groups in early society must have been greatly helped by the easy divisions of that society. Much of the world—all Europe, for example—was then covered by the primeval forest; men had only conquered, and as yet could only conquer, a few plots and corners from it. These narrow spaces were soon exhausted, and if numbers grew some of the new people must move. Accordingly migrations were constant, and were necessary. And these migrations were not like those of modern times. There was no such feeling as binds even Americans who hate, or speak as if they hated, the present political England—nevertheless to "the old home." There was then no organized means of communication—no practical com-

munication, we may say, between parted members of the same group; those who once went out from the parent society went out forever; they left no abiding remembrance, and they kept no abiding regard. Even the language of the parent tribe and of the descended tribe would differ in a generation or two. There being no written literature and no spoken intercourse, the speech of both would vary (the speech of such communities is always varying), and would vary in different directions. One set of causes, events, and associations would act on one, and another set on another; sectional differences would soon arise, and, for speaking purposes, what philologists call a dialectical difference often amounts to real and total difference: no connected interchange of thought is possible any longer. Separate groups soon "set up house;" the early societies begin a new set of customs, acquire and keep a distinct and special "luck."

If it were not for this facility of new formations, one good or bad custom would long since have "corrupted" the world; but even this would not have been enough but for those continual wars, of which I have spoken at such length in the essay on "The Use of Conflict," that I need say nothing now. These are by their incessant fractures of old images, and by their constant infusion of new elements, the real regenerators of society. And whatever be the truth or falsehood of the general dislike to mixed and half-bred races, no such suspicion was probably applicable to the early mixtures of primitive society. Supposing, as is likely, each great aboriginal race to have had its own quarter of the world (a quarter, as it would seem, corresponding to the special quarters in which plants and animals are divided), then the immense majority of the mixtures would be between men of different tribes but of the same stock, and this no one would object to, but everyone would praise.

In general, too, the conquerors would be better than the conquered (most merits in early society are more or less military merits), but they would not be very much better, for the lowest steps in the ladder of civilization are very steep, and the effort to mount them is slow and tedious. And this is probably the better if they are to produce a good and quick effect in civilizing those they have conquered. The experience of the English in India shows—if it shows anything—that a highly civilized race may fail in producing a rapidly excellent effect on a less civilized

race, because it is too good and too different. The two are not *en rapport* together; the merits of the one are not the merits prized by the other; the manner-language of the one is not the manner-language of the other. The higher being is not and cannot be a model for the lower; he could not mould himself on it if he would, and would not if he could. Consequently, the two races have long lived together, "near and yet far off," daily seeing one another and daily interchanging superficial thoughts, but in the depths of their mind separated by a whole era of civilization, and so affecting one another only a little in comparison with what might have been hoped. But in early societies there were no such great differences, and the rather superior conqueror must have easily improved the rather inferior conquered.

It is in the interior of these customary groups that national characters are formed. As I wrote a whole essay on the manner of this before, I cannot speak of it now. By proscribing non-conformist members for generations, and cherishing and rewarding conformist members, nonconformists become fewer and fewer, and conformists more and more. Most men mostly imitate what they see, and catch the tone of what they hear, and so a settled type—a persistent character—is formed. Nor is the process wholly mental. I cannot agree, though the greatest authorities say it, that no "unconscious selection" has been at work at the breed of man. If neither that nor conscious selection has been at work, how did there come to be these breeds, and such there are in the greatest numbers, though we call them nations? In societies tyrannically customary, uncongenial minds become first cowed, then melancholy, then out of health, and at last die. A Shelley in New England could hardly have lived, and a race of Shelleys would have been impossible. Mr. Galton wishes that breeds of men should be created by matching men with marked characteristics with women of like characteristics. But surely this is what nature has been doing time out of mind, and most in the rudest nations and hardest times. Nature disheartened in each generation the ill-fitted members of each customary group, so deprived them of their full vigor, or, if they were weakly, killed them. The Spartan character was formed because none but people with a Spartan make of mind could endure a Spartan existence. The early Roman character was so formed too. Perhaps all very marked national characters can be traced

back to a time of rigid and pervading discipline. In modern times, when society is more tolerant, new national characters are neither so strong, so featurely, nor so uniform.

In this manner society was occupied in pre-historic times,—it is consistent with and explicable by our general principle as to savages, that society should for ages have been so occupied, strange as that conclusion is, and incredible as it would be, if we had not been taught by experience to believe strange things.

Secondly, this principle and this conception of pre-historic times explain to us the meaning and the origin of the oldest and strangest of social anomalies—an anomaly which is among the first things history tells us—the existence of caste nations. Nothing is at first sight stranger than the aspect of those communities where several nations seem to be bound up together—where each is governed by its own rule of law, where no one pays any deference to the rule of law of any of the others. But if our principles be true, these are just the nations most likely to last, which would have a special advantage in early times, and would probably not only maintain themselves, but conquer and kill out others also. The characteristic necessity of early society as we have seen, is strict usage and binding coercive custom. But the obvious result and inevitable evil of that is monotony in society; no one can be much different from his fellows, or can cultivate his difference.

Such societies are necessarily weak from the want of variety in their elements. But a caste nation is various and composite; and has in a mode suited to early societies the constant co-operation of contrasted persons, which in a later age is one of the greatest triumphs of civilization. In a primitive age the division between the warrior caste and the priestly caste is especially advantageous. Little popular and little deserving to be popular now-a-days as are priestly hierarchies, most probably the beginnings of science were made in such, and were for ages transmitted in such. An intellectual class was in that age only possible when it was protected by a notion that whoever hurt them would certainly be punished by heaven. In this class apart discoveries were slowly made and some beginning of mental discipline was slowly matured. But such a community is necessarily unwarlike, and the superstition which protects priests from home murder will not aid them in conflict with the for-

eigner. Few nations mind killing their enemies' priests, and many priestly civilizations have perished without record before they well began. But such a civilization will not perish if a warrior caste is tacked on to it and is bound to defend it. On the contrary, such a civilization will be singularly likely to live. The head of the sage will help the arm of the soldier.

That a nation divided into castes must be a most difficult thing to found is plain. Probably it could only begin in a country several times conquered, and where the boundaries of each caste rudely coincided with the boundaries of certain sets of victors and vanquished. But, as we now see, when founded it is a likely nation to last. A parti-colored community of many tribes and many usages is more likely to get on, and help itself, than a nation of a single lineage and one monotonous rule. I say "at first," because I apprehend that in this case, as in so many others in the puzzling history of progress, the very institutions which most aid at step number one are precisely those which most impede at step number two. The whole of a caste nation is more various than the whole of a non-caste nation, but each caste itself is more monotonous than anything is, or can be, in a non-caste nation. Gradually a habit of action and type of mind forces itself on each caste, and it is little likely to be rid of it, for all who enter it are taught in one way and trained to the same employment. Several non-caste nations have still continued to progress. But all caste nations have stopped early, though some have lasted long. Each color in the singular composite of these tessellated societies has an indelible and invariable shade.

Thirdly, we see why so few nations have made rapid advance, and how many have become stationary. It is in the process of becoming a nation, and in order to become such, that they subjected themselves to the influence which has made them stationary. They could not become a real nation without binding themselves by a fixed law and usage, and it is the fixity of that law and usage which has kept them as they were ever since. I wrote a whole essay on this before, so I need say nothing now; and I only name it because it is one of the most important consequences of this view of society, if not indeed the most important.

Again, we can thus explain one of the most curious facts of the present world. "Manner," says a shrewd observer, who has seen much of existing life, "manner gets regularly worse as you

go from the East to the West; it is best in Asia, not so good in Europe, and altogether bad in the western states of America." And the reason is this—an imposing manner is a dignified usage, which tends to preserve itself and also all other existing usages along with itself. It tends to induce the obedience of mankind. One of the cleverest novelists of the present day has a curious dissertation to settle why on the hunting-field, and in all collections of men, some men "snub and some men get snubbed;" and why society recognizes in each case the ascendancy or the subordination as if it was right. "It is not at all," Mr. Trollope fully explains, "rare ability which gains the supremacy; very often the ill-treated man is quite as clever as the man who ill-treats him. Nor does it absolutely depend on wealth; for, though great wealth is almost always a protection from social ignominy, and will always insure a passive respect, it will not in a miscellaneous group of men of itself gain an active power to snub others. Schoolboys, in the same way," the novelist adds, "let some boys have dominion, and make other boys slaves." And he decides, no doubt truly, that in each case "something in the manner or gait" of the supreme boy or man has much to do with it. On this account in early society a dignified manner is of essential importance; it is, then, not only an auxiliary mode of acquiring respect, but a principal mode. The competing institutions which have now much superseded it, had not then begun. Ancient institutions or venerated laws did not then exist; and the habitual ascendancy of grave manner was a primary force in winning and calming mankind. To this day it is rare to find a savage chief without it; and almost always they greatly excel in it. Only last year a red Indian chief came from the prairies to see President Grant, and everybody declared that he had the best manners in Washington. The secretaries and heads of departments seemed vulgar to him; though, of course, intrinsically they were infinitely above him, for he was only "a plundering rascal." But an impressive manner had been a tradition in the societies in which he had lived, because it was of great value in those societies; and it is not a tradition in America, for nowhere is it less thought of, or of less use, than in a rough English colony; the essentials of civilization there depend on far different influences.

And manner, being so useful and so important, usages and customs grow up to develop it. Asiatic society is full of such things, if it should not rather be said to be composed of them.

"From the spirit and decision of a public envoy upon ceremonies and forms," says Sir John Malcolm, "the Persians very generally form their opinion of the character of the country he represents. This fact I had read in books, and all I saw convinced me of its truth. Fortunately the Elchee had resided at some of the principal courts of India, whose usages are very similar. He was, therefore, deeply versed in that important science denominated 'Kâida-e-nishest-oo-berkhâst' (or the art of sitting and rising), in which is included a knowledge of the forms and manners of good society, and particularly those of Asiatic kings and their courts.

"He was quite aware, on his first arrival in Persia, of the consequence of every step he took on such delicate points; he was, therefore, anxious to fight all his battles regarding ceremonies before he came near the footstool of royalty. We were consequently plagued, from the moment we landed at Ambusheher, till we reached Shiraz, with daily, almost hourly, drilling, that we might be perfect in our demeanor at all places, and under all circumstances. We were carefully instructed where to ride in a procession, where to stand or sit within doors, when to rise from our seats, how far to advance to meet a visitor, and to what part of the tent or house we were to follow him when he departed, if he was of sufficient rank to make us stir a step.

"The regulations of our risings and standings, and movings and reseatings, were, however, of comparatively less importance than the time and manner of smoking our Kelliâns and taking our coffee. It is quite astonishing how much depends upon coffee and tobacco in Persia. Men are gratified or offended, according to the mode in which these favorite refreshments are offered. You welcome a visitor, or send him off, by the way in which you call for a pipe or a cup of coffee. Then you mark, in the most minute manner, every shade of attention and consideration, by the mode in which he is treated. If he be above you, you present these refreshments yourself, and do not partake till commanded; if equal, you exchange pipes, and present him with coffee, taking the next cup yourself; if a little below you, and you wish to pay him attention, you leave him to smoke his own pipe, but the servant gives him, according to your condescending nod, the first cup of coffee; if much inferior, you keep your distance and maintain your rank, by taking the first cup of coffee

yourself, and then directing the servant, by a wave of the hand, to help the guest.

"When a visitor arrives, the coffee and pipe are called for to welcome him; a second call for these articles announces that he may depart; but this part of the ceremony varies according to the relative rank or intimacy of the parties.

"These matters may appear light to those with whom observances of this character are habits, not rules; but in this country they are of primary consideration, a man's importance with himself and with others depending on them."

In ancient customary societies the influence of manner, which is a primary influence, has been settled into rules, so that it may aid established usages and not thwart them—that it may, above all, augment the habit of going by custom, and not break and weaken it. Every aid, as we have seen, was wanted to impose the yoke of custom upon such societies; and impressing the power of manner to serve them was one of the greatest aids.

And lastly, we now understand why order and civilization are so unstable even in progressive communities. We see frequently in states what physiologists call "Atavism"—the return, in part, to the unstable nature of their barbarous ancestors. Such scenes of cruelty and horror as happened in the great French Revolution, and as happen, more or less, in every great riot, have always been said to bring out a secret and suppressed side of human nature; and we now see that they were the outbreak of inherited passions long repressed by fixed custom, but starting into life as soon as that repression was catastrophically removed, and when sudden choice was given. The irritability of mankind, too, is only part of their imperfect, transitory civilization and of their original savage nature. They could not look steadily to a given end for an hour in their pre-historic state; and even now, when excited or when suddenly and wholly thrown out of their old grooves, they can scarcely do so. Even some very high races, as the French and the Irish, seem in troubled times hardly to be stable at all, but to be carried everywhere as the passions of the moment and the ideas generated at the hour may determine. But, thoroughly to deal with such phenomena as these, we must examine the mode in which national characters can be emancipated from the rule of custom, and can be prepared for the use of choice.