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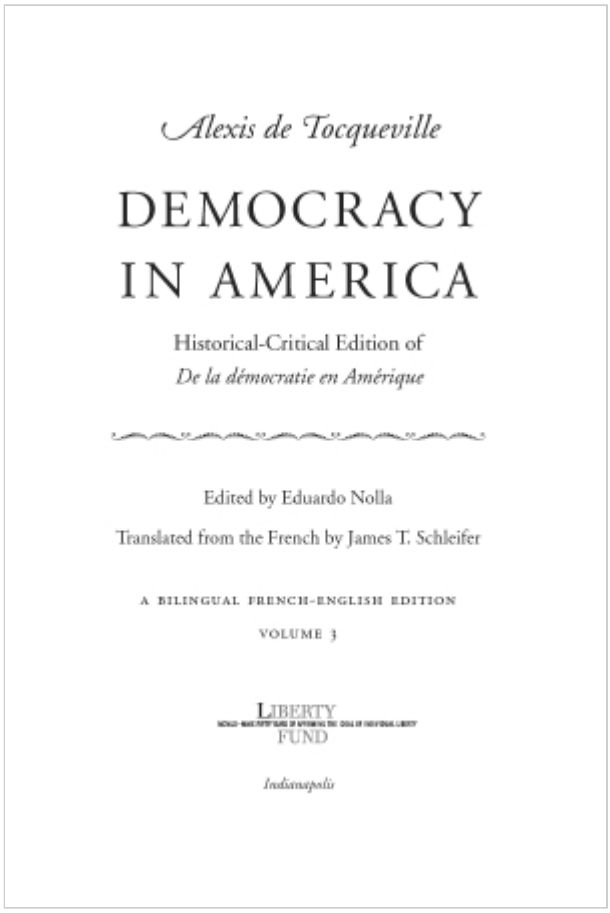
Alexis de Tocqueville, ***Democracy in America: Historical-Critical Edition, vol. 3*** [1840]



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A new 4 volume edition of Tocqueville's classic text *De la Démocratie en Amérique*. The original was published in two large volumes, the first in 1835, the second in 1840. The first volume focused primarily on political society; the second, on civil society. The online version of Liberty Fund's edition contains only the English translation of the French critical edition. Vol. 3 contains Parts I and II.

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DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA
(1840)

VOLUME III

Part I: Influence of Democracy on the Intellectual Movement in the United States

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[DEMOCRACY IN AMERICAA (1840), Volume III]

*Foreword*B*

The Americans have a democratic social state that has naturally suggested to them certain laws and certain political mores.c

This same social state has, moreover, given birth among them to a multitude of sentiments and opinions that were unknown in the old aristocratic societies of Europe. It has destroyed or modified relationships that formerly existed and established new ones. The appearance of civil society has been no less changed than the physiognomy of the political world.

I dealt with the first subject in the work that I published five years ago on American democracy. The second is the subject of the present book. These two parts complement one another and form only a single work.d

I must immediately warn the reader against an error that would be very prejudicial to me.

Seeing me attribute so many diverse effects to equality, he could conclude that I consider equality as the unique cause of all that happens today.e This would assume a very narrow view on my part.

There is, in our time, a host of opinions, sentiments, instincts that owe their birth to facts foreign or even contrary to equality. Thus, if I took the United States as an example, I would easily prove that the nature of the country, the origin of the inhabitants, the religion of the first founders, their acquired enlightenment, their previous habits, exercised and still exercise, independently of democracy, an immense influence on their way of thinking and feeling. Different causes, also distinct from the fact of equality, would be found in Europe and would explain a great part of what is happening there.

I recognize the existence of all these different causes and their power, but talking about them is not my subject. I have not undertaken to show the reason for all our inclinations and all our ideas; I have only wanted to show to what extent equality had modified both.f

You will perhaps be surprised that, since I am firmly of the opinion that the democratic revolution we are witnessing is an irresistible fact against which it would be neither desirable nor wise to struggle, I have often ended up addressing such harsh words in this book to the democratic societies created by this revolution.

I will simply reply that it is because I was not an adversary of democracy that I have wanted to be candid about it.g

Men do not receive the truth from their enemies, and their friends hardly ever offer the truth to them; that is why I have spoken it.

I have thought that many would take it upon themselves to announce the new good things that equality promises to men, but that few would dare to point out from a distance the perils with which it threatens them. So it is principally toward these perils that I have directed my attention, and, believing that I have clearly discerned them, I have not had the cowardice to say nothing about them.h

I hope that you will find again in this second work the impartialityj that seemed to be noted in the first. Placed in the middle of the contradictory opinions that divide us, I have tried to eradicate temporarily in my heart the favorable sympathies or contrary instincts that each one of them inspires in me. [I have wanted to live alone in order to keep my mind free.] If those who read my book find a single sentence that aims to flatter one of the great parties that have agitated our country, or one of the small factions that bother and enervate it today, may those readers raise their voices and accuse me.

The subject that I have wanted to embrace is immense; for it includes most of the sentiments and ideas that the new state of the world brings forth. Such a subject assuredly exceeds my powers;k while treating it, I have not succeeded in satisfying myself.

But, if I have not been able to achieve the goal that I set, readers will at least do me the justice of granting that I have conceived and followed my enterprise in the spirit that could make me worthy to succeed in it.m

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First Part[A]

Influence Of Democracy On The Intellectual Movement In The United States

Chapter 1[A]

Of The Philosophical Method Of The Americans[*B]

I think that in no country in the civilized world is there less interest in philosophy than in the United States.

The Americans have no philosophical school of their own, and they worry very little about all those that divide Europe; they hardly know their names.

It is easy to see, however, that nearly all the inhabitants of the United States direct their minds in the same way, and conduct them according to the same rules; that is to say, they possess, without ever having taken the trouble to define its rules, a certain philosophical method that is common to all of them.

To escape from the spirit of system, from the yoke of habits, from the maxims of family,[c] from the opinions of class, and, to a certain point, from the prejudices of nation; to take tradition only as information, and present facts only as a useful study for doing otherwise and better; to seek by yourself and in yourself alone the reason for things, to strive toward the result without allowing yourself to be caught up in the means, and to aim for substance beyond form: such are the principal features that characterize what I will call the philosophical method of the Americans.[d]

If I go still further and, among these various features, look for the principal one and the one that can sum up nearly all the others, I discover that, in most operations of the mind, each American appeals only to the individual effort of his reason.

So America is one of the countries of the world where the precepts of Descartes are least studied and best followed.[e] That should not be a surprise.

Americans do not read the works of Descartes, because their social state diverts them from speculative studies, and they follow his maxims because the same social state naturally disposes their mind to adopt them.[f]

Amid the constant movement that reigns within a democratic society,[g] the bond that links generations together weakens or breaks; each man easily loses track of the ideas of his ancestors, or is hardly concerned about them.

Nor can the men who live in such a society draw their beliefs from the opinions of the class to which they belong, for there are so to speak no longer any classes, and those that still exist are composed of elements so fluid, that the corps can never exercise a true power over its members.h

As for the action that the intelligence of one man can have on that of another, it is necessarily very limited in a country where citizens, having become more or less similar, all see each other at very close range; and, not noticing in any one of them the signs of incontestable greatness and superiority, they are constantly brought back to their own reasonj as the most visible and nearest source of truth. Then it is not only confidence in a particular man that is destroyed, but the taste to believe any man whatsoever on his word.

So each person withdraws narrowly into himself and claims to judge the world from there.

The custom that the Americans have of only taking themselves as guide for their judgment leads their mind to other habits.

Since they see that they manage without help to solve all the small difficulties that their practical life presents, they easily conclude that everything in the world is explicable, and that nothing goes beyond the limits of intelligence.

Thus, they readily deny what they cannot understand; that gives them little faith in the extraordinary and an almost invincible distaste for the supernatural.

Since they are accustomed to relying on their own witness, they love to see the matter that they are dealing with very clearly; so in order to see it more closely and in full light, they rid it as fully as they can of its wrapping; they push aside all that separates them from it, and clear away everything that hides it from their view. This disposition of their mind soon leads them to scorn forms, which they consider as useless and inconvenient veils placed between them and the truth.

So the Americans did not need to draw their philosophical method from books, they found it within themselves. I will say the same about what happened in Europe.

This same method became established and popularized in Europe only as conditions there became more equal and men more similar.

Let us consider for a moment the train of events:

In the XVIth century, the men of the Reformationk subject some of the dogmas of the ancient faith to individual reason; but they continue to exclude all the others from discussion.m In the XVIIth, Bacon, in the natural sciences, and Descartes, in philosophy strictly speaking, abolish accepted formulas, destroy the rule of traditions and overthrow the authority of the master.n

The philosophers of the XVIIIth century, finally generalizing the same principle, undertake to submit to the individual examination of each man the object of all his beliefs.o

Who does not see that Luther, Descartesp and Voltaire used the same method, and that they differ only in the greater or lesser use that they claimed to make of it?

Why did the men of the Reformation enclose themselves so narrowly in the circle of religious ideas? Why did Descartes want to use it only in certain matters, although he made his method applicable to everything, and declare that only philosophical and not political things must be judged by oneself? How did it happen that in the XVIIIth century general applications that Descartes and his predecessors had not noticed or had refused to see were all at once drawn from that same method? Finally, why in that period did the method we are speaking about suddenly emerge from the schools to penetrate society and become the common rule of intelligence, and why, after becoming popular among the French, was it openly adopted or secretly followed by all the peoples of Europe?

The philosophical method in question was able to arise in the XVIth century, to take shape and become general in the XVIIth; but it could not be commonly adopted in either one of the two. Political laws, the social state, the habits of the mind that flow from these first causes, were opposed to it.

It was discovered in a period when men began to become equal and similar to each other. It could only be generally followed in centuries when conditions had finally become nearly similar and men almost the same.

So the philosophical method of the XVIIIth century is not only French, but democratic,q which explains why it was so easily accepted everywhere in Europe, whose face it so much contributed to changing. It is not because the French changed their ancient beliefs and modified their ancient mores that they turned the world upside down; it is because they were the first to generalize and bring to light a philosophical method by the aid of which you could easily attack all things old and open the way to all things new.

If someone now asks me why, today, this same method is followed more rigorously and applied more often among the French than among the Americans, among whom equality is nonetheless as complete and older, I will answer that it is due in part to two circumstances that must first be made clear.

It is religion that gave birth to the Anglo-American societies: that must never be forgotten; so in the United States religion merges with all national habits and all sentiments that the country brings forth; that gives it a particular strength.r

To this powerful reason add this other one, which is no less so: in America, religion has so to speak set its own limits; the religious order there has remained entirely distinct from the political order, so that they were able to change ancient laws easily without shaking ancient beliefs.

So Christianity retained a great dominion over the mind of the Americans, and, what I want to note above all, it reigns not only as a philosophy that you adopt after examination, but also as a religion that you believe without discussion.

In the United States, Christian sects vary infinitely and are constantly changing, but Christianity itself is an established and irresistible fact that no one attempts to attack or defend.

The Americans, having admitted the principal dogmas of the Christian religion without examination, are obliged to receive in the same way a great number of moral truths that arise from it and are due to it. That confines the work of individual analysis within narrow limits, and excludes from it several of the most important human opinions.s

The other circumstance that I spoke about is this: The Americans have a democratic social state and a democratic constitution, but they have not had a democratic revolution. They arrived on the soil that they occupy more or less as we see them. That is very important.

There are no revolutions that do not turn ancient beliefs upside down, enervate authority and cloud common ideas. So every revolution has more or less the effect of leaving men to themselves and of opening before the mind of each one of them an empty and almost limitless space.

When conditions become equal following a prolonged struggle between the different classes that formed the old society, envy, hatred and contempt for neighbor, pride and exaggerated confidence in self, invade, so to speak, the human heart and for some time make it their domain. This, apart from equality, contributes powerfully to divide men, to make them mistrust each other's judgment and seek enlightenment only within themselves alone.t

Each person then tries to be self-sufficient and glories in having beliefs that are his own. Men are no longer tied together except by interests and not by ideas, and you would say that human opinions no longer form anything other than a kind of intellectual dust that swirls on all sides, powerless to come together and settle.

Thus, the independence of mind that equality suggests is never so great and never appears so excessive as at the moment when equality begins to become established and during the painful work that establishes it. So you must carefully distinguish the type of intellectual liberty that equality can provide, from the anarchy that revolution brings. These two things must be considered separately, in order not to conceive exaggerated hopes and fears about the future.

I believe that the men who will live in the new societies will often make use of their individual reason; but I am far from believing that they will often abuse it.

This is due to a cause more generally applicable to all democratic countries and that, in the long run, must keep individual independence of thought within fixed and sometimes narrow limits.

I am going to speak about it in the chapter that follows.u

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Chapter 2A

*Of The Principal Source Of Beliefs Among Democratic Peoples*B

Dogmatic beliefs are more or less numerous, depending on the times. They are born in different ways and can change form and object; but you cannot make it so that there are no dogmatic beliefs, that is to say, opinions that men receive on trust and without discussion. If each person undertook to form all his opinions himself and to pursue truth in isolation, along paths opened up by himself alone, it is improbable that a great number of men would ever unite together in any common belief.c

Now, it is easy to see that no society is able to prosper without similar beliefs, or rather none can continue to exist in such a way; for, without common ideas, there is no common action, and, without common action, there are still men, but not a social body. So for society to exist, and, with even more reason, for this society to prosper, all the minds of the citizens must always be brought and held together by some principal ideas; and that cannot happen without each one of them coming at times to draw his opinions from the same source and consenting to receive a certain number of ready-made beliefs.d

If I now consider man separately, I find that dogmatic beliefs are no less indispensable for him to live alone than to act in common with his fellows.e

If man was forced to prove to himself all the truths that he uses every day, he would never finish doing so; he would wear himself out with preliminary demonstrations without advancing; as he has neither the time, because of the short span of his life, nor the ability, because of the limitations of his mind, to act in this way, he is reduced to holding as certain a host of facts and opinions that he has had neither the leisure nor the power to examine and to verify by himself, but that those more clever have found or that the crowd adopts. On this foundation he builds himself the structure of his own thoughts. It is not his will that leads him to proceed in this manner; the inflexible law of his condition compels him to do so.

There is in this world no philosopher so great that he does not believe a million things on the faith of others, and who does not assume many more truths than he establishes.f

This is not only necessary but desirable. A man who would undertake to examine everything by himself would only be able to give a little time and attention to each thing; this work would keep his mind in a perpetual agitation that would prevent him from penetrating any truth deeply and from settling reliably on any certitude. His intelligence would be independent and weak at the very same time. So, among the various subjects of human opinions, he must make a choice and adopt many beliefs

without discussing them, in order to go more deeply into a small number that he has reserved to examine for himself.g

[<In this manner he is misled more, but he deceives himself less.>] It is true that every man who receives an opinion on the word of others puts his mind into slavery; but it is a salutary servitude that allows making a good use of liberty.h

[That is noticeable above all in dogmatic beliefs whose subject is religion.

Religion, by providing the mind with a clear and precise solution to a great number of metaphysical and moral questions as important as they are difficult to resolve, leaves the mind the strength and the leisure to proceed with calmness and with energy in the whole area that religion abandons to it; and it is not precisely because of religion, but with the help of the liberty and the peace that religion gained for it, that the human mind has often done such great things in the centuries of faith.]j

So, no matter what happens, authority must always be found somewhere in the intellectual and moral world. Its place is variable, but it necessarily has a place. Individual independence can be greater or lesser; it cannot be limitless. Thus, the question is not to know if an intellectual authorityk exists in democratic centuries, but only to know where its repository is and what its extent will be.

I showed in the preceding chapter how equality of conditions made men conceive a kind of instinctive unbelief in the supernatural, and a very high and often exaggerated idea of human reason.

So men who live during these times of equality are not easily led to place the intellectual authority to which they submit outside and above humanity. It is in themselves or their fellows that they ordinarily look for the sources of truth. That would be enough to prove that a new religion cannot be established during these centuries, and that all attempts to bring it to life would be not only impious, but also ridiculous and unreasonable. You can predict that democratic peoples will not easily believe in divine missions, that they will readily scoff at new prophets and that they will want to find the principal arbiter of their beliefs within the limits of humanity and not beyond.

When conditions are unequal and men dissimilar, there are some individuals very enlightened, very learned, very powerful because of their intelligence, and a multitude very ignorant and very limited. So men who live in times of aristocracy are naturally led to take as guide for their opinions the superior reason of one man or of one class, while they are little disposed to recognize the infallibility of the mass.

The contrary happens in centuries of equality.m

As citizens become more equal and more similar, the tendency of each blindly to believe a certain man or a certain class decreases. The disposition to believe the mass increases, and more and more it is opinion that leads the world.

Not only is common opinion the sole guide that remains for individual reason among democratic peoples; but also it has among these peoples an infinitely greater power than among any other. In times of equality, men, because of their similarity, have no faith in each other; but this very similarity gives them an almost unlimited confidence in the judgment of the public; for it does not seem likely to them that, since all have similar enlightenment, truth is not found on the side of the greatest number.n

When the man who lives in democratic countries compares himself individually to all those who surround him, he feels with pride that he is equal to each of them; but, when he comes to envisage the ensemble of his fellows and to place himself alongside this great body, he is immediately overwhelmed by his own insignificance and weakness.

This same equality that makes him independent of each one of his fellow citizens in particular, delivers him isolated and defenseless to the action of the greatest number.o

So the public among democratic peoples has a singular power the idea of which aristocratic nations would not even be able to imagine. It does not persuade, it imposes its beliefs and makes them penetrate souls by a kind of immense pressure of the mind of all on the intelligence of each.

In the United States, the majority takes charge of providing individuals with a host of ready-made opinions, and thus relieves them of the obligation to form for themselves opinions that are their own. A great number of theories in matters of philosophy, morality and politics are adopted in this way by each person without examination on faith in the public; and, if you look very closely, you will see that religion itself reigns there much less as revealed doctrine than as common opinion.p

I know that, among Americans, political laws are such that the majority governs society as a sovereign;q that greatly increases the dominion that it naturally exercises over intelligence. For there is nothing more familiar to man than recognizing a superior wisdom in the one who oppresses him.r

This political omnipotence of the majority in the United States increases, in fact, the influence that the opinions of the public would have without it on the mind of each citizen there; but it does not establish it. The sources of this influence must be sought in equality itself, and not in the more or less popular institutions that equal men can give themselves. It is to be believed that the intellectual dominion of the greatest number would be less absolute among a democratic people subject to a king, than within a pure democracy; but it will always be very absolute, and, whatever the political laws may be that govern men in centuries of equality, you can predict that faith in common opinion will become a sort of religion whose prophet will be the majority.

Thus intellectual authority will be different, but it will not be less; and, far from believing that it must disappear, I foresee that it would easily become too great and that it might well be that it would finally enclose the action of individual reason within more narrow limits than are suitable for the grandeur and happiness of the

human species. I see very clearly in equality two tendencies: one that leads the mind of each man toward new thoughts and the other that readily reduces him to thinking no more. And I notice how, under the dominion of certain laws, democracy would extinguish the intellectual liberty that the democratic social state favors, so that after breaking all the obstacles that were formerly imposed on it by classes or men, the human mind would bind itself narrowly to the general wills of the greatest number [*volontés générales du plus grand nombre* —Trans.].s

If, in place of all the diverse powers that hindered or slowed beyond measure the rapid development of individual reason, democratic peoples substituted the absolute power of a majority, the evil would only have changed character. Men would not have found the means to live independently; they would only have discovered, a difficult thing, a new face of servitude. I cannot say it enough: for those who see liberty of the mind as a holy thing, and who hate not only the despot but also despotism, there is in that something to make them reflect deeply. For me, when I feel the hand of power pressing on my head, knowing who is oppressing me matters little to me, and I am no more inclined to put my head in the yoke, because a million arms present it to me.

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Chapter 3A

Why The Americans Show More Aptitude And Taste For General Ideas Than Their Fathers The English

God does not consider the human species in general. He sees at a single glance and separately all the beings who make up humanity, and he notices each of them with the similarities that bring each closer to the others and the differences that isolate each.

So God does not need general ideas; that is to say he never feels the necessity to encompass a very great number of analogous objects within the same form in order to think about them more comfortably.

It is not so with man. If the human mind undertook to examine and to judge individually all the particular cases that strike it, it would soon be lost amid the immensity of details and would no longer see anything; in this extremity, it resorts to an imperfect, but necessary procedure that helps its weakness and proves it.b

After considering a certain number of matters superficially and noticing that they are alike, the human mind gives them all the same name, puts them aside and goes on its way.

General ideas do not attest to the strength of human intelligence, but rather to its insufficiency, for there are no beings exactly the same in nature: no identical facts; no rules applicable indiscriminately and in the same way to several matters at once.c

General ideas are admirable in that they allow the human mind to make rapid judgements about a great number of matters at the same time; but, on the other hand, they never provide it with anything other than incomplete notions, and they always make it lose in exactitude what it gains in breadth.

As societies grow older, they acquire knowledge of new facts and each day, almost without knowing it, they take hold of a few particular truths.

As man grasps more truths of this nature, he is naturally led to conceive a greater number of general ideas. You cannot see a multitude of particular facts separately, without finally discovering the common bond that holds them together. Several individuals make the notion of the species emerge; several species lead necessarily to that of the genus. So the older and more extensive the enlightenment of a people, the greater will always be their habit of and taste for general ideas.

But there are still other reasons that push men to generalize their ideas or move them away from doing so.

The Americans make much more frequent use than the English of general ideas and delight much more in doing so; that seems very strange at first, if you consider that these two peoples have the same origin, that they lived for centuries under the same laws and that they still constantly communicate their opinions and their mores to one another. The contrast seems even much more striking when you concentrate your attention on our Europe and compare the two most enlightened peoples that live there.d

You would say that among the English the human mind tears itself away from the contemplation of particular facts only with regret and pain in order to return from there to causes, and that the human mind generalizes only in spite of itself.

It seems, on the contrary, that among us the taste for general ideas has become a passion so unrestrained that it must be satisfied in the slightest thing. I learn each morning upon waking that a certain general and eternal law has just been discovered that I had never heard of until then [and <I am assured> that I obey with all the rest of my fellows some primary causes of which I was unaware]. There is no writer so mediocre for whom it is enough in his essay to discover truths applicable to a great kingdom and who does not remain discontent with himself if he has not been able to contain humanity within the subject of his discourse.e

Such a dissimilarity between two very enlightened peoples astonishes me. If finally I turn my mind toward England and notice what has been happening for half a century within that country, I believe I am able to assert that the taste for general ideas is developing there as the ancient constitution of the country is becoming weaker.

So the more or less advanced state of enlightenment alone is not sufficient to explain what suggests love of general ideas to the human mind or turns it away from them.

When conditions are very unequal, and inequalities are permanent, individuals become little by little so dissimilar that you would say that there are as many distinct humanities as there are classes; you see only one of them at a time, and, losing sight of the general bond that gathers all within the vast bosom of the human species, you envisage only certain men and not man.

So those who live in these aristocratic societies never conceive very general ideas relative to themselves, and that suffices to give them a habitual distrust of these ideas, and an instinctive disgust for them.

The man who inhabits democratic countries, on the contrary, sees near him only more or less similar beings; so he cannot consider whatever part of the human species, without having his thought widen and expand to embrace the whole. All the truths that are applicable to himself seem to him to apply equally or in the same way to each one of his fellow citizens and of his fellow men.f Having contracted the habit of general ideas in the one area of his studies that concerns him most and that interests him more, he transfers this same habit to all the others, and this is how the need to find common rules in everything, to encompass a great number of matters within the

same form, and to explain an ensemble of facts by a sole cause, becomes an ardent and often blind passion of the human mind.g

Nothing shows the truth of what precedes better than the opinions of antiquity relative to slaves.

The most profound and far-reaching geniuses of Rome and of Greece were never able to reach this idea so general, but at the same time so simple, of the similarity of men and of the equal right to liberty that each one of them bears by birth; and they struggled hard to prove that slavery was in nature and that it would always exist. Even more, everything indicates that those of the ancients who had been slaves before becoming free, several of whom have left us beautiful writings, themselves envisaged servitude in the same way.

All the great writers of antiquity were part of the aristocracy of masters, or at least they saw this aristocracy established without dispute before their eyes; so their minds, after expanding in several directions, were limited in that one, and Jesus Christ had to come to earth in order to make it understood that all members of the human species were naturally similar and equal.h

In centuries of equality, all men are independent of each other, isolated and weak; you see none whose will directs the movements of the crowd in a permanent fashion; in these times, humanity always seems to march by itself. So in order to explain what is happening in the world, you are reduced to searching for some general causes that, acting in the same way on each one of our fellows, therefore lead them all voluntarily to follow the same route. That also naturally leads the human mind to conceive general ideas and causes it to contract the taste for them.

I showed previously how equality of conditions brought each man to search for truth by himself. It is easy to see that such a method must imperceptibly make the human mind tend toward general ideas.

When I repudiate the traditions of class, of profession and of family, when I escape from the rule of example in order, by the sole effort of my reason, to search for the path to follow, I am inclined to draw the grounds of my opinions from the very nature of man, which brings me necessarily and almost without my knowing, toward a great number of very general notions.j

Everything that precedes finally explains why the English show much less aptitude and taste for the generalization of ideas than their sons, the Americans, and above all than their neighbors, the French, and why the English today show more of such aptitude and taste than their fathers did.k

The English have for a long time been a very enlightened and at the same time very aristocratic people; their enlightenment made them tend constantly toward very general ideas, and their aristocratic habits held them in very particular ideas. From that this philosophy, at the very same time bold and timid, broad and narrow, that

dominated in England until now, and that still keeps so many minds there restricted and immobile.m

Apart from the causes that I showed above, you find still others, less apparent, but no less effective, that produce among nearly all democratic peoples the taste and often the passion for general ideas.

These sorts of ideas must be clearly distinguished. There are some that are the product of a slow, detailed, conscientious work of intelligence, and those enlarge the sphere of human knowledge.

There are others that arise easily from a first rapid effort of the mind, and that lead only to very superficial and very uncertain notions.

Men who live in centuries of equality have a great deal of curiosity and little leisure; their life is so practical, so complicated, so agitated, so active, that little time remains for them to think. The men of democratic centuries love general ideas, because they exempt them from studying particular cases; they contain, if I can express myself in this way, many things within a small volume and in little time produce a great result. So when, after an inattentive and short examination, they believe they notice among certain matters a common relationship, they push their research no further, and, without examining in detail how these diverse matters are similar or different, they hasten to arrange them according to the same formula, in order to move on.

One of the distinctive characteristics of democratic centuries is the taste that all men there feel for easy success and present enjoyments. This is found in intellectual careers as in all others. Most of those who live in times of equality are full of an ambition intense and soft at the same time; they want to gain great successes immediately, but they would like to excuse themselves from great efforts. These opposing instincts lead them directly to the search for general ideas, by the aid of which they flatter themselves to portray very vast matters at little cost, and to attract the attention of the public without difficulty.

And I do not know if they are wrong to think this way; for their readers are as much afraid to go deeper as they themselves are and ordinarily seek in the works of the mind only easy pleasures and instruction without work.

If aristocratic nations do not make enough use of general ideas and often show them an ill-considered scorn, it happens, on the contrary, that democratic peoples are always ready to abuse these sorts of ideas and to become impassioned excessively for them.n

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Chapter 4A

Why The Americans Have Never Been As Passionate As The French About General Ideas In Political Matters

[<I showed in the preceding chapter that equality of conditions suggested to the human mind the taste for general ideas. I do not want to abandon this subject without pointing out here in passing how the great liberty that the Americans enjoy prevents them from giving themselves blindly to this very taste in politics.>]

I said before that the Americans showed a less intense taste than the French for general ideas. That is above all true for general ideas relative to politics.

Although the Americans introduce infinitely more general ideas into legislation than the English, and although they concern themselves much more than the latter with adjusting the practice of human affairs to the theory, you have never seen in the United States political bodies as in love with general ideas as were our own Constituent Assembly and Convention; never has the entire American nation had a passion for these sorts of ideas in the same way that the French people of the XVIIIth century did, and never has it shown so blind a faith in the goodness and in the absolute truth of any theory.

This difference between the Americans and us arises out of several causes, but principally this one:

The Americans form a democratic people that has always run public affairs by themselves, and we are a democratic people that, for a long time, has only been able to think about the best way to conduct them.

Our social state already led us to conceive very general ideas in matters of government, while our political constitution still prevented us from rectifying these ideas by experience and from discovering little by little their inadequacy; while among the Americans these two things constantly balanced and mutually corrected each other.

It seems, at first view, that this is strongly opposed to what I said previously, that democratic nations drew from the very agitation of their practical life the love that they show for theories. A closer examination reveals that there is nothing contradictory there.b

Men who live in democratic countries are very avid for general ideas, because they have little leisure and because these ideas excuse them from wasting their time in examining particular cases; that is true, but it must be extended only to the matters that are not the habitual and necessary object of their thoughts.c Tradesmen will grasp eagerly and without looking very closely all the general ideas that are presented to

them relative to philosophy, politics, the sciences and the arts; but they will accept only after examination those that have to do with commerce and accept them only with reservation.

The same thing happens to statesmen, when it is a matter of general ideas relative to politics.

So when there is a subject on which it is particularly dangerous for democratic peoples to give themselves to general ideas blindly and beyond measure, the best corrective that you can employ is to make them concern themselves with it every day and in a practical way; then it will be very necessary for them to enter into details, and the details will make them see the weak aspects of the theory.

The remedy is often painful, but its effect is certain.

In this way democratic institutions, which force each citizen to be occupied in a practical way with government, moderate the excessive taste for general theories in political matters that equality suggests.d

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Chapter 5A

*How, In The United States, Religion Knows How To Make Use Of Democratic Instincts*B

I established in one of the preceding chapters that men cannot do without dogmatic beliefs, and that it was even much to be desired that they had such beliefs. I add here that, among all dogmatic beliefs, the most desirable seem to me to be dogmatic beliefs in the matter of religion; that very clearly follows, even if you want to pay attention only to the interests of this world alone.

[≠Religions have the advantage that they provide the human mind with the clear and precise answer to a very great number of questions.≠]

There is hardly any human action, no matter how particular you assume it to be, that is not born out of a very general idea that men have conceived of God, of God's relationships with humanity, of the nature of their soul and of their duties toward their fellows. You cannot keep these ideas from being the common source from which all the rest flows.c

[Experience has proved that they were necessary to all men and that each man needed them daily in order to solve the smallest problems of his existence.]

So men have an immense interest in forming very fixed ideas about God, their soul, their general duties toward their creator and toward their fellows; for doubt about these first points would leave all their actions to chance and would condemn them in a way to disorder and impotence.

So this matter is the one about which it is most important for each one of us to have fixed ideas, and unfortunately it is also the one on which it is most difficult for each person, left to himself and by the sole effort of his reason, to come to fix his ideas.

Only minds very emancipated from the ordinary preoccupations of life, very perceptive, very subtle, very practiced are able with the help of a great deal of time and care to break through to such necessary truths.

Yet we see that these philosophers themselves are almost always surrounded by uncertainties; at each step the natural light that illumines them grows dark and threatens to go out, and despite all their efforts they still have been able to discover only a small number of contradictory notions, in the middle of which the human mind has drifted constantly for thousands of years, unable to grasp the truth firmly or even to find new errors. Such studies are far beyond the average capacity of men, and, even if most men were capable of devoting themselves to such studies, it is clear that they would not have the leisure to do so.

Fixed ideas about God and human nature are indispensable for the daily practice of their life, and this practice prevents them from being able to acquire those ideas.

That seems unique to me. Among the sciences, there are some, useful to the crowd, that are within its grasp; others are only accessible to a few persons and are not cultivated by the majority, which needs only the most remote of their applications. But the daily practice of this science is indispensable to all, even though its study is inaccessible to the greatest number.

General ideas relative to God and to human nature are, therefore, among all ideas, those most suitable to remove from the habitual action of individual reason, and for which there is the most to gain and the least to lose by recognizing an authority.

The first object, and one of the principal advantages of religions, is to provide for each of these primordial questions a clear, precise answer, intelligible to the crowd and very enduring.

There are very false and very absurd religions. You can say however that every religion that remains within the circle that I have just pointed out and that does not claim to go outside of it, as several have tried to do in order to stop the free development of the human mind in all directions, imposes a salutary yoke on the intellect; and it must be recognized that, if religion does not save men in the other world, it is at least very useful to their happiness and to their grandeur in this one.

This is above all true of men who live in free countries.

When religion is destroyed among a people, doubt takes hold of the highest portions of the intellect and half paralyzes all the others. Each person gets accustomed to having only confused and changing notions about the matters that most interest his fellows and himself. You defend your opinions badly or you abandon them, and, since you despair of being able, by yourself, to solve the greatest problems that human destiny presents, you are reduced like a coward to not thinking about them.

Such a state cannot fail to enervate souls; it slackens the motivating forces of will and prepares citizens for servitude.

Then not only does it happen that the latter allow their liberty to be taken, but they often give it up.

When authority no longer exists in religious matters, any more than in political matters, men are soon frightened by the sight of this limitless independence. This perpetual agitation [<and this continual mutation>] of all things disturbs and exhausts them. Since everything shifts in the intellectual world, they at least want everything to be firm and stable in the material order, and, no longer able to recapture their ancient beliefs, they give themselves a master.

For me, I doubt that man can ever bear complete religious independence and full political liberty at the same time; and I am led to think that, if he does not have faith, he must serve, and, if he is free, he must believe.

I do not know, however, if this great utility of religions is not still more visible among peoples where conditions are equal, than among all others.

It must be recognized that equality, which introduces great advantages into the world, nevertheless suggests, as will be shown below, very dangerous instincts to men; it tends to isolate them from one another and to lead each one of them to be interested only in himself alone.

It opens their souls excessively to love of material enjoyments.

The greatest advantage of religions is to inspire entirely opposite instincts. There is no religion that does not place the object of the desires of men above and beyond the good things of the earth, and that does not naturally elevate his soul toward realms very superior to those of the senses. Nor is there any religion that does not impose on each man some duties toward the human species or in common with it, and that does not in this way drag him, from time to time, out of contemplation of himself. This is found in the most false and most dangerous religions.

So religious peoples are naturally strong precisely in the places where democratic peoples are weak; this makes very clear how important it is for men to keep their religion while becoming equal.

I have neither the right nor the will to examine the supernatural means that God uses to make a religious belief reach the heart of man. At this moment I am envisaging religions only from a purely human viewpoint. I am trying to find out how they can most easily retain their dominion in the democratic centuries that we are entering.d

I have shown how, in times of enlightenment and equality, the human mind agreed to receive dogmatic beliefs only with difficulty and strongly felt the need to do so only as regards religion [<and dogmatic beliefs are readily adopted in the form of common opinions>]. This indicates first of all that, in those centuries, religions must be more discreet than in all other centuries in staying within the limits that are appropriate to them and must not try to go beyond them; for, by wanting to extend their power beyond religious matters, they risk no longer being believed in any matter. So they must carefully draw the circle within which they claim to stop the human mind, and beyond that circle they must leave the mind entirely free to be abandoned to itself.

Mohammed made not only religious doctrines, but also political maxims, civil and criminal laws, and scientific theories descend from heaven and placed them in the Koran. The Gospel, in contrast, speaks only of the general relationships of men with God and with each other. Beyond that, it teaches nothing and requires no belief in anything. That alone, among a thousand other reasons, is enough to show that the first of these two religions cannot long dominate during times of enlightenment and democracy, whereas the second is destined to reign during these centuries as in all others.e

If I continue this same inquiry further, I find that for religions to be able, humanly speaking, to persist in democratic centuries, they must not only carefully stay within

the circle of religious matters; their power also depends a great deal on the nature of the beliefs that they profess, on the external forms that they adopt, and on the obligations that they impose.

What I said previously, that equality brings men to very general and very vast ideas, must principally be understood in the matter of religion. Men similar and equal easily understand the notion of a single God, imposing on each one of them the same rules and granting them future happiness at the same cost. The idea of the unity of the human race leads them constantly to the idea of the unity of the Creator, while in contrast men very separate from each other and strongly dissimilar readily come to make as many divinities as there are peoples, castes, classes and families, and to mark out a thousand particular roads for going to heaven.

You cannot deny that Christianity itself has not in some way been subjected to the influence exercised by the social and political state on religious beliefs.

At the moment when the Christian religion appeared on earth, Providence, which without doubt prepared the world for its coming, had gathered together a great part of the human species, like an immense flock under the scepter of the Caesars. The men who made up this multitude differed a great deal from one another, but they nevertheless had this point in common, they all obeyed the same laws; and each of them was so weak and so small in relation to the greatness of the prince, that they all seemed equal when compared to him.

It must be recognized that this new and particular state of humanity had to dispose men to receive the general truths that Christianity teaches, and it serves to explain the easy and rapid way in which it then penetrated the human mind.f

The counter-proof came about after the destruction of the Empire.

The Roman world was then broken so to speak into a thousand pieces; each nation reverted to its original individuality. Soon, within the interior of these nations, ranks became infinitely graduated; races became marked; castes divided each nation into several [enemy] peoples. In the middle of this common effort that seemed to lead human societies to subdivide themselves into as many fragments as it was possible to imagine, Christianity did not lose sight of the principal general ideas that it had brought to light. But it seemed nonetheless to lend itself, as much as it could, to the new tendencies given birth by the splitting up of the human species. Men continued to adore only a single God, creator and sustainer of all things; but each people, each city, and so to speak each man believed in the ability to gain some separate privilege and to create particular protectors next to the sovereign master. Not able to divide Divinity, his agents at least were multiplied and enlarged beyond measure; the homage due to angels and saints became for most Christians a nearly idolatrous worship, and it could be feared at one time that the Christian religion was regressing toward the religions that it had vanquished.

It seems clear to me that the more the barriers that separated nations within humanity and citizens within the interior of each people tend to disappear, the more the human

mind heads as if by itself toward the idea of a single and omnipotent being, dispensing equally and in the same way the same laws to each man. So particularly in these centuries of democracy, it is important not to allow the homage given to secondary agents to be confused with the worship due only to the Creator.

[So you can foresee in advance that every religion in a democratic century that comes to establish intermediary powers between God and men and indicates certain standards of conduct to certain men will come to clash with the irresistible tendencies of intelligence; it will not acquire authority or will lose the authority that it had acquired at a time when the social state suggested opposite notions.]

Another truth seems very clear to me; religions must attend less to external practices in democratic times than in all others.

I have shown, in relation to the philosophical method of the Americans, that nothing revolts the human mind more in times of equality than the idea of submitting to forms. Men who live during these times endure representations impatiently; symbols seem to them puerile artifices that you use to veil or keep from their eyes truths that it would be more natural to show them entirely naked and in full light of day; the trappings of ceremonies leave them cold, and they are naturally led to attach only a secondary importance to the details of worship.

Those who are charged with regulating the external form of religions in democratic centuries must pay close attention to these natural instincts of human intelligence, in order not to struggle needlessly against them.

I firmly believe in the necessity of forms;g I know that they fix the human mind in the contemplation of abstract truths, and forms, by helping the mind to grasp those truths firmly, make it embrace them with fervor. I do not imagine that it is possible to maintain a religion without external practices, but on the other hand I think that, during the centuries we are entering, it would be particularly dangerous to multiply them inordinately; that instead they must be restricted and that you should retain only those that are absolutely necessary for the perpetuation of the dogma itself, which is the substance of religions,1 of which worship is only the form. A religion that would become more minutely detailed, more inflexible and more burdened by small observances at the same time that men are becoming more equal, would soon see itself reduced to a troop of passionate zealots in the middle of an unbelieving multitude.

I know that some will not fail to object that religions, all having general and eternal truths as their object, cannot bend in this way to the changing instincts of each century, without losing the character of certitude in the eyes of men. I will answer here again that you must distinguish very carefully between the principal opinions that constitute a belief and that form what theologians call the articles of faith, and the incidental notions that are linked to them. Religions are obliged always to hold firm in the first, whatever the particular spirit of the times; but they must very carefully keep from binding themselves in the same way to the second, during centuries when everything changes position constantly and when the mind, accustomed to the moving

spectacle of human affairs, reluctantly allows itself to be fixed. Immobility in external and secondary things does not seem to me a possibility for enduring except when civil society itself is immobile; everywhere else, I am led to believe that it is a danger.

We will see that, among all the passions to which equality gives birth or favors, there is one that it makes particularly intense and that it deposits at the same time in the heart of all men; it is the love of well-being. The taste for well-being forms like the salient and indelible feature of democratic ages.

It can be believed that a religion that undertook to destroy this fundamental passion would in the end be destroyed by it; if a religion wanted to drag men away entirely from the contemplation of the good things of this world in order to deliver them solely to the thought of those of the other, you can predict that souls would finally escape from its hands and go far from it to plunge into material and present pleasures alone.

The principal business of religions is to purify, to regulate and to limit the overly ardent and overly exclusive taste for well-being that men feel in times of equality; but I believe that religions would be wrong to try to overcome it entirely and to destroy it. Religions will not succeed in turning men away from love of riches; but they can still persuade them to enrich themselves only by honest means.h

This leads me to a final consideration that, in a way, includes all the others. As men become more similar and more equal, it is more important for religions, while still keeping carefully out of the daily movement of affairs, not unnecessarily to go against generally accepted ideas and the permanent interests that rule the mass; for common opinion appears more and more as the first and most irresistible of powers; outside of it there is no support strong enough to allow resistance to its blows for long.j That is no less true among a democratic people, subjected to a despot, than in a republic. In centuries of equality, kings often bring about obedience, but it is always the majority that brings about belief; so it is the majority that must be pleased in everything not contrary to faith.

[It would be wrong to attribute only to the Puritan origin of Americans the power that religion retains among them; there are many other causes as well. The object of what precedes was to make the reader better understand the principal ones.] k I showed, in my first work, how American priests stand aside from public affairs. This is the most striking example, but not the only example, of self-restraint. In America, religion is a world apart where the priest reigns but which he is careful never to leave; within its limits, he leadsm minds; outside he leaves men to themselves and abandons them to the independence and to the instability that are appropriate to their nature and to the time. I have not seen a country where Christianity was less enveloped by forms, practices and images than in the United States, and where it presented more clear, more simple and more general ideas to the human mind. Although the Christians of America are divided into a multitude of sects, they all see their religion from this same perspective. This applies to Catholicism as well as to the other beliefs. There are no Catholic priests who show less taste for small individual observances, extraordinary and particular methods of gaining your salvation [indulgences, pilgrimages and relics], or who are attached more to the spirit of the law and less to its

letter than the Catholic priests of the United States; nowhere is the doctrine of the Church that forbids giving the saints the worship that is reserved only for God taught more clearly and followed more. Still, the Catholics of America are very dutiful and very sincere.

Another remark is applicable to the clergy of all communions. American priests do not try to attract and fix the entire attention of man on the future life; they willingly abandon a part of his heart to the cares of the present; they seem to consider the good things of this world as important, though secondary matters. If they themselves do not participate in industry, they are at least interested in its progress and applaud it, and, while constantly pointing out the other world to the faithful man as the great object of his fears and of his hopes, they do not forbid him to seek well-being honestly in this one. Far from showing him how the two things are separate and opposite, they pay particular attention instead to finding in what place they touch and are connected.

All American priests know the intellectual dominion exercised by the majority and respect it. They support only necessary struggles against the majority. They do not get involved in party quarrels, but they willingly adopt the general opinions of their country and their time, and they go along without resistance with the current of sentiments and ideas that carries everything along around them. They try hard to correct their contemporaries, but do not separate from them. So public opinion is never their enemy; instead it sustains and protects them, and their beliefs reign simultaneously with the strengths that are their own and those that they borrow from the majority.

In this way, by respecting all the democratic instincts that are not contrary to it and by using several of those instincts to help itself, religion succeeds in struggling with advantage against the spirit of individual independence that is the most dangerous of all to religion.

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Chapter 6A

Of The Progress Of Catholicism In The United States

America is the most democratic country on earth, and at the same time the country where, according to trustworthy reports,b the Catholic religion is making the most progress. This is surprising at first view.

Two things must be clearly distinguished. Equality disposes men to want to judge by themselves; but, from another side, it gives them the taste and the idea of a single social power, simple and the same for all. So men who live in democratic centuries are very inclined to avoid all religious authority. But, if they consent to submit to such an authority, they at least want it to be unitary and uniform; religious powers that do not all lead to the same center [or in other words national churches] are naturally shocking to their intelligence, and they imagine almost as easily that there is no religion as that there are several.c

You see today, more than in earlier periods, Catholics who become unbelievers and Protestants who turn into Catholics. If you consider Catholicism internally, it seems to lose; if you look at it from the outside, it gains. That can be explained.

Men today are naturally little disposed to believe; but as soon as they have a religion, they find a hidden instinct within themselves that pushes them without their knowing toward Catholicism. Several of the doctrines and practices of the Roman Church astonish them;d but they experience a secret admiration for its government, and its great unity attracts them.

If Catholicism succeeded finally in escaping from the political hatreds to which it gave birth, I hardly doubt that this very spirit of the century, which seems so contrary to it, would become very favorable to it,e and that it would suddenly make great conquests.

It is one of the most familiar weaknesses of human intelligence to want to reconcile contrary principles and to buy peace at the expense of logic. So there have always been and will always be men who, after submitting a few of their religious beliefs to an authority, will want some other religious beliefs to elude it, and will allow their minds to float haphazardly between obedience and liberty. But I am led to believe that the number of the latter will be fewer in democratic centuries than in other centuries, and that our descendants will tend more and more to divide into only two parts, some leaving Christianity entirely, others going into the Roman Church.

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Chapter 7

*What Makes The Minds Of Democratic Peoples Incline Toward Pantheism*A

I will show later how the predominant taste of democratic peoples for very general ideas is found again in politics; but now I want to point out its principal effect in philosophy.

It cannot be denied that pantheism has made great progress in our time. The writings of a portion of Europe clearly carry its mark. The Germans introduce it into philosophy, and the French into literature. Among the works of the imagination that are published in France, most contain some opinions or some portrayals borrowed from pantheistic doctrines, or allow a sort of tendency toward those doctrines to be seen in their authors. This does not appear to me to happen only by accident, but is due to a lasting cause.b

As conditions become more equal and each man in particular becomes more similar to all the others, weaker and smaller, you get used to no longer envisaging citizens in order to consider only the people; you forget individuals in order to think only about the species.

In these times, the human mind loves to embrace all at once [and to mix up in the same view] a host of diverse matters; it constantly aspires to be able to connect a multitude of consequences to a single cause.

The mind is obsessed by the idea of unity, looking for it in all directions, and, when it believes unity has been found, it embraces it and rests there. Not only does the human mind come to discover in the world only one creation and one creator, this first division of things still bothers it, and it readily tries to enlarge and to simplify its thought by containing God and the universe in a single whole. If I find a philosophical system according to which the things material and immaterial, visible and invisible that the world contains are no longer considered except as the various parts of an immense being that alone remains eternal amid the continual change and incessant transformation of everything that composes it, I will have no difficulty concluding that such a system, although it destroys human individuality, or rather because it destroys it, will have secret charms for men who live in democracy; all their intellectual habits prepare them for conceiving it and set them on the path to adopt it. It naturally attracts their imagination and fixes it; it feeds the pride of their mind and flatters its laziness.c

Among the different systems by the aid of which philosophy seeks to explain the world, pantheism seems to me the one most likely to seduce the human mind in democratic centuries.d All those who remain enamored of the true grandeur of man must join forces and struggle against it.

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Chapter 8A

*How Equality Suggests To The Americans The Idea Of The Indefinite Perfectibility Of Man*B[TN 7]

Equality suggests several ideas to the human mind that would not have occurred to it otherwise, and it modifies nearly all those that the mind already had. I take for example the idea of human perfectibility, because it is one of the principal ones that intelligence can conceive and because it constitutes by itself alone a great philosophical theory whose consequences are revealed each moment in the conduct of affairs.

Although man resembles animals in several ways, one feature is particular only to him alone; he perfects himself, and they do not perfect themselves. The human species could not fail to discover this difference from the beginning. So the idea of perfectibility is as old as the world; equality did not give birth to it, but equality gave it a new character.

When citizens are classed according to rank, profession, birth, and when all are compelled to follow the path on which chance placed them, each man believes that near him he sees the furthest limits of human power, and no one tries any more to struggle against an inevitable destiny. It is not that aristocratic peoples absolutely deny man the ability to perfect himself. They do not judge it to be indefinite; they conceive of amelioration, not change; they imagine the condition of society becoming better, but not different; and, while admitting that humanity has made great progress and that it can still make more progress, they enclose humanity in advance within impassable limits.

So they do not believe they have reached the supreme good and absolute truth (what man or what people has been so foolish ever to imagine that?), but they like to persuade themselves that they have almost attained the degree of grandeur and knowledge that our imperfect nature entails; and since nothing stirs around them, they readily imagine that everything is in its place.c That is when the lawmaker claims to promulgate eternal laws, when peoples and kings want to erect only enduring monuments and when the present generation assumes the task of sparing future generations the trouble of regulating their own destiny.

As castes disappear, as classes come closer together, as common practices, customs, and laws vary because men are mixed tumultuously together, as new facts arise, as new truths come to light, as old opinions disappear and as others take their place, the image of an ideal and always fleeting perfection presents itself to the human mind.

Continual changes then pass before the eyes of each man at every moment. Some changes worsen his position, and he understands only too well that a people or an individual, however enlightened, is not infallible. Other changes improve his lot, and

he concludes that man, in general, is endowed with the indefinite ability to improve. His failures make him see that no one can claim to have discovered absolute good; his successes inflame him in pursuing the absolute good without respite. Therefore, always searching, falling, getting up again, often disappointed, never discouraged, he tends constantly toward this immense grandeur that he half sees vaguely at the end of the long course that humanity must still cover.

[When conditions are equal each man finds himself so small next to the mass that he imagines nothing equivalent to the efforts of the latter. The sentiment of his own weakness leads him each day to exaggerate the power of the human species.]

You cannot believe how many facts flow naturally from this philosophical theory that man is indefinitely perfectible,d and the prodigious influence that it exercises on even those who, occupied only with acting and not with thinking, seem to conform their actions to it without knowing it.

I meet an American sailor, and I ask him why the vessels of his country are constituted so as not to last for long, and he answers me without hesitation that the art of navigation makes such rapid progress each day, that the most beautiful ship would soon become nearly useless if it lasted beyond a few years.e

In these chance words said by a coarse man and in regard to a particular fact, I see the general and systematic idea by which a great people conducts all things.

Aristocratic nations are naturally led to compress the limits of human perfectibility too much, and democratic nations to extend them sometimes beyond measure.

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Chapter 9A

*How The Example Of The Americans Does Not Prove That A Democratic People Cannot Have Aptitude And Taste For The Sciences, Literature, And The Arts*B

It must be recognized that, among the civilized people of today, there are few among whom the advanced sciences have made less progress than in the United States, and who have provided fewer great artists, illustrious poets and celebrated writers.c

Some Europeans, struck by this spectacle, have considered it as a natural and inevitable result of equality, and they have thought that, if the democratic social state and institutions came at some time to prevail over all the earth,d the human mind would see the enlightenment that illuminates it darken little by little, and man would fall back into the shadows.

Those who reason in this way confuse, I think, several ideas that it would be important to separate and to examine apart. Without wanting to, they mix what is democratic with what is only American.e

The religion that the first emigrants professed and that they handed down to their descendants, simple in its worship, austere and nearly primitive in its principles, enemy of external signs and of the pomp of ceremonies, is naturally little favorable to the fine arts and permits literary pleasures only reluctantly.

[≠At their arrival on the shores of the New World, these men were at first assailed by such great needs and threatened by such great dangers, that they had to dedicate all the resources of their intelligence to satisfying the first and overcoming the second. ≠]

The Americans are a very ancient and very enlightened people, who encountered a new and immense country in which they can expand at will, and that they make fruitful without difficulty. That is without example in the world. So in America, each man finds opportunities unknown elsewhere to make or to increase his fortune. Greed is always in good condition there, and the human mind, distracted at every moment from the pleasures of the imagination and the works of intelligence, is drawn only into the pursuit of wealth. Not only do you see in the United States, as in all other countries, industrial and commercial classes; but, what has never been seen, all men there are busy at the same time with industry and with commerce.

I am persuaded however that, if the Americans had been alone in the universe, with the liberties and enlightenment acquired by their fathers and the passions that were their own, they would not have taken long to discover that you cannot make progress for long in the application of the sciences without cultivating the theory; that all the arts improve by their interaction, and however absorbed they might have been in the

pursuit of the principal object of their desires, they would soon have recognized that to reach it better, they had to turn away from it from time to time.

The taste for pleasures of the mind is, moreover, so natural to the heart of civilized man that, among the cultured nations that are least disposed to devote themselves to it, there is always a certain number of citizens who develop it. This intellectual need, once felt, would have soon been satisfied.

But, at the same time that the Americans were led naturally to ask of science only its particular applications, of the arts only the means to make life easy, learned and literary Europe took care of going back to the general sources of truth, and perfected at the same time all that can work toward the pleasures of man as well as all that must serve his needs.f

At the head of the enlightened nations of the Old World, the inhabitants of the United States particularly singled out one with whom a common origin and analogous habits closely united them. They found among this people famous scientists, skilled artists, great writers, and they could reap the rewards of intelligence without needing to work to accumulate them.

I cannot agree to separate America from Europe, despite the Ocean that divides them. I consider the people of the United States as the portion of the English people charged with exploiting the forests of the New World, while the rest of the nation, provided with more leisure and less preoccupied by the material cares of life, is able to devote itself to thought and to develop the human mind in all aspects.

[<≠So I think that democracy must no more be judged by America than the different nations of Europe by one of the commercial and manufacturing classes that are found within them. ≠>]

So the situation of the Americans is entirely exceptional, and it may be believed that no democratic people will ever be put in the same situation. Their entirely Puritan origin, their uniquely commercial habits, even the country that they inhabit and that seems to divert their intelligence from the study of the sciences, letters and the arts; the proximity of Europe, that allows them not to study them without falling back into barbarism; a thousand particular causes, of which I have been able to show only the principal ones, had to concentrate the American mind in a singular way in the concern for purely material things. The passions, needs, education, circumstances, everything seems in fact to combine to bend the inhabitant of the United States toward the earth. Religion alone makes him, from time to time, turn a fleeting and distracted gaze toward heaven.

So let us stop seeing all democratic nations with the face of the American people, and let us try finally to consider them with their own features.g

You can imagine a people among whom there would be neither caste, nor hierarchy, nor class; where the law, recognizing no privileges, would divide inheritances equally; and who, at the same time, would be deprived of enlightenment and liberty.

This is not an empty hypothesis: a despot can find it in his interest to make his subjects equal and to leave them ignorant, in order to keep them slaves more easily.

Not only would a democratic people of this type show neither aptitude nor taste for the sciences, literature and the arts, but also you may believe that it will never show them.

The law of inheritance would itself undertake in each generation to destroy fortunes, and no one would create new ones. The poor man, deprived of enlightenment and liberty, would not even conceive the idea of rising toward wealth, and the rich man would allow himself to be carried along toward poverty without knowing how to defend himself. A complete and invincible equality would soon be established between these two citizens. No one would then have either the time or the taste for devoting himself to the works and pleasures of the mind. But everyone would live benumbed in the same ignorance and in an equal servitude.

When I come to imagine a democratic society of this type, I immediately think I feel myself in one of these low, dark and suffocating places, where lights, brought in from outside, soon grow dim and are extinguished. It seems to me that a sudden weight overwhelms me, and that I am dragging myself along among the shadows around me in order to find the exit that should lead me back to the air and daylight. But all of this cannot apply to men already enlightened who remain free after destroying the particular and hereditary rights that perpetuated property in the hands of certain individuals or certain bodies.

[<In democratic societies of this type equality encounters necessary limits that it cannot go beyond.>]

When the men who live within a democratic society are enlightened, they discover without difficulty that nothing either limits them or fixes their situation or forces them to be content with their present fortune.

So they all conceive the idea of increasing it, and, if they are free, they all try to do so, but all do not succeed in the same way. The legislature, it is true, no longer grants privileges, but nature gives them. Since natural inequality is very great, fortunes become unequal from the moment when each man makes use of all his abilities in order to grow rich.

The law of inheritance is still opposed to the establishment of rich families, but it no longer prevents the existence of the rich. It constantly leads citizens back toward a common level from which they constantly escape; they become more unequal in property the more their enlightenment increases and the greater their liberty is.

In our time a sect celebrated for its genius and its extravagances arose; it claimed to concentrate all property in the hands of a central power and to charge the latter with distributing it afterward, according to merit, to all individuals. You were shielded in this way from the complete and eternal equality that seems to threaten democratic societies.

There is another simpler and less dangerous remedy; it is to grant privilege to no one, to give everyone equal enlightenment and an equal independence, and to leave to each man the care of making his place for himself. Natural inequality will soon appear and wealth will pass by itself toward the most able.h

So [enlightened] and free democratic societies will always contain within them a multitude of wealthy or well-to-do men. These rich men will not be bound as closely together as members of the old aristocratic class; they will have different instincts and will hardly ever possess a leisure as secure and as complete; but they will be infinitely more numerous than those who composed this class could have been. These men will not be narrowly confined within the preoccupations of material life and they will be able, although to varying degrees, to devote themselves to the works and pleasures of the mind. So they will devote themselves to them; for, if it is true that the human mind leans from one side toward the limited, the material and the useful, from the other, it rises naturally toward the infinite, the non-material and the beautiful. Physical needs attach the mind to the earth, but, as soon as you no longer hold it down, it stands up by itself.

Not only will the number of those who can interest themselves in the works of the mind be greater, but also the taste for intellectual enjoyments will descend, from one person to the next, even to those who, in aristocratic societies, seem to have neither the time nor the capacity to devote themselves to those enjoyments.

When there are no more hereditary riches, privileges of class and prerogatives of birth, and when each man no longer draws his strength except from himself, it becomes clear that what makes the principal difference among the fortunes of men is intelligence. All that serves to fortify, to expand and to embellish intelligence immediately acquires a great value.

The utility of knowledge reveals itself with an extremely particular clarity to the very eyes of the crowd. Those who do not appreciate its charms value its effects and make some efforts to achieve it.

In enlightened and free democratic centuries, men have nothing that separates them or anything that keeps them in their place; they go up or go down with a singular rapidity. All classes see each other constantly, because they are very close. They communicate and mingle every day, imitate and envy each other; that suggests to the people a host of ideas, notions, desires that they would not have had if ranks had been fixed and society immobile. In these nations, the servant never considers himself as a complete stranger to the pleasures and works of the master, the poor to those of the rich; the man of the country tries hard to resemble the man of the city, and the provinces, the metropolis.

Thus, no one allows himself easily to be reduced to the material cares of life alone, and the most humble artisan casts, from time to time, a few eager and furtive glances into the superior world of intelligence. People do not read in the same spirit and in the same way as among aristocratic peoples; but the circle of readers expands constantly and ends by including all citizens.j

From the moment when the crowd begins to be interested in the works of the mind, it discovers that a great means to acquire glory, power or wealth is to excel in a few of them. The restless ambition given birth by equality [v: democracy] immediately turns in this direction as in all the others. The number of those who cultivate the sciences, letters and the arts becomes immense. A prodigious activity reveals itself in the world of the mind; each man seeks to open a path for himself there and tries hard to attract the eye of the public. Something occurs there analogous to what happens in the United States in political society; works are often imperfect, but they are innumerable; and, although the results of individual efforts are ordinarily very small, the general result is always very great.

So it is not true to say that men who live in democratic centuries are naturally indifferent to the sciences, letters and the arts; only it must be recognized that they cultivate them in their own way, and that they bring, from this direction, qualities and defects that are their own.

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Chapter 10A

*Why The Americans Are More Attached To The Application Of The Sciences Than To The Theory*B

If the democratic social state and democratic institutions do not stop the development of the human mind, it is at least incontestable that they lead it in one direction rather than another. Their efforts, limited in this way, are still very great, and you will pardon me, I hope, for stopping a moment to contemplate them.

When it was a matter of the philosophical method of the Americans, I made several remarks that we should benefit from here.

Equality develops in every man the desire to judge everything by himself; it gives him, in everything, the taste for the tangible and the real, scorn for traditions and forms. These general instincts make themselves seen principally in the particular subject of this chapter.

Those who cultivate the sciences among democratic peoples are always afraid of being lost in utopias. They distrust systems; they love to stay very close to the facts and to study them by themselves; since they do not allow themselves to be easily impressed by the name of any one of their fellows, they are never inclined to swear on the word of the master; but, on the contrary, you see them constantly occupied with searching for the weak part of his doctrine. Scientific traditions have little sway over them; they never stop for long in the subtleties of a school, and they spin out a lot of fancy words with difficulty; they enter as much as they can into the principal parts of the subject that occupies them, and they love to explain them in common language. The sciences then have a freer and more certain, but less lofty allure.c

The mind can, it seems to me, divide science into three parts.

The first contains the most theoretical principles, the most abstract notions, the ones whose application is unknown or very distant.

The second is made up of general truths that, though still pure theory, lead nevertheless by a direct and short path to application.

The processes of application and the means of execution fulfilld the third.e

Each one of these different portions of science can be cultivated separately, even though reason and experience make it known that none of them can prosper for long when it is separated absolutely from the other two.

In America, the purely applied part of the sciences is admirably cultivated, and the theoretical portion immediately necessary to application is carefully attended to; in

this regard the Americans reveal a mind always clear, free, original and fruitful; but there is hardly anyone in the United States who devotes himself to the essentially theoretical and abstract portion of human knowledge. In this the Americans show the excess of a tendency that will be found, I think, although to a lesser degree, among all democratic peoples.f

Nothing is more necessary to the cultivation of the advanced sciences, or of the higher portion of the sciences, than meditation; and nothing is less appropriate to meditation than the interior of a democratic society. There you do not find, as among aristocratic peoples, a numerous class that remains at rest because it finds itself well-off, and another that does not stir because it despairs of being better-off. Each man is in motion; some want to attain power, others to take hold of wealth. Amid this universal tumult, this repeated clash of contrary interests, this continual march of men toward fortune, where to find the calm necessary for profound intellectual syntheses? How to fix your thoughts on some point, when around you everything moves, and you yourself are dragged along and tossed about each day by the impetuous current that drives everything?g

The type of permanent agitation that reigns within a tranquil and already constituted democracy must be clearly distinguished from the tumultuous and revolutionary movements that almost always accompany the birth and development of a democratic society.

When a violent revolution takes place among a very civilized people, it cannot fail to give a sudden impulse to sentiments and to ideas.

This is true above all of democratic revolutions, that, by moving at once all of the classes that make up a people, give birth at the same time to immense ambitions in the heart of each citizen.

If the French suddenly made such admirable progress in the exact sciences, at the very moment when they finally destroyed the remnants of the old feudal society, this sudden fertility must be attributed, not to democracy, but to the unparalleled revolution that accompanied its development. What occurred then was a particular fact; it would be imprudent to see in it the indication of a general law.

Great revolutions are not more common among democratic peoples than among other peoples; I am even led to believe that they are less so. But within these nations there reigns a small uncomfortable movement, a sort of incessant rotation of men that troubles and distracts the mind without enlivening or elevating it.

Not only do men who live in democratic societies devote themselves with difficulty to meditation, but also they naturally have little regard for it. The democratic social state and democratic institutions lead most men to act constantly; now, the habits of mind that are appropriate to action are not always appropriate to thought. The man who acts is often reduced to being content with approximation, because he would never reach the end of his plan if he wanted to perfect each detail. He must rely constantly on ideas that he has not had the leisure to study in depth, for he is helped much more by

the expediency of the idea that he is using than by its rigorous correctness; and everything considered, there is less risk for him in making use of a few false principles, than in taking up his time establishing the truth of all his principles. The world is not controlled by long, learned proofs. The rapid view of a particular fact, the daily study of the changing passions of the crowd, the chance of the moment and the skill to grab hold of it, decide all matters there.

So in centuries when nearly everyone acts, you are generally led to attach an excessive value to the rapid flights and to the superficial conceptions of the mind, and, on the contrary, to depreciate excessively its profound and slow work.

This public opinion influences the judgment of the men who cultivate the sciences; it persuades them that they can succeed in the sciences without meditation, or turns them away from those sciences that require it.h

There are several ways to study the sciences. You find among a host of men a selfish, mercenary and industrial taste for the discoveries of the mind that must not be confused with the disinterested passion that is aroused in the heart of a small number; there is a desire to utilize knowledge and a pure desire to know. I do not doubt that occasionally, among a few, an ardent and inexhaustible love of truth is born that feeds on itself and gives constant delight without ever being able to satisfy itself. It is this ardent, proud and disinterested love of the true that leads men to the abstract sources of truth in order to draw generative ideas from there.

If Pascalj had envisaged only some great profit, or even if he had been moved only by the sole desire for glory, I cannot believe that he would ever have been able to summon up, as he did, all the powers of his intelligence to reveal more clearly the most hidden secrets of the Creator. When I see him, in a way, tear his soul away from the midst of the cares of life, in order to give it entirely to this inquiry, and, prematurely breaking the ties that hold the soul to the body, die of old age before reaching forty years of age, I stop dumbfounded; and I understand that it is not an ordinary cause that can produce such extraordinary efforts.

The future will prove if these passions, so rare and so fruitful, arise and develop as easily amid democratic societies as within aristocratic ones. As for me, I admit that I find it difficult to believe.

In aristocratic societies, the class that leads opinion and runs public affairs, being placed above the crowd in a permanent and hereditary way, naturally conceives a superb idea of itself and of man. It readily imagines glorious enjoyments for man and sets magnificent ends for his desires. Aristocracies often undertake very tyrannical and very inhuman actions, but they rarely conceive low thoughts; and they show a certain proud disdain for small pleasures, even when they give themselves over to them; that gives all souls there a very lofty tone. In aristocratic times, you generally get very vast ideas about the dignity, power and grandeur of man. These opinions influence those who cultivate the sciences, like all the others; it facilitates the natural impulse of the mind toward the highest regions of thought and naturally disposes the mind to conceive the sublime and nearly divine love of truth.

So the scientists of these times are carried toward theory, and it even often happens that they conceive an ill-considered scorn for application. “Archimedes,” says Plutarch,k “had a heart so noble that he never deigned to leave any written work on how to erect all of these war machines [<for which he gained glory and fame, not for human knowledge but rather for divine wisdom>]; and considering all of this science of inventing and making machines and generally any art that brings some utility when put into practice, as vile, low and mercenary, he used his mind and his study to write only things whose beauty and subtlety were in no way mixed with necessity.” Such is the aristocratic aim of the sciences.

It cannot be the same among democratic nations. [Among these peoples, the opinions of the class that governs and the general mores of the nation hardly ever raise the human mind toward theory; on the contrary they draw it every day toward application.]

Most of the men who compose these nations are very greedy for material and present enjoyments; since they are always discontent with the position that they occupy, and always free to leave it, they think only about the means to change their fortune or to increase it. [Men naturally have the desire to take pleasure quickly and easily, but that is particularly true of those who live in democracies.

This sentiment to which scientists themselves are not strangers leads them to look for the consequences of a principle already known rather than to find a new principle; their work is at the very same time easier and better understood.

The same sentiment makes the public attach much more value to applications than to abstract truths.]m For minds so disposed, every new method that leads to wealth by a shorter road, every machine that shortens work, every instrument that reduces the costs of production, every discovery that facilitates and increases pleasures, seems the most magnificent effort of human intelligence. It is principally from this side that democratic peoples are attached to the sciences, understand them and honor them.n In aristocratic centuries [v.: societies], people particularly demand enjoyments of the mind from the sciences; in democratic ones, those of the body.

Depend on the fact that the more a nation is democratic, enlightened and free, the larger the number of these self-seeking men who appreciate scientific genius will grow, and the more discoveries immediately applicable to industry will yield profit, glory and even power to their authors; for, in democracies, the class that works takes part in public affairs, and those who serve it have to look to it for honors as well as for money.

You can easily imagine that, in a society organized in this manner, the human mind is led imperceptibly to neglect theory and that it must, on the contrary, feel pushed with an unparalleled energy toward application, or at least toward the portion of theory necessary to those who do applications.

An instinctive tendency raises the human mind in vain toward the highest spheres of intelligence; interest leads it back toward the middle ones. That is where it puts forth

its strength and restless activity, and brings forth miracles. These very Americans, who have not discovered a single one of the general laws of mechanics, have introduced to navigation a new machine that is changing the face of the world.

Certainly, I am far from claiming that the democratic peoples of today are destined to see the transcendent light of the human mind extinguished, or even that they must not kindle new light within their midst. At the age of the world in which we find ourselves and among so many lettered nations that are tormented incessantly by the ardor of industry, the ties that bind the different parts of science together cannot fail to be striking; and the very taste for application, if it is enlightened, must lead men not to neglect theory. In the middle of so many attempts at application, so many experiments repeated each day, it is often nearly impossible for very general laws not to happen to appear; so that great discoveries would be frequent, even though great inventors were rare.

I believe moreover in high scientific vocations. If democracy does not lead men to cultivate the sciences for their own sake, on the other hand it immensely increases the number of those who cultivate the sciences. It cannot be believed that, among so great a multitude, there is not born from time to time some speculative genius inflamed by the sole love of truth. You can be sure that the latter will work hard to penetrate the most profound mysteries of nature, whatever the spirit of his country and of his time. There is no need to aid his development; it is enough not to stop it. All that I want to say is this: permanent inequality of conditions leads men to withdraw into proud and sterile research for abstract truths; while the democratic social state and democratic institutions dispose them to ask of the sciences only their immediate and useful applications.

This tendency is natural and inevitable. It is interesting to know it, and it can be necessary to point it out.

If those who are called to lead the nations of today saw clearly and from a distance these new instincts that will soon be irresistible, they would understand that with enlightenment and liberty, the men who live in democratic centuries cannot fail to improve the industrial portion of the sciences, and that henceforth all the effort of the social power must go to sustain the theoretical sciences and to create great scientific passions.

Today, the human mind must be kept to theory, it runs by itself toward application, and instead of leading it back constantly toward the detailed examination of secondary effects, it is good to distract it sometimes in order to raise it to the contemplation of first causes.

Because Roman civilization died following the invasion of the barbarians, we are perhaps too inclined to believe that civilization cannot die otherwise.

If the light that enlightens us ever happened to go out, it would grow dark little by little and as if by itself. By dint of limiting yourself to application, you would lose sight of principles, and when you had entirely forgotten the principles, you would

badly follow the methods that derive from them; no longer able to invent new methods, you would employ without intelligence and without art the learned processes that you no longer understood.

When the Europeans reached China three hundred years ago, they found all the arts at a certain degree of perfection, and they were astonished that, having arrived at this point, the Chinese had not advanced more. Later they discovered the vestiges of some advanced knowledge that had been lost. The nation was industrial; most of the scientific methods were preserved within it; but science itself no longer existed. That explained to the Europeans the singular type of immobility in which they found the mind of the people. The Chinese, while following the path of their fathers, had forgotten the reasons that had guided the latter. They still used the formula without looking for the meaning; they kept the instrument and no longer possessed the art of modifying and of reproducing it. So the Chinese could not change anything. They had to give up improvement. They were forced to imitate their fathers always and in all things, in order not to throw themselves into impenetrable shadows, if they diverged for an instant from the road that the latter had marked. The source of human knowledge had nearly dried up; and although the river still flowed, it could no longer swell its waves or change its course.

China had subsisted peacefully for centuries however; its conquerors had taken its mores; order reigned there. A sort of material well-being was seen on all sides. Revolutions there were very rare, and war was so to speak unknown.o

So you must not feel reassured by thinking that the barbarians are still far from us; for if there are some peoples who allow light to be wrested from their hands, there are others who trample it underfoot themselves.p

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Chapter 11A

*In What Spirit The Americans Cultivate The Arts*B

I believe it would be wasting my time and that of my readers, if I applied myself to showing how the general mediocrity of fortune, the lack of superfluity, the universal desire for well-being and the constant efforts made by each person to gain well-being for himself, make the taste for the useful predominate over the love of the beautiful in the heart of man. Democratic nations, where all these things are found, will therefore cultivate the arts that serve to make life comfortable in preference to those whose object is to embellish it; they will by habit prefer the useful to the beautiful, and they will want the beautiful to be useful.c

But I intend to go further, and, after pointing out the first feature, to outline several others.

It happens ordinarily, in centuries of privilege, that the exercise of nearly all the arts becomes a privilege and that each profession is a world apart where no one is at liberty to enter. And, even when industry is free, the immobility natural to aristocratic nations makes all those who are occupied by the same art end up nevertheless forming a distinct class, always composed of the same families, all of whose members know each other and a class in which public opinion and corporate pride soon arise. In an industrial class of this type, each artisan has not only his fortune to make, but also his reputation to keep. It is not only his interest that regulates his behavior, or even that of the buyer, but that of the corps, and the interest of the corps is that each artisan produces masterpieces. So in aristocratic centuries, the aim of the arts is to make the best possible, and not the most rapid or the cheapest.d

When on the contrary each profession is open to all, when the crowd enters and leaves each constantly, and when its different members, because of their great number, become unknown, indifferent and nearly invisible to each other, the social bond is destroyed, and each worker, led back to himself, seeks only to earn the greatest amount of money possible at the least cost. There is nothing more than the will of the consumer to limit him. Now it happens that, at the same time, a corresponding revolution makes itself felt among the last.

In countries where wealth, like power, is concentrated in a few hands and remains there, the use of most of the wealth of this world belongs to always the same small number of individuals; necessity, opinion, the moderation of desires exclude all others.

Since this aristocratic class keeps itself immobile at the point of grandeur where it is placed, without narrowing or expanding, it always experiences the same needs and feels them in the same way. The men who compose it draw naturally from the

superior and hereditary position that they occupy the taste for what is very well made and very lasting.

That gives a general turn to the ideas of the nation as regards the arts. It often happens, among these peoples, that the peasant himself prefers to do entirely without the objects that he covets than to acquire them imperfect.

So in aristocracies, workers labor only for a limited number of buyers, who are very difficult to satisfy. The gain that they expect depends principally on the perfection of their works.

This is no longer so when, all privileges being destroyed, ranks mingle and all men constantly go down and rise up the social scale.

You always find, within a democratic people [≠and particularly in the period when they finally come to be so ≠], a host of citizens whose patrimony divides and decreases. They have contracted, in better times, certain needs that they continue to have after the ability to satisfy them no longer exists, and they try restlessly to find if there is not some indirect means to provide for them.

On the other hand, you always see in democracies a very large number of men whose fortune grows, but whose desires grow very much faster than their fortune and who greedily eye the goods that their fortune promises them, before it delivers them. These men try to open in all directions shorter paths to these nearby enjoyments. The result of the combination of these two causes is that in democracies you always meet a multitude of citizens whose needs are beyond their resources and who would readily agree to being satisfied incompletely rather than renouncing entirely the object of their covetous desire.

The worker easily understands these passions because he shares them himself. In aristocracies, he tried to sell his products very expensively to a few; now he understands that there would be a more expedient means to become rich, it would be to sell his products inexpensively to all [<for he begins to discover that a small profit that is repeated every day would be preferable to a considerable gain that you can expect only rarely.>

That sets his mind on a new path. He no longer tries to make the best possible but at the lowest price.].

Now, there are only two ways to arrive at lowering the price of merchandise.

The first is to find better, shorter and more skillful means of producing it.e The second is to fabricate in greater quantity objects more or less similar, but of less value. Among democratic peoples, all the intellectual abilities of the worker are directed toward these two ends.

He tries hard to invent procedures that allow him to work, not only better, but faster and at less cost, and if he cannot manage to do so, to reduce the intrinsic qualities of the thing that he is making without making it entirely inappropriate to its intended

use. When only the rich had watches, nearly all were excellent. Now hardly any are made that are not mediocre, but everyone has them. Thus, democracy not only tends to direct the human mind toward the useful arts, it leads artisans to make many imperfect things very rapidly, and leads the consumer to content himself with these things.

It isn't that in democracies art is not capable, as needed, of producing marvels. That is revealed sometimes, when buyers arise who agree to pay for time and effort. In this struggle of all the industries, amid this immense competition and these innumerable trials, excellent workers are formed who get to the furthest limits of their profession. But the latter rarely have the opportunity to show what they know how to do; they carefully moderate their efforts. They stay within a skillful mediocrity that is self-assessing and that, able to go beyond the goal that it sets for itself, aims only for the goal that it attains. In aristocracies, in contrast, workers always do all that they know how to do, and, when they stop, it is because they are at the limit of their knowledge.

When I arrive in a country and I see the arts provide some admirable products, that teaches me nothing about the social state and political constitution of the country.f But if I notice that the products of the arts there are generally imperfect, in very great number and at a low price, I am sure that, among the people where this is occurring, privileges are becoming weak, and the classes are beginning to mingle and are soon going to blend.g

Artisans who live in democratic centuries not only seek to put their useful products in the reach of all citizens, they also try hard to give all their products shining qualities that the latter do not have.

In the confusion of all classes, each man hopes to be able to appear to be what he isn't and devotes great efforts to succeeding in doing so. Democracy does not give birth to this sentiment, which is only too natural to the heart of man; but it applies it to material things. The hypocrisy of virtue exists in all times; that of luxury belongs more particularly to democratic centuries.

In order to satisfy these new needs of human vanity, there is no imposture to which the arts do not resort; industry sometimes goes so far in this direction that it ends by harming itself. The diamond has already been so perfectly imitated that it is easy to make a mistake. Once the art of producing false diamonds has been invented so that you can no longer distinguish false from true ones, both will probably be abandoned, and they will again become stones.

This leads me to talk about those arts that are called, par excellence, the fine arts.

I do not believe that the necessary effect of the democratic social state and democratic institutions is to decrease the number of men who cultivate the fine arts. [<I even think that their number increases with democracy>]; but these causes powerfully influence the manner in which they are cultivated. Since most of those who had already contracted the taste for the fine arts have become poor, and, on the other hand, many of those who are not yet rich have begun, by imitation, to conceive the taste for

the fine arts, the quantity of consumers in general increases, and very rich and very refined consumers become more rare. Something analogous to what I already demonstrated when I talked about the useful arts then occurs in the fine arts. They multiply their works and reduce the merit of each one of them.

No longer able to aim at the great, you seek the elegant and the pretty; you tend less to reality than to appearance.

In aristocracies you do a few great paintings, and, in democratic countries, a multitude of small pictures. In the first, you raise bronze statues, and, in the second, you cast plaster statues.

When I arrived for the first time in New York by the part of the Atlantic Ocean called the East River, I was surprised to notice, along the river bank, at some distance from the city, a certain number of small palaces of white marble,h several of which were of a classical architecture; the next day, able to consider more closely the one that had particularly attracted my attention, I found that its walls were of white-washed brick and its columns of painted wood. It was the same for all the buildings that I had admired the day before.

The democratic social state and democratic institutions give as well, to all the imitative arts, certain particular tendencies that are easy to point out. [<I know that here I am going back to ideas that I have already had the occasion to explain in relation to poetry, but the fault is due less to me than to the subject that I am treating. I am talking about man and man is a simple being, whatever effort is made to split him up in order to know him better. It is always the same individual that you envisage in various lights. All that I can do is only to point out the result here, leaving to the memory of the reader the trouble of going back to the causes.>]j They often divert them from portraying the soul in order to attach them only to portraying the body; and they substitute the representation of movements and sensations for that of sentiments and ideas; in the place of the ideal, finally, they put the real.

I doubt that Raphael made as profound a study of the slightest mechanisms of the human body as the artists of today. He did not attribute the same importance as they to rigorous exactitude on this point, for he claimed to surpass nature. He wanted to make man something that was superior to man; he undertook to embellish beauty itself.

David and his students were, on the contrary, as good anatomists as painters. They represented marvelously well the models that they had before their eyes, but rarely did they imagine anything beyond; they followed nature exactly, while Raphael sought something better than nature. They left us an exact portrait of man, but the first gave us a glimpse of divinity in his works.

You can apply to the very choice of subject what I said about the manner of treating it.

The painters of the Renaissance usually looked above themselves, or far from their time, for great subjects that left a vast scope to their imagination. Our painters often lend their talent to reproducing exactly the details of the private life that they have constantly before their eyes, and on all sides they copy small objects that have only too many originals in nature.k

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Chapter 12A

Why The Americans Erect Such Small And Such Large Monuments At The Same Time

I have just said that, in democratic centuries, the monuments of art tended to become more numerous and smaller. I hasten to point out the exception to this rule.

Among democratic peoples, individuals are very weak; but the State, which represents them all and holds them all in its hand, is very strong.b Nowhere do citizens appear smaller than in a democratic nation. Nowhere does the nation itself seem greater and nowhere does the mind more easily form a vast picture of it. In democratic societies, the imagination of men narrows when they consider themselves; it expands indefinitely when they think about the State. The result is that the same men who live meanly in cramped dwellings often aim at the gigantic as soon as it is a matter of public monuments.c

The Americans have laid out on the site that they wanted to make into the capital the limits of an immense city that, still today, is hardly more populated than Pontoise, but that, according to them, should one day contain a million inhabitants; already they have uprooted trees for ten leagues around, for fear that they might happen to inconvenience the future citizens of this imaginary metropolis. They have erected, in the center of the city, a magnificent palace to serve as the seat of Congress, and they have given it the pompous name of the Capitol.

Every day, the particular states themselves conceive and execute prodigious undertakings that would astonish the genius of the great nations of Europe.

Thus, democracy does not lead men only to make a multitude of petty works; it also leads them to erect a small number of very large monuments. But between these two extremes there is nothing. So a few scattered remnants of very vast structures tell nothing about the social state and institutions of the people who erected them.

I add, although it goes beyond my subject, that they do not reveal their greatness, their enlightenment and their real prosperity any better.

Whenever a power of whatever kind is capable of making an entire people work toward a sole undertaking, it will succeed with little knowledge and a great deal of time in drawing something immense from the combination of such great efforts; you do not have to conclude from that that the people is very happy, very enlightened or even very strong.d The Spanish found the city of Mexico full of magnificent temples and vast palaces; this did not prevent Cortez from conquering the Mexican Empire with six hundred foot soldiers and sixteen horses.

If the Romans had known the laws of hydraulics better, they would not have erected all these aqueducts that surround the ruins of their cities; they would have made better use of their power and their wealth. If they had discovered the steam engine, perhaps they would not have extended to the extreme limits of their empire those long artificial stone lines that are called roman roads.

These things are magnificent witnesses to their ignorance at the same time as to their grandeur.

People who would leave no other traces of their passage than a few lead pipes in the earth and a few iron rods on its surface could have been more masters of nature than the Romans.e

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Chapter 13A

Literary Physiognomy Of Democratic Centuries

When you enter the shop of a bookstore in the United States, and when you go over the American books that fill their shelves, the number of works appears very large, while that of known authors seems in contrast very small.b

First you find a multitude of elementary treatises intended to give the first notion of human knowledge. Most of these works were written in Europe. The Americans reprint them while adapting them to their use. Next comes a nearly innumerable quantity of books on religion, Bibles, sermons, pious stories, controversies, accounts of charitable institutions. Finally appears the long catalogue of political pamphlets: in America, parties, to combat each other, do not write books, but brochures that circulate with an unbelievable rapidity, live for a day and die.c

Amid all of these obscure productions of the human mind appear the more remarkable works of only a small number of authors who are known by Europeans or who should be.d

Although today America is perhaps the civilized country in which there is least involvement with literature,e a large number of individuals is found there who are interested in things of the mind and who make them, if not their whole life's work, at least the attraction of their leisure. But it is England that provides to the latter most of the books that they demand.f Nearly all of the great English works are reproduced in the United States. The literary genius of Great Britain still shines its light into the depths of the forests of the New World. There is scarcely a pioneer's cabin where you do not find a few odd volumes of Shakespeare. I recall having read for the first time the feudal drama of Henry V in a log house.g

Not only do the Americans go each day to draw upon the treasures of English literature, but also you can truthfully say that they find the literature of England on their own soil.h Among the small number of men who are busy in the United States composing works of literature, most are English in content and above all in form. In this way they carry to the middle of democracy the ideas and the literary practices that are current within the aristocratic nation that they have taken as a model. They paint with colors borrowed from foreign mores; almost never representing in its reality the country where they were born, they are rarely popular there.

[Read the books of Mr. W. Irving; there you will only find soft and pale reflections of a fire that is no longer seen and no longer felt {there you will find the qualities and the defects of a translation}].

The citizens of the United States themselves seem so convinced that books are not published for them, that before settling on the merit of one of their writers, they

ordinarily wait for him to have been appreciated in England. This is how, in the case of paintings, you willingly leave to the author of the original the right to judge the copy.j

So the inhabitants of the United States do not yet have, strictly speaking, literature. The only authors that I recognize as Americans are journalists. The latter are not great writers, but they speak the language of the country and make themselves heard. I see only foreigners in the others. They are for the Americans what the imitators of the Greeks and the Romans were for us in the period of the renaissance of letters, an object of curiosity, not generally speaking of sympathy. They amuse the mind [<of a few>] and do not act on the mores [<of all>].

I have already said that this state of things was very far from being due only to democracy, and that it was necessary to look for the causes in several particular circumstances independent of democracy.

If the Americans, while still keeping their social state and their laws, had another origin and found themselves transported to another country, I do not doubt that they would have a literature. As they are, I am sure that in the end they will have one; but it will have a character different from the one that shows itself in the American writings of today, one that will be its own. It is not impossible to sketch this character in advance.

I suppose an aristocratic people among whom letters are cultivated[some of this type are found in the world]; the works of the mind, as well as the affairs of government, are regulated there by a sovereign class. Literary life, like political existence, is concentrated nearly entirely in this class or in those closest to it. This is enough for me to have the key to all the rest.

When a small number of always the same men are involved at the same time in the same matters, they easily agree and decide in common on certain principal rules that must guide each one of them. If the matter that attracts their attention is literature, the works of the mind will soon be subjected by them to a few precise laws that you will no longer be allowed to avoid.

If these men occupy a hereditary position in the country, they will naturally be inclined not only to adopt a certain number of fixed rules for themselves, but also to follow those that their ancestors imposed on themselves; their set of laws will be rigorous and traditional at the same time.

Since they are not necessarily preoccupied with material things, since they have never been so, and since their fathers were not either, they were able over several generations to take an interest in works of the mind. They understood literary art and in the end they love it for itself and take a learned pleasure in seeing that you conform to it.

That is still not all; the men I am speaking about began their life and finish it in comfort or in wealth; so they have naturally conceived the taste for studied enjoyments and the love of refined and delicate pleasures.

In addition, a certain softness of mind and heart that they often contract amid this long and peaceful use of so many worldly goods, leads them to avoid in their very pleasures whatever could be found too unexpected and too intense. They prefer to be amused than to be intensely moved; they want to be interested, but not carried away.k

Now imagine a great number of literary works executed by the men I have just described or for them, and you will easily conceive of a literature where everything is regulated and coordinated in advance. The least work will be meticulous in its smallest details; art and work will be seen in everything; each genre will have particular rules that it will not be free to depart from and that will isolate it from all the others.

The style will seem almost as important as the idea, form as content; the tone will be polished, moderate, elevated. The mind will always have a noble bearing, rarely a brisk pace, and writers will be more attached to perfection than to production.

It will sometimes happen that the members of the lettered class, since they live only with each other and write only for themselves, will entirely lose sight of the rest of the world; this will throw them into the affected and the false; they will make small literary rules for their sole use, which will imperceptibly turn them away from good sense and finally take them away from nature.

By dint of wanting to speak in a way other than common they attain a sort of aristocratic jargonm that is hardly less removed from fine language than the dialect of the people.

Those are the natural pitfalls of literature in aristocracies. Every aristocracy that sets itself entirely apart from the people becomes powerless. That is true in letters as well as in politics.1

Now let us turn the picture around and consider the reverse side.

Let us take ourselves to a democracy whose ancient traditions and present enlightenment make it sensitive to the enjoyments of the mind. Ranks are mixed and confused; knowledge like power is infinitely divided and, if I dare say so, scattered in all directions.

Here is a confused crowd with intellectual needs to satisfy. These new amateurs of the pleasures of the mind have not all received the same education; they do not possess the same enlightenment, they do not resemble their fathers, and at every instant they differ from themselves; for they are constantly changing place, sentiments and fortune. So the mind of each one of them is not linked with that of all the others by common traditions and habits, and they have never had either the power, or the will, or the time to agree among themselves.

It is, however, from within this incoherent and agitated multitude that authors arise, and it is this multitude that distributes profits and glory to the latter.

It is not difficult for me to understand that, things being so, I must expect to find in the literature of such a people only a small number of those rigorous conventions that readers and writers recognize in aristocratic centuries. If it happened that the men of one period fell into agreement on a few, that would still prove nothing for the following period for, among democratic nations, each new generation is a new people. So among these nations, letters can be subjected to strict rules only with difficulty, and it is nearly impossible that they might ever be subjected to permanent rules.

In democracies, all the men who occupy themselves with literature are far from having received a literary education, and, of those among them able to have some smattering of literature, most follow a political career or embrace a profession from which they can turn away only for moments to sample surreptitiously the pleasures of the mind. So they do not make these pleasures the principal charm of their existence; but they consider them as a temporary and necessary relaxation amid the serious work of life. Such men can never acquire sufficiently advanced knowledge of literary art to sense its niceties; the small nuances escape them. Having only a very short time to give to letters, they want to turn it entirely to account. They love books that can be obtained without difficulty, that are quickly read, that do not require learned research to be understood. They demand easy things of beauty that reveal themselves and that can be enjoyed at once; above all they must have the unexpected and the new. Accustomed to a practical, contentious, monotonous existence, they need intense and rapid emotions, sudden insights, striking truths or errors that immediately draw them out of themselves and introduce them suddenly and as if by violence into the middle of the subject.n

What more do I need to say about it? And, without my explaining it, who does not understand what is about to follow?

Taken as a whole, the literature of democratic centuries cannot present, as in the time of aristocracy, the image of order, regularity, science and art; form will ordinarily be neglected and sometimes scorned. Style will often appear bizarre, incorrect, overdone and dull, and almost always bold and vehement. Authors will aim for rapidity of execution rather than for perfection of details. Short writings will be more frequent than big books, spirit more frequent than erudition, imagination more frequent than depth. A rough and almost wild strength of thought will reign, and often there will be a very great variety and singular fertility in production. They will try to astonish rather than please, and will strive more to carry passions away than to charm taste.o

Writers will undoubtedly be found here and there who would like to take another path, and, if they have superior merit, they will succeed in being read, despite their faults and qualities. But these exceptions will be rare, and even those who, in the whole of their work, depart in this way from common practice, will always return to it in some details.p

I have just portrayed two extreme states; but nations do not go suddenly from the first to the second; they arrive there only gradually and through infinite nuances. During the passage that leads a lettered people from one to the other, a moment almost always occurs when as the literary genius of democracies meets that of aristocracies, both seem to want to reign in agreement over the human mind.

Those are transient, but very brilliant periods:q then you have fertility without exuberance, and movement without confusion [liberty in order]. Such was French literature of the XVIIIth century.r

I would go beyond my thought, if I said that the literature of a nation is always subordinated to its social state and political constitution. I know that, apart from these causes, there are several others that give certain characteristics to literary works; but the former seem to me the principal ones.

The connections that exist between the social and political state of a people and the genius of its writers are always very numerous; whoever knows the one is never completely ignorant of the other.

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Chapter 14A

*Of The Literary Industry*B

Democracy not only makes the taste for letters penetrate the industrial classes, it introduces the industrial spirit into literature.

[In aristocratic centuries you often take literature as a career, and in the others as a trade.]

In aristocracies, readers are particular and few; in democracies, it is less difficult to please them, and their number is prodigious. As a result, among aristocratic peoples, you can hope to succeed only by immense efforts, and these efforts which can bring a great deal of glory cannot ever gain much money; while among democratic nations, a writer can hope to obtain without much cost a mediocre fame and a great fortune.c For that, he does not have to be admired; it is enough that he is enjoyed.d

The always growing crowd of readers and the continual need that they have for something new assures the sales of a book that they hardly value.

In times of democracy, the public often acts toward authors like kings ordinarily do toward their courtiers; it enriches them and despises them. What more is needed for the venal souls who are born in courts, or who are worthy to live there?

Democratic literatures always swarm with these authors who see in letters only an industry,e and, for the few great writers that you see there, you count sellers of ideas by the thousands.

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Chapter 15A

Why The Study Of Greek And Latin Literature Is Particularly Useful In Democratic Societies

What was called the people in the most democratic republics of antiquity hardly resembled what we call the people. In Athens, all citizens took part in public affairs; but there were only twenty thousand citizens out of more than three hundred fifty thousand inhabitants; all the others were slaves and fulfilled most of the functions that today belong to the people and even to the middle classes.

So Athens, with its universal suffrage, was, after all, only an aristocratic republic in which all the nobles had an equal right to government.

You must consider the struggle of the patricians and the plebeians of Rome in the same light and see in it only an internal quarrel between the junior members and the elders of the same family. All belonged in fact to the aristocracy and had its spirit.b

It must be noted, moreover, that in all of antiquity books were rare and expensive, and that it was highly difficult to reproduce them and to circulate them. These circumstances, coming to concentrate in a small number of men the taste and practice of letters, formed like a small literary aristocracy of the elite within a larger political aristocracy. Also nothing indicates that, among the Greeks and the Romans, letters were ever treated like an industry.

So these peoples, who formed not only aristocracies, but who were also very civilized and very free nations, had to give to their literary productions the particular vices and special qualities that characterize literature in aristocratic centuries.

It is sufficient, in fact, to cast your eyes on the writings that antiquity has left to us to discover that, if writers there sometimes lacked variety and fertility in subjects, boldness, movement and generalization in thought, they always demonstrated an admirable art and care in details; nothing in their works seems done in haste or by chance; everything is written for connoisseurs, and the search for ideal beauty is shown constantly. There is no literature that puts more into relief the qualities that are naturally lacking in writers of democracies than that of the ancients. So no literature exists that is more appropriate to study in democratic centuries. This study is, of all, the most appropriate for combatting the literary defects inherent in these centuries; as for their natural qualities, they will arise all by themselves without the need to learn how to acquire them.

Here I must make myself clear. A study can be useful to the literature of a people and not be appropriate for their social and political needs.

If you persisted stubbornly in teaching only literature in a society where each man was led by habit to make violent efforts to increase his fortune or to maintain it, you would have very polished and very dangerous citizens; for since the social and political state gives them needs every day that education would never teach them to satisfy, they would disturb the State, in the name of the Greeks and the Romans, instead of making it fruitful by their industry.

It is clear that in democratic societies the interest of individuals, as well as the security of the State, requires that the education of the greatest number be scientific, commercial, and industrial rather than literary.

Greek and Latin must not be taught in all schools; but it is important that those destined by their nature or their fortune to cultivate letters, or predisposed to appreciate them, find schools where they can perfectly master ancient literature and be thoroughly penetrated by its spirit. A few excellent universities would be worth more to achieve this goal than a multitude of bad colleges where superfluous studies done badly prevent necessary studies from being done well.

All those who have the ambition to excel in letters, among democratic nations, must be nourished often by the works of antiquity. It is a healthy regimen.

It is not that I consider the literary productions of the ancients as irreproachable. I think only that they have special qualities that can serve marvelously to counterbalance our particular defects. They support us as we lean over the edge.

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Chapter 16A

*How American Democracy Has Modified The English Language*B

If what I have said previously concerning letters in general has been well understood by the reader, he will easily imagine what type of influence the democratic social state and democratic institutions can exercise on language itself, which is the first instrument of thought.

American authors live more, truly speaking, in England than in their own country, since they constantly study English writers and take them daily as models. It is not like this for the population itself; the latter is subjected more immediately to the particular causes that can have an effect on the United States. So you must pay attention not to the written language, but to the spoken language, if you want to see the modifications that the idiom of an aristocratic people can undergo while becoming the language of a democracy.c

Educated Englishmen, and judges more competent to appreciate these fine nuances than I am able to be myself,d have often assured me that the enlightened classes of the United States differed notably, in their language, from the enlightened classes of Great Britain.e

They not only complained that the Americans had put many new words into use; the difference or the distance between the two countries was enough to explain that; but they also complained that these new words were particularly borrowed either from the jargon of parties, or from the mechanical arts, or from the language of business. They added that old English words were often taken by the Americans in a new sense. Finally, they said that the inhabitants of the United States frequently intermingled styles in a singular way, and that they sometimes put together words that, in the language of the mother country, were customarily kept apart. [This is how they happened, for example, to introduce a familiar or common expression into the pomp of a speech.]

These remarks, which were made to me at various times by men who seemed to me to merit belief, led me to reflect upon this subject, and my reflections brought me, by theory, to the same place that they had reached by practice.

In aristocracies, where everything remains at rest, language must naturally share that rest. Few new words are made, because few new things happen; and if you did new things, you would try hard to portray them with known words whose meaning has been fixed by tradition.

If it happens that the human mind there finally stirs by itself, or that enlightenment, penetrating from outside, awakens it, the new expressions that are created have a

learned, intellectual and philosophical character that indicates that they do not to owe their birth to a democracy. When the fall of Constantinople made the sciences and letters flow back toward the West [and when the enlightenment of antiquity after being revived in Italy finally penetrated among us], the French language found itself almost all at once invaded by a multitude of new words, all of which had their roots in Greek and Latin. You then saw in France an erudite neologism, which was practiced only by the enlightened classes, and whose effects were never felt by the people or only reached them in the long run.

All the nations of Europe successively presented the same spectacle. Milton alone introduced into the English language more than six hundred words, almost all drawn from Latin, Greek and Hebrew.f

The perpetual movement that reigns within a democracy tends on the contrary constantly to renew the face of language like that of public affairs. Amid this general agitation and this competition of all minds, a great number of new ideas are formed; old ideas are lost or reappear; or they become subdivided into infinite small nuances.

So words are often found there that must go out of use, and others that must be brought into use.

Democratic nations moreover love movement for itself. That is seen in language as well as in politics. Even when they do not need to change words, they sometimes feel the desire to do so.

The genius of democratic peoples shows itself not only in the great number of new words that they put into use, but also in the nature of the ideas that these new words represent.

Among these peoples, the majority makes the law in the matter of language, as in everything else. Its spirit reveals itself there as elsewhere. Now, the majority is occupied more with public affairs than studies, more with political and commercial interests than with philosophical speculation or literature. Most of the words created or accepted by the majority will bear the mark of these habits; they will serve principally to express the needs of industry, the passions of parties or the details of public administration. Language will expand constantly in that way, while on the contrary it will little by little abandon the terrain of metaphysics and theology.

As for the source from which democratic nations draw their new words and the manner in which they set about to fabricate them, it is easy to say.

Men who live in democratic countries hardly know the language that was spoken in Rome and in Athens, and they do not bother about going back to antiquity in order to find the expression they are lacking. If they sometimes resort to learned etymologies, it is ordinarily vanity that makes them search the content of the dead languages, and not erudition that brings certain words naturally to their minds. It even happens sometimes that it is the most ignorant among them who make the most use of such etymologies. The entirely democratic desire to go beyond your sphere often leads men

in democracies to want to enhance a very coarse profession by a Greek or Latin name. The lower an occupation and the more removed from knowledge, the more pompous and erudite is the name. This is how our tightrope walkers have transformed themselves into acrobats and funambulists.

Lacking dead languages, democratic peoples willingly borrow words from living languages; for they communicate constantly among themselves, and the men of different countries willingly imitate each other, because they resemble each other more each day.

But democratic peoples look principally to their own language for the means to innovate. From time to time, they take up in their vocabulary forgotten expressions that they bring to light again, or they take from a particular class of citizens a term that is its own in order to bring the term into the regular language with a figurative meaning; a multitude of expressions that at first belonged only to the special language of a party or a profession thus find themselves brought into general circulation.

The most usual expedient that democratic peoples employ to innovate with regard to language consists of giving an uncommon meaning to an expression already in use. This method is very simple, very quick and very easy. Knowledge is not needed to use it well; and ignorance even facilitates its use. But it makes language run great risks. By doubling the meaning of a word in this way, democratic peoples sometimes make it doubtful which meaning they are leaving aside and which one they are giving to it.

An author begins by turning a known expression a little bit away from its original meaning and after having modified it in this way, he adapts it as well as he can to his subject. Another appears who pulls the meaning in another direction; a third carries it with him along a new path; and since there is no common arbiter, no permanent tribunal that can definitely settle the meaning of the word, the latter remains in a variable situation. As a result, writers almost never have an air of being attached to a single thought; instead they always seem to aim at the middle of a group of ideas, leaving to the reader the trouble of judging which one is hit.

This is an unfortunate consequence of democracy. I would prefer that you sprinkled the language with Chinese, Tartar or Huron words, than to make the meaning of French words uncertain. Harmony and homogeneity are only the secondary beauties of language. There is much more convention in this kind of thing, and you can, if necessary, do without them. But there is no good language without clear terms.g

Equality necessarily brings several other changes to language.

In aristocratic centuries, when each nation tends to hold itself apart from all the others and loves to have a physiognomy that is its own, it often happens that several peoples who have a common origin become very foreign to each other, so that, without ceasing to be able to understand each other, they no longer all speak in the same way.

In these same centuries, each nation is divided into a certain number of classes that see each other little and do not mingle; each one of these classes invariably takes on and keeps intellectual habits that belong only to it, and adopts by preference certain words and certain terms that pass afterward from generation to generation like inheritances. You then find in the same idiom a language of the poor and a language of the rich, a language of commoners and a language of nobles, a learned language and a vulgar language. The more profound the divisions and the more insurmountable the barriers, the more this must be so. I would readily bet that, among the castes of India, language varies prodigiously, and that almost as much difference is found between the language of a pariah and that of a Brahmin as between their forms of dress.

When, on the contrary, men no longer held in their place see each other and communicate constantly, when castes are destroyed, and when classes are renewed and mixed together, all the words of a language are mingled. Those words that cannot suit the greatest number perish; the rest form a common mass from which each person draws more or less haphazardly. Nearly all the different dialects that divided the idioms of Europe are noticeably tending to disappear; there are no *patois* in the New World, and they are disappearing daily in the Old World.h

This revolution in the social state influences style as well as language. Not only does everyone use the same words, but they also get accustomed to employing each of them indiscriminately. The rules that style had created are almost destroyed. You hardly find expressions that, by their nature, seem vulgar, and others that appear refined. Since individuals from various ranks bring with them, to whatever station they rise, expressions and terms that they have used, the origin of words is lost like that of men, and a confusion is developed in language as in society.

I know that in the classification of words rules are found that are not due to one form of society rather than to another, but that derive from the very nature of things. There are expressions and turns which are vulgar because the sentiments that they must express are truly low, and others which are elevated because the objects that they want to portray are naturally very high.

Ranks, by mingling, will never make these differences disappear. But equality cannot fail to destroy what is purely conventional and arbitrary in the forms of thought. I do not even know if the necessary classification which I pointed out above will not always be less respected among a democratic people than among another; because, among such a people, there are no men whose education, enlightenment and leisure permanently dispose them to study the natural laws of language and who make those laws respected by observing them themselves.

I do not want to abandon this subject without portraying democratic languages with a last feature that will perhaps characterize them more than all the others.

I showed previously that democratic peoples had the taste and often the passion for general ideas; that is due to qualities and defects that are their own. This love of general ideas shows itself, in democratic languages, in the continual use of generic

terms and abstract words, and by the manner in which they are used. That is the great merit and the great weakness of these languages.j

Democratic peoples passionately love generic terms and abstract words, because these expressions enlarge thought and, by allowing many objects to be included in a little space, aid the work of the mind.k

A democratic writer will willingly say in an abstract way *the capable* for capable men, and without getting into details about the things to which this capacity applies. He will speak about *actualities* in order to depict all at once the things that are happening at this moment before his eyes, and he will understand by the word *eventualities* all that can happen in the universe beginning from the moment when he is speaking.

Democratic writers constantly create abstract words of this type, or they take the abstract words of language in a more and more abstract sense.

Even more, to make discourse more rapid, they personify the object of the abstract words and make it act like a real individual. They will say that *the force of things wants the capable to govern.*m

I cannot do better than to explain my thought by my own example.

I have often used the word equality in an absolute sense; I have, as well, personified equality in several places, and in this way I have happened to say that equality did certain things or refrained from certain others. You can maintain that the men of the century of Louis XIV would not have spoken in this way; it would never have occurred to the mind of any one of them to use the word equality without applying it to a particular thing, and they would rather have renounced using it than agree to making equality into a living person.

These abstract words that fill democratic languages and that you use for the slightest reason without connecting them to any particular fact, enlarge and veil thought. They make the expression more rapid and the idea less clear. But, as regards language, democratic peoples prefer obscurity to labor.

I do not know, moreover, if vagueness does not have a certain secret charm for those who speak and write among these peoples.

Men who live there, since they are often left to the individual efforts of their intellect, are almost always tormented by doubt. Moreover, since their situation changes constantly, they are never held firmly to any one of their opinions by the very immobility of their fortune.

So the men who inhabit democratic countries often have vacillating thoughts; they must have very broad expressions in order to contain them. Since they never know if the idea they express today will suit the new situation that they will have tomorrow, they naturally conceive the taste for abstract terms. An abstract word is like a box

with a false bottom; you put the ideas that you want into it, and you take them out without anyone seeing.

[I am so persuaded of the influence that the social state and political institutions of a people exercise on its language, that I think that you could easily succeed in discovering these first facts solely by inspecting the words of the language, and I am astonished that this idea has not been applied more often and more perfectly to the idioms that we know without knowing the men who use or have used them.]

Among all peoples, generic and abstract words form the basis of language; so I am not claiming that you find these words only in democratic languages. I am only saying that the tendency of men, in times of equality, is particularly to augment the number of words of this type, always to take them singly in their most abstract sense, and to use them for the slightest reason, even when the needs of speech do not require it.

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Chapter 17A

*Of Some Sources Of Poetry Among Democratic Nations*B

Several very different meanings have been given to the word poetry. It would tire readers to try to find out which one of these different meanings is most suitable to choose; I prefer to tell them immediately which one I have chosen.

Poetry, in my view, is the search for and the portrayal of the ideal.c

The poet is the one who, by taking away a part of what exists, adding some imaginary features to the picture, and combining certain real circumstances that are not found together, completes, enlarges nature. Thus, the aim of poetry will not be to represent truth, but to embellish it and to offer a higher image to the mind.d

Verse will seem to me like the ideal of beauty for language, and in this sense it will be eminently poetic; but in itself alone, it will not constitute poetry.

[<Poetry always takes as the subject of its portraits beings who are really found in nature or who at least live in the imagination of the men to whom it is addressed. It changes, enlarges, embellishes what exists; it does not create what does not exist, and if it attempts to do so, it can still amuse or surprise, but it no longer rouses and becomes the puerile game of an idle imagination.>]e

I want to find out if, among the actions, sentiments and ideas of democratic peoples, some are found that lend themselves to the imagination of the ideal and that must, for this reason, be considered as natural sources of poetry.

It must first be recognized that the taste for the ideal and the pleasure that is taken in seeing its portrayal are never as intense and as widespread among a democratic people as within an aristocracy.

[In democratic societies the human mind finds itself constantly bound by the small details of real [v: present] life. That results not only from the fact that all men work, but above all from the fact that they carry out all their works with fervor and I could almost say with love.]f

Among aristocratic nations, it sometimes happens that the body acts as if by itself, while the soul is plunged into a repose that weighs it down. Among these nations, the people themselves often show poetic tastes, and their spirit sometimes soars above and beyond what surrounds them.g

But, in democracies, the love of natural enjoyments, the idea of something better, competition, the charm of impending success, are like so many spurs that quicken the steps of each man in the career that he has embraced and forbid him from standing aside from it for a single moment. The principal effort of the soul goes in this

direction. Imagination is not extinguished, but it devotes itself almost exclusively to imagining the useful and to representing the real.

Equality not only diverts men from portraying the ideal; it decreases the number of subjects to portray.

[You cannot deny that equality [v: democracy], while becoming established among men, does not make a great number of these subjects that lent themselves to the portrayal of the ideal disappear from their view, and does not in this way dry up several of the most abundant sources of poetry.]

Aristocracy, by holding society immobile, favors the steadiness and duration of positive religions, as well as the stability of political institutions.

Not only does it maintain the human spirit in faith, but it disposes it to adopt one faith rather than another. An aristocratic people will always be inclined to place intermediary powers between God and man.

You can say that in this aristocracy shows itself very favorable to poetry. When the universe is populated with supernatural powers that do not fall within the senses, but are discovered by the mind, imagination feels at ease, and poets, finding a thousand diverse subjects to portray, find innumerable spectators ready to be interested in their portraits.

In democratic centuries, on the contrary, it sometimes happens that beliefs go drifting away like the laws. Doubt then brings the imagination of poets back to earth and encloses them within the visible and real world.h

Even when equality does not shake religions, it simplifies them; it diverts attention from secondary agents in order to bring it principally to the sovereign master.

Aristocracy naturally leads the human mind to the contemplation of the past, and fixes it there. Democracy, on the contrary, gives men a sort of instinctive distaste for what is ancient. In that, aristocracy is very much more favorable to poetry, for things ordinarily enlarge and become obscure as they become more distant; and from this double perspective they lend themselves more to the portrayal of the ideal.

After removing the past from poetry, equality partially removes the present.

Among aristocratic peoples, a certain number of privileged individuals exist, whose existence is so to speak above and beyond the human condition; power, wealth, glory, spirit, delicacy and distinction in all things seem to belong by right to the latter. The crowd never sees them very closely, or does not follow them in detail; there is little that you have to do to make the portrayal of these men poetic.

On the other hand, there exists among these same peoples ignorant, humble and subservient classes; and the latter lend themselves to poetry by the very excess of their coarseness and misery, as the others do by their refinement and their grandeur. Moreover, since the different classes that make up an aristocratic people are very

separated from each other and know each other badly, imagination can always, while representing them, add something to or subtract something from the real.

In democratic societies, where men are all very small and very similar, each one, while viewing himself, sees all the others at the same instant. So poets who live in democratic centuries cannot ever take one man in particular as the subject of their portrait; for a subject with mediocre greatness, which you also see clearly on all sides, will never lend itself to the ideal.

Therefore equality, while becoming established on the earth, dries up most of the ancient sources of poetry.

Let us try to show how it finds new ones.

When doubt depopulated heaven and when the progress of equality reduced each man to better known and smaller proportions, poets, not yet imagining what they could put in place of these great subjects that withdrew with aristocracy, turned their eyes toward inanimate nature. Losing heroes and gods from view, they undertook at first to portray rivers and mountains.

That gave birth in the last century to the poetry that was called, par excellence, descriptive.

Some have thought that this embellished portrayal of the material and inanimate things which cover the earth was poetry appropriate to democratic centuries; but I think that is a mistake. I believe that it only represents a period of transition.

I am persuaded that in the long run democracy diverts the imagination from everything that is external to man, in order to fix it only on man.j

Democratic peoples can be very amused for a moment by considering nature; but they get really excited only by the sight of themselves. Here alone are the natural sources of poetry to be found among these peoples, and it may be believed that all poets who do not want to draw upon these sources will lose all sway over the souls of those whom they claim to charm, and will end by no longer having anything except cold witnesses to their transports.

I have demonstrated how the idea of the progress and of the indefinite perfectibility of the human species was appropriate to democratic ages.

Democratic peoples hardly worry about what has been, but they readily dream about what will be, and their imagination has no limits in this direction; it expands and grows without measure.

This offers a vast opening to poets and allows them to move their portrayal far away from what is seen. Democracy, which closes the past to poetry, opens the future.

[≠In democratic centuries poets cannot take as the subject of their portrait a hero or a prince. ≠]

Since all the citizens who make up a democratic society are nearly equal and similar, poetry cannot attach itself to any one of them; but the nation offers itself to its brush. The similarity of all individuals, which makes each one of them separately inappropriate for becoming the subject of poetry, allows poets to include them all in the same image and to consider finally the people itself. Democratic nations see their own figure more clearly than all others and this great figure lends itself marvelously to the portrayal of the ideal.

I will easily acknowledge that the Americansk do not have poets; I cannot admit as well that they do not have poetic ideas.m

Some in Europe are very much interested in the American wilderness, but the Americans themselves hardly think about it. The wonders of inanimate nature leave them indifferent, and so to speak they see the admirable forests that surround them only at the moment when they fall under their blows.n Their sight is filled with another spectacle. The American people see themselves marching across this wilderness, draining swamps, straightening rivers, populating empty areas, and subduing nature. [Every day they notice their size growing and their strength increasing, and they already perceive themselves in the future leading as absolute masters the vast continent that they have made fruitful and cleared.] This magnificent image of themselves does not only present itself now and then to the imagination of the Americans; you can say that it follows each one of them in the least as well as in the principal of his actions, and that it remains always hovering in his mind.

You cannot imagine anything so small, so colorless, so full of miserable interests, so anti-poetical, in a word, than the life of a man in the United States; but among the thoughts that direct him one is always found that is full of poetry, and that one is like a hidden nerve which gives vigor to all the rest.o [You must not be astonished by this for how could you think that men who do such great things would be entirely devoid of great ideas?]p

In aristocratic centuries, each people, like each individual, is inclined to hold itself immobile and separate from all the others.

In democratic centuries the extreme mobility of men and their impatient desires make them constantly change place, and make the inhabitants of different countries mingle together, see and hear each other, and borrow from each other. So it is not only the members of the same nation who become similar; nations themselves assimilate, and all together form in the eye of the beholder nothing more than a vast democracy in which each citizen is a people. That brings to light for the first time the figure of the human species.

All that relates to the existence of the human species taken as a whole, its vicissitudes, its future becomes a very fertile mine for poetry.q

Poets who lived in aristocratic ages made admirable portraits by taking as subjects certain incidents in the life of a people or of a man; but not one of them ever dared to

include in his tableau the destinies of the human species, while poets who write in democratic ages can undertake to do so.

At the same time that each person, raising his eyes above his country, finally begins to notice humanity itself, God reveals himself more and more to the human mind in his full and entire majesty.

If in democratic centuries faith in positive religions is often shaky and beliefs in intermediary powers, whatever name you give them, grow dim, men on the other hand are disposed to conceive a much more vast idea of Divinity itself, and the intervention of the divine in human affairs appears to them in a new and greater light.

Seeing the human species as a single whole, they easily imagine that the same design rules over its destinies, and in the actions of each individual, they are led to recognize the mark of this general and constant plan by which God leads the species.r

This can also be considered as a very abundant source of poetry that opens in these centuries.

Democratic poets will always seem small and cold if they try to give bodily forms to gods, demons or angels, and try to make them descend from heaven to quarrel over the earth.

But, if democratic poets want to connect the great events that they are relating to the general designs of God for the universe, and, without showing the hand of the sovereign master, cause his thought to be entered into, they will be admired and understood, for the imagination of their com-patriots itself follows this road.s

You can equally foresee that poets who live in democratic ages will portray passions and ideas rather than persons and actions. [and that they will apply themselves to relating the general features of human passions and ideas rather than those that depend on a time and on a country.t

This is easy to understand.]

Language, dress and the daily actions of men in democracies are resistant to the imagination of the ideal. These things are not poetic in themselves, and they would moreover cease to be so, because they are too well known by all those to whom you undertook to speak about them. That forces poets constantly to penetrate below the external surface that the senses reveal to them, in order to glimpse the soul itself. Now there is nothing that lends itself more to portraying the ideal than man envisaged in this way in the depths of his non-material nature.u

I do not need to travel across heaven and earth to find a marvelous subject full of contrast, of grandeur and infinite pettiness, of profound obscurities and singular clarity, capable at the same time of giving birth to pity, admiration, contempt, terror. I have only to consider myself. Man comes out of nothing, passes through time, and goes to disappear forever into the bosom of God. You see him only for a moment wandering at the edge of the two abysses where he gets lost.

If man were completely unaware of himself, he would not be poetic; for what you have no idea about you cannot portray. If he saw himself clearly, his imagination would remain dormant and would have nothing to add to the picture. But man is revealed enough for him to see something of himself, and hidden enough for the rest to disappear into impenetrable shadows, into which he plunges constantly and always in vain, in order finally to understand himself.v

So among democratic peoples, you must not wait for poetry to live by legends, for it to be nourished by traditions and ancient memories, for it to try to repopulate the universe with supernatural beings in whom readers and poets themselves no longer believe, or for it coldly to personify virtues and vices that you can see in their own form. It lacks all these resources; but man remains for it, and that is enough. Human destinies, man, taken apart from his time and country and placed in front of nature and God, with his passions, his doubts, his unprecedented prosperity and incomprehensible miseries, will become for these peoples the principal and almost unique subject of poetry; and this is what you can already ascertain if you consider what has been written by the great writers who have appeared since the world began to turn toward democracy.

Writers who, today, have so admirably reproduced the features of Childe Harold, of René and of Jocelynw did not claim to recount the actions of one man; they wanted to illuminate and enlarge certain still obscure aspects of the human heart.

Those are the poems of democracy.

So equality does not destroy all the subjects of poetry; it makes them less numerous and more vast.x

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Chapter 18A

*Why American Writers And Orators Are Often Bombastic*B

I have often noticed that the Americans, who generally treat matters with a clear and spare language devoid of all ornamentation, and whose extreme simplicity is often common, fall readily into bombast as soon as they want to take up poetic style. They then appear pompous without letup from one end of the speech to the other; and seeing them lavish images at every turn in this way, you would think that they never said anything simply.

The English fall more rarely into a similar fault.

The cause of this can be pointed out without much difficulty.

In democratic societies, each citizen is habitually busy contemplating a very small object, which is himself. If he comes to raise his eyes higher, he then sees only the immense image of society, or the still greater figure of the human species. He has only very particular and very clear ideas, or very general and very vague notions; the intermediate space is empty.

So when you have drawn him out of himself, he is always waiting for you to offer him some prodigious object to look at, and it is only at this price that he agrees to keep himself away for a moment from the small complicated concerns that agitate and charm his life.

This seems to me to explain well enough why men of democracies who in general have such narrow affairs, demand from their poets such vast conceptions and portraits so beyond measure.

For their part, writers hardly fail to obey these instincts that they share; they inflate their imagination constantly, and expanding it beyond measure, they make it reach the gigantesque, for which they often abandon the great.

In this way, they hope immediately to attract the eyes of the crowd and to fix them easily on themselves, and they often succeed in doing so; for the crowd, which seeks in poetry only very vast subjects, does not have time to measure exactly the proportions of all the subjects that are presented to it, or taste sure enough to see easily in what way they are disproportionate. The author and the public corrupt each other at the same time.

We have seen, moreover, that among democratic peoples the sources of poetry were beautiful, but not very abundant. You soon end by exhausting them. Finding no more material for the ideal in the real and in the true, poets leave them entirely and create monsters.

I am not afraid that the poetry of democratic peoples may show itself to be timid or that it may stay very close to the earth. I am apprehensive instead that it may lose itself at every moment in the clouds, and that it may finish by portraying entirely imaginary realms. I fear that the works of democratic poets may offer immense and incoherent images, over-charged portraits, bizarre compositions, and that the fantastic beings that have emerged from their mind may sometimes cause the real world to be missed.

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Chapter 19A

*Some Observations On The Theater Of Democratic Peoples*B

When the revolution that changed the social and political state of an aristocratic people begins to make itself felt in literature, it is generally in the theater that it is first produced, and it is there that it always remains visible.

The spectator of a dramatic work is in a way taken unprepared by the impression that is suggested to him. He does not have time to search his memory or to consult experts; he does not think about fighting the new literary instincts that are beginning to emerge in him; he yields to them before knowing them.

Authors do not take long to discover which way public taste is thus secretly leaning. They turn their works in that direction; and plays, after serving to make visible the literary revolution that is being prepared, soon end by carrying it out. If you want to judge in advance the literature of a people that is turning toward democracy, study its theater.

Among aristocratic nations themselves, moreover, plays form the most democratic portions of literature. There is no literary enjoyment more accessible to the crowd than those that you experience seeing the stage. Neither preparation nor study is needed to feel them. They grip you amid your preoccupations and your ignorance. When the love, still half crude, for the pleasures of the mind begins to penetrate a class of citizens, it immediately drives them to the theater. The theaters of aristocratic nations have always been full of spectators who do not belong to the aristocracy. It is only in the theater that the upper classes have mingled with the middle and lower classes, and that they have agreed if not to accept the advice of the latter, at least to allow them to give it. It is in the theater that the learned and the lettered have always had the most difficulty making their taste prevail over that of the people, and keeping themselves from being carried away by the taste of the people. There the pit has often laid down the law for the boxes.

[So democracy not only introduces the lower classes into the theater, it makes them dominate there.]

If it is difficult for an aristocracy not to allow the theater to be invaded by the people, you will easily understand that the people must rule there as a master once democratic principles have penetrated laws and mores, when ranks merge and minds like fortunes become more similar, and when the upper class loses its power, its traditions and its leisure, along with its hereditary wealth.

So the tastes and instincts natural to democratic peoples as regards literature, will show themselves first in the theater, and you can predict that they will be introduced there with violence. In written works, the literary laws of the aristocracy will become

modified little by little in a general and so to speak legal manner. In the theater, they will be overthrown by riots.

[All that I have said in a general way about the literature of democracies is particularly applicable to the works of the theater.]

The theater puts into relief most of the qualities and nearly all the vices inherent in democratic literatures.

Democratic peoples have only very mediocre esteem for learning, and they scarcely care about what happened in Rome and in Athens; they mean for you to talk about themselves, and they ask for the present to be portrayed.

Consequently, when the heroes and mores of antiquity are often reproduced on stage, and care is taken to remain very faithful to ancient traditions, that is enough to conclude that the democratic classes do not yet dominate the theater.

Racine excuses himself very humbly, in the preface of *Britannicus,* for having made Junie enter among the vestal virgins, where, according to Aulu-Gelle, he says, “no one younger than six or older than nine years of age was received.” It may be believed that he would not have thought to accuse himself or to defend himself from such a crime, if he had written today.c

Such a fact enlightens me not only about the state of literature in the times in which it took place, but also about that of the society itself. A democratic theater does not prove that the nation is democratic; for, as we have just seen, even in aristocracies it can happen that democratic tastes influence the stage. But when the spirit of aristocracy alone rules the theater, that demonstrates invincibly that the whole society is aristocratic, and you can boldly conclude that this same learned and lettered class that directs authors commands citizens and leads public affairs.

It is very rare that the refined tastes and haughty tendencies of the aristocracy, when it governs the theater, do not lead it to make a choice, so the speak, in human nature. Certain social conditions interest it principally, and it is pleased to find them portrayed on the stage; certain virtues, and even certain vices, seem to the aristocracy to merit more particularly being reproduced on stage: it accepts the portrayal of these while it removes all the others from its sight. In the theater, as elsewhere, it only wants to find great lords, and it is moved only by kings. It is the same for styles. An aristocracy willingly imposes certain ways of speaking on authors; it wants all to be said with this tone.

The theater therefore often happens to portray only one of the dimensions of man, or even sometimes to represent what is not found in human nature; it rises above human nature and leaves it behind.

In democratic societies spectators do not have such preferences, and they rarely exhibit similar antipathies; they love to find on stage the confused mixture of conditions, of sentiments and ideas that they find before their eyes. The theater becomes more striking, more popular and more true.

Sometimes, however, those who write for the theater in democracies also go beyond human nature, but in another way than their precursors. By dint of wanting to reproduce minutely the small singularities of the present moment and the particular physiognomy of certain men, they forget to relate the general features of the species.

When the democratic classes rule the theater, they introduce as much liberty in the manner of treating the subject as in the very choice of this subject.

The love of the theater being, of all literary tastes, the one most natural to democratic peoples, the number of authors and that of spectators, like that of the performances, increases constantly among these peoples. Such a multitude, composed of such diverse elements and spread over so many different places, cannot accept the same rules and be subject to the same laws. No agreement is possible among very numerous judges who do not know where to meet; each separately makes his judgment. If the effect of democracy is in general to make literary rules and conventions doubtful, in the theater it abolishes them entirely, in order to substitute only the caprice of each author and each public.

It is equally in the theater above all that what I have already said elsewhere in a general way concerning style and art in democratic literatures is revealed. When you read the criticism brought forth by the dramatic works of the century of Louis XIV, you are surprised to see the great esteem of the public for verisimilitude, and the importance that it placed on the fact that a man, remaining always true to himself, did nothing that could not be easily explained and understood. It is equally surprising how much value was then attached to the forms of language and what small quarrels over words were made with dramatic authors.

It seems that the men of the century of Louis XIV attached a very exaggerated value to these details, which are noticed in the study but that elude the stage.d For, after all, the principal object of a play is to be presented, and its first merit is to stir emotion. That came from the fact that the spectators of this period were at the same time the readers. Leaving the performance, they waited at home for the writer, in order to complete their judgment of him.

In democracies, you listen to plays, but you do not read them. Most of those who attend stage plays are not seeking the pleasures of the mind, but the intense emotions of the heart. They are not waiting to find a work of literature, but a spectacle, and provided that the author speaks the language of the country correctly enough to make himself understood and that the characters excite curiosity and awaken sympathy, they are content; without asking anything more of the fiction, they immediately reenter the real world. So style there is less necessary; for on the stage observation of these rules escapes more and more.

As for verisimilitudes, it is impossible to be often new, unexpected, rapid, while remaining faithful to them. So they are neglected, and the public pardons it. You can count on the fact that they will not worry about the roads you have led them along, if you lead them finally to an object that touches them. They will never reproach you for having moved them in spite of the rules.

[Two things must be clearly distinguished.

Complicated intrigues, forced effects, improbability are often due to scorn for art and sometimes to ignorance of it. These faults are found in all theaters that are beginning, and for this reason aristocratic theaters have often provided an example of them, because it is ordinarily aristocracy that leads the youthful period of peoples. The oddities, coarseness and extravagance that are sometimes found in Lope de Vega and in Shakespeare[e] do not prove that these great men followed the natural taste of the aristocracy, but only that they were the first to write for it.[f] Their genius subsequently perpetuated their errors.[g] When a great dramatic author does not purge the stage of the vices that he finds there, he fixes them there, and all those who follow imitate those courtiers of Alexander who found it easier to tilt their heads to the side like their master than to conquer Asia.

Democratic writers know in general the conventions of the stage, and the rules of dramatic art, but often they willingly neglect them in order to go faster or to strike more forcefully.]

The Americans bring to full light the different instincts that I have just depicted, when they go to the theater.[h] But it must be recognized that there is still only a small number of them who go. Although spectators and spectacles have prodigiously increased since forty years ago in the United States, the population still goes to this type of amusement only with extreme reticence.

That is due to particular causes that the reader already knows and that it is sufficient to recall to him in two words.

The Puritans, who founded the American republics, were not only enemies of pleasure; they professed in addition an entirely special horror of the theater. They considered it as an abominable diversion, and as long as their spirit reigned unrivaled, dramatic presentations were absolutely unknown among them. These opinions of the first fathers of the colony left profound traces in the mind of their descendants.

The extreme regularity of habits and the great rigidity of mores that are seen in the United States, moreover, have not been very favorable to the development of theatrical art until now.

There are no subjects for drama in a country that has not witnessed great political catastrophes[j] and where love always leads by a direct and easy road to marriage. Men who use every day of the week for making their fortune and Sunday for praying to God do not lend themselves to the comic muse.

A single fact suffices to show that the theater is not very popular in the United States.

The Americans, whose laws authorize freedom and even license of speech in everything, have nonetheless subjected dramatic authors to a kind of censorship.[k] Theatrical presentations can only take place when the administrators of the town allow them. This demonstrates clearly that peoples are like individuals. They give

themselves without caution to their principal passions, and then they are very careful not to yield to the impetus of tastes that they do not have.

There is no portion of literature that is tied by tighter and more numerous bonds to the current state of society than the theater.

The theater of one period can never suit the following period if, between the two, an important revolution has changed mores and laws.

The great writers of another century are still studied. But plays written for another public are no longer attended. Dramatic authors of past time live only in books.

The traditional taste of a few men, vanity, fashion, the genius of an actor can for a time sustain or bring back an aristocratic theater within a democracy; but soon it collapses by itself. It is not overthrown; it is abandoned.

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Chapter 20A

*Of Some Tendencies Particular To Historians In Democratic Centuries*B

Historians who write in aristocratic centuries ordinarily make all events depend on the particular will and the mood of certain men, and they readily link the most important revolutions to the slightest accidents. They wisely make the smallest causes stand out, and often they do not see the greatest ones.

Historians who live in democratic centuries show completely opposite tendencies.

Most of them attribute to the individual almost no influence on the destiny of the species, or to citizens on the fate of the people. But, in return, they give great general causes to all the small particular facts. [In their eyes, all events are linked together by a tight and necessary chain, and therefore they sometimes end up by denying nations control over themselves and by contesting the liberty of having been able to do what they did.]c These contrasting tendencies can be explained.

When historians in aristocratic centuries cast their eyes on the world theater, they notice first of all a very small number of principal actors who lead the whole play. These great characters, who keep themselves at the front of the stage, stop their view and hold it; while they apply themselves to uncovering the secret motives that make the latter act and speak, they forget the rest.

The importance of the things that they see a few men do gives them an exaggerated idea of the influence that one man is able to exercise, and naturally disposes them to believe that you must always go back to the particular action of an individual to explain the movements of the crowd.

When, on the contrary, all citizens are independent of each other, and when each one of them is weak, you do not discover any one of them who exercises a very great or, above all, a very enduring power over the mass. At first view, individuals seem absolutely powerless over the mass, and you would say that society moves all by itself by the free and spontaneous participation of all the men who compose it.d

That naturally leads the human mind to search for the general reason that has been able to strike so many minds all at once in this way and turn them simultaneously in the same direction.e

I am very persuaded that, among democratic nations themselves, the genius, the vices or the virtues of certain individuals delay or precipitate the natural course of the destiny of the people; but these sorts of fortuitous and secondary causes are infinitely more varied, more hidden, more complicated, less powerful, and consequently more difficult to disentangle and to trace in times of equality than in the centuries of

aristocracy, when it is only a matter of analyzing, amid general facts, the particular action of a single man or of a few men.f

The historian soon becomes tired of such a work; his mind becomes lost amid this labyrinth, and, not able to succeed in seeing clearly and in bringing sufficiently to light individual influences, he denies them. He prefers to speak to us about the nature of races, about the physical constitution of a country, or about the spirit of civilization [<great words that I cannot hear said without involuntarily recalling the abhorrence of a vacuum that was attributed to nature before the heaviness of air was discovered>]. That shortens his work, and, at less cost, better satisfies the reader.g

M. de Lafayette said somewhere in his *Mémoires*h that the exaggerated system of general causes brought marvelous consolations to mediocre public men. I add that it gives admirable consolations to mediocre historians. It always provides them with a few great reasons that promptly pull them through at the most difficult point in their book, and it favors the weakness or laziness of their minds, all the while honoring its depth.

For me, I think that there is no period when one part of the events of this world must not be attributed to very general facts, and another to very particular influences. These two causes are always found; only their relationship differs. General facts explain more things in democratic centuries than in aristocratic centuries, and particular influences fewer. In times of aristocracy, it is the opposite; particular influences are stronger, and general causes are weaker, as long as you do not consider as a general cause the very fact of inequality of conditions, which allows a few individuals to thwart the natural tendencies of all the others.

So historians who try to portray what is happening in democratic societies are right to give a large role to general causes and to apply themselves principally to discovering them; but they are wrong to deny entirely the particular action of individuals, because it is difficult to find and to follow it [and to content themselves often with great words when great causes elude them].

Not only are historians who live in democratic centuries drawn to giving a great cause to each fact, but also they are led to linking facts and making a system emerge.

In aristocratic centuries, since the attention of historians is diverted at every moment toward individuals, the sequence of events escapes them, or rather they do not believe in such a sequence. The thread of history seems to them broken at every instant by the passage of a man.

In democratic centuries, on the contrary, the historian, seeing far fewer actors and many more actions, can easily establish a relationship and a methodical order among them.

Ancient literature, which has left us such beautiful histories, offers not a single great historical system, while the most miserable modern literatures are swarming with

them. It seems that ancient historians did not make enough use of these general theories that our historians are always ready to abuse.

Those who write in democratic centuries have another, more dangerous tendency.

When the trace of the action of individuals or nations becomes lost, it often happens that you see the world move without uncovering the motor. Since it becomes very difficult to see and to analyze the reasons that, acting separately on the will of each citizen, end by producing the movement of the people, you are tempted to believe that the movement is not voluntary and that societies, without knowing it, obey a superior force that dominates them.

Even if you should discover on earth the general fact that directs the particular will of all individuals, that does not save human liberty. A cause vast enough to be applied at the same time to millions of men, and strong enough to bend all of them in the same direction, easily seems irresistible; after seeing that you yielded to it, you are very close to believing that it could not be resisted.

So historians who live in democratic times not only deny to a few citizens the power to act on the destiny of the people, they also take away from peoples themselves the ability to modify their own fate, and subject them either to an inflexible providence or to a sort of blind fatality. According to these historians, each nation is invincibly tied, by its position, its origin, its antecedents, its nature, to a certain destiny that all its efforts cannot change. They make the generations stand together with each other, and, going back in this way, from age to age and from necessary events to necessary events, to the origin of the world, they make a tight and immense chain that envelops the entire human species and binds it.

It is not enough for them to show how facts happened; they like as well to reveal that it could not have happened otherwise. They consider a nation that has reached a certain place in its history, and assert that it has been forced to follow the road that led it there. That is easier than teaching what it could have done to take a better route.j

It seems, while reading the historians of aristocratic ages and particularly those of antiquity, that, in order to become master of his fate and govern his fellows, man has only to know how to control himself. You would say, while surveying the histories written in our time, that man can do nothing, either for himself or around him. The historians of antiquity taught how to command; those of our days scarcely teach anything except how to obey. In their writings, the author often appears great, but humanity is always small.

If this doctrine of fatality, which has so many attractions for those who write history in democratic times, by passing from the writers to their readers, in this way penetrated the entire mass of citizens and took hold of the public mind, you can predict that it would soon paralyze the movement of new societies and would reduce Christians to Turks.k

I will say, moreover, that such a doctrine is particularly dangerous in this period in which we live; our contemporaries are all too inclined to doubt free will, because each of them feels limited on all sides by his weakness, but they still readily grant strength and independence to men gathered in a social body. Care must be taken not to obscure this idea, for it is a matter of lifting up souls and not finally demoralizing them.m

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Chapter 21A

*Of Parliamentary Eloquence In The United States*B

Among aristocratic peoples all men stand together and depend on each other; among all men there is a hierarchical bond by the aid of which each one can be kept in his place and the whole body can be kept in obedience. Something analogous is always found within the political assemblies of these peoples. Parties there line up naturally behind certain leaders, whom they obey by a kind of instinct that is only the result of habits contracted elsewhere. They bring to the small society of the assembly the mores of the larger society.

[In the public assemblies of aristocratic nations there are only a few men who act as spokesmen. All the others assent and keep quiet. Orators speak only when something is useful to the party. They say only what can serve the general interests of the party and they do not needlessly repeat what has already been said. The discussion is clear, rapid and concise.

Breadth and depth are often lacking in the *discussions* of the Parliament of England, but the debate is almost always conducted admirably and speeches are very pertinent to the subject. ≠It is not always so in Congress. ≠

I at first believed that this way of treating public affairs came from the long use that the English have of parliamentary life. But it must be clearly admitted that it is due to some other cause, since the Americans, with the same experience, do not follow the same method.

In the democratic countries most accustomed to the representative regime, it often happens that a great number of those who are part of the assemblies have not sufficiently reflected in advance about the suitable way to act there. The reason is that among these peoples public life is rarely a career. You go there by chance; you soon depart. It is a road that you cross and that you do not follow. So to it you bring your natural enlightenment, and not an acquired knowledge.

In aristocratic countries that have had assemblies for a long time, it is not the same. Since there is only a small number of men who can enter national councils, those men apply themselves to becoming part of those councils and study in advance the art of how to conduct themselves there. Since the same men are part of the legislature over a long period of time, they have the time to recognize the methods that best serve the conduct of affairs, and they are always numerous enough to force the new arrivals to conform.

This reason seems good, but it does [not (ed.)] suffice to explain the difference that is noticeable here between the Americans and the English. In the United States, deliberative bodies are so numerous and public assemblies so multiplied that there is

no man, who has reached maturity, who has not very often had the occasion to enter into some gathering of this type and who has not been able to see the game. If there are no classes in America that are specially destined for public affairs, all classes get actively involved and constantly think about them. Almost all of even those who remain in private life thus receive a political education. So you must look for a more general and deeper cause than the one indicated above.

Not only do the Americans not always have very precise notions about the parliamentary art, but also they are more strongly inclined to violate the rules of that art when they know them.]

In democratic countries, a great number of citizens often happen to head toward the same point; but each one marches or at least professes to march there only by himself. Accustomed not to regulate his movements except according to his personal impulses, he yields with difficulty to receiving his rules from outside. This taste for and this practice of independence follow him into national councils. If he agrees to associate himself with others for the pursuit of the same plan, he at least wants to remain master of his own way of cooperating in the common success.

That is why, in democratic countries, parties so impatiently endure someone leading them and appear subordinate only when the danger is very great. Even so, the authority of leaders, which in these circumstances can go as far as making parties act and speak, almost never extends to the power of making parties keep quiet.

Among aristocratic peoples, the members of political assemblies are at the same time members of the aristocracy. Each one of them possesses by himself a high and stable rank, and the place that he occupies in the assembly is often less important in his eyes than the one that he fills in the country. That consoles him for not playing a role in the discussion of public affairs, and disposes him not to seek a mediocre role with too much ardor.

In America, it ordinarily happens that the deputy amounts to something only by his position in the assembly. So he is constantly tormented by the need to gain importance, and he feels a petulant desire to bring his ideas fully to light every moment.c

He is pushed in this direction not only by his vanity, but also by that of his constituents and by the continual necessity to please them.

Among aristocratic peoples, the member of the legislature rarely has a narrow dependence on voters; for them he is often in some way a necessary representative; sometimes he holds them in a narrow dependency, and if they come finally to refuse him their vote, he easily has himself appointed elsewhere; or, renouncing a political career, he shuts himself up in an idleness that still has splendor.

In a democratic country, like the United States, the deputy hardly ever has an enduring hold on the mind of his constituents. However small the electoral body, democratic instability makes it change face constantly. So it must be captivated every

day. He is never sure of them; and if they abandon him, he is immediately without resources; for he does not naturally have a position elevated enough to be easily noticed by those who are not nearby; and, in the complete independence in which citizens live, he cannot hope that his friends or the government will easily impose him on an electoral body that will not know him. So it is in the district that he represents that all the seeds of his fortune are sown; it is from this corner of the earth that he must emerge in order to rise to command the people and to influence the destinies of the world.

Thus, it is natural that, in democratic countries, the members of political assemblies think more about their constituents than about their party, while in aristocracies, they attend more to their party than to their constituents.d

Now, what must be said to please voters is not always what would be suitable for serving well the political opinion that they profess.

The general interest of a party is often that the deputy who is a member never speak about the great public affairs that he understands badly; that he speak little about the small affairs that would hinder the march of the great one; and most often finally, that he keep completely quiet. To maintain silence is the most useful service that a mediocre speaker can render to public matters.

But this is not the way that the voters understand it.

The population of a district charges a citizen to take part in the government of the State, because it has conceived a very grand idea of his merit. Since men appear greater in proportion to being surrounded by smaller objects, it may be believed that the rarer the talents among those represented, the higher the opinion that will be held about the representative. So it often happens that the less the voters have to expect from their deputy, the more they will hope from him; and, however incompetent he may be, they cannot fail to require from him signal efforts that correspond to the rank that they give him.

Apart from the legislator of the State, the voters see also in their representative the natural protector of the district in the legislature; they are not even far from considering him as the agent of each one of those who elected him, and they imagine that he will display no less ardor insisting on their particular interests than on those of the country.

Thus, the voters hold it as certain in advance that the deputy they will choose will be an orator; that he will speak often if he can, and that, in the case where he would have to limit himself, he will at least try hard in his rare speeches to include the examination of all the great affairs of the State along with the account of all the petty grievances that they themselves have complained about; so that, not able to appear often, he shows on each occasion that he knows what to do, and, instead of spouting forth incessantly, he every now and then compresses his remarks entirely into a small scope, providing in this way a kind of brilliant and complete summary of his constituents and of himself. For this price, they promise their next votes.

This pushes into despair honest, mediocre men who, knowing themselves, would not have appeared on their own. The deputy, carried away in this way, speaks up to the great distress of his friends, and, throwing himself imprudently into the middle of the most celebrated orators, he muddles the debate and tires the assembly.

All the laws that tend to make the elected more dependent on the voter therefore modify not only the conduct of the legislators, as I noted elsewhere, but also their language. They influence at the very same time public affairs and the manner of speaking about them.

[I think as well that the more the electoral body is divided into small parts, the more discussions will become droning within the legislative body. You can count on the fact that such a system will fill the assembly with mediocre men[*] and that all the mediocre men whom it sends there will make as many efforts to appear as if they were superior men.]

There is, so to speak, not a member of Congress who agrees to return home without having given at least one speech, or who bears being interrupted before he is able to include within the limits of his harangue everything that can be said about what is useful to the twenty-four states that compose the Union, and especially to the district he represents. So he puts successively before the minds of his listeners great general truths that he often does not notice himself and that he points out only in a confused way, and small highly subtle particularities that he does not find and explain very easily. Consequently, it often happens that, within this great body, discussion becomes vague and muddled, and it seems to crawl toward the goal that is proposed rather than marching toward it.

Something analogous will always be revealed, I believe, in the public assemblies of democracies.

Happy circumstances and good laws could succeed in drawing to the legislature of a democratic people men much more noteworthy than those who are sent by the Americans to Congress; but you will never prevent the mediocre men who are found in it from putting themselves on public display, smugly and on all sides.

The evil does not appear entirely curable to me, because it is due not only to the regulations of the assembly, but also to its constitution and even to that of the country.

The inhabitants of the United States seem themselves to consider the matter from this point of view, and they testify to their long practice of parliamentary life not by abstaining from bad speeches, but by subjecting themselves courageously to hearing them. They resign themselves to hearing them as if to an evil that experience had made them recognize as inevitable.

[<Some insist that sometimes they are sleeping, but they never grumble.>]

We have shown the petty side of political discussions in democracies; let us reveal the great one.

What has happened for the past one hundred fifty years in the Parliament of England has never caused a great stir outside; the ideas and sentiments expressed by orators have never found much sympathy among the very peoples who found themselves placed closest to the great theater of British liberty, while, from the moment when the first debates took place in the small colonial assemblies of America in the period of the revolution, Europe was moved.e

That was due not only to particular and fortuitous circumstances, but also to general and lasting causes.

I see nothing more admirable or more powerful than a great orator discussing great affairs within a democratic assembly. Since there is never a class that has its representatives in charge of upholding its interests, it is always to the whole nation, and in the name of the whole nation that they speak.f That enlarges thought and elevates language.g

Since precedents there have little sway; since there are no more privileges linked to certain properties or rights inherent to certain bodies or certain men, the mind is forced to go back to general truths drawn from human nature, in order to treat the particular affairs that concern it. Out of that is born, in the political discussions of a democratic people, however small it may be, a character of generality that often makes those discussions captivating to the human species. All men are interested in them because it is a question of man, who is everywhere the same.

Among the greatest aristocratic peoples, on the contrary, the most general questions are almost always dealt with by a few particular reasons drawn from the customs of a period or from the rights of a class; this interests only the class in question, or at most the people among whom this class is found.

It is to this cause as much as to the grandeur of the French nation, and to the favorable dispositions of the peoples who hear it, that you must attribute the great effect that our political discussions sometimes produce in the world.

Our orators often speak to all men, even when they are only addressing their fellow citizens.h

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Second Part

*Influence Of Democracy On The Sentiments Of The Americans*A

Chapter 1A

*Why Democratic Peoples Show A More Ardent And More Enduring Love For Equality Than For Liberty*B

The first and most intense of the passions given birth by equality of conditions, I do not need to say, is the love of this very equality. So no one will be surprised that I talk about it before all the others.

Everyone has noted that in our time, and especially in France, this passion for equality has a greater place in the human heart every day. It has been said a hundred times that our contemporaries have a much more ardent and much more tenacious love for equality than for liberty; but I do not find that we have yet adequately gone back to the causes of this fact. I am going to try.c

You can imagine an extreme point where liberty and equality meet and merge.

Suppose that all citizens participate in the government and that each one has an equal right to take part in it.

Since no one then differs from his fellows, no one will be able to exercise a tyrannical power; men will be perfectly free, because they will all be entirely equal; and they will all be perfectly equal, because they will be entirely free. Democratic peoples tend toward this ideal.

That is the most complete form that equality can take on earth; but there are a thousand other forms that, without being as perfect, are scarcely less dear to these peoples.

Equality can become established in civil society and not reign in the political world. Everyone can have the right to pursue the same pleasures, to enter the same professions, to meet in the same places; in a word, to live in the same way and to pursue wealth by the same means, without all taking the same part in government.

A kind of equality can even become established in the political world, even if political liberty does not exist. Everyone is equal to all his fellows, except one, who is, without distinction, the master of all, and who takes the agents of his power equally from among all.

It would be easy to form several other hypotheses according to which a very great equality could easily be combined with institutions more or less free, or even with institutions that would not be free at all.

So although men cannot become absolutely equal without being entirely free, and consequently equality at its most extreme level merges with liberty, you are justified in distinguishing the one from the other.d

The taste that men have for liberty and the one that they feel for equality are, in fact, two distinct things, and I am not afraid to add that, among democratic peoples, they are two unequal things.

If you want to pay attention, you will see that in each century, a singular and dominant fact is found to which the other facts are related; this fact almost always gives birth to a generative thought, or to a principal passion that then ends by drawing to itself and carrying along in its course all sentiments and all ideas. It is like the great river toward which all of the surrounding streams seem to flow.

Liberty has shown itself to men in different times and in different forms; it has not been linked exclusively to one social state, and you find it elsewhere than in democracies. So it cannot form the distinctive characteristic of democratic centuries.

The particular and dominant fact that singles out these centuries is equality of conditions; the principal passion that agitates men in those times is love of this equality.

Do not ask what singular charm the men of democratic ages find in living equal; or the particular reasons that they can have to be so stubbornly attached to equality rather than to the other advantages that society presents to them. Equality forms the distinctive characteristic of the period in which they live; that alone is enough to explain why they prefer it to everything else.

But, apart from this reason, there are several others that, in all times, will habitually lead men to prefer equality to liberty.

If a people could ever succeed in destroying by itself or only in decreasing the equality that reigns within it, it would do so only by long and difficult efforts. It would have to modify its social state, abolish its laws, replace its ideas, change its habits, alter its mores. But, to lose political liberty, it is enough not to hold on to it, and liberty escapes.

So men do not hold on to equality only because it is dear to them; they are also attached to it because they believe it must last forever.

You do not find men so limited and so superficial that they do not discover that political liberty may, by its excesses, compromise tranquillity, patrimony, and the life of individuals. But only attentive and clear-sighted men see the dangers with which equality threatens us, and ordinarily they avoid pointing these dangers out. They know that the miseries that they fear are remote, and they imagine that those miseries affect

only the generations to come, about whom the present generation scarcely worries. The evils that liberty sometimes brings are immediate; they are visible to all, and more or less everyone feels them. The evils that extreme equality can produce appear only little by little; they gradually insinuate themselves into the social body; they are seen only now and then, and, at the moment when they become most violent, habit has already made it so that they are no longer felt.

The good things that liberty brings show themselves only over time, and it is always easy to fail to recognize the cause that gives them birth.

The advantages of equality make themselves felt immediately, and every day you see them flow from their source.

Political liberty, from time to time, gives sublime pleasures to a certain number of citizens.

Equality provides a multitude of small enjoyments to each man every day. The charms of equality are felt at every moment, and they are within reach of all; the most noble hearts are not insensitive to them, and they are the delight of the most common souls. So the passion to which equality gives birth has to be at the very same time forceful and general.

Men cannot enjoy political liberty without purchasing it at the cost of some sacrifices, and they never secure it except by a great deal of effort. But the pleasures provided by equality are there for the taking. Each one of the small incidents of private life seems to give birth to them, and to enjoy them, you only have to be alive.

Democratic peoples love equality at all times, but there are certain periods when they push the passion that they feel for it to the point of delirium. This happens at the moment when the old social hierarchy, threatened for a long time, is finally destroyed, after a final internal struggle, when the barriers that separated citizens are at last overturned. Men then rush toward equality as toward a conquest, and they cling to it as to a precious good that someone wants to take away from them. The passion for equality penetrates the human heart from all directions, it spreads and fills it entirely. Do not tell men that by giving themselves so blindly to one exclusive passion, they compromise their dearest interests; they are deaf. Do not show them that liberty is escaping from their hands while they are looking elsewhere; they are blind, or rather they see in the whole universe only one single good worthy of desire.

What precedes applies to all democratic nations. What follows concerns only ourselves.

Among most modern nations, and in particular among all the peoples of the continent of Europe, the taste and the idea of liberty only began to arise and to develop at the moment when conditions began to become equal, and as a consequence of this very equality. It was absolute kings who worked hardest to level ranks among their subjects. Among these peoples, equality preceded liberty; so equality was an ancient fact, when liberty was still something new; the one had already created opinions,

customs, laws that were its own, when the other appeared alone, and for the first time, in full view. Thus, the second was still only in ideas and in tastes, while the first had already penetrated habits, had taken hold of mores, and had given a particular turn to the least actions of life. Why be surprised if men today prefer the one to the other?e

I think that democratic peoples have a natural taste for liberty; left to themselves, they seek it, they love it, and it is only with pain that they see themselves separated from it. But they have an ardent, insatiable, eternal, invincible passion for equality; they want equality in liberty, and if they cannot obtain that, they still want equality in slavery. They will suffer poverty, enslavement, barbarism, but they will not suffer aristocracy.

This is true in all times, and above all in our own. All men and all powers that would like to fight against this irresistible power will be overturned and destroyed by it.f In our day, liberty cannot be established without its support, and despotism itself cannot reign without it.

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Chapter 2A

Of Individualism In Democratic Countries

I have shown how, in centuries of equality, each man looked for his beliefs within himself; I want to show how, in these same centuries, he turns all his sentiments toward himself alone.

*Individualism*b is a recent expression given birth by a new idea. Our fathers knew only egoism.

Egoism is a passionate and exaggerated love of oneself, which leads man to view everything only in terms of himself alone and to prefer himself to everything.c

Individualism is a considered and peaceful sentiment that disposes each citizen to isolate himself from the mass of his fellows and to withdraw to the side with his family and his friends; so that, after thus creating a small society for his own use, he willingly abandons the large society to itself.

Egoism is born out of blind instinct; individualism proceeds from an erroneous judgment rather than from a depraved sentiment. It has its source in failings of the mind as much as in vices of the heart.d

Egoism parches the seed of all virtues; individualism at first dries up only the source of public virtues, but, in the long run, it attacks and destroys all the others and is finally absorbed into egoism.

Egoism is a vice as old as the world. It hardly belongs more to one form of society than to another.

Individualism is of democratic origin, and it threatens to develop as conditions become equal.

Among aristocratic peoples, families remain for centuries in the same condition, and often in the same place. That, so to speak, makes all generations contemporaries. A man almost always knows his ancestors and respects them; he believes he already sees his grandsons, and he loves them. He willingly assumes his duty toward both, and he often happens to sacrifice his personal enjoyments for these beings who are no more or who do not yet exist.

Aristocratic institutions have, moreover, the effect of tying each man closely to several of his fellow citizens.

Since classes are very distinct and unchanging within an aristocratic people, each class becomes for the one who is part of it a kind of small country, more visible and dearer than the large one.

Because, in aristocratic societies, all citizens are placed in fixed positions, some above others, each citizen always sees above him a man whose protection he needs, and below he finds another whose help he can claim.

So men who live in aristocratic centuries are almost always tied in a close way to something that is located outside of themselves, and they are often disposed to forget themselves. It is true that, in these same centuries, the general notion of *fellow* is obscure, and that you scarcely think to lay down your life for the cause of humanity; but you often sacrifice yourself for certain men.e

In democratic centuries, on the contrary, when the duties of each individual toward the species are much clearer, devotion toward one man [<or one class>] becomes more rare; the bond of human affections expands and relaxes.

Among democratic peoples, new families emerge constantly out of nothing, others constantly fall back into nothing, and all those that remain change face; the thread of time is broken at every moment, and the trace of the generations fades. You easily forget those who preceded you, and you have no idea about those who will follow you. Only those closest to you are of interest.

Since each class is coming closer to the others and is mingling with them, its members become indifferent and like strangers to each other. Aristocracy had made all citizens into a long chain that went from the peasant up to the king; democracy breaks the chain and sets each link apart.

As conditions become equal, a greater number of individuals will be found who, no longer rich enough or powerful enough to exercise a great influence over the fate of their fellows, have nonetheless acquired or preserved enough enlightenment and wealth to be able to be sufficient for themselves. The latter owe nothing to anyone, they expect nothing so to speak from anyone; they are always accustomed to consider themselves in isolation, and they readily imagine that their entire destiny is in their hands.

Thus, not only does democracy make each man forget his ancestors, but it hides his descendants from him and separates him from his contemporaries; it constantly leads him back toward himself alone and threatens finally to enclose him entirely within the solitude of his own heart.[*]

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Chapter 3

*How Individualism Is Greater At The End Of A Democratic Revolution Than At Another Time*A

It is above all at the moment when a democratic society finally takes form on the debris of an aristocracy, that this isolation of men from each other, and the egoism that follows are most easily seen.

These societies not only contain a great number of independent citizens, they are filled daily with men who, having reached independence only yesterday, are intoxicated with their new power; these men conceive a presumptuous confidence in their strength, and not imagining that from then on they might need to ask for the help of their fellows, they have no difficulty showing that they think only of themselves.

An aristocracy usually succumbs only after a prolonged struggle, during which implacable hatreds are kindled among the different classes. These passions survive victory, and you can follow their traces amid the democratic confusion that follows.b

Those among the citizens who were first in the destroyed hierarchy cannot immediately forget their former greatness; for a long time they consider themselves like strangers within the new society. They see in all the men made equal to them by this society, oppressors whose destiny cannot provoke sympathy; they have lost sight of their former equals and no longer feel tied by a common interest to their fate; so each one, withdrawing apart, thinks he is reduced to being concerned only with himself. Those, on the contrary, who formerly were placed at the bottom of the social ladder, and who had been brought closer to the general level by a sudden revolution, enjoy only with a kind of secret uneasiness their newly acquired independence; if they find at their side a few of their former superiors, they look at them with triumph and fear, and move apart from them.

So it is usually at the beginning of democratic societies that citizens show themselves most disposed to separate themselves.

Democracy leads men not to draw nearer to their fellows; but democratic revolutions dispose them to flee each other and perpetuate within equality the hatreds given birth by inequality.

The great advantage of the Americans is to have arrived at democracy without having to suffer democratic revolutions, and to have been born equal instead of becoming so.c

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Chapter 4A

*How The Americans Combat Individualism With Free Institutions*B

Despotism, which, by its nature, is fearful, sees in the isolation of men the most certain guarantee of its own duration, and it ordinarily puts all its efforts into isolating them. There is no vice of the human heart that pleases it as much as egoism: a despot easily pardons the governed for not loving him, provided that they do not love each other.c He does not ask them to help him lead the State; it is enough that they do not claim to run it themselves.d Those who claim to unite their efforts in order to create common prosperity, he calls unruly and restless spirits; and, changing the natural meaning of words, he calls good citizens those who withdraw narrowly into themselves.e

Thus, the vices given birth by despotism are precisely those that equality favors. The two things complement each other and help one another in a fatal way.

Equality places men side by side, without a common bond to hold them. Despotism raises barriers between them and separates them. It disposes them not to think about their fellows and makes indifference into a kind of public virtue.

So despotism, which is dangerous in all times, is to be particularly feared in democratic centuries.f

It is easy to see that in these same centuries men have a particular need for liberty.

When citizens are forced to occupy themselves with public affairs, they are necessarily drawn away from the middle of their individual interests and are, from time to time, dragged away from looking at themselves.

From the moment when common affairs are treated together, each man notices that he is not as independent of his fellows as he first imagined, and that, to gain their support, he must often lend them his help.

When the public governs, there is no man who does not feel the value of the public's regard and who does not seek to win it by gaining the esteem and affection of those among whom he must live.

Several of the passions that chill and divide hearts are then forced to withdraw deep into the soul and hide there. Pride conceals itself; scorn dares not to show itself. Egoism is afraid of itself. [You dread to offend and you love to serve.]

Under a free government, since most public functions are elective, the men who feel cramped in private life because of the loftiness of their souls or the restlessness of

their desires, sense every day that they cannot do without the population that surrounds them.

It then happens that you think about your fellows out of ambition, and that often, in a way, you find it in your interest to forget yourself. [This finally produces within democratic nations something analogous to what was seen in aristocracies.

In aristocratic countries men are bound tightly together by their very inequalities. In democratic countries where the various representatives of public power are elected, men attach themselves to each other by the exertion of their own will, and it is in this sense then that you can say that in those countries election replaces hierarchy to a certain degree.]gh I know that you can raise the objection here of all the intrigues given birth by an election, the shameful means that the candidates often use and the slanders that their enemies spread. Those are occasions of hatred, and they present themselves all the more often as elections become more frequent [≠which never fails to happen in proportion as municipal liberties develop ≠].j

These evils are no doubt great, but they are temporary, while the good things that arise with them endure.

The desire to be elected can, for a short while, lead certain men to make war on each other; but this same desire leads all men in the long run to lend each other natural support; and, if it happens that an election accidentally divides two friends, the electoral system draws closer together in a permanent way a multitude of citizens who would always have remained strangers to each other. Liberty creates particular hatreds, but despotism gives birth to general indifference.

The Americans fought, by means of liberty, against the individualism given birth by equality, and they defeated it.

The law-makers of America did not believe that to cure an illness so natural and so fatal to the social body in democratic times, it was sufficient to grant the nation a single way of representing itself as a whole; they thought, as well, that it was appropriate to give political life to each portion of the territory, in order infinitely to multiply for citizens the occasions to act together, and to make the citizens feel every day that they depend on each other.k

This was to behave with wisdom.

The general affairs of a country occupy only the principal citizens. The latter gather together in the same places only from time to time; and, as it often happens that afterward they lose sight of each other, no lasting bonds are established among them. But, when it is a matter of having the particular affairs of a district regulated by the men who live there, the same individuals are always in contact, and they are in a way forced to know each other and to please each other.

You draw a man out of himself with difficulty in order to interest him in the destiny of the entire State, because he poorly understands the influence that the destiny of the State can exercise on his fate. But if it is necessary to have a road pass by the end of

his property, he will see at first glance that there is a connection between this small public affair and his greatest private affairs, and he will discover, without anyone showing him, the close bond that here unites particular interest to general interest.

So it is by charging citizens with the administration of small affairs, much more than by giving them the government of great ones, that you interest them in the public good and make them see the need that they constantly have for each other in order to produce that good.

You can, by a dazzling action, suddenly capture the favor of a people; but, to win the love and respect of the population that surrounds you, there must be a long succession of small services provided, humble good offices, a constant habit of benevolence and a well-established reputation of disinterestedness.

So local liberties, which make a great number of citizens put value on the affection of their neighbors and of those nearby, constantly bring men back toward each other despite the instincts that separate them, and force them to help each other.

In the United States, the most opulent citizens are very careful not to isolate themselves from the people; on the contrary, they constantly draw closer to them, they readily listen to them and speak with them every day. They know that in democracies the rich always need the poor and that, in democratic times, the poor are attached by manners more than by benefits. The very grandeur of these benefits, which brings out the difference of conditions, causes a secret irritation to those who profit from them; but simplicity of manners has nearly irresistible charms; familiarity of manners seduces and even their coarseness does not always displease.

This truth does not at first sight penetrate the mind of the rich. Usually, they resist it as long as the democratic revolution lasts, and they do not even admit it immediately after the revolution is accomplished. They willingly agree to do good for the people; but they want to continue to hold them carefully at a distance. They believe that is enough; they are wrong. They would ruin themselves in this way without rekindling the heart of the population that surrounds them. It is not the sacrifice of their money that is demanded of them; it is the sacrifice of their pride.m

You would say that in the United States there is no imagination that does not exhaust itself inventing means to increase wealth and to satisfy the needs of the public. The most enlightened inhabitants of each district are constantly using their knowledge to discover new secrets appropriate for increasing common prosperity; and, when they have found some, they hasten to give them to the crowd.n

While closely examining the vices and weaknesses often shown by those who govern in America, you are astonished by the growing prosperity of the people, and you are mistaken.o It is not the elected magistrate who makes the American democracy prosper; but it prospers because the magistrate is elective.p

It would be unjust to believe that the patriotism of the Americans and the zeal that each of them shows for the well-being of his fellow citizens has nothing real about it.

Although private interest directs most human actions in the United States as well as elsewhere, it does not determine all of them.

I must say that I have often seen Americans make great and true sacrifices for public affairs, and I have observed a hundred times that they hardly ever fail to lend faithful support to each other as needed.

The free institutions that the inhabitants of the United States possess, and the political rights that they use so much, recall constantly, and in a thousand ways, to each citizen that he lives in society. They lead his mind at every moment toward this idea, that the duty as well as the interest of men is to make themselves useful to their fellows; and, as he sees no particular cause to hate them, since he is never either their slave or their master, his heart inclines easily in the direction of benevolence. You first get involved in the general interest by necessity, and then by choice; what was calculation becomes instinct; and by working for the good of your fellow citizens, you finally acquire the habit and taste of serving them.

[When men, unequal to each other, put all their political powers in the hands of one man, that is not enough for them to become indifferent and cold toward each other, because they continue to need each other constantly in civil life.

But when equal men do not take part in government, they almost entirely lack the occasion to harm each other or to make use of each other. Each one forgets his fellows to think only of the prince and himself.

So political liberty, which is useful when conditions are unequal, becomes necessary in proportion as they become equal.]q

Many people in France consider equality of conditions as a first evil, and political liberty as a second. When they are forced to submit to the one, they try hard at least to escape the other. As for me, I say that, to combat the evils that equality can produce, there is only one effective remedy: political liberty.

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Chapter 5A

*Of The Use That Americans Make Of Association In Civil Life*B

I do not want to talk about those political associations by the aid of which men seek to defend themselves against the despotic action of a majority or against the encroachments of royal power. I have already treated this subject elsewhere. It is clear that, if each citizen, as he becomes individually weaker and therefore more incapable of preserving his liberty by himself alone, did not learn the art of uniting with his fellows to defend his liberty, tyranny would necessarily grow with equality.c Here it is a matter only of the associations that are formed in civil life and whose aim has nothing political about it.

The political associations that exist in the United States form only a detail amid the immense tableau that associations as a whole present there.

Americans of all ages, of all conditions, of all minds, constantly unite. Not only do they have commercial and industrial associations in which they all take part, but also they have a thousand other kinds: religious, moral, [intellectual,] serious ones, useless ones, very general and very particular ones, immense and very small ones;d Americans associate to celebrate holidays, establish seminaries, build inns, erect churches, distribute books, send missionaries to the Antipodes; in this way they create hospitals, prisons, schools. If, finally, it is a matter of bringing a truth to light or of developing a sentiment with the support of a good example, they associate. Wherever, at the head of a new undertaking, you see in France the government, and in England, a great lord, count on seeing in the United States, an association.

I found in America some kinds of associationse of which, I confess, I had not even the idea, and I often admired the infinite art with which the inhabitants of the United States succeeded in setting a common goal for the efforts of a great number of men, and in making them march freely toward it.

I have since traveled across England, from where the Americans took some of their laws and many of their customs, and it seemed to me that there one was very far from making such constant and skillful use of association.

It often happens that the English individually carry out very great things, while there is scarcely so small an enterprise for which the Americans do not unite. It is clear that the first consider association as a powerful means of action; but the second seem to see it as the only means they have to act.

Thus the most democratic country on earth is, out of all, the one where men today have most perfected the art of pursuing in common the object of their common desires and have applied this new science to the greatest number of things.f Does this result

from an accident, or could it be that in fact a necessary connection exists between associations and equality?

Aristocratic societies always contain within them, amid a multitude of individuals who can do nothing by themselves, a small number of very powerful and very rich citizens; each of the latter can by himself carry out great enterprises.

In aristocratic societies, men do not need to unite in order to act, because they are held tightly together.

There, each citizen, rich and powerful, is like the head of a permanent and compulsory association that is composed of all those who are dependent on him and who are made to cooperate in the execution of his plans.

Among democratic peoples, on the contrary, all citizens are independent and weak; they can hardly do anything by themselves, and no one among them can compel his fellows to lend him their help. So they all fall into impotence if they do not learn to help each other freely.g

If men who live in democratic countries had neither the right nor the taste to unite for political ends, their independence would run great risks, but they could for a long time retain their wealth and their enlightenment; while, if they did not acquire the custom of associating in ordinary life, civilization itself would be in danger.h A people among whom individuals lost the power to do great things separately without acquiring the ability to achieve them together would soon return to barbarism.

Unfortunately, the same social state that makes associations so necessary to democratic peoples makes them more difficult for them than for all other peoples.

When several members of an aristocracy want to associate, they easily succeed in doing so. As each one of them has great strength in society, the number of members of the association can be very small, and, when the numbers are few, it is very easy for them to know and understand each other and to establish fixed rules.

The same facility is not found among democratic nations, where those in the association must always be very numerous so that the association has some power.

[The liberty to associate is, therefore, more precious and the science of association more necessary among those peoples than among all others and <it becomes more precious and more necessary as equality is greater.>]

I know that there are many of my contemporaries who are not hindered by this. They claim that as citizens become weaker and more incapable, the government must be made more skillful and more active, in order for society to carry out what individuals are no longer able to do. They believe they have answered everything by saying that. But I think they are mistaken.

A government could take the place of a few of the largest American associations, and within the Union several particular states have already tried to do so. But what

political power would ever be able to be sufficient for the innumerable multitude of small enterprises that the American citizens carry out every day with the aid of the association?j

It is easy to foresee that the time is coming when man will be less and less able to produce by himself alone the things most common and most necessary to his life.k So the task of the social power will grow constantly, and its very efforts will make it greater every day. The more it puts itself in the place of associations, the more individuals, losing the idea of associating, will need it to come to their aid. These are causes and effects that engender each other without stopping. Will the public administration end up directing all the industries for which an isolated citizen cannot suffice?m And if a moment finally arrives when, as a consequence of the extreme division of landed property, the land is infinitely divided, so that it can no longer be cultivated except by associations of farm workers, will the head of government have to leave the tiller of the State in order to come to hold the plow?

The morals and intelligence of a democratic people would run no lesser dangers than their trade and industry, if the government came to take the place of associations everywhere.n

Sentiments and ideas are renewed, the heart grows larger and the human mind develops only by the reciprocal action of men on each other.

I have demonstrated that this action is almost nil in democratic countries. So it must be created there artificially. And this is what associations alone are able to do.

When the members of an aristocracy adopt a new idea or conceive of a new sentiment, they place them, in a way, next to them on the great stage where they are themselves, and, in this way exposing those new ideas or sentiments to the sight of the crowd, they introduce them easily into the mind or heart of those who surround them.

In democratic countries only the social power is naturally able to act in this way, but it is easy to see that its action is always insufficient and often dangerous.o

A government can no more suffice for maintaining alone and for renewing the circulation of sentiments and ideas among a great people than for conducting all of the industrial enterprises. From the moment it tries to emerge from the political sphere in order to throw itself into the new path, it will exercise an unbearable tyranny, even without wanting to do so; for government only knows how to dictate precise rules; it imposes the sentiments and ideas that it favors, and it is always difficult to distinguish its counsels from its orders.p

It will be still worse if a government believes itself really interested in having nothing move. It will then keep itself immobile and allow itself to become heavy with a voluntary sleep.

So it is necessary that it does not act alone.

Associations, among democratic peoples, must take the place of the powerful individuals that equality of conditions has made disappear.

As soon as some inhabitants of the United States have conceived of a sentiment or an idea that they want to bring about in the world, they seek each other out, and when they have found each other, they unite. From that moment, they are no longer isolated men, but a power that is seen from afar, and whose actions serve as an example; a power that speaks and to which you listen.

The first time I heard in the United States that one hundred thousand men[*] had publicly pledged not to use strong liquor, the thing seemed to me more amusingq than serious, and I did not at first see clearly why these citizens, who were so temperate, would not be content to drink water within their families.

I ended by understanding that these hundred thousand Americans, frightened by the progress that drunkenness was making around them, had wanted to give their patronage to temperance. They had acted precisely like a great lord who dressed very plainly in order to inspire disdain for luxury among simple citizens. It may be believed that if these hundred thousand menr lived in France, each one of them would have individually addressed the government in order to beg it to oversee the taverns throughout the entire kingdom.

There is nothing, in my opinion, that merits our attention more than the intellectual and moral associations of America. The political and industrial associations of the Americans easily fall within our grasp, but the others escape us; and, if we discover them, we understand them badly, because we have hardly ever seen anything analogous. You must recognize, however, that the intellectual and moral associations are as necessary as the political and industrial ones to the American people, and perhaps more.

In democratic countries, the science of association is the mother science; the progress of all the others depends on the progress of the former.s

Among the laws that govern human societies, there is one that seems more definitive and clearer than all the others. For men to remain civilized or to become so, the art of associating must become developed among them and be perfected in the same proportion as equality of conditions grows.

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[Of The Manner In Which American Governments Act Toward Associations]T

[In England, the State mingles strictly only in its own affairs. Often it even relies on individuals for the task of undertaking and of completing works whose usefulness or grandeur has an almost national appearance.

The English think they have done enough for the citizens by allowing them to give themselves unreservedly to their industry, or by allowing them to associate freely if they need to do so.

The Americans go further: it often happens that they lend to certain associations the support of the State or even charge the State with taking their place.

≠There are works that do not precisely have a national character, but whose execution is very difficult, in which the government takes part in the United States, or that it carries out at its expense. Such a thing is hardly seen in England. ≠

That is explained when you consider that, if associations are more necessary in a democratic country, they are at the same time more difficult.

Among an aristocratic people, an association can have very great power and be composed of only a few men. In democratic countries, in order to create a similar association, you must unite a multitude of citizens all without defenses, keep them together and lead them. So in aristocratic countries the State can rely on individuals and associations for everything. In democratic countries it cannot do the same.

Those who govern democratic societies are in a very difficult position. If they always want to take the place of great associations, they prevent the spirit of association from developing and they take on a burden that weighs them down; and if they rely only on associations, very useful and often necessary things are not done by anyone.

Men who live in democratic centuries have more need than others to be allowed to do things by themselves, and more than others, they sometimes need things to be done for them. That depends on circumstances.

The greatest art of government in democratic countries consists in clearly distinguishing the circumstances and acting according to how circumstances lead it.

I will say only in a general way that since the first interest of a people of this type is that the spirit of association spreads and becomes secure within it, all the other interests must be subordinated to that one.

So the government [v. social power], even when it lends its support to individuals, must never discharge them entirely from the trouble of helping themselves by uniting;

often it must deny them its help in order to let them find the secret of being self-sufficient, and it must withdraw its hand as they better understand the art of doing so.

This is, moreover, not particular to the subject of associations or to democratic times.

The principal aim of good government has always been to make the citizens more and more able to do without its *help.* That is more useful than the help can be.

If men learn in *obedience* only the art of obeying and not that of being free, I do not know what privileges they will have over the animals except that the shepherd would be taken from among them.]u

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Chapter 6A

*Of The Relation Between Associations And Newspapers*B

When men are no longer bound together in a solid and permanent way, you cannot get a large number to act in common, unless by persuading each one whose help is needed that his particular interest obliges him to unite his efforts voluntarily with the efforts of all the others.

That can usually and conveniently be done only with the aid of a newspaper;c only a newspaper can succeed in putting the same thought in a thousand minds at the same instant.

A newspaper is an advisor that you do not need to go to find, but which appears by itself and speaks to you daily and briefly about common affairs, without disturbing you in your private affairs.

So newspapers become more necessary as men are more equal and individualism more to be feared. It would diminish their importance to believe that they serve only to guarantee liberty; they maintain civilization.

I will not deny that, in democratic countries, newspapers often lead citizens to do in common very ill-considered undertakings; but if there were no newspapers, there would be hardly any common action. So the evil that they produce is much less than the one they cure.

A newspaper not only has the effect of suggesting the same plan to a large number of men; it provides them with the means to carry out in common the plans that they would have conceived by themselves.

The principal citizens who inhabit an aristocratic country see each other from far away; and, if they want to combine their strength, they march toward each other, dragging along a multitude in their wake.

It often happens, on the contrary, in democratic countries, that a large number of men who have the desire or the need to associate cannot do so; since all are very small and lost in the crowd, they do not see each other and do not know where to find each other. Along comes a newspaper that exposes to view the sentiment or the idea that came simultaneously, but separately, to each of them. All head immediately for this light, and these wandering spirits, who have been looking for each other for a long time in the shadows, finally meet and unite.

[<In aristocratic countries you group readily around one man, and in democratic countries around a newspaper, and it is in this sense that you can say that newspapers there take the place of great lords.>]

The newspaper has drawn them closer together, and they continue to need it to hold them together.

For an association among a democratic people to have some power it must be numerous. Those who compose it are thus spread over a large area, and each of them is kept in the place that he inhabits by the mediocrity of his fortune and by the multitude of small cares that it requires. They must find a means to talk together every day without seeing each other, and to march in accord without getting together. Thus there is hardly any democratic association that can do without a newspaper.d

So a necessary relation exists between associations and newspapers; newspapers make associations, and associations make newspapers; and if it was true to say that associations must multiply as conditions become equal, it is no less certain that the number of newspapers grows as associations multiply.e

Consequently America is the only country in the world where at the same time you find the most associations and the most newspapers.

This relationship between the number of newspapers and that of associations leads us to discover another one between the condition of the periodical press and the administrative form of the country, and we learn that the number of newspapers must decrease or increase among a democratic people in proportion as administrative centralization is more or less great. For among democratic peoples, you cannot entrust the exercise of local powers to the principal citizens as in aristocracies. These powers must be abolished, or their use handed over to a very great number of men. These men form a true association established in a permanent manner by the law for the administration of one portion of the territory, and they need a newspaper to come to find them each day amid their small affairs, and to teach them the state of public affairs. The more numerous the local powers are, the greater is the number of those called by the law to exercise them; and the more this necessity makes itself felt at every moment, the more newspapers proliferate.

It is the extraordinary splitting up of administrative power, much more than great political liberty and the absolute independence of the press, that so singularly multiplies the number of newspapers in America. If all the inhabitants of the Union were voters under the rule of a system that limited their electoral right to the choice of the legislators of the State, they would need only a small number of newspapers, because they could have only a few very important, but very rare occasions to act together; but within the great national association, the law established in each province and in each city, and so to speak in each village, small associations with the purpose of local administration. The law-maker in this way forced each American to cooperate daily with some of his fellow citizens in a common work, and each of them needs a newspaper to teach him what the others are doing.

I think that a democratic people,1 who would not have national representation, but a great number of small local powers, would end by having more newspapers than another people among whom a centralized administration would exist alongside an elected legislature. What best explains to me the prodigious development that the

daily press has undergone in the United States, is that I see among the Americans the greatest national liberty combined with local liberties of all types.

It is generally believed in France and in England that it is enough to abolish the duties that burden the press in order to increase newspapers indefinitely. That greatly exaggerates the effects of such a reform. Newspapers multiply not only following low cost, but also following the more or less repeated need that a large number of men have to communicate together and to act in common.

I would equally attribute the growing power of newspapers to more general reasons than those that are often used to explain it.

A newspaper can continue to exist only on the condition of reproducing a common doctrine or common sentiment for a large number of men. So a newspaper always represents an association whose members are its habitual readers.

This association can be more or less defined, more or less limited, more or less numerous; but it exists in minds, at least in germ; for that reason alone the newspaper does not die.

This leads us to a final reflection that will end this chapter.

The more conditions become equal, the weaker men are individually, the more they allow themselves to go along easily with the current of the crowd and the more difficulty they have holding on alone to an opinion that the crowd abandons.

The newspaper represents the association; you can say that it speaks to each one of its readers in the name of all the others, and the weaker they are individually, the more easily it carries them along.f

So the dominion of newspapers must grow as men become more equal.

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Chapter 7A

*Relations Between Civil Associations And Political Associations*B

There is only one nationc on earth where the unlimited liberty of associating for political ends is used daily. This same nation is the only one in the world where the citizens have imagined making continual use of the right of association in civil life and have succeeded in gaining in this way all the good things civilization can offer.

Among all peoples where political association is forbidden, civil association is rare.

It is hardly probable that this is a result of an accident; but you must instead conclude from it that there exists a natural and perhaps necessary relationship between the two types of associations.

[≠Men can associate in a thousand ways, but the spirit of association is a whole, and you cannot stop one of its principal developments without weakening it everywhere else. ≠]

Some men have by chance a common interest in a certain affair. It concerns a commercial enterprise to direct, an industrial operation to conclude; they meet together and unite; in this way they become familiar little by little with association [and when it becomes necessary to associate for a political end, they feel more inclined to attempt it and more capable of succeeding in doing so.]

The more the number of these small common affairs increases, the more men acquire, even without their knowing, the ability to pursue great affairs together.

Civil associations therefore facilitate political associations; but, on the other hand, political association develops and singularly perfects civil association.

In civil life, each man can, if need be, believe that he is able to be self-sufficient. In politics, he can never imagine it. So when a people has a public life, the idea of association and the desire to associate present themselves each day to the mind of all citizens; whatever natural reluctance men have to act in common, they will always be ready to do so in the interest of a party.

Thus politics generalizes the taste and habit of association; it brings about the desire to unite and teaches the art of associating to a host of men who would have always lived alone.

Politics not only gives birth to many associations, it creates very vast associations.

In civil life it is rare for the same interest to attract naturally a large number of men toward a common action. Only with a great deal of art can you succeed in creating something like it.

In politics, the occasion presents itself at every moment. Now, it is only in great associations that the general value of association appears. Citizens individually weak do not form in advance a clear idea of the strength that they can gain by uniting; you must show it to them in order for them to understand it. The result is that it is often easier to gather a multitude for a common purpose than a few men; a thousand citizens do not see the interest that they have in uniting; ten thousand see it. In politics, men unite for great enterprises, and the advantage that they gain from association in important affairs teaches them, in a practical way, the interest that they have in helping each other in the least affairs.

A political association draws a multitude of individuals out of themselves at the same time; however separated they are naturally by age, mind, fortune, it brings them closer together and puts them in contact. They meet once and learn how to find each other always.

You can become engaged in most civil associations only by risking a portion of your patrimony; it is so for all industrial and commercial companies. When men are still little versed in the art of associating and are ignorant of its principal rules, they fear, while associating for the first time in this way, paying dearly for their experience. So they prefer doing without a powerful means of success, to running the dangers that accompany it. But they hesitate less to take part in political associations, which seem without danger to them, because in them they are not risking their own money. Now, they cannot take part for long in those associations without discovering how you maintain order among a great number of men, and by what process you succeed in making them march, in agreement and methodically, toward the same goal. They learn to submit their will to that of all the others, and to subordinate their particular efforts to common action, all things that are no less necessary to know in civil associations than in political associations.

So political associations can be considered as great free schools, where all citizens come to learn the general theory of associations.

So even if political association would not directly serve the progress of civil association, it would still be harmful to the latter to destroy the first.

When citizens can associate only in certain cases, they regard association as a rare and singular process, and they hardly think of it.

When you allow them to associate freely in everything, they end up seeing in association the universal and, so to speak, unique means that men can use to attain the various ends that they propose. Each new need immediately awakens the idea of association. The art of association then becomes, as I said above, the mother science; everyone studies it and applies it.

When certain associations are forbidden and others allowed, it is difficult in advance to distinguish the first from the second. In case of doubt, you refrain from all, and a sort of public opinion becomes established that tends to make you consider any association like a daring and almost illicit enterprise.1

So it is a chimera to believe that the spirit of association, repressed at one point, will allow itself to develop with the same vigor at all the others, and that it will be enough to permit men to carry out certain enterprises together, for them to hurry to try it. When citizens have the ability and the habit of associating for all things, they will associate as readily for small ones as for great ones. But if they can associate only for small ones, they will not even find the desire and the capacity to do so. In vain will you allow them complete liberty to take charge of their business together; they will only nonchalantly use the rights that you grant them; and after you have exhausted yourself with efforts to turn them away from the forbidden associations, you will be surprised at your inability to persuade them to form the permitted ones.

I am not saying that there can be no civil associations in a country where political association is forbidden; for men can never live in society without giving themselves to some common enterprise. But I maintain that in such a country civil associations will always be very few in number, weakly conceived, ineptly led, and that they will never embrace vast designs, or will fail while wanting to carry them out.

This leads me naturally to think that liberty of association in political matters is not as dangerous for public tranquillity as is supposed, and that it could happen that after disturbing the State for a time, liberty of association strengthens it.d

In democratic countries, political associations form, so to speak, the only powerful individuals who aspire to rule the State. Consequently the governments [v. princes] of today consider these types of associations in the same way that the kings of the Middle Ages saw the great vassals of the crown: they feel a kind of instinctive horror for them and combat them at every occasion.

They have, on the contrary, a natural favor for civil associations, because they have easily discovered that the latter, instead of leading the mind of citizens toward public affairs, serve to distract it from these affairs, and by engaging citizens more and more in projects that cannot be accomplished without public peace, civil associations turn them away from revolutions. But the governments of today do not notice that political associations multiply and prodigiously facilitate civil associations, and that by avoiding a dangerous evil, they are depriving themselves of an effective remedy. When you see the Americans associate freely each day, with the purpose of making a political opinion prevail, of bringing a statesman to the government, or of wresting power from another man, you have difficulty understanding that men so independent do not at every moment fall into license.

If, on the other hand, you come to consider the infinite number of industrial enterprises that are being pursued in common in the United States, and you see on all sides Americans working without letup on the execution of some important and difficult plan, which would be confounded by the slightest revolution, you easily

conceive why these men, so very busy, are not tempted to disturb the State or to destroy a public peace from which they profit.

Is it enough to see these things separately? Isn't it necessary to find the hidden bond that joins them? It is within political associations that the Americans of all the states, all minds and all ages, daily acquire the general taste for association and become familiar with its use. There they see each other in great number, talk together, understand each other and become active together in all sorts of enterprises. They then carry into civil life the notions that they have acquired in this way and make them serve a thousand uses.

So it is by enjoying a dangerous liberty that the Americans learn the art of making the dangers of liberty smaller.

If you choose a certain moment in the existence of a nation, it is easy to prove that political associations disturb the State and paralyze industry; but when you take the entire life of a people, it will perhaps be easy to demonstrate that liberty of association in political matters is favorable to the well-being and even to the tranquillity of citizens.

I said in the first part of this work: "The unlimited freedom of association cannot be confused with the freedom to write: the first is both less necessary and more dangerous than the second. A nation can set limits on the first without losing control over itself; sometimes it must set limits in order to continue to be in control." And later I added: "You cannot conceal the fact that, of all liberties, the unlimited freedom of association, in political matters, is the last one that a people can bear. If unlimited freedom of association does not make a people fall into anarchy, it puts a people on the brink, so to speak, at every moment."

Thus, I do not believe that a nation is free at all times to allow its citizens the absolute right to associate in political matters; and I even doubt that there is any country in any period in which it would be wise to set no limits to the liberty of association.

A certain people, it is said, cannot maintain peace internally, inspire respect for the laws or establish enduring government, if it does not enclose the right of association within narrow limits. Such benefits are undoubtedly precious, and I conceive that, to acquire or to retain them, a nation agrees temporarily to impose great burdens on itself; but still it is good that the nation knows precisely what these benefits cost it.

That, to save the life of a man, you cut off his arm, I understand; but I do not want you to assure me that he is going to appear as dexterous as if he were not a one-armed man.

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Chapter 8A

*How The Americans Combat Individualism By The Doctrine Of Interest Well Understood*B

[I showed in a preceding chapter how equality of conditions developed among all men the taste for well-being, and directed their minds toward the search for what is useful.

Elsewhere, while talking about individualism, I have just shown how this same equality of conditions broke the artificial bonds that united citizens in aristocratic societies, and led each man to search for what is useful to himself alone.

These various changes in the social constitution and in the tastes of humanity cannot fail to influence singularly the theoretical idea that men form of their duties and their rights.]c

When the world was led by a small number of powerful and rich individuals, the latter loved to form a sublime idea of the duties of man; they took pleasure in professing that it is glorious to forget self and that it is right to do good without interest, just like God. That was the official doctrine of this time in the matter of morality [{moral philosophy}].

I doubt that men were more virtuous in aristocratic centuries than in others, but it is certain that they then talked constantly about the beauties of virtue; they only studied in secret how it was useful. But as imagination soars less and as each person concentrates on himself, moralists become afraid of this idea of sacrifice, and they no longer dare to offer it to the human mind; so they are reduced to trying to find out if the individual advantage of citizens would not be to work toward the happiness of all, and, when they have discovered one of these points where particular interest meets with general interest and merges with it, they hasten to bring it to light; little by little similar observations multiply. What was only an isolated remark becomes a general doctrine, and you believe finally that you see that man, by serving his fellows, serves himself, and that his particular interest is to do good.d

[<But this doctrine is not accepted all at once or by all. Many receive a few parts of it and reject the rest. Some *adopt it at the bottom of their hearts and reject it with disdain* before the eyes of the world.>]e

I have already shown, in several places in this work, how the inhabitants of the United States almost always knew how to combine their own well-being with that of their fellow citizens. What I want to note here is the general theory by the aid of which they succeed in doing so.f

In the United States, you almost never say that virtue is beautiful. You maintain that it is useful, and you prove it every day. American moralists do not claim that you must

sacrifice yourself for your fellows because it is great to do so; but they say boldly that such sacrifices are as necessary to the person who imposes them on himself as to the person who profits from them.g

They have noticed that, in their country and time, man was led back toward himself by an irresistible force and, losing hope of stopping him, they have thought only about guiding him.

So they do not deny that each man may follow his interest, but they strive to prove that the interest of each man is to be honest.

Here I do not want to get into the details of their reasons, which would take me away from my subject; it is enough for me to say that they have persuaded their fellow citizens.

A long time ago, Montaigne said: "When I would not follow the right road because of rectitude, I would follow it because I found by experience that in the end it is usually the happiest and most useful path."h

So the doctrine of interest well understood is not new; but, among the Americans of today, it has been universally admitted; it has become popular; you find it at the bottom of all actions; it pokes through all discussions. You find it no less in the mouths of the poor than in those of the rich.

In Europe the doctrine of interest is much cruder than in America, but at the same time, it is less widespread and above all less evident, and great devotions that are felt no more are still feigned among us every day.

The Americans, in contrast, take pleasure in explaining almost all the actions of their life with the aid of interest well understood; they show with satisfaction how enlightened love of themselves leads them constantly to help each other and disposes them willingly to sacrifice for the good of the State a portion of their time and their wealth. I think that in this they often do not do themselves justice; for you sometimes see in the United States, as elsewhere, citizens give themselves to the disinterested and unconsidered impulses that are natural to man; but the Americans hardly ever admit that they yield to movements of this type; they prefer to honor their philosophy rather than themselves.j

I could stop here and not try to judge what I have just described. The extreme difficulty of the subject would be my excuse. But I do not want to take advantage of it, and I prefer that my readers, clearly seeing my purpose, refuse to follow me rather than remain in suspense.

Interest well understood is a doctrine not very lofty, but clear and sure. It does not try to attain great objectives, but without too much effort it attains all those it targets. Since the doctrine is within reach of all minds, each man grasps it easily and retains it without difficulty. Accommodating itself marvelously to the weaknesses of men, it easily gains great dominion and it is not difficult for it to preserve that dominion,

because the doctrine turns personal interest back against itself and, to direct passions, uses the incentive that excites them.

The doctrine of interest well understood does not produce great devotions; but it suggests small sacrifices every day; by itself, it cannot make a man virtuous, but it forms a multitude of steady, temperate, moderate, farsighted citizens who have self-control; and, if it does not lead directly to virtue by will, it imperceptibly draws closer to virtue by habits.k

If the doctrine of interest well understood came to dominate the moral world entirely, extraordinary virtues would undoubtedly be rarer. But I also think that then the coarsest depravities would be less common. The doctrine of interest well understood perhaps prevents some men from rising very far above the ordinary level of humanity; but a great number of others who fall below encounter the doctrine and cling to it. Consider a few individuals, it lowers them. Envisage the species, it elevates it.

I will not be afraid to say that the doctrine of interest well understood seems to me, of all philosophical theories, the most appropriate to the needs of the men of our time, and that I see in it the most powerful guarantee remaining to them against themselves. So it is principally toward this doctrine that the mind of the moralists of today should turn. Even if they were to judge it as imperfect, it would still have to be adopted as necessary.

I do not believe, everything considered, that there is more egoism among us than in America; the only difference is that there it is enlightened and here it is not. Each American knows how to sacrifice a portion of his particular interests in order to save the rest. We want to keep everything, and often everything escapes us.

I see around me only men who seem to want to teach their contemporaries, every day by their word and their example, that what is useful is never dishonorable. Will I never finally find some men who undertake to make their contemporaries understand how what is honorable can be useful?

There is no power on earth that can prevent the growing equality of conditions from leading the human mind toward the search for what is useful, and from disposing each citizen to become enclosed within himself.

So you must expect individual interest to become more than ever the principal, if not the sole motivating force of the actions of men; but how each man will understand his individual interest remains to be known.

If citizens, while becoming equal, remained ignorant and coarse, it is difficult to predict to what stupid excess their egoism could be led, and you cannot say in advance into what shameful miseries they would plunge themselves, out of fear of sacrificing something of their well-being to the prosperity of their fellows.m

I do not believe that the doctrine of interest, as it is preached in America, is evident in all its parts; but it contains a great number of truths so evident that it is enough to enlighten men in order for them to see them. So enlighten them at all cost, for the

century of blind devotions and instinctive virtues is already fleeing far from us, and I see the time drawing near when liberty, the public peace and the social order itself will not be able to do without enlightenment.n

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Chapter 9A

*How The Americans Apply The Doctrine Of Interest Well Understood In The Matter Of Religion*B

If the doctrine of interest well understood had only this world in view, it would be far from enough; for a great number of sacrifices can find their reward only in the other; and whatever intellectual effort you make to feel the usefulness of virtue, it will always be difficult to make a man live well who does not want to die.

So it is necessary to know if the doctrine of interest well understood can be easily reconciled with religious beliefs.

The philosophers who teach this doctrine say to men that, to be happy in life, you must watch over your passions and carefully repress their excesses; that you cannot gain lasting happiness except by denying yourself a thousand passing enjoyments, and that finally you must triumph over yourself constantly in order to serve yourself better.

The founders of nearly all religions adhered more or less to the same language. Without pointing out another path to men, they only placed the goal further away; instead of placing in this world the prize for the sacrifices that they impose, they put it in the other.c

Nonetheless, I refuse to believe that all those who practice virtue because of the spirit of religion act only with a reward in view.

I have met zealous Christians who constantly forgot themselves in order to work with more fervor for the happiness of all, and I have heard them claim that they acted this way only to merit the good things of the other world; but I cannot prevent myself from thinking that they are deluding themselves. I respect them too much to believe them.

Christianity tells us, it is true, that you must prefer others to self in order to gain heaven; but Christianity also tells us that you must do good to your fellows out of love of God. That is a magnificent expression; man penetrates divine thought with his intelligence, he sees that the purpose of God is order; he associates freely with this great design; and even while sacrificing his particular interests to this admirable order of all things, he expects no other recompense than the pleasure of contemplating it.

So I do not believe that the sole motivating force of religious men is interest; but I think that interest is the principal means that religions themselves use to lead men, and I do not doubt that it is from this side that they take hold of the crowd and become popular.

So I do not see clearly why the doctrine of interest well understood would put off men of religious beliefs, and it seems to me, on the contrary, that I am sorting out how it brings them closer.

[All the actions of the human mind are linked together, and once man is set by his will on a certain path, he then marches there without wanting to, and he feels himself carried along by his own inertia.]

I suppose that, to attain happiness in this world, a man resists instinct in all that he encounters and coldly considers all the actions of his life, that instead of yielding blindly to the heat of his first desires, he has learned the art of combating them, and that he has become accustomed to sacrificing effortlessly the pleasure of the moment to the permanent interest of his entire life.

If such a man has faith in the religion that he professes, it will hardly cost him anything to submit to the inconveniences that it imposes. Reason itself counsels him to do it, and custom prepared him in advance to endure it.

If he has conceived doubts about the object of his hopes, he will not let himself be stopped easily, and he will judge that it is wise to risk a few of the good things of this world in order to maintain his rights to the immense heritage that has been promised to him in the other.

“To be mistaken in believing the Christian religion true,” said Pascal, “there is not much to lose; but what misfortune to be mistaken in believing it false!”d

The Americans do not affect a crude indifference for the other life; they do not assume a puerile pride in scorning the perils that they hope to escape.

So they practice their religion without shame and without weakness; but you ordinarily see, even amid their zeal, something so tranquil, so methodical and so calculated, that it seems that it is the reason much more than the heart that leads them to the steps of the altar.e

Not only do Americans follow their religion by interest, but they often place in this world the interest that you can have in following religion. In the Middle Ages, priests spoke only about the other life: they hardly worried about proving that a sincere Christian can be a happy man here below.

But American preachers come back to earth constantly, and only with great pain can they take their eyes away from it. To touch their listeners better, they show them every day how religious beliefs favor liberty and public order, and it is often difficult to know, hearing them, if the principal object of religion is to gain eternal felicity in the other world or well-being in this one.

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Chapter 10A

*Of The Taste For Material Well-Being In America*B

In America, the passion for material well-being is not always exclusive, but it is general; if everyone does not experience it in the same way, everyone feels it. The concern to satisfy the slightest needs of the body and to provide for the smallest conveniences of life preoccupies minds universally.

Something similar is seen more and more in Europe.

Among the causes that produce these similar effects in two worlds, several are close to my subject, and I must point them out.

When wealth is fixed in the same families by inheritance, you see a great number of men who enjoy material well-being, without feeling the exclusive taste for well-being.

What most strongly holds the human heart is not the peaceful possession of a precious object but the imperfectly satisfied desire to possess it and the constant fear of losing it.

In aristocratic societies the rich, never knowing a state different from their own, do not fear its changing; they scarcely imagine another one. So for them material well-being is not the goal of life; it is a way of living. They consider it, in a way, like existence, and enjoy it without thinking about it.

Since the natural and instinctive taste that all men feel for well-being is thus satisfied without difficulty and without fear, their soul proceeds elsewhere and attaches itself to some more difficult and greater enterprise that animates it and carries it away.

In this way, in the very midst of material enjoyments, the members of an aristocracy often demonstrate a proud scorn for these very enjoyments and find singular strength when they must finally do without them. All the revolutions that have disturbed or destroyed aristocracies have shown with what ease men accustomed to superfluity were able to do without necessities, while men who have laboriously attained comfort are hardly ever able to live after losing it.c

If, from the upper ranks, I pass to the lower classes, I will see analogous effects produced by different causes.

Among nations where aristocracy dominates society and keeps it immobile, the people end by becoming accustomed to poverty as the rich are to their opulence. The latter are not preoccupied by material well-being, because they possess it without difficulty; the former do not think about material well-being, because they despair of gaining it and do not know it well enough to desire it.d

In these sorts of societies the imagination of the poor is pushed toward the other world; the miseries of real life cramp their imagination; but it escapes those miseries and goes to find its enjoyments beyond.

When, on the contrary, ranks are mingled and privileges destroyed, when patrimonies divide and enlightenment and liberty spread, the desire to gain well-being occurs to the imagination of the poor, and the fear of losing it to the mind of the rich.e A multitude of mediocre fortunes is established. Those who possess them have enough material enjoyments to conceive the taste for these enjoyments, and not enough to be content with them. They never obtain these enjoyments except with effort and devote themselves to them only with trepidation.

So they are constantly attached to pursuing or to retaining these enjoyments so precious, so incomplete and so fleeting. [Preoccupied by this sole concern, they often forget all the rest.

It is not the wealth, but the work that you devote to obtaining it for yourself that encloses the human heart within the taste for well-being.]f

I seek a passion that is natural to men who are excited and limited by the obscurity of their origin or the mediocrity of their fortune, and I find none more appropriate than the taste for well-being. The passion for well-being is essentially a passion of the middle class; it grows and spreads with this class; it becomes preponderant with it. From there it gains the upper ranks of society and descends to the people.

I did not meet, in America, a citizen so poor who did not cast a look of hope and envy on the enjoyments of the rich, and whose imagination did not grasp in advance the good things that fate stubbornly refused him.

On the other hand, I never saw among the rich of the United States this superb disdain for material well-being that is sometimes shown even within the heart of the most opulent and most dissolute aristocracies.

Most of these rich have been poor; they have felt the sting of need; they have long fought against a hostile fortune, and now that victory is won, the passions that accompanied the struggle survive it; they remain as if intoxicated amid these small enjoyments that they have pursued for forty years.

It is not that in the United States, as elsewhere, you do not find a fairly large number of rich men who, holding their property by inheritance, possess without effort an opulence that they have not gained. But even these do not appear less attached to the enjoyments of material life. The love of well-being has become the national and dominant taste. The great current of human passions leads in this direction, it sweeps everything along in its wake.g

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Chapter 11A

*Of The Particular Effects Produced By The Love Of Material Enjoyments In Democratic Centuries*B

You could believe, from what precedes, that the love of material enjoyments must constantly lead the Americans toward disorder in morals, disturb families and in the end compromise the fate of society itself.

But this is not so; the passion for material enjoyments produces within democracies other effects than among aristocratic peoples.

It sometimes happens that weariness with public affairs, the excess of wealth, the ruin of beliefs, the decadence of the State, little by little turn the heart of an aristocracy toward material enjoyments alone. At other times, the power [v. tyranny] of the prince or the weakness of the people, without robbing the nobles of their fortune, forces them to withdraw from power, and by closing the path to great undertakings to them, abandons them to the restlessness of their desires; they then fall heavily back onto themselves, and they seek in the enjoyments of the body to forget their past grandeur.

When the members of an aristocratic body turn exclusively in this way toward material enjoyments, they usually gather at this point alone all the energy that the long habit of power gave them.

To such men the pursuit of well-being is not enough; they require a sumptuous depravity and a dazzling corruption. They worship the material magnificently and seem to vie with one another in their desire to excel in the art of making themselves into brutes.

The more an aristocracy has been strong, glorious and free, the more it will appear depraved, and whatever the splendor of its virtues had been, I dare to predict it will always be surpassed by the brilliance of its vices.c

The taste for material enjoyments does not lead democratic peoples to such excesses.d There the love of well-being shows itself to be a tenacious, exclusive, universal passion, but contained. It is not a question of building vast palaces, of vanquishing or of deceiving nature, of exhausting the universe, in order to satisfy better the passions of a man; it is a matter of adding a few feet to his fields, of planting an orchard, of enlarging a house, of making life easier and more comfortable each moment, of avoiding discomfort and satisfying the slightest needs effortlessly and almost without cost. These goals are small, but the soul becomes attached to them; it thinks about them every day and very closely; these goals finish by hiding from the soul the rest of the world, and they sometimes come to stand between the soul and God.

This, you will say, cannot be applied except to those among the citizens whose fortune is mediocre; the rich will show tastes analogous to those that the rich reveal in aristocratic centuries. That I dispute.e

Concerning material enjoyments, the most opulent citizens of a democracy will not show tastes very different from those of the people, whether, because having emerged from the people, they really share their tastes, or whether they believe they must submit to them. In democratic societies, the sensuality of the public has taken on a certain moderate and tranquil appearance, to which all souls are obliged to conform. It is as difficult to escape the common rule in its vices as in its virtues.

So the rich who live amid democratic nations aim for the satisfaction of their slightest needs rather than for extraordinary enjoyments; they satisfy a multitude of small desires and do not give themselves to any great disordered passion. They fall therefore into softness rather than debauchery.

This particular taste that the men of democratic centuries conceive for material enjoyments is not naturally opposed to order; on the contrary, it often needs order to satisfy itself. Nor is it the enemy of regularity of morals; for good morals are useful to public tranquillity and favor industry. Often it even comes to be combined with a sort of religious morality; you want to be as well-off as possible in this world, without renouncing your chances in the other.

Among material goods, there are some whose possession is criminal; you take care to do without them. There are others whose use is allowed by religion and morality; to the latter you give unreservedly your heart, your imagination, your life, and by trying hard to grasp them, you lose sight of these more precious goods that make the glory and the grandeur of the human species.

What I reproach equality for is not carrying men toward the pursuit of forbidden enjoyments; it is for absorbing them entirely in the pursuit of permitted enjoyments.

In this way there could well be established in the world a kind of honest materialism that would not corrupt souls, but would soften them and end by silently relaxing all their springs of action.

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Chapter 12A

*Why Certain Americans Exhibit So Excited A Spiritualism*B

Although the desire to acquire the goods of this world is the dominant passion of the Americans, there are moments of respite when their soul seems suddenly to break the material bonds that hold it and to escape impetuously toward heaven.c

In all of the states of the Union, but principally in the half-populated regions of the West, you sometimes meet itinerant preachers who peddle the divine word from place to place.

Entire families, old people, women and children cross difficult places and go through uninhabited woods in order to come from far away to hear them; and when these people have found the preachers, for several days and several nights, while listening to them, they forget their concern for public and private affairs and even the most pressing needs of the body.

[<≠America is assuredly the country in the world in which the sentiment of individual power has the most sway. But several religious sects have been founded in the United States that, despairing of moderating the taste for material enjoyments, have gone as far as destroying the incentive of property by establishing community of goods within them.≠>]d

You find here and there, within American society, some souls totally filled with an excited and almost fierce spiritualism that you hardly find in Europe. From time to time bizarre sects arise there that try hard to open extraordinary paths to eternal happiness. Religious madness is very common there.

This must not surprise us.

Man has not given himself the taste for the infinite and the love of what is immortal. These sublime instincts do not arise from a caprice of the will; they have their unchanging foundation in his nature; they exist despite his efforts. He can hinder and deform them, but not destroy them.

The soul has needs that must be satisfied; and whatever care you take to distract it from itself, it soon grows bored, restless and agitated amid the enjoyments of the senses.e

If the spirit of the great majority of humanity ever concentrated solely on the pursuit of material goods, you can expect that a prodigious reaction would take place in the souls of some men. The latter would throw themselves frantically into the world of spirits, for fear of remaining hampered in the overly narrow constraints that the body wanted to impose on them.

So you should not be astonished if, within a society that thinks only about the earth, you would find a small number of individuals who wanted to look only to heaven. I would be surprised if, among a people solely preoccupied by its well-being, mysticism did not soon make progress.f

It is said that the persecutions of the emperors and the tortures of the circus populated the deserts of the Thebaid; as for me, I think that it was much more the delights of Rome and the Epicurean philosophy of Greece.g

If the social state, circumstances and laws did not so narrowly confine the American spirit to the pursuit of well-being, it is to be believed that when the American spirit came to occupy itself with non-material things, it would show more reserve and more experience, and that it would control itself without difficulty. But it feels imprisoned within the limits beyond which it seems it is not allowed to go. As soon as it crosses those limits, it does not know where to settle down, and it often runs without stopping beyond the bounds of common sense.h

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Chapter 13A

Why The Americans Appear So Restless Amid Their Well-Being

You still sometimes find, in certain remote districts of the Old World, small populations that have been as if forgotten amid the universal tumult and that have remained unchanged when everything around them moved. Most of these peoples are very ignorant and very wretched; they are not involved in governmental affairs and often governments oppress them. But they usually show a serene face, and they often exhibit a cheerful mood.

I saw in America the most free and most enlightened men placed in the happiest condition in the world; it seemed to me that a kind of cloud habitually covered their features; they appeared to me grave and almost sad, even in their pleasures.b

The principal reason for this is that the first do not think about the evils that they endure, while the others think constantly about the goods that they do not have.c

It is a strange thing to see with what kind of feverish ardor the Americans pursue well-being, and how they appear tormented constantly by a vague fear of not having chosen the shortest road that can lead to it.d

The inhabitant of the United States is attached to the goods of this world, as if he was assured of not dying, and he hastens so much to seize those goods that pass within his reach, that you would say that at every instant he is afraid of ceasing to live before enjoying them. He seizes all of them, but without gripping them, and he soon lets them escape from his hands in order to run after new enjoyments.e

A man, in the United States, carefully builds a house in which to spend his old age, and he sells it while the ridgepole is being set; he plants a garden and he rents it as he is about to taste its fruits; he clears a field, and he leaves to others the trouble of gathering the harvest. He embraces a profession, and he leaves it. He settles in a place that he soon leaves in order to carry his changing desires elsewhere. If his private affairs give him some respite, he immediately plunges into the whirl of politics. And when, near the end of a year filled with work, he still has a little leisure, he takes his restless curiosity here and there across the vast limits of the United States. He will do as much as five hundred leagues in a few days in order to distract himself better from his happiness.

Death finally intervenes and stops him before he has grown weary of this useless pursuit of a complete felicity that always escapes.

You are at first astounded contemplating this singular agitation exhibited by so many happy men, in the very midst of abundance. This spectacle is, however, as old as the world; what is new is to see it presented by an entire people.

The taste for material enjoyments must be considered as the primary source of this secret restlessness that is revealed in the actions of Americans, and of this inconstancy that they daily exemplify.

The man who has confined his heart solely to the pursuit of the goods of this world is always in a hurry, for he has only a limited time to find them, to take hold of them and to enjoy them. The memory of the brevity of life goads him constantly. Apart from the goods that he possesses, at every instant he imagines a thousand others that death will prevent him from tasting if he does not hurry. This thought fills him with uneasiness, fears, and regrets, and keeps his soul in a kind of constant trepidation that leads him to change plans and places at every moment.

If the taste for material well being is joined with a social state in which neither law nor custom any longer holds anyone in his place, it is one more great excitement to this restlessness of spirit; you will then see men continually change path, for fear of missing the shortest road that is to lead them to happiness.

It is easy to understand, moreover, that if the men who passionately seek material enjoyments do desire strongly, they must be easily discouraged; since the final goal is to enjoy, the means to get there must be quick and easy, otherwise the difficulty of obtaining the enjoyment would surpass the enjoyment. So most souls are at the same time ardent and soft, violent and enervated. Often death is less feared than constant efforts toward the same goal.

Equality leads by a still more direct road toward several of the effects that I have just described.

When all the prerogatives of birth and fortune are destroyed, when all the professions are open to everyone, and when you can reach the summit of each one of them on your own, an immense and easy career seems to open before the ambition of men, and they readily imagine that they are called to great destinies.f But that is an erroneous view that experience corrects every day. The same equality that allows each citizen to conceive vast hopes makes all citizens individually weak. It limits their strengths on all sides, at the same time that it allows their desires to expand.

Not only are they powerless by themselves, but also they find at each step immense obstacles that they had not at first noticed.

They destroyed the annoying privileges of a few of their fellows; they encounter the competition of all. The boundary marker has changed form rather than place. When men are more or less similar and follow the same road, it is very difficult for any one of them to march quickly and cut through the uniform crowd that surrounds and crushes him.

This constant opposition that reigns between the instincts given birth by equality and the means that equality provides to satisfy them torments and fatigues souls.g

You can imagine men having arrived at a certain degree of liberty that satisfies them entirely. They then enjoy their independence without restlessness and without fervor. But men will never establish an equality that is enough for them.

Whatever efforts a people may make, it will not succeed in making conditions perfectly equal within it; and if it had the misfortune to arrive at this absolute and complete leveling, there would still be inequality of intelligence that, coming directly from God, will always escape the laws.

No matter how democratic the social state and political constitution of a people, you can therefore count on each of its citizens always seeing near himself several points that are above him, and you can predict that he will obstinately turn his attention solely in their direction. When inequality is the common law of a society, the greatest inequalities do not strike the eye. When all is nearly level, the least inequalities offend it. This is why the desire for equality always becomes more insatiable as equality is greater.h

Among democratic peoples, men easily gain a certain equality; they cannot attain the equality they desire. The latter retreats from them every day, but without ever hiding from their view, and by withdrawing, it draws them in pursuit. They constantly believe that they are about to grasp it, and it constantly escapes their grip. They see it close enough to know its charms, they do not come close enough to enjoy it, and they die before having fully savored its sweet pleasures.

It is to these causes that you must attribute the singular melancholy that the inhabitants of democratic countries often reveal amid their abundance, and this disgust for life that sometimes comes to seize them in the middle of a comfortable and tranquil existence.

Some complain in France that the number of suicides is growing; in America suicide is rare, but we are assured that insanity is more common than anywhere else.

These are different symptoms of the same disease.

Americans do not kill themselves, however agitated they are, because religion forbids them to so do, and because among them materialism does not so to speak exist, although the passion for material well-being is general.

Their will resists, but often their reason gives way.j

In democratic times enjoyments are more intense than in aristocratic centuries, and above all the number of those who sample them is infinitely greater; but on the other hand, it must be recognized that hopes and desires are more often disappointed there, souls more excited and more restless, and anxieties more burning.k

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Chapter 14A

How The Taste For Material Enjoyments Is United, Among The Americans, With The Love Of Liberty And Concern For Public Affairs

When a democratic Stateb turns to absolute monarchy, the activity that was brought previously to public and private affairs comes suddenly to be concentrated on the latter, and a great material prosperity results for some time; but soon the movement slows and the development of production stops.c

I do not know if you can cite a single manufacturing and commercial people, from the Tyrians to the Florentines and to the English, who have not been a free people. So there is a close bond and a necessary connection between these two things: liberty and industry.

That is generally true of all nations, but especially of democratic nations.

I showed above how men who live in centuries of equality had a continual need for association in order to obtain nearly all the goods they covet, and on the other hand, I showed how great political liberty perfected and spread widely within their midst the art of association. So liberty, in these centuries, is particularly useful for the production of wealth. You can see, on the contrary, that despotism is particularly the enemy of the production of wealth.

The nature of absolute power, in democratic centuries, is neither cruel nor savage, but it is minutely detailed and irksome. A despotism of this type, although it does not trample humanity underfoot, is directly opposed to the genius of commerce and to the instincts of industry.

Thus the men of democratic times need to be free, in order to obtain more easily the material enjoyments for which they are constantly yearning.

It sometimes happens, however, that the excessive taste that they conceive for these very enjoyments delivers them to the first master who presents himself. The passion for well-being then turns against itself and, without noticing, drives away the object of its desires.

There is, in fact, a very perilous transition in the life of democratic peoples.

When the taste for material enjoyments develops among one of these peoples more rapidly than enlightenment and the habits of liberty, there comes a moment when men are carried away, as if beyond themselves, by the sight of these new goods that they are ready to grasp. Preoccupied by the sole concern to make a fortune, they no longer notice the close bond that unites the particular fortune of each one of them to the

prosperity of all. There is no need to take away from such citizens the rights that they possess; they willingly allow them to escape. The exercise of their political rights seems to them a tiresome inconvenience that distracts them from their industry. Whether it is a matter of choosing their representatives, coming to the assistance of the authorities, dealing together with common affairs, they lack the time; they cannot waste such precious time on useless works. Those are games for idle men that are not suitable for grave men who are busy with the serious interests of life. The latter believe that they are following the doctrine of interest, but they have only a crude idea of it, and in order to see better to what they call their affairs, they neglect the principal one which is to remain their own masters.

Since the citizens who work do not want to think about public matters, and since the class that could fill its leisure hours by shouldering these concerns no longer exists, the place of the government is as though empty.

If, at this critical moment, a clever man of ambition comes to take hold of power, he finds that the path to all usurpations is open [<and he will have no difficulty turning against liberty the very passions developed or given birth by liberty>].

As long as he sees for a while that all material interests prosper, he will easily be discharged from the rest. Let him, above all, guarantee good order. Men who have a passion for material enjoyments usually find how the agitations of liberty disturb well-being, before noticing how liberty serves to gain it; and at the slightest noise of public passions that penetrates into the petty enjoyments of their private life, they wake up and become anxious; for a long time the fear of anarchy keeps them constantly in suspense and always ready to jump away from liberty at the first disorder.

I agree without difficulty that public peace is a great good, but I do not want to forget that it is through good order that all peoples have arrived at tyranny. It assuredly does not follow that peoples should scorn public peace; but it must not be enough for them. A nation that asks of its government only the maintenance of order is already a slave at the bottom of its heart. The nation is a slave of its well-being, and the man who is to put it in chains can appear.

The despotism of factions is to be feared no less than that of one man.

When the mass of citizens wants only to concern itself with private affairs, the smallest parties do not have to despair of becoming masters of public affairs.

It is then not rare to see on the world's vast stage, as in our theaters, a multitude represented by a few men. The latter speak alone in the name of the absent or inattentive crowd; alone they take action amid the universal immobility; they dispose of everything according to their caprice; they change laws and tyrannize mores at will; and you are astonished to see into what a small number of weak and unworthy hands a great people can fall.

Until now, the Americans have happily avoided all the pitfalls that I have just pointed out; and in that they truly merit our admiration.

There is perhaps no country on earth where you find fewer men of leisure than in America, and where all those who work are more inflamed in the pursuit of well-being. But if the passion of the Americans for material enjoyments is violent, at least it is not blind, and reason, powerless to moderate it, directs it.

An American is busy with his private interests as if he were alone in the world, and a moment later, he devotes himself to public matters as if he had forgotten his private interests. He seems sometimes animated by the most egotistical cupidity and sometimes by the most intense patriotism. The human heart cannot be divided in this manner. The inhabitants of the United States bear witness alternately to such a strong and so similar a passion for their well-being and for their liberty that it is to be believed that these passions unite and blend some place in their soul. The Americans, in fact, see in their liberty the best instrument and the greatest guarantee of their well-being. They love both of these two things. So they do not think that getting involved in public matters is not their business; they believe, on the contrary, that their principal business is to secure by themselves a government that allows them to acquire the goods that they desire, and that does not forbid them to enjoy in peace those they have acquired.

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Chapter 15A

*How From Time To Time Religious Beliefs Divert The Soul Of The Americans Toward Non-Material Enjoyments*B

[≠However animated the Americans are in the pursuit of well-being, there are moments when they stop and turn away for a moment to think about God and about the other life. ≠]

In the United States, when the seventh day of each week arrives, commercial and industrial life seems suspended; all noise ceases. A profound rest, or rather a kind of solemn recollection follows; the soul, finally, regains self-possession and contemplates itself.

During this day, the places consecrated to commerce and industry are deserted; each citizen, surrounded by his children, goes to church; there strange discourses are held forth that do not seem much made for his ears. He hears about the innumerable evils caused by pride and covetousness. He is told about the necessity to control his desires, about the fine enjoyments attached to virtue alone, and about the true happiness that accompanies it.

Back at home, you do not see him run to his business ledgers. He opens the book of the Holy Scriptures; there he finds sublime or touching portrayals of the grandeur and the goodness of the Creator, of the infinite magnificence of the works of God, of the elevated destiny reserved formen, of their duties and their rights to immortality.

This is how, from time to time, the American escapes in a way from himself, and how, tearing himself away for a moment from the petty passions that agitate his life and from the transitory interests that fill it, he enters suddenly into an ideal world where everything is great, pure, eternal.

[So I am constantly led to the same subjects by different roads; and I discover more and more the close bond that unites the two parts of my subject.]

In another place in this work, I looked for the causes to which the maintenance of political institutions in America had to be attributed, and religion seemed to me one of the principal ones. Today, when I am concerned with individuals, I find religion again and notice that it is no less useful to each citizen than to the whole State.

The Americans show, by their practice, that they feel the entire necessity of moralizing democracy by religion. What they think in this regard about themselves is a truth that must penetrate every democratic nation.

I do not doubt that the social and political constitution of a people disposes them to certain beliefs and to certain tastes in which they easily abound afterward; while these

same causes turn them away from certain opinions and certain tendencies without their working at it themselves, and so to speak without their suspecting it.

All the art of the legislator consists in clearly discerning in advance these natural inclinations of human societies, in order to know where the effort of the citizens must be aided, and where it would instead be necessary to slow it down. For these obligations differ according to the times. Only the end toward which humanity must always head is unchanging; the means to reach that end constantly vary.

[≠There are vices or erroneous opinions that can only be established among a people by struggling against the general current of society. These are not to be feared; they must be considered as unfortunate accidents. But there are others that, having a natural rapport with the very constitution of the people, develop by themselves and effortlessly among the people. Those, however small they may be at their beginning and however rare they seem, deserve to attract the great care of the legislator. ≠]c

If I were born in an aristocratic century, amid a nation in which the hereditary wealth of some and the irremediable poverty of others diverted men from the idea of the better and, as well, held souls as if benumbed in the contemplation of another world, I would want it to be possible for me to stimulate among such a people the sentiment of needs; I would think about finding more rapid and easier means to satisfy the new desires that I would have brought about, and, diverting the greatest efforts of the human mind toward physical study, I would try to excite the human mind in the pursuit of well-being.d

If it happened that some men caught fire thoughtlessly in the pursuit of wealth and exhibited an excessive love for material enjoyments, I would not become alarmed; these particular traits would soon disappear in the common physiognomy.

Legislators of democracies have other concerns.

Give democratic peoples enlightenment and liberty and leave them alone. They will easily succeed in drawing from this world all the [material] goods that it can offer; they will perfect each one of the useful arts and daily make life more comfortable, easier, sweeter; their social state pushes them naturally in this direction. I am not afraid that they will stop.

But while man takes pleasure in this honest and legitimate pursuit of well-being, it is to be feared that in the end he may lose the use of his most sublime faculties, and that by wanting to improve everything around him, he may in the end degrade himself. The danger is there and nowhere else.

So legislators in democracies and all honest and enlightened men who live in democracies must apply themselves without respite to lifting up souls and keeping them pointed toward heaven. It is necessary that all those who are interested in the future of democratic societies unite, and that all in concert make continual efforts to spread within these societies the taste for the infinite, the sentiment for the grand and the love for non-material pleasures.

If among the opinions of a democratic people there exist a few of these harmful theories that tend to make you believe that everything perishes with the body, consider the men who profess them as the natural enemies of the people.

There are many things that offend me in the materialists. Their doctrines seem pernicious to me, and their pride revolts me. If their system could be of some use to man, it seems that it would be in giving him a modest idea of himself. But they do not show that this is so; and when they believe that they have sufficiently established that men are only brutes, they appear as proud as if they had demonstrated that men were gods.e

Materialism is, among all nations, a dangerous sickness of the human mind; but it must be particularly feared among a democratic people, because it combines marvelously with the vice of the heart most familiar to these people.

Democracy favors the taste for material enjoyments. This taste, if it becomes excessive, soon disposes men to believe that everything is only matter; and materialism, in turn, finally carries them with an insane fervor toward these same enjoyments. Such is the fatal circle into which democratic nations are pushed. It is good that they see the danger and restrain themselves.

Most religions are only general, simple and practical means to teach men the immortality of the soul. That is the greatest advantage that a democratic people draws from belief, and what makes these beliefs more necessary for such a people than for all others.

So when no matter which religion has put down deep roots within a democracy, be careful about weakening it; but instead protect it carefully as the most precious heritage of aristocratic centuries;f do not try to tear men away from their ancient religious opinions in order to substitute new ones, for fear that, during the transition from one faith to another, when the soul finds itself for one moment devoid of beliefs, love of material enjoyments comes to spread and fill the soul entirely.

[I do not believe that all religions are equally true and equally good, but I think that there is none so false or so bad that it would not still be advantageous for a democratic people to profess.]

Assuredly, metempsychosis is not more reasonable than materialism; but if it were absolutely necessary for a democracy to make a choice between the two, I would not hesitate, and I would judge that its citizens risk becoming brutalized less by thinking that their soul is going to pass into the body of a pig than by believing that it is nothing.g

The belief in a non-material and immortal principle, united for a time to matter, is so necessary for the grandeur of man, that it still produces beautiful effects even when you do not join the opinion of rewards and punishments with it and when you limit yourself to believing that after death the divine principle contained in man is absorbed in God or goes to animate another creature.h

Even the latter consider the body as the secondary and inferior portion of our nature; and they scorn it even when they undergo its influence; while they have a natural esteem and secret admiration for the non-material part of man, even though they sometimes refuse to submit themselves to its dominion. This is enough to give a certain elevated turn to their ideas and their tastes, and to make them tend without interest, and as if on their own, toward pure sentiments and great thoughts.

It is not certain that Socrates and his school had well-fixed opinions on what must happen to man in the other life; but the sole belief on which they were settled, that the soul has nothing in common with the body and survives it, was enough to give to platonic philosophy the sort of sublime impulse that distinguishes it.

When you read Plato, you notice that in the times prior to him and in his time, many writers existed who advocated materialism. These writers have not survived to our time or have survived only very incompletely. It has been so in nearly all the centuries; most of the great literary reputations are joined with spiritualism. The instinct and the taste of humanity uphold this doctrine; they often save this doctrine despite the men themselves and make the names of those who are attached to it linger on. So it must not be believed that in any time, and in whatever political state, the passion for material enjoyments and the opinions that are linked with it will be able to suffice for an entire people.[j] The heart of man is more vast than you suppose; it can at the same time enclose the taste for the good things of the earth and the love of the good things of heaven; sometimes the heart seems to give itself madly to one of the two; but it never goes for a long time without thinking of the other.[k]

If it is easy to see that, particularly in times of democracy, it is important to make spiritual opinions reign, it is not easy to say what those who govern democratic peoples must do for those opinions to reign.

I do not believe in the prosperity any more than in the duration of official philosophies, and as for State religions, I have always thought that if sometimes they could temporarily serve the interests of political power, they always sooner or later become fatal to the Church.

Nor am I one of those who judge that in order to raise religion in the eyes of the people, and to honor the spiritualism that religion professes, it is good to grant indirectly to its ministers a political influence that the law refuses to them.

[I would even prefer that you gave the clergy a definite power than to allow them to hold an irregular and hidden power. For, in the first case, you at least see clearly the political circle in which priests can act; while in the other, there are no limits at which the imagination of the people must stop, or public misfortunes for which the people will not be tempted to blame the priests.][m]

I feel so convinced of the nearly inevitable dangers that beliefs run when their interpreters mingle in public affairs, and I am so persuaded that Christianity must at all cost be maintained within the new democracies, that I would prefer to chain priests within the sanctuary than to allow them out of it.

So what means remain for authority to lead men back toward spiritualistic opinions or keep them in the religion that suggests these opinions?

What I am going to say is going to do me harm in the eyes of politicians. I believe that the only effective means that governments can use to honor the dogma of the immortality of the soul is to act each day as if they believed it themselves; and I think that it is only by conforming scrupulously to religious morality in great affairs that they can claim to teach citizens to know, love and respect religious morality in little affairs.n

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Chapter 16A

*How The Excessive Love Of Well-Being Can Harm Well-Being*B

There is more of a connection than you think between the perfection of the soul and the improvement of the goods of the body; man can leave these two things distinct and alternately envisage each one of them; but he cannot separate them entirely without finally losing sight of both of them.

Animals have the same senses that we have and more or less the same desires: there are no material passions that we do not have in common with them and whose germ is not found in a dog as well as in ourselves.

So why do the animals only know how to provide for their first and most crude needs, while we infinitely vary our enjoyments and increase them constantly?

What makes us superior in this to animals is that we use our soul to find the material goods toward which their instinct alone leads them. With man, the angel teaches the brute the art of satisfying himself. Man is capable of rising above the goods of the body and even of scorning life, an idea animals do not even conceive; he therefore knows how to multiply these very advantages to a degree that they also cannot imagine.

Everything that elevates, enlarges, expands the soul, makes it more capable of succeeding at even those enterprises that do not concern it.

Everything that enervates the soul, on the contrary, or lowers it, weakens it for all things, the principal ones as well as the least ones, and threatens to make it almost as powerless for the first as for the second. Thus, the soul must remain great and strong, if only to be able, from time to time, to put its strength and its greatness at the service of the body.

If men ever succeed in being content with material goods, it is to be believed that they would little by little lose the art of producing them, and that they would end by enjoying them without discernment and without progress, like the animals.

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Chapter 17A

*How, In Times Of Equality And Doubt, It Is Important To Push Back The Goal Of Human Actions*B

In centuries of faith, the final aim of life is placed after life.

So men of those times, naturally and so to speak without wanting to, become accustomed to contemplating over a long period of years an unchanging goal toward which they march constantly, and they learn, by taking imperceptible steps forward, to repress a thousand small passing desires, the better to arrive at the satisfaction of this great and permanent desire that torments them. When the same men want to concern themselves with earthly things, these habits recur. They readily set for their actions here below a general and certain goal, toward which all their efforts are directed. You do not see them give themselves each day to new attempts; but they have settled plans that they do not grow weary of pursuing.

This explains why religious peoplesc have often accomplished such enduring things. By concerning themselves with the other world, they found the great secret of succeeding in this one.

Religions give the general habit of behaving with the future in view. In this they are no less useful to happiness in this life than to felicity in the other. It is one of their great political dimensions.

But, as the light of faith grows dim, the view of men narrows; and you would say that each day the goal of human actions appears closer to them.

Once they become accustomed to no longer being concerned about what must come after their life, you see them fall easily back into that complete and brutal indifference about the future that is only too suited to certain instincts of the human species. As soon as they have lost the custom of putting their principal hopes in the long run, they are naturally led to wanting to realize their slightest desires without delay, and it seems that, from the moment they lose hope of living eternally, they are disposed to act as if they had only a single day to exist.

In the centuries of unbelief, it is therefore always to be feared that men will constantly give themselves to the daily whims of their desires and that, renouncing entirely what cannot be acquired without long efforts, they will establish nothing great, peaceful and lasting.

If it happens that, among a people so disposed, the social state becomes democratic, the danger that I am pointing out increases.

[<In aristocracies, the fixity of conditions and the immobility of the social body direct the human mind toward the idea of the future and hold it there.>]

When each man seeks constantly to change place, when an immense competition is open to all, when wealth accumulates and disappears in a few moments amid the tumult of democracy, the idea of a sudden and easy fortune, of great possessions easily gained and lost, the image of chance in all its forms occurs to the human mind. The instability of the social state comes to favor the natural instability of desires. In the middle of these perpetual fluctuations of fate, the present grows; it hides the future that fades away, and men want to think only about the next day.

In these countries where by an unhappy coincidence irreligion and democracy meet, philosophers and those governing must apply themselves constantly to pushing back the goal of human actions in the eyes of men; that is their great concern.

While enclosing himself within the spirit of his century and his country, the moralist must learn to defend himself. May he try hard each day to show his contemporaries how, even amid the perpetual movement that surrounds them, it is easier than they suppose to conceive and to carry out long-term enterprises. May he make them see that, even though humanity has changed appearance, the methods by which men can obtain the prosperity of this world have remained the same, and that, among democratic peoples, as elsewhere, it is only by resisting a thousand small particular everyday desires that you can end up satisfying the general passion for happiness that torments.

The task of those who govern is not less marked out.

At all times it is important that those who govern nations conduct themselves with a view toward the future. But that is still more necessary in democratic and unbelieving centuries than in all others. By acting in this way, the leaders of democracies not only make public affairs prosper, but by their example they also teach individuals the art of conducting private affairs.

Above all they must try hard to banish chance, as much as possible, from the political world.

The sudden and unmerited elevation of a courtier produces only a passing impression in an aristocratic country, because the ensemble of institutions and beliefs usually forces men to move slowly along paths that they cannot leave.

But nothing is more pernicious than such examples offered to the view of a democratic people. Such examples end by hurrying the heart of a democratic people down a slope along which everything is dragging it. So it is principally in times of skepticism and equality that you must carefully avoid having the favor of the people, or that of the prince, granted or denied by chance, take the place of knowledge and services. It is to be hoped that every advance there appears to be the fruit of effort, so that there is no overly easy greatness, and that ambition is forced to set its sights on the goal for a long time before achieving it.

Governments must apply themselves to giving back to men this taste for the future that is no longer inspired by religion and the social state; and without saying so, they must teach citizens every day in a practical way that wealth, fame, and power are the rewards of work; that great successes are found at the end of long desires, and that nothing lasting is gained except what is acquired with pain.

When men become accustomed to foreseeing from a great distance what must happen to them here below, and to finding nourishment in hopes, it becomes difficult for them always to stop their thinking at the precise limits of life, and they are very close to going beyond those limits in order to cast their sight farther.

So I do not doubt that by making citizens accustomed to thinking about the future in this world, you lead them closer little by little, and without their knowing it, to religious beliefs.

Thus, the means that, to a certain point, allows men to do without religion, is perhaps, after all, the only one that remains to us for leading humanity back by a long detour toward faith.

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Chapter 18A

*Why, Among The Americans, All Honest Professions Are Considered Honorable*B

Among democratic peoples, where there is no hereditary wealth, each man works in order to live, or has worked, or is born from people who have worked. So the idea of work, as the necessary, natural and honest condition of humanity, presents itself on all sides to the human mind.

Not only is work not held in dishonor among these peoples, it is honored; prejudice is not against work, it is for it. In the United States, a rich man believes that he owes to public opinion the consecration of his leisure to some industrial or commercial operation or to some public duties. He would consider himself of bad reputation if he used his life only for living. It is to avoid this obligation to work that so many rich Americans come to Europe; there, they find the remnants of aristocratic societies among which idleness is still honored.

Equality not only rehabilitates the idea of work, it boosts the idea of work that gains a profit.

In aristocracies, it is not precisely work that is scorned, it is work for profit. Work is glorious when ambition or virtue alone brings it about. Under aristocracy, however, it constantly happens that the man who works for honor is not insensitive to the allure of gain. But those two desires meet only in the depths of his soul. He takes great care to hide from all eyes the place where they come together. He willingly hides it from himself. In aristocratic countries, there are hardly any public officials who do not pretend to serve the State without interest. Their salary is a detail that they sometimes think little about and that they always pretend not to think about at all.

Thus, the idea of gain remains distinct from that of work. In vain are they joined in point of fact; the past separates them.

In democratic societies, these two ideas are, on the contrary, always visibly united. Since the desire for well-being is universal, since fortunes are mediocre and temporary, since each man needs to increase his resources or to prepare new ones for his children, everyone sees very clearly that gain is, if not wholly, at least partially what leads them to work. Even those who act principally with glory in view get inevitably accustomed to the idea that they are not acting solely for this reason, and they discover, whatever they may say, that the desire to live combines in them with the desire to make their life illustrious.

From the moment when, on the one hand, work seems to all citizens an honorable necessity of the human condition, and when, on the other hand, work is always visibly done, in whole or in part, out of consideration for a salary, the immense space that

separated the different professions in aristocratic societies disappears. If the professions are not always similar, they at least have a similar feature.

There is no profession in which work is not done for money. The salary, which is common to all, gives all a family resemblance.

This serves to explain the opinions that the Americans entertain concerning the various professions.

American servants do not believe themselves degraded because they work; for around them, everyone works. They do not feel debased by the idea that they receive a salary; for the President of the United States also works for a salary. He is paid to command, just as they are paid to serve.

In the United States, professions are more or less difficult, more or less lucrative, but they are never noble or base. Every honest profession is honorable.

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Chapter 19A

What Makes Nearly All Americans Tend Toward Industrial Professions

I do not know if, of all the useful arts, agriculture is not the one that improves most slowly among democratic nations. Often you would even say that it is stationary, because several of the other useful arts seem to race ahead.

On the contrary, nearly all the tastes and habits that arise from equality lead men naturally toward commerce and industry.b

I picture an active, enlightened, free man, comfortably well-off, full of desires. He is too poor to be able to live in idleness; he is rich enough to feel above the immediate fear of need, and he thinks about bettering his lot. This man has conceived the taste for material enjoyments; a thousand others abandon themselves to this taste before his eyes; he has begun to give himself to it, and he burns to increase the means to satisfy it more. But life passes, time presses. What is he going to do?

For his efforts, cultivation of the earth promises nearly certain, but slow results. In that way you become rich only little by little and with difficulty. Agriculture is suitable only for the rich who already have a great excess, or for the poor who ask only to live. His choice is made: he sells his field, leaves his home and goes to devote himself to some risky, but lucrative profession.c

Now, democratic societies abound in men of this type; and as equality of conditions becomes greater, their number increases.

So democracy not only multiplies the number of workers; it leads men to one work rather than another; and, while it gives them a distaste for agriculture, it directs them toward commerce and industry.1

This spirit reveals itself among the richest citizens themselves.

In democratic countries, a man, however wealthy he is assumed to be, is almost always discontent with his fortune, because he finds himself not as rich as his father and is afraid that his sons will not be as rich as he. So most of the rich in democracies constantly dream about the means to acquire wealth, and they naturally turn their sights toward commerce and industry, which seem to them the quickest and most powerful means to gain it. On this point they share the instincts of the poor man without having his needs, or rather they are pushed by the most imperious of all needs: that of not declining.d

In aristocracies, the rich are at the same time those who govern. The attention that they give constantly to great public affairs diverts them from the small concerns that

commerce and industry demand. If the will of one of them is nonetheless directed by chance toward trade, the will of the aristocratic corps immediately bars the route to him; for it is useless to resist the dominion of numbers, you never completely escape its yoke; and, even within those aristocratic corps that refuse most stubbornly to acknowledge the rights of the national majority, there is a particular majority that governs.2

In democratic countries, where money does not lead the one who has it to power, but often keeps him away from it, the rich do not know what to do with their leisure.e Restlessness and the greatness of their desires, the extent of their resources, the taste for the extraordinary, which are almost always felt by those who stand, in whatever way, above the crowd, presses them to action. Only the road to commerce is open to them. In democracies, there is nothing greater or more brilliant than commerce; that is what attracts the attention of the public and fills the imagination of the crowd; all energetic passions are directed toward commerce. Nothing can prevent the rich from devoting themselves to it, neither their own prejudices, nor those of anyone else. The rich of democracies never form a corps that has its own mores and its own organization; the particular ideas of their class do not stop them, and the general ideas of their country push them. Since, moreover, the great fortunes that are seen within a democratic people almost always have a commercial origin, several generations must pass before those who possess those fortunes have entirely lost the habits of trade.f

Confined to the narrow space that politics leaves to them, the rich of democracies therefore throw themselves from all directions into commerce; there they can expand and use their natural advantages; and it is, in a way, by the very boldness and by the grandeur of their industrial enterprises that you must judge what little value they would have set on industry if they had been born within an aristocracy.

The same remark, moreover, is applicable to all the men of democracies, whether they are poor or rich.

Those who live amid democratic instability have constantly before their eyes the image of chance, and they end by loving all enterprises in which chance plays a role.

So they are all led toward commerce, not only because of the gain that it promises, but by love of the emotions that it gives.

The United States of America has only emerged for a half-century from the colonial dependence in which England held it; the number of great fortunes is very small there, and capital is still rare. But there is no people on earth who has made as rapid progress as the Americans in commerce and industry. They form today the second maritime nation of the world; and, although their manufacturing has to struggle against almost insurmountable natural obstacles, it does not fail to make new gains every day.

In the United States the greatest industrial enterprises are executed without difficulty, because the entire population is involved in industry, and because the poorest as well as the wealthiest citizen readily combine their efforts. So it is astonishing every day to see the immense works that are executed without difficulty by a nation that does not

so to speak contain rich men. The Americans arrived only yesterday on the land that they inhabit, and they have already overturned the whole natural order to their profit. They have united the Hudson with the Mississippi and connected the Atlantic Ocean with the Gulf of Mexico, across more than five hundred leagues of the continent that separates these two seas. The longest railroads that have been constructed until now are in America.

But what strikes me most in the United States is not the extraordinary greatness of some industrial enterprises, it is the innumerable multitude of small enterprises.

Nearly all the farmers of the United States have combined some commerce with agriculture; most have made agriculture into a trade.

It is rare for an American farmer to settle forever on the land that he occupies. In the new provinces of the West principally, you clear a field in order to resell it and not to harvest it; you build a farm with the expectation that, since the state of the country is soon going to change due to the increase of inhabitants, you will be able to get a good price.

Every year, a swarm of inhabitants from the North descends toward the South and comes to live in the countries where cotton and sugar cane grow. These men cultivate the earth with the goal of making it produce in a few years what it takes to make them rich, and they already foresee the moment when they will be able to return to their country to enjoy the comfort gained in this way. So the Americans bring to agriculture the spirit of trade, and their industrial passions are seen there as elsewhere.

The Americans make immense progress in industry, because they are all involved in industry at the same time; and for the same reason, they are subject to very unexpected and very formidable industrial crises.

Since they are all engaged in commerce, commerce among them is subject to such numerous and so complicated influences that it is impossible to foresee in advance the difficulties that can arise. Since each one of them is more or less involved in industry, at the slightest shock that business experiences, all particular fortunes totter at the same time, and the State falters.g

I believe that the recurrence of industrial crises is an illness endemic among the democratic nations of our day.h It can be made less dangerous, but cannot be cured, because it is not due to an accident, but to the very temperament of these peoples.j

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Chapter 20A

*How Aristocracy Could Emerge From Industry*B

I showed how democracy favored the development of industry and immeasurably multiplied the number of industrialists; we are going to see in what roundabout way industry in turn could well lead men toward aristocracy.

It has been recognized that when a worker is occupied every day only with the same detail, the general production of the work is achieved more easily, more rapidly and more economically.

It has been recognized as well that the more an industry was undertaken on a large scale, with great capital and large credit, the less expensive its products were.c

These truths have been seen dimly for a long time, but they have been demonstrated in our time. They are already applied to several very important industries, and the smallest industries are successively making use of them.

I see nothing in the political world that should occupy the legislator more than these two new axioms of industrial science.

When an artisan devotes himself constantly and solely to the fabrication of a single object, he ends by acquitting himself of this work with a singular dexterity. But he loses, at the same time, the general ability to apply his mind to directing the work. Each day he becomes more skillful and less industrious, and you can say that in him the man becomes degraded as the worker improves.

What should you expect from a man who has used twenty years of his life making pinheads? And in his case, to what in the future can the powerful human intelligence, which has often stirred the world, be applied, if not to searching for the best way to make pinheads!

When a worker has in this way consumed a considerable portion of his existence, his thought has stopped forever near the daily object of his labor; his body has contracted certain fixed habits that he is no longer allowed to give up. In a word, he no longer belongs to himself, but to the profession that he chose. Laws and mores have in vain taken care to break down all the barriers around this man and to open for him in all directions a thousand different roads toward fortune; an industrial theory more powerful than mores and laws has bound him to an occupation and often to a place in society that he cannot leave. Amid the universal movement, it has made him immobile.

As the principle of the division of labor is more completely applied, the worker becomes weaker, more limited, and more dependent. The art makes progress, the artisan goes backward. On the other hand, as it becomes clearer that the larger the

scale of manufacturing and the greater the capital, the more perfect and the less expensive the products of an industry are, very rich and very enlightened men arise to exploit industries that, until then, have been left to ignorant and poor artisans. The greatness of the necessary efforts and the immensity of the results to achieve attract them.

Thus, at the same time that industrial science constantly lowers the class of workers, it raises the class of masters.

While the worker applies his intelligence more and more to the study of a single detail, the master casts his sight every day over a broader whole, and his mind expands in proportion as that of the worker contracts. Soon nothing will be needed by the worker except physical strength without intelligence; the master needs knowledge, and almost genius to succeed. The one more and more resembles the administrator of a vast empire, and the other a brute.

So the master and the worker are not in any way similar here, and every day they differ more. They are no longer held together except as the two end links of a long chain. Each one occupies a place made for him and does not leave it. The one is in a continual, narrow and necessary dependence on the other, and seems born to obey, as the latter to command.

What is this, if not aristocracy?d

As conditions become more and more equal in the body of the nation, the need for manufactured objects becomes more general and increases, and an inexpensive price that puts these objects within reach of mediocre fortunes becomes a greater element of success.

So every day more opulent and more enlightened men are found who devote their wealth and their knowledge to industry and who seek, by opening great workshops and strictly dividing labor, to satisfy the new desires that appear on all sides.

Thus, as the mass of the nation turns to democracy, the particular class that is concerned with industry becomes more aristocratic. Men show themselves more and more similar in the nation and more and more different in the particular class, and inequality increases in the small society in proportion as it decreases in the large one.

In this way, when you go back to the source, it seems that you see aristocracy come by a natural effort from the very heart of democracy.

But that aristocracy does not resemble the aristocracies that preceded it.

You will notice first that, applying only to industry and to a few of the industrial professions, it is an exception, a monstrosity, within the whole of the social state.

The small aristocratic societies formed by certain industries amid the immense democracy of our time include, like the great aristocratic societies of former times, a few very opulent men and a multitude of very miserable ones.

These poor have few means to emerge from their condition and to become rich, but the rich constantly become poor, or leave trade after having realized their profits. Thus, the elements that form the class of the poor are more or less fixed; but the elements that compose the class of the rich are not. Truly speaking, although there are rich men, the class of the rich does not exist; for these rich men have neither spirit nor aims in common, nor shared traditions or shared hopes. So there are members, but not a corps.

Not only are the rich not united solidly with each other, but you can say that there is no true bond between the poor and the rich.

They are not fixed in perpetuity next to each other; at every moment interest draws them closer and separates them. The worker depends in general on the master, but not on a particular master. These two men see each other at the factory and do not know each other elsewhere, and while they touch at one point, they remain very far apart at all others. The manufacturer asks the worker only for his work, and the worker expects from him only a salary. The one does not commit himself to protecting, nor the other to defending, and they are not linked in a permanent way, either by habit or by duty.

The aristocracy established by trade hardly ever settles amid the industrial population that it directs; its goal is not to govern the latter, but to make use of it.

An aristocracy thus constituted cannot have a great hold on those it employs; and if it manages to seize them for a moment, they soon escape. It does not know what it wants and cannot act.

The territorial aristocracy of past centuries was obligated by law, or believed itself obligated by mores, to come to the aid of those who served it and to relieve their miseries. But the manufacturing aristocracy of today, after impoverishing and brutalizing the men it uses, delivers them in times of crisis to public charity to be fed. This results naturally from what precedes. Between the worker and the master, contacts are frequent, but there is no true association.

I think that, everything considered, the manufacturing aristocracy that we see arising before our eyes is one of the harshest that has appeared on the earth; but at the same time it is one of the most limited and least dangerous.

Nonetheless, it is in this direction that the friends of democracy must with anxiety constantly turn their attention; for if permanent inequality of conditions and aristocracy ever penetrate the world again, you can predict that they will come in through this door.

[a.] Introduction to the third volume./

Ideas about the plan of this volume./

Perhaps most of the things contained in this bundle will be useful for the large final chapter in which I intend to summarize the subject./

Influence of democracy. *Ter* [three (ed.)]:

I. Ideas
II. Sentiments. This relates only to man in isolation.
III. Customs. They include the relationships of men with one another.

What is American or English without being democratic.

Great difficulty in disentangling what is *democratic, commercial, English* and *Puritan.*

To explain in the foreword.

My principal subject is not *America,* but the *influence of democracy on America.* As a result, the only one of the four causes set forth above that I must dwell upon seriously and at length is the *democratic.* Perhaps not because it is the principal one (what I believe, moreover), but because it is the one that is most important for me to show. I must speak about the others only: 1. To interest the class of readers who want above all to know America, 2. To make myself clearly understood, 3. To show that I am not exclusive and entirely given to a single idea.

[In the margin: I see all the other causes, but I am only looking at the democratic.]

If, among these various causes, I always choose by preference to deal with the democratic cause, let me not therefore be accused of an exclusive mind.

I do not believe it necessary to treat the *commercial, English* and *Puritan* causes separately. I only think that I must show in the course of the book that I know and appreciate them.

To speak about the four causes only in the preface and only there give them their respective places.

Important idea.

After finishing, look carefully at the places where I could point out how the things produced by democracy help democracy in turn and indirectly.

[On the following page] Perhaps in the large final chapter.

Idea of democratic liberty and idea of religion.

[b.] Several notes and fragments indicate that Tocqueville had considered writing along preface that contained a good number of ideas present in the fourth and last part of the book (it constituted a single chapter in the first drafts). Did the sheer size of the last chapter lead him to sacrifice the preface? This preface was reduced to a foreword, and certain ideas of the introduction (including the admission of his error concerning the weakening of the federal bond) did not finally find their place in the first pages of this volume.

Some notes of rough drafts that present a version of the foreword very similar to the final version bear the date 5 February 1838. In the following months, however, Tocqueville did not stop coming back to the idea of writing a long introduction to the second volume and hesitated about whether to place certain fragments at the beginning or at the end of the book.

“One of the principal ideas of the preface must be, it seems to me, to show in brief all the dissimilarities that exist between the American democracy and ours. Democracy pushing men further in certain directions in America than it does among us (sciences, arts), in certain others pushing them not as far (religion, good morals)” (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 48).

Note relative to the preface of my great work.

It must be shown how recent events justify most of the things that I said.

Indians.

Texas.

Negroes.

The necessity of having troops in the cities.

Ultra-democratic tendencies.

Admit my error. The weakening of the federal bond (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 39).

[*] In civil society as in political society, these two points of departure explain nearly everything. And I must come back to that in a general way, either at the beginning or at the end of the third volume (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 39–41).

[c.] First paragraphs of the book in a rough draft:

The work which appears at this moment (illegible word) the public is not an entirely new work. It is the second and last part of a book that I published five years ago on democracy in the United States.

When there are no more castes, distinct features, particular and exclusive rights, permanent riches, entailed estates, citizens differ little from each other by their conditions, and they constantly change conditions; they naturally adopt certain laws, and contract certain habits of government that are appropriate to them.

This same equality and these same causes influence not only their political ideas and habits, but also all their habits and all their ideas. The men who live in this democratic social state conceive new opinions; they adopt new mores; they establish relationships among themselves that did not exist or modify those that already existed.

The appearance of civil society is not less changed than the physiognomy of the political world.

[To the side, with a bracket that includes the two previous paragraphs: Louis would say that only about the Americans.]

≠The object of the book that I published five years ago was to show the first effects of equality; this one wants to depict the second. The two parts united form a single whole. ≠

It is this second portion of the subject that I wanted to treat in the present book.

I am assuredly very far from claiming to have seen everything on so vast a ground. I am even certain that I have discovered only a small part of what it includes.

The Revolution that reduced to dust the aristocratic society in which our fathers lived is the great event of the time. It has changed everything, modified everything, altered everything. [v: hit everything].

[In the margin, with a bracket that includes the two previous paragraphs] Todelete, I think (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 35–36).

[d.] "The first book more American than democratic. This one more democratic than American" (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 53).

[e.] In Preface, I believe.

Explain somewhere what I understand by centuries of equality [v: democratic centuries]. It is not that chimerical time when all men will be perfectly similar and equal, but those:

> 1. When a great number among them will be in (two illegible words) and when a greater number will fall either above or below, but not far from the common measure.
> 2. Those when there will be no more permanent classification, caste, class, any insurmountable barrier or even one very difficult to surmount, so that if all men are not equal, they can all aspire to the same point; some being able (illegible word) to fear falling, others to hope to rise, so that a common measure makes itself (illegible word) against which all men measure themselves in advance, which spreads the sentiment of equality even within unequal conditions.
> —22 June 1838 (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 45–46).

In another place, he explains:

Two close but distinct propositions:

> 1. I cannot show all that equality does and will do.

2. I do not claim to link everything to equality, but only to show where equality acts (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 53).

“Idea of the preface or of the last chapter./

“That democracy is not the cause of everything, but that it mixes with everything, and has a part in all the causes” (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 42).

[f.] Principal object. Somewhere.

I want to make *everyone* understand that a democratic social state is an invincible necessity in our time.

Dividing then my readers into enemies and friends of democracy, I want to make the first understand that for a democratic social state to be tolerable, for it to be able to produce order, progress, in a word, to avoid all the evils that they anticipate, at least the greatest ones, they must at all costs hasten to give *enlightenment* and *liberty* to the people who already have such a social state.

To the second, I want to make them understand that democracy cannot give the happy fruits that they expect from it except by combining it with morality, spiritualism, beliefs . . .

I thus try to unite all honest and generous minds within a small number of common ideas.

As for the question of knowing if such a social state is or is not the best that humanity can have, may God himself say so. Only God can say (YTC, CVk, 2, pp. 55–56).

[g.] “I am profoundly persuaded that you can succeed in making democratic peoples into prosperous, free, powerful, moral and happy nations. So I do not despair of the future, but I think that peoples, like men, in order to make the most of their destiny, need to know themselves, and that to master events, it is above all necessary to master yourself ” (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 33).

“Idea of bringing democracy to moderate itself.

Idea of the book” (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 39).

[h.] In a first version of this paragraph, Tocqueville added: “<Far from wanting to stop the development of the new society, I am trying to produce it>” (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 44).

[j.] “This in the preface. “I am often obliged to repeat myself because I want to divide what is indivisible, the soul. The same soul constantly produces an idea and a sentiment. Place there the already completed piece in which I compare the soul to a milieu whose ideas and sentiments are like beams . . .” (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 30).

[k.] “Not only do I not claim to have seen everything in my subject, but I am certain I have seen only a very small part. The democratic revolution is the great event of our days, it spreads to everything, it modifies or changes everything. There is nothing that cannot or perhaps should not be dealt with while speaking about it. I have said all that I have seen clearly, leaving to those more skillful or to men enlightened by a longer experience to portray the rest” (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 47).

[m.] Ideas of the preface or of the last chapter:

In order to make myself well understood I have constantly been obliged to depict extreme states, an aristocracy without a mixture of democracy, a democracy without a mixture of aristocracy, a perfect equality which is an imaginary state. Then I come to attribute to one or the other of the two principles more complete effects than those that they generally produce because, in general, they are not alone. In my words, the reader must distinguish what my true opinion is, from what is said in order to make it well understood (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 51).

To say in the preface, if not in the book.

Idea of races.

I do not believe that there are races destined for liberty and others for servitude, some for happiness and enlightenment, others for misfortunes and ignorance. These are cowardly doctrines.

Doctrines, however. Why? That is due to the natural vice of the human mind in democratic times [and of the heart that makes these peoples tend toward materialism. This idea of the invisible influence of race is an essentially materialistic idea], apart from the weakening of beliefs.

That the generative idea of this book is directly the opposite, since I begin invincibly at this point that whatever the tendencies of the social state, men can always modify them and ward off the bad tendencies while appropriating the good (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 37).

[a.] The rough drafts indicate that in the beginning the first chapter included a large portion of the ideas that now constitute the following chapters: the taste for generalideas, general ideas in politics and certain considerations from chapter V on religion. Chapters VI and VII are not in the summary of chapters copied in notebook CVf, which suggests that they were included when the work of writing was already well advanced.

Concerning the other chapters of the first part, a note mentions:

A chapter IV was found here in which I explained at length the influence that the philosophical method of the Americans exercised on the relationships of father and children, of master and servant, on women, the customs of societies.

This spoiled the subject and treated it incompletely, for all these things have a particular character under democracy not only because of the philosophical doctrine given birth by equality, but also for a thousand other causes that cannot, consequently, be treated here.

I believe however that for the mind of the reader, tired by the long theory that precedes, to rest in applications, I would do [well (ed.)] in a very short chapter to point out how in fact the philosophical method of the Americans can *influence* (not cause) all these things (YTC, CVj, I, pp. 91–92).

In a letter to Beaumont of 14 June 1836 (*Correspondance avec Beaumont, OC,* VIII, 1, p. 160), Tocqueville announced his intention to finish the first part before his departure for Switzerland in mid-July, which allows us reasonably to date the first version of this part to the summer of 1836. It is in November 1838, when he begins the revision of his manuscript, that Tocqueville, in another letter to Beaumont (*ibid.,* pp. 325–26) alludes to the confusion of the first two chapters and the necessity to review them. In the following letter (*ibid.,* p. 328), he says he has thrown the first one hundred pages of the manuscript into the fire and entirely rewritten them. Another letter of the same month to Francisque de Corcelle confirms these statements (*Correspondance avec Corcelle, OC,* XV, 1, p. 105).

[a.] "While rereading and recasting my manuscript, do, after each chapter, a small outline of what it contains; a kind of *assets* and *liabilities* of democracy; that will marvelously facilitate for me the final tableau, which it is immensely important to do well" (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 11–12).

Notebook F of the manuscript collection of Yale reproduces short summaries of each chapter. The first page bears the date April 1840. Here is the summary of this chapter:

> 1. That the Americans show by their actions that they have a philosophical method, even though they have neither philosophical school nor philosophical doctrine strictly speaking.
> 2. That this method consists principally of drawing your opinions only from within yourself, as Descartes indicates.
> 3. That it is principally from their social state that they have drawn this method and that it is the same cause that has made it adopted in Europe.
> 4. That the Americans have not made so great a use of this method as the French: 1. Because they got from their origin a more fixed religion. 2. Because they are not and have never been in revolution. 3. As a result of a still more general and powerful cause that I am going to develop in the following chapter and that in the long run must limit, among all democratic peoples, the intellectual independence given birth by equality (YTC, CVf, pp. 1–2).

The first draft of this chapter (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 42–82) contains some ideas that afterward will acquire sufficient importance to constitute independent chapters(chapters 2 to 8). Tocqueville clearly hesitated a great deal about the content

of the first chapter, finding himself inclined to speak about individualism before everything else.

“Perhaps,” Tocqueville noted again in a rough draft, “begin the whole book with the chapters on individualism and the taste for material enjoyments. Nearly everything flows from there in ideas as well as in sentiments” (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 12).

It is probably on the advice of Kergorlay, who spent the autumn of 1838 at the Tocqueville château at the very time when the author worked on the revision of the first version of his manuscript, and who found the first two chapters remarkably well written, that Tocqueville changed his mind.

In another place:

Of all the chapters that precede the IXth where I am now (December 1838), there is not a single one in which I have not felt the need to assume that the reader knew either what leads democratic peoples to *individualism,* or what leads them to the *taste for material enjoyments.* The experience of these eight chapters tends to prove that the two chapters on *individualism* and material enjoyments should precede the others.

L[ouis (ed.)]. thinks that whatever logical interest there might be in beginning with the two chapters above, I must persevere in placing the chapter on method at the beginning. That, he says, opens the subject very grandly and makes it immediately seen from a very elevated perspective (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 11).

Chapter 9 in the manuscript is now number 11, entitled: in what spirit the americans cultivate the arts.

Another note, probably prior, suggested: “Perhaps do a chapter on the influence of democracy on the moral sciences. I do not believe that the first chapter of the book corresponds to that” (YTC, CVa, p. 45).

[*] In the beginning, the organization of the first chapters probably must have appeared as follows: (1) A long chapter on philosophical method, including a certain number of ideas that were later moved or that formed independent chapters, like the one on pantheism, which now bears number 7. (2) The origin of beliefs among democratic peoples.(3) A chapter on religion. (4) The influence of philosophical method on the relations of the father with his children, of the master with his servants, on woman and on habits. (5) The taste for general ideas. (6) Science and the arts.

[b.] Chap. 1.

This first chapter treats a very abstract matter. Extreme efforts must be made to make it clear and perceptible, otherwise the reader would be discouraged.

In this chapter there are two ideas that I take up and leave alternately in a way that is fatiguing for the mind, it is that of an *independent method* and of the *inclination and aptitude for general ideas.*

Either these two ideas must be intimately linked with each other, or they must be separated entirely and treated individually.

Perhaps explain in a few words the meaning of the expressions: general ideas, generalization, method (YTC, CVj, 1, p. 42).

The jacket that contains the manuscript of the chapter bears this note: " ≠There is no society without common ideas and no common ideas if on each point each person is abandoned to the solitary and individual effort of his reason. ≠"

[c.] In the rough drafts and first versions: ". . . from the maxims of State" (YTC, CVj, 1, p. 21; another version, p. 43).

[d.] In the margin, in pencil: "{And religion, Ampère?}"

Jean-Jacques Ampère, writer and historian with eclectic tastes, son of the famous physicist. Tocqueville met him in 1835 in the salon of Madame Récamier, with whom Ampère was in love for fifteen years. We know little about the beginning of the friendship between Tocqueville and Ampère, but we know that the author of the *Democracy* read several chapters of this volume to him and asked for his advice on several occasions. From 1841, the Tocqueville château sheltered in one of its towers a *room of Ampère,* always ready to receive him. Indefatigable traveler, Ampère ended several of his long journeys by a visit to the Tocquevilles.

Upon the death of the author, Ampère published a touching article on "his best friend": "Alexis de Tocqueville," *Correspondant,* 47, 1859, pp. 312–35. The correspondence of Tocqueville with Ampère has been published in volume XI of *Œuvres complètes.*

[e.] "Although Descartes professes a great scorn for the crowd, his method is based on the idea of the equality of minds, for if I must rely on myself why would you not do the same?

"Protestantism itself already announced that society had become very democratic" (YTC, CVj, 1, p. 13).

"Descartes, the greatest democrat" (YTC, CVj, 1, p. 53).

A letter from Kergorlay dated 27 June 1834 (*Correspondance avec Kergorlay, OC,* XIII, 1, pp. 384–89) suggests that the two friends had had the project of reading together the *Discours de la méthode.* It contains the first impressions of Kergorlay on reading this work.

[f.] In the margin: "<Perhaps transfer here several of the things that I say in the chapter on *revolutions*. Here the foundations are found, they must be well secured before building.>"

[g.] "A democratic people, society, time does not mean a people, society, time in which all men are equal, but a people, society, time in which there are no more castes,

fixed classes, privileges, particular and exclusive rights, permanent riches, properties fixed in the hands of families, in which all men can constantly rise or descend and mingle together in all ways.

"When I mean it in the political sense, I say *democracy.*

"When I want to speak about the effects of equality, I say *equality"* (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 50–51).

[h.] In the margin: "<They escape the rule of their own habits, for they change them constantly.>"

[k.] In the margin of a first version belonging to the rough drafts: "The Protestant religion (perhaps religions should only be touched as little as possible for fear of burning my fingers)" (YTC, CVj, 1, p. 45).

[m.] I suppose that knowing the language that our fathers spoke, I do not know their history. I open the books of the (three illegible words) of the XVIth century. I understand that there one preaches to men that each one of them has the right and the ability to choose the particular road that should lead to heaven. I am assured that half of the nations of Europe have adopted this new doctrine. That is enough. I do not need to be taught that a great political revolution has preceded and accompanied the religious revolution whose history is provided for me.

[v: That is enough. I already know without anyone telling me that in a nation in which intellectual equality is thus professed and accepted, a very great inequality in conditions cannot exist and that whatever the external appearances of political society may still be, men have already come very close to a common level]" (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 13–14).

[n.] Fragment on a separate sheet of the manuscript:

Read the preliminary portion of the *Novum Organum* entitled *subject and plan,* p. 263 and following, and compare the manner in which Bacon explains his method concerning the physical senses to the manner in which Descartes, more or less at the same time, conceived and explained his method concerning the moral sciences, and you will be astonished to see to what degree the two methods are identical and how these new truths occur in the same way to these two minds.

This is obviously not the result of chance, but indicates a general direction of the human mind in this period. Bacon and Descartes, like all great revolutionaries, made ideas that were already spread in all minds *clear and systematic.*/

They gave the general formula applicable to all the particular truths that each person began to find at hand everywhere./

Bacon, 1561–1626.

The *Novum Organum* (instrument) was published in 1620./

"Our method," says Bacon (p. 264), "submits to examination what ordinary logic adopts on the faith of others and by deferring blindly to authority. [. . . (ed.) . . .] Instead of rushing, so to speak, as is commonly done, toward the most elevated principles and the most general propositions in order then to deduce middle propositions, it begins on the contrary with natural history and particular facts and climbs only imperceptibly and with an extreme slowness up the ascending ladder, to entirely general propositions and to principles of the first order./

"The seat of human understanding," he says below, "must be rid of all received opinions and methods, then the mind must be turned in an appropriate way toward the facts that must enlighten it; finally, when it is sufficiently prepared, these facts must be presented to it."/

Obviously not only is a new scientific method introduced there, but also a great revolution of the human mind is begun or rather *legalized, theorized.*

From the moment when observation, the detailed and analytical observation of facts, is the condition of all scientific progress, there is no longer a means to have anything other than individual and formed beliefs in scientific matters. Received or dogmatic beliefs are chased from that entire portion of the human mind.

Tocqueville takes this quotation from the preface of Bacon's work which is entitled: "Spirit, Subject, Purpose, and Plan of the Work."

[o.] The manuscript says:

If I put aside the opinions of the French philosophers of the XVIIIth century and their actions, which must be considered as fortuitous accidents caused by the particular state of their country, in order to envisage only the fundamental principles that constituted their method, I discover that the same rules that directed their minds lead that of the Americans today. I see that in the period when they wrote the old aristocratic society among us was finally dissolving; this makes me see clearly that the philosophical method of the XVIIIth century is not only French but democratic, and that is why it was so easily adopted in all of Europe and why it contributed so powerfully to changing the face of Europe. I do not claim that this method could only arise in democratic centuries, but I am saying that men who live during these centuries are particularly disposed by their social state to find and to accept this method, and that it is only during that time that it can become usual and popular.

If someone asks me why, today . . .

In a rough draft, the author specified:

The first use that the French philosophers made of their liberty was to attack all religions with a kind of fury and particularly the Christian religion. I believe that this must be considered as a pure accident, a fact particular to France, the result of extraordinary circumstances that might never have been found and that already to a great extent no longer exist.

I am persuaded that the revolutionary influence (two illegible words) France is due much less [to (ed.)] its very ideas than to the philosophical method that provided them. It is not because they shook Christianity in their country, changed their laws, modified their mores that they turned Europe upside down. It is because they were the first to point out to the human mind a new method by the aid of which you could easily attack all things old and open the way to all things new.

And if someone asks me why foreign peoples so readily conformed to the new method that the French brought to light, I will answer that like the French, although to a lesser degree, they were naturally disposed by their social state to adopt it (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 54–56).

The same idea appears at the beginning of his "Social and Political State of France Before and Since 1789" (*OC,* II, 1, p. 34).

[p.] "Descartes was Catholic by his beliefs and Protestant by his method" (YTC, CVj, 1, p. 32).

[q.] "It is not Luther, Bacon, Descartes, Voltaire that must be blamed. They only gave form or application; the substance emerged from the state of the world in their time" (*Rubish,* 1).

[r.] All the peoples of Europe were born in centuries when the ardor of religious passions reigned, but American society was established especially in order to satisfy these very passions. It was created in order to obey rules prescribed by a positive belief and it is a direct product of faith. The influence of this premier fact grows weaker each day; it is still powerful; and if the Americans are dogmatic in the matter of religion that is not because their social state is democratic, but because their origin is Puritan.

Although philosophy and religion are two distinct things, there nevertheless exists between them a very close link that makes them in some way depend on each other. When the human mind has indeed stopped within the fixed limits of a religious belief, philosophy merges so to speak with religion or at least it becomes as exclusive and nearly as stable as religion itself. When on the contrary religious beliefs are shaken, philosophical systems proliferate.

The Americans do not concern themselves with proving by metaphysical reasons the existence of God and the immortality of the soul, they do not try to mark out the rules of human morality, and do not claim to discover the common principle that should govern the actions of man. They believe in the authenticity of a book in which God himself, addressing immortal creatures, took care to set down with his powerful hand the limit of good and evil.

[In the margin: This is very good and merits being kept; perhaps it should be placed where I show how aristocracy immobilizes the mind.]

(three illegible words) the greatest of the philosophical questions that have divided the world for six thousand years seem hardly to preoccupy the mind of the Americans.

This results from yet another cause than the one indicated above.

Although philosophical systems can in the long run exercise a powerful influence on the destinies of the human species, they seem to have only a very indirect connection with the fate of each man in particular; it follows that it can excite only a secondary interest in the latter. So men never feel carried toward philosophical studies by an actual and pressing need, they devote themselves to them for pleasure or in order to fill the leisure that the principal affairs of life leave to them. Now in {small} democratic countries generally and in particular in the United States, where so many various raw materials are offered to human activity, few men are found who can be concerned with philosophy, and the latter, should they be found, would lack a public that would be interested in their work and would encourage their efforts.

When a man incessantly pursues well-being or wealth, leads ships to the antipodes of the earth, cuts down forests each day, fills in swamps, transforms the wilderness, he willingly leaves to another the trouble of discovering the limits of free will and of trying to find out the origin of evil.

Of all the branches of human study, philosophy will be, if I am not mistaken, the one that will suffer most from the establishment of democracy. If men, whose social state and habits are democratic, wanted to occupy themselves with philosophy, I do not doubt that they would bring to this matter the boldness and freedom of mind that they display elsewhere. But it can be believed that rarely will they want to be concerned with it.

It is right moreover to distinguish two things with care.

A nation can have a philosophy of its own and have no philosophical system *strictly* speaking. When each of the men who compose a people proves individually by his actions that they all have a certain uniform way of envisaging human affairs, you can say that the people in general have a philosophy even though no one has yet taken on the task of reducing these common notions to a body of knowledge, of specifying these general ideas spread throughout the crowd and of linking them methodically together in a logical order.

When you study the life of the Americans you discover without difficulty that the greater part of all their principal actions are naturally linked to a certain small number of theoretical philosophical opinions to which each man indistinctly conforms his conduct.

Do you know why the inhabitant of the United States (illegible word) does not undertake to control the private conduct of his servants and scarcely reserves the right to counsel his children?

Do you understand why he (illegible word) lavishly (two illegible words) of himself . . .

[In the margin: *Examples* drawn from the American theory of the *equality of men,* of the *doctrine of interest.* Each one for himself.

I know that there is a multitude of American actions that have their driving power in these two doctrines, but they do not come back to me at this moment.

End in this way:

So the Americans have a [v: their] philosophy even though they do not have philosophers, and if they do not preach their doctrines in writings, they at least teach them by their actions.

Perfectibility. Nothing draws visible limits to man.

Another very fruitful principle for the Americans.

All philosophical doctrines that can have a close connection to human actions are very fixed in America. Purely theoretical opinions are intermingled with religious doctrines strictly speaking.]

The fact is that the Americans have allowed the Christian religion to direct the small actions of life, and they have adopted [v: have created for themselves] a democratic philosophy for most of the large ones (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 63–69).

[s.] I am firmly persuaded that if you sincerely applied to the search for the true religion the philosophical method of the XVIIIth century, you would without difficulty discover the truth of the dogmas taught by Jesus Christ, and I think that you would arrive at Christianity by reason as well as by faith. So I am not astonished to see in the Americans sincere Christians, but at first glance, I am surprised by the manner in which they become so. Within Christianity the American mind is deployed with an entirely democratic independence, but it is very rare for it to dare to go beyond these limits that it does not seem to have imposed on itself (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 59– 60).

[t.] General revolt against all authority. Attempt to appeal to individual reason in all things. General and salient character of the philosophy of the XVIIIth century, character essentially democratic.

But much more so when conditions are becoming equal than when conditions are equal. An intellectual anarchy that is revolutionary and not democratic. We see on this point more disorder than we will ever see.

The XVIIIth century exalted the individual (illegible word). It was revolution, not democracy.

Skepticism is found at the beginning of democratic centuries rather than in these centuries.

The philosophy of the XVIIIth century was revolutionary rather than democratic. Try to find out what was revolutionary in it and what was democratic (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 11–12).

[u.] In the manuscript, you find here these two fragments:

two good fragments that will perhaps be necessary to put to use.

[In the margin: To join to the chapter on method./

This piece would have been excellent in the chapter on *method* if before showing why democratic peoples have an independent individual reason, I had shown why aristocratic peoples do not have it. *To see.*]

In the Middle Ages it was believed that all opinions had to follow from authority. Philosophy, this natural antagonist of authority, had itself, in those times, taken the form of authority; it had taken on the characteristics of a religion. After creating certain opinions by the free and individual force of some minds, it imposed these opinions without discussion and by repressing the force that had given birth to it (see what Aristotle was in the Middle Ages and until the beginning of the XVIIth century when the *Parlement* of Paris forbid under penalty of death either to uphold or to teach any maxim against ancient and approved authors.)

In the XVIIIth century the extreme of the opposite state was reached, that is to say that people claimed to appeal for all things only to individual reason and to chase dogmatic beliefs away entirely, and just as in the Middle Ages the form and the appearance of a religion was given to philosophies, in the XVIIIth century the form and the appearance of philosophy was given to religions.

Today the movement still continues in minds of a second order, but the others understand and accept that received beliefs and discovered beliefs, authority and liberty, individualism and social force are needed at the very same time. The whole question is to decide the limits of these two things.

My whole mind must be bent to that.

24 April 1837.

The other fragment says:

There is no society possible without social conventions, that is to say without a simultaneous agreement of the majority of citizens on certain beliefs, ideas or certain customs that you accept once in order to follow them forever.

There are conventions of this type in democracies as elsewhere, but at the same time that the social state and mores become more democratic, the number of these conventions becomes less. Agreement is reached on very general ideas that place wider and wider limits on the independence of each person and allow variety in a multitude of particular cases and secondary facts to be introduced progressively. It is like a circle that is constantly growing larger and in which individual liberty expands in proportion and becomes agitated.

I will take as an example what is happening in the United States in the matter of religion. It is clear that the Americans to [*sic*] accept the truth of the Christian religion without discussing it.

They have in a way moved the limits of discussion back to the extreme limits of Christianity, but there the spirit of innovation must stop and it stops in fact as if by itself, by a type of tacit and general agreement; while within the interior of Christianity the individual independence given birth by democracy is exercised without constraint and there is no interpretation of the Gospel so strange that does not find. . . [interrupted text (ed.)]

[To the side: Good sentence to introduce in the chapter on philosophical method, in the place where I speak about the religion of the Americans.]

On a strip of paper:

"D[emocratic (ed.)] method.

"The democratic tendency that consists of getting to the substance of things without paying attention to the form; in fact, through the formality, [this] is clearly seen in the civil code. Marriage is perfected by consent and only in consent; sale by the desire to sell...."

1. That man cannot do without dogmatic beliefs:
    1. Without dogmatic beliefs there are no common ideas and consequently no common action; so they are necessary to society.
    2. The individual can have neither the time nor the strength of mind necessary to develop opinions that are his own on all matters. If he undertook it, he would never have anything except vague and incomplete notions. So dogmatic beliefs are necessary to the individual.
2. Therefore, there will always be beliefs of this type. It is only a matter of finding their sources.
3. It is in humanity and not above or beyond that democratic men will place the arbiter of their beliefs.
4. Within the interior of humanity, it is to the mass alone that each individual hands over the care of forming for him opinions that he cannot form for himself on a great number of matters.
5. So intellectual authority will be different, but it will perhaps not be less.
6. Far from fearing that it is disappearing, it must instead be feared that it is becoming too great (YTC, CVf, pp. 2–3).

[b.] New sources of beliefs. Authority. Sources of beliefs among democratic peoples. To put in, before or after the chapters in which I treat the influence of equality on philosophy and religion.

Religion—authority.

Philosophy—liberty.

What is happening in the United States in the matter of religion is proof of this. (Illegible word) difficulty for men to stop at common ideas. Remedy for that in the future. This difficulty is something more *revolutionary* than *democratic.*

The same ideas from this chapter recur two or three times in the course of the work, among others in *associations* and above all in *revolutions;* I must try to treat them completely here, with verve and without being concerned about what I said elsewhere; because that is their natural and principal place. But afterward it would be necessary to compare this chapter to those I named above, so as to avoid monotony as much as possible, particularly with the chapter on revolutions. There is the danger. I believe however that it can be avoided by painting with moderation in this chapter the natural and true state of democratic peoples relative to beliefs and in the chapter on revolutions by showing (illegible word) and more (illegible word) the exaggeration and the danger of the same tendencies (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 1–2).

The first title of the second chapter had been: of particular causes that in america can harm the free development and the generalization of thought (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 33–42, 82–88). The principal cause, Tocqueville wrote, is the rule of the majority. This idea reappears at the end of the chapter, but without the development and the attention it had received in the rough drafts.

[c.] Note to reread before reworking this chapter. Capital.

The weakening of beliefs is much more general and more complete during the democratic revolution than when democracy is settled.

Since a multitude of beliefs is then renounced, general confidence in beliefs is shaken.

By belief I mean an opinion that you have not had the time to examine yourself and that you accept on trust because it has been transmitted to you, and because those more clever profess it or because the crowd follows it.

Dogmatic beliefs are supports necessary for the weakness [of (ed.)] men. There is no human mind that is able to find [prove? (ed.)] by itself all the truths that it needs to live. A belief is an instrument that you have not fabricated yourself, but that you use because you lack the time to look for something better.

You cannot hide the fact that equality of conditions, democracy . . . is essentially contrary to *dogmatic beliefs,* that is a capital idea, which I must face throughout this chapter, clarify, explain and carefully delimit in my mind (YTC, CVj, 1, p. 2).

Wilhelm Hennis (“La ‘nueva ciencia politica’ de Tocqueville,” *Revista de estudios politicos* 22, 1981, pp. 7–38) notes that Tocqueville is more like Rousseau than he is a Cartesian because he accepts the necessity of dogmatic beliefs and because he places the grandeur of man in the coincidence of the sentiment of liberty with religious sensibility.

But to us this anti-cartesianism seems instead to be a sign of Pascal’s influence. Like the author of the *Pensées,* Tocqueville believes that, at the time of his fleeting passage

in the world, man must accept certain general ideas that he is incapable of proving or of discovering by himself and that all free human action finds itself within the circle limited by these truths. As Tocqueville wrote to Kergorlay in 1841: “Experience teaches me more and more that the success and the grandeur of this world reside much more in the good choice of these general and generative ideas than in the skillfulness that allows you each day to get yourself out of the small difficulties of the moment” (*Correspondance avec Kergorlay, OC,* XIII, 2, p. 100).

Luiz Díez del Corral has more than once demonstrated the influence of Pascal on Tocqueville (as in “El liberalismo de Tocqueville. (La influencia de Pascal.),” *Revista de Occidente* 3, no. 26 (1965): 133–53). See also Luis Díez del Corral, *El pensamiento político de Tocqueville* (Madrid: Alianza, 1989); and Aurelian Craiutu, *Liberalism Under Siege* (Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2003).

[d.] “I know only two states bearable for peoples as for men: dogmatic beliefs [v: ignorance] or advanced knowledge, between these two extremes are found doubt and all miseries” (YTC, CVa, p. 41).

[f.] “The great Newton himself resembles an imbecile more by the things that he does not know than he differs from one by the things that he knows” (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 36).

In a note destined for the introduction, Tocqueville had written:

Preface.

There is no man in the world who has ever found, and it is nearly certain that none will ever be met who will find the central ending point for, I am not saying all the beams of general truth, which are united only in God alone, but even for all the beams of a particular truth. Men grasp fragments of truth, but never truth itself. This admitted, the result would be that every man who presents a complete and absolute system, by the sole fact that his system is complete and absolute, is almost certainly in a state of error or falsehood, and that every man who wants to impose such a system on his fellows by force must *ipso facto* and without preliminary examination of his ideas be considered as a tyrant and an enemy of the human species.

[To the side: They intercept some beams from time to time, but they never hold the light in their hand.]

The idea is not mine, but I believe it good. 8 March 1836.

Not to accept or to disregard a fact because the cause escapes you is a great weakness and a great foolishness in the moral and political sciences, as in all the others (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 46–47).

[g.] In the margin, in pencil: “To reexamine. Ampère.”

[h.] Uncertainty of human judgments./

The one who receives an idea is almost always more convinced of its correctness and absolute truth than the one who conceived and produced it. This appears at first view contrary to good sense and even to experience, but it is so.

The work to which the one who conceived the idea devoted himself in order to make it ready to appear before the public, almost always made him discover certain weak, obscure or even incomplete sides that escape others. The reader or the listener who sees the result of the operation without seeing the operation itself, notices at first the plausible and likely side that is presented to him and, without being concerned about the other side, he seizes the former and holds on to it firmly. I am persuaded that everything considered skepticism is more common among those who teach where certitude is to be found than among those who go to the latter to find certitude.

27 December 1835 (YTC, CVa, pp. 54–55).

And in another place:

A doctrine must never be judged by the one who professes it, but by those who accept it.

[In the margin: That a doctrine must not be judged by the teacher, but by the disciples.]

The most harmful doctrines can lead the man who invented them to very beautiful practical consequences; because, apart from his doctrine, he has the strength of mind, the imagination, the ambition and the energy that made him discover the doctrine and bring it to light. His disciples have nothing more than the doctrine and in them it bears its natural fruits.

29 December 1836 (YTC, CVa, p. 34).

[j.] “I would readily compare dogmatic beliefs to algebraic quantities by the aid of which you simplify the operations of life” (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 5–6).

[k.] Two effects of authority:

> 1. More *time* and *freedom of mind* to examine and go deeper into the questions that you reserve for yourself.
> 2. More assurance in holding your own in the portion that you reserved for yourself and in defending yourself there against external attacks than if you did not have one certain and firmly established point.

Not only are you strong on beliefs that you have *received,* but you are also more confident about beliefs that you formed yourself. The soul acquired the habit of firmly believing and energetically defending all its beliefs, the dogmatic ones as much as the philosophical ones (*Rubish,* 1).

[m.] Influence that equality of conditions exercises on philosophy.

The further I go the more I am persuaded that equality of conditions pushes man with an unequaled energy to lose sight of the individual, his dignity, his strength, his value . . . , in order to think no longer of anything except the mass. This single given fact influences nearly all the points of view that men have about humanity in that time. The trace [of it (ed.)] has been found everywhere.

In democracy you see only *yourself* and *all.* After the influence that equality exercises on philosophical method, say what it exercises on philosophy itself.

[To the side: Question of realists and nominalists, to examine when I treat the influence of equality on philosophy. You tend more and more today to lose sight of the individual in order to see only humanity, that is to say, to become, I believe, *realist.*

See *Revue des deux mondes* of May 1837, literary review of the year]" (YTC, CVj, 1, p. 7).

It concerns A.C.T., "Mouvement de la presse française en 1836," *Revue des deux mondes,* 4th series, X, 1837, pp. 453–98. On page 456, an account is given of the edition done by Victor Cousin of the works of Abelard and of his definition of the words *realist* and *nominalist.*

In 1840, Tocqueville writes, on the same question, to his English translator:

I believe that the realists are wrong. But above all I am sure that the political tendency of their philosophy, dangerous in all times, is very pernicious in the time in which we live. The great danger of democratic ages, be sure of it, is the destruction or the excessive weakening *of the parts* of the social body in the presence of *the whole.* Everything today that raises up the idea of the individual is healthy. Everything that gives a separate existence to the species and enlarges the notion of the type is dangerous. The mind of our contemporaries runs in this direction by itself. The doctrine of the realists introduced into the political world pushes toward all the abuses of democracy; it is what facilitates despotism, centralization, scorn for particular rights, the doctrine of necessity, all the institutions and all the doctrines that allow the social body to trample men underfoot and that make the nation all and the citizens nothing (Letter to Henry Reeve of 3 February 1840, *Correspondance anglaise, OC,* VI, 1, pp. 52–53).

[n.] In the margin: "Before having this entire part of my discussion printed, I must reread the analogous things that I say in the chapter on *revolutions* and consider for myself what I should leave there or transfer here."

> 1. Absence of those intermediate authorities between his own reason and the collective reason of his fellows leaves nothing else as guide except the mass.
> 2. Each individual, finding himself isolated and weak, finds himself overwhelmed in the presence of the mass.
> 3. It is only during democratic centuries that you clearly conceive the idea of the mass [{human species}], when you follow it without hesitating, you

> believe it without discussion and beliefs penetrate souls by a kind [of (ed.)] immense pressure of the mind of the greatest number [v: of all] on the intelligence of each (*Rubish,* 1).

[p.] When you look very closely, you see that equality of conditions produces three things:

> 1. It isolates men from one another, prevents the reciprocal action of their intelligence and allows their minds to diverge in all directions.
> 2. It gives to nearly all men the same needs, the same interests, the same sights, so that in the long run, without knowing it or wanting it, they find themselves having on a host of points the same ideas and the same tastes.
> 3. It creates the *moral* power of the majority (I saw in another place its political power). Man, feeling very weak, seeing around him only beings equally weak and similar to him, the idea of the collective intelligence of his fellows easily overwhelms him. That gives to common opinion a power over minds that it never attains to the same degree among aristocratic peoples. Among the latter, where there are individuals very enlightened, very learned, very powerful due to their intelligence and a crowd of others very ignorant, very limited, you readily trust the superior reason of a man, but you believe little in the infallibility of the mass. It is the time of prophets.

Faith in common opinion is the faith of democratic nations. The majority is the prophet; you believe it without reasoning. You follow it confidently without discussion. It exerts an immense pressure on individual intelligence. The moral dominion of the majority is perhaps called to replace religions to a certain point or to perpetuate certain ones of them, if it protects them. But then religion would live more like common opinion than like religion. Its strength would be more borrowed than its own. All this can be supported by the example of the Americans.

Men will never be able to deepen all their ideas by themselves. That is contrary to their limited nature. The most (illegible word) and the most free genius believes a million things on the faith of others. So *moral authority* no matter what you do must be found somewhere in the moral world. Its place is variable, but a place is necessary for it. Man needs to believe dogmatically a host of things, were it only to have the time to discuss a few others of them. This authority is principally called *religion* in aristocratic centuries. It will perhaps be named *majority* in democratic centuries, or rather *common opinion.*

[In the margin: Somewhere make the state of transition felt in which each person is pulling in his direction and forms purely individual opinions, beliefs, ideas.]

As men become more equal, the disposition to believe in one man decreases, the disposition to believe in the mass increases, and is more and more the opinion that leads the world.

Religion is an authority (illegible word) [prior? (ed.)] to humanity, but manifested by one man or one class of men to all the others, who submit to it. Common opinion is an

authority that is not prior to humanity and that is exercised by the generality of men on the individual.

The source of these two authorities is different, but their effects come together. Common opinion like religion gives ready made beliefs and relieves man from the unbearable and impossible obligation to decide everything each day by himself. These beliefs were originally discussed, but they are no longer discussed and they penetrate minds by a kind of pressure of all on each.

[In the margin: I spoke elsewhere about the political and violent dominion of the majority. Here, I am speaking about its moral and peaceful dominion. To say that.]

It is very difficult to believe that equality does not weaken the first of these authorities, but you can think that it will make up for it in part by the second, and that the moral power of common opinion will be called upon to limit much more than is supposed the errors of individual reason. This will be a change of power rather than a destruction of power (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 8–10).

[q.] The manuscript says “governs despotically.”

[r.] Of particular causes that can harm the free development and generalization of thought in America./

I showed in the preceding chapter that dogmatic and traditional opinions maintained in the matter of religion limited the innovative mind of the Americans in several directions so to speak. There is another cause perhaps less powerful, but more general that threatens to stop and already hinders the free development of thought in the United States. This cause, which I already pointed out in another part of this work, is nothing other than the (illegible word) power that the majority exercises in America.

A religion is a power whose movements are regulated in advance and that moves within a known sphere, and many people believe that within this sphere its effects are beneficial, and that a dogmatic religion better manages to obtain the desirable effects of a religion than one that is rational. The majority is a (illegible word) power that moves in a way haphazardly and can spread successively to everything. Religion is law, the omnipotence of the majority is arbitrariness.

Religion leads the human mind to stop by itself and makes obedience the free choice of a moral and independent being.

The majority forces the human mind to stop, despite what they have [*sic*] and by forcing it constantly to obey ends by taking away from it even the desire to be free to act for itself.

In the United States, the pernicious influence that omnipotence of the majority exercises over thought makes itself noticeable above all in politics. It is principally on political questions that public opinion has formed until now; but the laws of the Americans are such that the majority, in whatever direction it decided to head, would

make its omnipotence equally felt. Its own will and not the constitution of the country limits it.

You cannot hide from the fact that the Americans have, in that, allowed themselves to be carried away by the usual tendency of democratic peoples. In democracies, whatever you think, the majority and the power that represents it are always provided with a rough power and no matter how little the laws favor instead of combat this tendency, it is nearly impossible to say where the limits of tyranny will be. Now, despotism, whoever imposes it, always produces a kind of dullness of the human mind. Freed from the opinions of family and of class, the human mind bends itself to the will of the greatest number. I say that among purely aristocratic peoples the interest of class, the habits of family, the customs of profession, the maxims of the State . . . form as so many barriers that enclose within them the imagination of man.

If in place of these (two illegible words) that hinder and slow the progress of the human mind, democratic peoples substituted the uncontrolled power of the majority, it is easy to see that the evil would only have changed character. You could say that the human mind is oppressed in another way, but you could not maintain that it is free. Men would not have found the means to live independently; they would only have discovered, a difficult thing, a new mode of servitude.

In aristocracies the power that curbs the imagination of man is one and the prejudices of all types that are born and maintained within an aristocracy take certain paths and prevent the imagination from proceeding in that direction, but they do [not (ed.)] attack intellectual liberty in its principle and in an absolute way; in democracies constituted in the manner that I spoke about above, the majority hangs in a way over the human mind, it curbs in a permanent and general way all its springs of action and by means of bending men to its will ends by taking away from each one of them the habit and the taste *to think* for themselves. So it could happen, if you were not careful, that democracy, under the dominion of certain laws, would harm the liberty of *thought* that the democratic social state favors, and after escaping from the interests of class and the traditions of family the human mind would chain itself to the will of the greatest number.

I think that is something that should make all those who see in human liberty a holy thing and who do not hate the despot, but despotism, reflect deeply. For me, when I feel the hand of power pressing on my head, knowing who is oppressing me matters little to me [and I (ed.)] do not feel more inclined to (illegible word) [put (ed.)] my head in the yoke because a million hands present it to me.

[two illegible lines]

I say that among democratic peoples I clearly notice two contrary tendencies. One leads men toward new and general thoughts, the other could reduce them, so to speak, to not thinking.

So if I found myself suddenly charged with giving laws to a democratic people, I would try to distinguish these two tendencies clearly and make them not cancel each

other out or at least make it so that the second does not become preponderant. With this purpose, I would attempt not to destroy the dominion of the majority, but to moderate its use and I would work hard to get it to limit itself after overturning all rival powers. In this way, in order to provide not a complete picture but an example, if I lived among a democratic people, I would prefer to see it adopt the monarchical constitution rather than the republican form, I would prefer that you instituted two legislative assemblies rather than one, an irremovable judiciary rather than elected magistrates, provincial powers rather than a centralized administration. For all of these institutions can be combined with democracy, without altering its essence. As the social state becomes more democratic I would attach more value to gaining all or a few of these things, and by acting in this way I would have in view not only, as I said in another part of this work, to save political liberty, but also to protect the general progress of the human mind. If you say that such maxims will not be popular, I will attempt to console myself with the hope that they are true.

I understand that you serve the cause of democracy, but I want you to do so as a moral and independent being who retains the use of his liberty even as he lends his support. That you see in the majority the most bearable of all powers, I understand, but I would like you to be its counselor and not its courtier, and I would want you to say to it just as Massillon said to the young king, Louis XV, Sire [interrupted text (ed.)]" (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 33–42).

The library of the Tocqueville château contained a 1740 edition, in five volumes, of the sermons of Massillon. Tocqueville is perhaps referring to the following passage from the second part of the sermon on the Incarnation:

The liberty, Sire, that princes owe to their peoples is the liberty of laws. You are the master of the life and the fortune of your subjects; but you can dispose of them only according to the laws. You know only God alone above you, it is true; but the laws must have more authority than yourself. You do not command slaves, you command a free and quarrelsome nation, as jealous of liberty as of its liberty.

Another note mentions:

"Chap. II. Of the particular causes that can harm the free development and the generalization of thought in America.

The pieces of Massillon, on which you can draw, are found:

Petit carême. 1. Sermon of Palm Sunday, first and third part. 2. Sermon of the Incarnation, second part.

You could still look for and, in any case, knit together separate sentences. There would be nothing improper about that" (YTC, CVj, 1, p. 33).

[s.] Liberty and authority will always divide the intellectual world into two parts. These two parts will be more or less unequal depending on the centuries./

Authority can be exercised in the name of one certain power or in the name of another; but authority itself will continue to exist.

[In the margin: If men had only dogmatic beliefs, they would remain immobile.

If they had only non-dogmatic beliefs, they would live in an ineffectual agitation. On the one hand, despotism; on the other, anarchy.] (*Rubish,* 1).

1. What is the strength and the weakness of general ideas. Result greater, less exact.
2. That general ideas arise principally from enlightenment.
3.

[a.] This is not sufficient to explain why the Americans and above all the French, who are not more enlightened than the English, show much more aptitude and taste for general ideas than the latter.

Apart from the common cause of enlightenment, these other causes must therefore be recognized:

1. When men are (illegible word) [similar? (ed.)] their similarity leads them to conceive ideas about themselves applicable to the entire species, which gives them the habit and the taste for general ideas in all things.
2. Men being equal and weak, you do not see individuals who force them to march along the same path. So a great cause must be imagined that acts separately but in the same way on each one of them. That also leads to general ideas.
3. When men have escaped from the spirit of class, profession, (illegible word) in order to search for truth by themselves, they are led to study the very nature of man. New form of general idea.
4. All men of democracies are very busy practically. That gives them a great taste for general ideas, which produce great results in little time.
5. Writers of democratic centuries, like all the other men of those centuries, want quick successes and present enjoyments. That leads them vigorously toward general ideas.

4. Also, aristocratic peoples do not esteem general ideas enough and do not make enough use of them; democratic peoples are always ready to abuse them and to become excessively impassioned about them (YTC, CVf, pp. 3–5).

[b.] The human mind naturally has the taste for general ideas because its soul is an emanation of God, the most generalizing being in the universe. So it is only by a kind of constraint that you keep the human mind contemplating particular cases. And if it sees a way to escape by some path, it rushes in that direction; and, the more restrained it is in all the other directions, the more violently it does so.

That is why when aristocratic societies become enlightened without yet ceasing to be aristocratic, you find minds who force their bonds and, in a way losing sight of earth, go far away from the real world in order to create the most general principles in matters of politics, morality, and philosophy.

During this time real society continues to follow its routine existence; and while castes, professions, religions, fortunes divide and classify men, interests, ideas, an entirely imaginary society is in a way built in the air outside of real society; it is an entirely imaginary society in which the human (illegible word) [v: mind], no longer limited by the desire for application, subjects everything to general principles and common rules.

So you must not judge the state of a people by a few adventurous minds that appear within it. For it could happen that they might be all the more given to generalizing the less the people itself is given to doing so, and that the impossibility of establishing anything that pleases them in the real world might be what pushes them so energetically into entirely imaginary regions. I doubt that More would have written his *Utopia* if he had been able to realize a few of his dreams in the government of England, and I think that the Germans of today would not abandon themselves with so much passion to the search for general truth in philosophy if they were allowed to generalize a few of their ideas in politics.

When some men put forward very general ideas, it is not proof therefore that the social state is already democratic; it is only an indication that it is beginning to become so.

But if you find among an entire people a visible tendency to apply the same rules to everything, if you see it, while still remaining in the practical and the real, try hard to extend the same moral, intellectual, political condition to all men at once, do not hesitate any longer and say without fear that here the revolution is accomplished, and it is from now on no longer a matter of destroying democracy, but only of regulating it.

The state of slavery in which the woman lives among savage tribes, her complete separation from men and her imprisonment among Orientals, her inferiority and more or less great subjugation among the civilized peoples of Europe can provide arguments about what I have said concerning the intellectual effects of aristocracy.

The aristocracy of sex is the most natural, the most complete and the most universal that is known. And the greater and more exclusive it is, the more it tends to specialize and to (illegible word) the circle of human ideas.

In the Orient there are the thoughts of men and the thoughts of women. In Europe you imagine ideas that apply at the same time to the two types that compose the human species.

By mixing the sexes in activities and in pleasures you thus give to the intelligence of men and of women something more daring and more general.

That also suffices to explain well the differences that are noticeable in the march of intelligence in the west and in the east (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 27–29).

Cf. conversation with Clark of 9 August 1833 (*Voyage en Angleterre, OC,* V, 2, p. 25).

[c.] Earlier version in a rough draft:

. . . at once. When man says that something is, he assumes a fact that he knows does not exist but that he uses, lacking anything better; he leaves better clarification for later when he has the time, just as the algebraist expresses by “a” or by “b” certain quantities whose value he will examine later (three illegible words).

So general ideas are only means by the aid of which men advance toward truth, but without ever finding it. You can even say that, to a certain extent, by following this path they are moving away from it.

For if they limited themselves to examining certain matters individually they (two illegible words) the former, while by considering them together he cannot have anything except a confused and inexact idea of everything.

General ideas are not any less the most powerful instruments of thought, but you must know how to use them.

That men often form general ideas out of laziness as much as out of weakness and need (YTC, CVj, 1, p. 15).

[d.] It is possible that certain .-.-.- a natural genius that leads them to generalize their ideas. Great writers have said so and yet I still doubt it. I see nothing in the physical constitution of man that disposes him to one order of ideas rather than to another, and nothing in historical facts leads me to believe that this particular disposition of the mind is inherent in one of the human races rather than in the others. I see that the peoples most avid for general ideas and the best disposed to discern them have not always shown the same taste for seeking them and the same facility for discerning them. So I reject a reason that analysis cannot grasp and that, supposedly applicable to all times, explains only what is happening today (*Rubish,* 1).

[e.] There are several causes that make men form general ideas.

A man by dint of research discovers numerous and new connections among diverse matters, beings, facts, . . . and he draws a general idea from it.

Another discovers a certain number of connections among other matters. He knows that the general idea that these connections (illegible word) bring forth is inexact, but he wants to go further and he uses it as an imperfect means that nonetheless helps him reach the truth.

These are the learned, considered, philosophical ways to create general ideas. General ideas created in this way attest to the vigor of the human mind.

But most men do not set about doing it in this way. After an inattentive and short examination, they believe they have discovered a common connection among certain matters. To continue research is long and tiresome. To examine in detail if the matters that you are comparing are truly alike and to what degree would be difficult. So you hasten to pronounce. If you considered most of the general ideas that are current among men you would see that most do not attest to the vigor of the human mind, but to its laziness.

[In the margin] Men do in the matter of government what they do in the fact of language. They notice at first only particular cases, then when they begin to know general ideas, they want to generalize too much; as they become more learned, they complicate their sciences and establish classifications, distinctions that they had not at first noticed. Thus with government. The idea of centralization belongs to the middle age of human intelligence (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 16–17).

And in the *rubish* of the end of volume IV:

The man who puts forth general ideas is exposed to two great dangers from the perspective of criticism.

He is exposed to the danger common to all those who put forth ideas which is that they are false and it is noticed. He is also exposed to another danger which is particular to the subject.

The more general an idea (and I suppose it true as well as general), the more it allows particular cases to escape. A very great number of particular cases opposed to a general idea would prove that the idea is false, but a few particular cases do not prove it. The one who raises against the maker of a general idea a certain number of particular cases does not therefore prove absolutely that this idea is false, but he advances the beginning of embarrassing [doubtful reading (ed.)] evidence.

Now, since this beginning of evidence exists against all general ideas true or false, it is like a weapon at the disposal of all narrow or ill-intentioned minds. General ideas can be appreciated in a competent manner only by very enlightened and very impartial minds. There is the evil.

Special ideas leave less room for partiality and require much less enlightenment in those who judge them" (*Rubish,* 2, in a jacket belonging to the bundle of the last part that is entitled some rubish that do not fall into one section of this chapter rather than into another).

[f.] In democracies, since men are all more or less equal and similar to each other, subject to sensations little different, and provided with analogous ideas, it is nearly always found that what is applicable to one is applicable at the same time and in the same way to all the others.

So democratic nations are led naturally and so to speak without wanting to be toward conceiving general ideas in what interests them the most, which is themselves. They

thus contract the general taste for generalization of ideas and carry it into all the inquiries of the mind.

In this way the smallest democratic people will be closer to searching for and finding the general rights that belong to the human species than the greatest nation whose social state is aristocratic.

There is only a step for the human mind between believing that all the citizens of a small republic must be free and considering that each man has an equal right to liberty (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 22–23).

[g.] The Americans are a democratic people who since its birth was able to act in all ways; the French form a democratic people who for a long time was able only to think. Now I know nothing that leads men more vigorously toward general theories than a social state that disposes them naturally to discover new ideas and a political constitution that forbids them from rectifying these ideas by practice and from testing them by experience.

In this sense, I think that the institutions of democracy prudently introduced are, everything considered, the best remedy that you can set against the errors of the democratic mind (YTC, CVj, 1, p. 71).

[h.] Proofs of the limits that the classification of ranks puts on the free development of thought.

Plato and Aristotle were born in the middle of democratic republics. Cicero saw the greatest part of the human species gathered under the same laws. These are ample reasons that should have made general thoughts come to the mind of these great men. Neither those men, however, nor any other of antiquity was able to discover the so simple idea of the equal right to liberty that each man [has (ed.)] by birth.

The slavery that has not existed for so many centuries appeared to them in the nature of things, and they seemed to consider it as a necessary and eternal condition of humanity.

Even more, nothing indicates that the men of that time who had been slaves before becoming free and several of whom were great writers, had considered from a different perspective the servitude from which they had suffered so much. How to explain this?

All the ancients who have left us writings were part of the aristocracy of masters, or at least they saw this aristocracy established without dispute among the men of their time. Their minds, so expansive in so many directions, were limited on that one and J[esus (ed.)]. C[hrist (ed.)]. had to come to earth in order to consider the general value of man and to make it understood that similar beings could and must be equal.

When I see Aristotle make the power of Alexander serve the progress of the natural sciences, ransack all of Asia weapons in hand in order to find unknown animals and plants, and when I notice that after studying nature at such great cost he ended up

finally by discovering slavery there, I feel myself led to think that man would do better to remain at home, not to study books and to look for truth only in his own heart (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 30–31).

[j.] In the margin: " ≠All this portion seems to me of contestable truth and to delete ≠."

[k.] "The (illegible word) reason for the difference.

> "1. In practical life.
> "2. The second . . . in physical nature; although I am in general little in favor of arguments based on the physical nature of peoples, I believe nonetheless that I am able to make use of them here" (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 69–70).

[m.] First version in a rough draft:

The English have for a long time been one of the most enlightened and most aristocratic people of the globe. I think that the singularities that you notice in their opinions must be attributed to the combination of these two causes. Their enlightenment made them tend toward general ideas, while their aristocratic habits held them within the circle of particular ideas. From that this philosophy at the very same time bold and timid, broad and narrow, liberated and addicted to routine that characterizes the march of the human mind in England. Certainly, the country that produced the two Bacons, the great Newton {Adam Smith and Jeremy Bentham}, that country is not naturally sterile in men who can conceive general ideas and put them within reach of the common people, but these extraordinary men lacked a public. They opened wide roads where they marched alone; mores and laws formed like intellectual barriers that separated their minds from that of the crowd, and if they were able to open their country to new and general ideas in the particular matters that they treated, they did not succeed in giving it the taste for new and general ideas in all matters. The various causes that I have just enumerated can exist without the social state and institutions having yet become democratic, and I do not claim that lacking the auxiliary causes they cannot develop more or less power. I am only saying that democracy places men in a situation favorable to the conception of new and general ideas and that uniting with other causes, it pushes them vigorously toward them. If the Americans were neither enlightened nor free, I doubt that they would have very general and very bold ideas, but I am sure that their social state coming to be combined with their enlightenment and their liberty has singularly helped them to conceive these sorts of ideas.

[In the margin] There is only one aristocracy in America, that of skin. See the consequences: more *narrow* ideas . . ." (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 80–81).

You find a variant of this fragment in YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 31–32, where Tocqueville adds (p. 32): "In America there is less freedom of mind in the slave countries. Among equal men, there cannot be lasting classification."

[n.] In the margin: “I believe that in this matter what can be said most generally true is this.”

[b.] “This in not a contradiction, but it is due to the fact that the Americans are not only equal but are republican” (*Rubish,* 1).

[c.] Let us consider Germany.

The human mind there shows itself excessively (illegible word) and generalizing as regards philosophy and above all metaphysics, regular and specialized, enslaved, in nearly all the rest. What causes that?

In America, on the contrary, where the human mind is regular as regards philosophy, it is bold and generalizing in all the rest.

Wouldn’t the result be that equality of conditions leads to bold and general ideas only in matters of civil and political society and exercises only an imperceptible influence on all the rest?

Or rather isn’t there a hidden reason that makes it so that bold and general ideas in philosophy can occur to a mind that does not conceive the others?

Or rather finally must you search for the explanation for all of that in the facts and say:

First of all, that it is not correct that in the United States the common mind is routine as regards philosophy. If you give the name philosophy to the principles that direct human actions, even if the principles were not reduced to theory and science, the Americans certainly have a philosophy and even a very new and very bold philosophy.

Secondly, equality of conditions is already very great; that the philosophical movement that you are speaking about has above all been noticeable since a half-century ago when equality of conditions really came about. That its consequences come about only in philosophy because it is suppressed by force everywhere else and that it brings them about all the more vigorously there because it can bring them about only there. Philosophy is in fact only the complete exercise of thought, separate from the practice of action (YTC, CVa, pp. 36–37).

See the first chapter of book III of the *Old Regime* (*OC,* II, 1, pp. 193–201), where, using the same reasoning, Tocqueville explains the appearance of the French pre-revolutionary intellectuals and their passion for general ideas in politics.

[d.] Usefulness of varying the means of government. Ideas too general as regards government are a sign of weakness in the human mind, like ideas too particular. Belonging to the middle age of intelligence. Danger of allowing a single social principle to take without objection the absolute direction of society.

General idea that I wanted to make emerge from this work.

[In the margin: Perhaps use here the piece on general ideas.]

.-.-.-.-.-.-.- men ordinarily {judge} ideas much more perfect, more effective and more beautiful in proportion to their being more simple, and that it [*sic*] can be reduced much more easily to a single fact.

This judgment arises in part from our weakness. Complications tire the human mind, and it willingly rests [v: with a kind of pride] in the idea of a single cause producing by itself alone an infinity of great effects. If however we cast our eyes on the work of the being par excellence, of the creator of man, of his eternal model, of God, we are surprised by the strange complications that present themselves to our sight. We are obliged to renounce our (illegible word) of beauty and to place perfection in the grandeur of the result and not in the simplicity of the means.

God ties together a multitude of bones, muscles, nerves, each of which has a separate and distinct function. The first elements are themselves the products of a multitude of primary causes. In the middle of this machine so complicated, he places an intelligence that resides there without being part of it. An invisible bond unites all these things and makes them all work toward a unique end. This assemblage feels, thinks, acts, it is man, it is the king of the world after the one who created it.

The same diversity is found in all the works of the Creator....

Man himself is only a means, among the millions of means that God uses to reach the great end that he proposes, the government of the universe. God indicates as much to us. .-.-.-.- great results can be obtained only with the help of a great diversity of efforts, with variety of chosen means. If your machine can function as well with one wheel as with two, only make one; but make ten if that is useful for the object that you have in view. If the machine thus composed produces what you must expect from it, it is no less beautiful than if it were simpler.

The error of men comes from believing that you can produce very great things with very simple means. If you could do it, they would be right to put the idea of beauty partially in the simplicity of means.

[v: So God, if I can express myself in this way, puts the idea of grandeur and perfection not in executing a great number of things with the help of a single means, but in making a multitude of diverse means contribute to the perfect execution of a single thing.]

Theoretical .-.-.-.-.- have more connection to practice than you think. This opinion that you can achieve a very great result with the help of a single means and that you should aim for that, this opinion applied to the matter of government has exercised a strange and fatal influence on the fate of humanity. It has singularly facilitated and still facilitates every day the establishment of despotism on the earth. What is more simple than (illegible word) organized government of a (illegible word)? What is more complicated than liberty?

If men had enough strength of mind to combine easily a great number of means, they would succeed better in this way.

It is their weakness and not their strength that leads them to the idea of (illegible word).

Not able to do something very well with a great number of means, they hope to do it more or less well with the help of one single means.

The human mind, not being able to coordinate a great number of means, got the idea that it was glorious to employ only a single one of them (YTC, CVk, 2, pp. 37– 41).

1.

[a.] I showed that dogmatic beliefs were necessary; the most necessary and the most desirable are dogmatic beliefs in the matter of religion. Reasons to believe.

[In the margin: To change the title. Put one that places it more clearly under the rubric of ideas and operations of the mind.]

1. Fixed ideas on God and human nature are necessary to *all* men and *every* day to *each* man, and it is found that there are only a few, if any, men who are capable by themselves of fixing their ideas on these matters. It is a science necessary to all at each moment and inaccessible to the greatest number. That is unique. So it is in these matters that there is the most to gain and the least to lose by having dogmatic beliefs.
2. These beliefs particularly necessary to free peoples.
3. Id. to democratic peoples.

2.

So I am led to seek *humanly* how religions could most easily assert themselves during the centuries of equality that we are entering.

Development of this:

1. Necessity that religions be based on the idea of a *unique* being imposing at the *same* time the *same* rules on *each* man.
2. Necessity of extricating religion from forms, practices, figures, as men become more democratic.
3. Necessity of not insisting on remaining immobile in secondary things.
4. Necessity of trying to purify and regulate the love of well-being, without attempting to destroy it.
5. Necessity of gaining the favor of the majority.

3. All this proved by the example of America (YTC, CVf, pp. 6–7).

[b.] Twice there must be the question of religion in this book.

1. The first *principally* in a separate chapter placed I think after the first in which I would examine *philosophically* the influence of democracy on religions.
2. The second *incidentally* somewhere in the second volume where I would say more oratorically how it is indispensable in democracies in order to immaterialize man (*Rubish,* 1).

See Agnès Antoine, "Politique et religion chez Tocqueville," in Laurence Guellec, *Tocqueville et l'esprit de la démocratie* ([Paris:] Presses de Sciences Po, 2005), pp. 305–17; and also by the same author, *L'impenséde la démocratie* (Paris: Fayard, 2003).

[c.] In the margin: "<What is most important is not so much that they are correct, it is that they are clear and fixed.>"

[d.] "If God allowed me to lift the veil of the future, I would refuse to do so; I would be afraid to see the human race in the hands of clerks and soldiers" (*Rubish,* 1). The same idea appears in another draft: "I would be afraid to see the entire society in the hands of soldiers. A *bureaucratic, military* organization. The soldier and the clerk. Symbol of future society" (YTC, CVa, p. 50). Cf. note a of p. 1245.

[e.] Tocqueville explained in a letter to Richard Milnes (Lord Houghton), dated 29 May 1844:

You seem to me only like Lamartine to have come back from the Orient a bit more Moslem than is suitable. I do not know why some distinguished minds show this tendency today. For my part, I have experienced from my contact with Islam (you know that through Algeria we touch each day on the institutions of Mohammed)entirely opposite effects. As I got to know this religion better, I better understood that from it above all comes the decadence that before our eyes more and more affects the Moslem world. Had Mohammed committed only the mistake of intimately joining a body of civil and political institutions to a religious belief, in a way to impose on the first the immobility that is in the nature of the second, that would have been enough to doom his followers in a given time at first to inferiority and then to inevitable ruin. The grandeur and holiness of Christianity is in contrast to have tried to reign only in the natural sphere of religions, abandoning all the rest to the free movements of the human mind.

With the kind permission of Trinity College, Cambridge (Houghton papers, 25/200).

[f.] The history of religions clearly shows the truth of what I said above that general ideas come easily to the human mind only when a great number of men are placed in an analogous situation.

Since the object of religion is to regulate the relationships that should exist between man and the Creator, there is nothing that seems more natural than general ideas.-.-.-.-.- until the Roman Empire, however, you saw almost as many religions and

gods as peoples. The idea of a religious doctrine applicable to all men came only when nearly all men had been subjected in the same manner to the same power.

I would say something more as well. You can conceive that all men should adore the same God, without accepting that all men are equal in the eyes of God. Christianity says these two things. So it is not only based on a general idea but on a very democratic idea, which is an additional nuance. I believe that Christianity comes from God and that it is not a particular state of humanity that gave birth to it; but it is obvious that it had to find great opportunities for spreading at a period when nearly all the human species, like an immense flock, was mixed and mingled under the scepter of the Caesars, and when subjects, whoever they were, were so small in relation to the greatness of the prince, that when you came to compare them to him, the differences that could exist among them seemed nearly imperceptible.

≠You wonder why nearly all the peoples of modern Europe present a physiognomy so similar? It is because the same revolution that occurs within each State among citizens, takes place within the interior of Europe among peoples. Europe forms more and more a democracy of nations; each [nation (ed.)] being nearly equal to the others by its enlightenment, its social state, its laws, it is not surprising that all envisage the same matters in the same way. ≠(*Rubish,* 1. Another version of the same passage exists in YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 85–87).

In the copy from CVj, 1 (p. 86), next to the third paragraph, in the margin, you read:“Is the social state the result of ideas or are the ideas the result of the social state?”

[g.] The manuscript says: “I do not deny the utility of forms.” See note r for p. 1270.

[1.]*In all religions, there are ceremonies that are inherent in the very substance of belief and that must be carefully kept from changing in any way. That is seen particularly in Catholicism, where form and foundation are often so closely united that they are one.*

[h.] “I believe religious beliefs necessary for all democratic peoples, but I believe them necessary for the Americans more than for all others. In a society constituted like the American republics, the only non-material conceptions [v: the only non-material tastes] come from religion” (YTC, CVa, p. 5).

[j.] “In democratic centuries religion needs the majority, and to gain this majority its genius must not be contrary to the democratic genius” (*Rubish,* 1).

[k.] I have already pointed out two great causes for the power of religious beliefs in America:

1. The Puritan origin.
2. The separation of church and State.

These two causes are very powerful, but they are not *democratic;* the ones that remain for me are *democratic* (*Rubish,* 1).

[m.] The manuscript says: “he subjugates.”

[a.] This chapter, which bears the number Vbis in the manuscript, as well as the one that follows, are not included in the list of notebook CVf. In the manuscript the first title is: how the progress of equality has favored the progress of catholicism.

On the jacket of the manuscript you find this note: “Ask for some figures from Mr. Wash perhaps.” Probably this concerns Robert Walsh, American journalist, founder of the *National Gazette.* Tocqueville and Beaumont met him in Philadelphia (George W. Pierson, *Tocqueville and Beaumont in America,* pp. 475–76, 537).

[b.] Several conversations with Americans had persuaded Tocqueville of the rapid increase of Catholicism in the United States. This fact has been contested by certain American critics. On this subject, it can be recalled that, in his first letters from America, Tocqueville noted that if the lower classes tended toward Catholicism, the upper classes converted instead to Unitarianism (cf. alphabetic notebook A, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, pp. 230–32. YTC, BIIa contains a note on conversions in India copied from the *Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register,* 4, April 1831, p. 316. It is not reproduced in *Voyage*).

[c.] “Two very curious conversations could be done, one with a Protestant minister, the other with a Catholic priest. They would be made to uphold on all points opposed [*sic*] to what they are in the custom of upholding elsewhere.

“These conversations would have to be preceded by a portrait of these two men and of their institutions. Very piquant details would result from all of that for the French public above all” (YTC, CVa, p. 55. See the appendix bearing the title sects in america).

[d.] The manuscript says: “repulse them.”

[e.] The chapter finishes in this way in the manuscript:

“and that it would end by being the only religion of all those who would have a religion.

“I think that it is possible that all men who make up the Christian nations will in the long run come to be no longer divided except into two parts. Some will leave Christianity entirely and others will go into the Roman Church.”

In 1843, Tocqueville had a very different secret opinion about the relation between Catholicism and democracy.

“Catholicism,” he wrote to Francisque de Corcelle, “which produces such admirable effects in certain cases, which must be upheld with all one’s power because in France religious spirit can exist only with it, Catholicism, I am very afraid, will never adopt the new society. It will never forget the position that it had in the old one and every time that [it] is given some powers, it will hasten to abuse them. I will say that only to

you. But I say it to you, because I want to have you enter into my most secret thought" *Correspondance avec Corcelle, OC,* XV, 1, p. 174.

[a.] In the first page of the manuscript: " ≠Very small chapter done afterward and that I think should be placed after *general ideas*. Think more whether it must be included and where to place it. Perhaps it is too unique to be separate. ≠"

It carries the number 3bis in the manuscript, and the first paragraph clearly indicates that at the moment of drafting it followed the current chapter 4, consecrated to general ideas in politics. The jacket of the chapter in the manuscript also contains a rough draft of the chapter.

[b.] In the margin, in pencil: "[illegible word]. Ampère."

[c.] Religious .-.-.-.-.-.- of a unique being regulating all men by the same laws is an essentially democratic idea. It can arise in other centuries, but it can have its complete development only in these centuries. Example of that in the Christianity of the Middle Ages when populations, without losing the general idea of a unique god, split up the divinity in the form of saints. So in democratic centuries a religion that wants to strike minds naturally must therefore get as close as possible to the idea of unity, of generality, of equality" (With the notes of chapter 5. *Rubish,* 1).

[d.] "Democracy, which brings about the idea of the unity of human nature, brings men back constantly to the idea of the unity of the creator./

"Household gods, particular saints of a family, patrons of cities and of kingdoms, all that is aristocratic.

"To accept all these different celestial powers, you must not believe all to be of the same species.

[With a bracket that includes the last two paragraphs: *Hic.*]" (In the *rubish* of chapter 5. *Rubish,* 1).

[a.] A note from the *rubish* of the foreword indicates that Tocqueville had thought of having this chapter followed by the one on interest well understood:

After showing how a democratic social state could give birth in the human mind to the idea of indefinite perfectibility, my intention was to show how this same social state brings men to adopt the doctrine of interest well understood as principal rule of life.

I would have thus pointed out to the reader the two principal ideas that in America [added: it seems to me] guide most of the actions of the Americans.

But I am finding unforeseen difficulties that force me to divide my work (With notes of the foreword. *Rubish,* 1).

1. The idea of human perfectibility is as old as man. But equality gives it a new character.
2. Among aristocratic peoples where everything is immobile and appears eternal, where men are fixed in castes, classes or professions that they cannot leave, the idea of perfectibility appears to the human mind only in a confused form and with very narrow limits.
3. In democratic societies where each man can try on his behalf to ameliorate his lot, where everything changes constantly and gives rise to infinite attempts, where each individual comparing himself to the mass has a prodigious idea of the form [strength? (ed.)] of the latter, the idea of perfectibility besets the human mind and assumes immense proportions.
4. This shown by America (YTC, CVf, pp. 7–8).

[Translator's Note 7:] For this title and chapter, I have used the cognate *indefinite,* a more literary term still carrying the sense of *without limit* or *not limited,* rather than using either *unlimited* or *infinite.*

[c.] Certitude:

I imagine that after long debating a point with others and with yourself, you reach the *will* to act, but not *certitude.* Discussion can show clearly what must be done, but almost never with utter certainty what must be believed. It always raises more new objections than the old ones it destroys. Only it draws the mind from the fog in which it rested and, allowing it to see different *probabilities* distinctly, forces it to come to a decision.

[On the side: June 1838.] (YTC, CVa, p. 47).

[d.] I am so sure that everything in this world has its limit that not to see the limit of something seems to me to be the most certain sign of the weakness of the human mind.

A man is endowed with an intelligence superior to that of the common man. He has beautiful thoughts, great sentiments; he takes extraordinary actions. How would I take hold of him in order to bring him back to the common level?

He deems that a certain truth that strikes his view is applicable in all times and to all men, or he judges that one of his fellows whom he admires is worthy to be admired and merits being imitated in everything.

That is enough to make me see his limits and to indicate to me where he comes back into the ordinary conditions of humanity.

He would place the limit of the true and the good elsewhere than where I place it myself; from that I would not conclude that he *fails at everything at this point;* I would instead feel disposed to believe that I am wrong myself.

But if he puts the limit nowhere, I have no further need to discuss it and I regard it as established that he is wrong.

5 April 1836. (YTC, CVa, pp. 35–36).

[e.] Note of Tocqueville in the manuscript: “This answer was given to me, but it concerned only steamboats.”

[a.] On the jacket containing the chapter: “The first part of the chapter seems good to me. The second does not satisfy me. The evidence does not grab my mind. Something, I do not know what, is missing./

“Perhaps it will be necessary to have the courage to delete this section entirely in order to arrive immediately at the chapter on details.” See note a of pp. 696–97.

The cover of the *rubish* of this chapter bears this note: “Very considerable and sufficiently finished fragments of the chapter as it was before the revision of September 1838” (*Rubish,* 1). Tocqueville already had worked on the chapters on art, science and literature in June 1836.

Bonnel (YTC, CVf, p. 1) remarks that a copy of the *Journal des débats* of 2 April 1838 exists inside a jacket on which Tocqueville wrote: “Journal to reread when I treat the direction that equality gives to the fine arts.” The number of the *Journal des débats* cited contains the second part of the review, by Philarète Chasles, of the work of E. J. Delécluze, *Notice sur la vie et les ouvrages de Léopold Robert* (Paris: Rittner and Goupil, 1838); the first had been published March 18. This book contains a commentary on the industrialization of art that could have interested Tocqueville.

1. The Americans have made little progress in the sciences, letters and arts.
2. This is due to causes that are more American than democratic.
    1. Puritan origin.
    2. Nature of the country that leads too vigorously to the sole search for riches.
    3. Proximity of scientific and literary Europe and of England in particular.
3. Why other democratic peoples would be different.
    1. A people who would be ignorant and (illegible word) at the same time as democratic, not only would not cultivate the sciences, letters and the arts, but also would never come to cultivate them. The law would constantly undo fortunes without creating new ones. Since ignorance and (illegible word) benumb souls, the poor man would not even have the idea of bettering his lot and the rich man of defending himself against the approach of poverty. Equality would become complete and invincible and no one would ever have either the time or the taste for devoting themselves to the works and pleasures of the mind. But it isn’t the same with a people who become democratic while remaining enlightened and free. Why:
        1.

        [b.] Since each man conceives the idea of the better and has the liberty to strive toward it, a general effort is made toward

wealth. Since each man is reduced to his own strength, he attains wealth depending on whether he has greater or lesser natural abilities. And since natural inequality is very great, fortunes become very unequal and the law of inheritance has no effect other than preventing the perpetuation of wealth in families. From the moment when inequality of fortunes exists, there are men of leisure, and from the moment when men have leisure, they tend by themselves toward the works and pleasures of the mind.

In an enlightened and free democratic society, men of leisure will have neither the usual wealth, nor the perfect tranquillity, nor the interests that the members of an aristocracy have, but they are much more numerous.

2. Not only is the number of those who can occupy their intelligence greater, but also the pleasures and the works of the mind are followed by a crowd of men who would in no way be involved in them in aristocratic societies.

[In the margin:

1. Utility of knowledge which appears to all and which arouses all to attempt to acquire some knowledge.
2. Perpetual mixture of all classes, all men continually growing closer together, emulation, ambition, envy that make even the worker claim to give his mind some culture.
3.

From the moment when the crowd is led to the works of the mind, a multitude devotes itself to them with ardor in order to gain glory, power, wealth. Democratic activity shows itself there as elsewhere. Production is immense.

Conclusion. Enlightened and free democratic societies do not neglect the sciences, the arts, letters; they only cultivate them in their own way] (YTC, CVf, pp. 8–10).

[c.] "To begin the chapter by: It must be recognized . . . something moderate, *supple,* and not too intensely satirical. I must not put the Americans *too low,* if afterward I want to raise up other democratic peoples" (*Rubish,* 1).

[d.] Passage that began the chapter, in a jacket of the *rubish* that carries this explanation:

≠Portion of the chapter relating to the particular reasons that turn Americans away from the sciences, literature and the arts. ≠/

Portions of the old chapter./

.-.-.-.-.-.- the frontiers of the United States toward the Northwest still meet here and there in nearly inaccessible places and on the banks of raging torrents against whose course European boats or canoes are unable to go, small groups of beavers half destroyed, remnants of a great amphibious population that formerly extended over the major part of the continent. Although reduced to a very small number, these industrious animals have kept their habits, I could almost say their civilization and their laws.

You see them as in the past devote themselves to different types of industry with surprising dexterity and marvelous harmony. They make bridges, raise large dams that make the rivers meander and, after establishing the walls of the dwelling according to a methodical and uniform plan, they take care to isolate it in the middle of a lake created by their efforts.

That is where, in a secure and tranquil refuge, the generations succeed each other obscurely, amid a profound peace and an unbroken well-being.

Although the most perfect harmony seems to reign within this small society, you cannot find there, if the accounts of the *voyageurs* do not mislead us, the trace of a hierarchical order; each one there is busy without letup with his affairs, but is always ready to lend his aid.

One day civilized man, this destroyer or this ruler of all beings, comes to pass by and the amphibious republic [v: nation] disappears forever without leaving a trace.

[In the margin: See the description of Buffon. Order, property, comfort, work in common and the division of property, public granaries, internal peace, union of all to repulse external violence.]

Ill-humored observers have been found who wanted to see in this republic of beavers a fairly faithful symbol of the republic of the United States.

Americans have concentrated, it is true, in a surprising way on material concerns.-.-.-.- to man only to have him more easily discover the means to satisfy the needs of the body.

It is not that the inhabitant of the United States is a coarse [v: unpolished] being, but among the products of civilization, he has chosen what was most defined, most material, most positive in order to appropriate it for himself. He has devoted himself to the study of the sciences only to look immediately for the useful applications; in letters, he saw only a powerful means to create individual affluence and social well-being; and he cultivated the arts much less to produce objects of value than to decorate and beautify the existence of the rich. You could say that he wanted to develop the intellectual power of man only to make it serve the pleasures of his physical nature and that he has employed all the resources of the angel only to perfect the animal [variant in the margin: ≠beast ≠].

Among the Europeans who from their arrival in the United States have been struck by this spectacle, there are several who have seen in this tendency of the American mind

a necessary and inevitable result of democracy and who have thought that if democratic institutions succeeded in prevailing over all the earth the human mind ..."(*rubish,* 1).

In the *rubish*influence of democracy on literature, Tocqueville comments: "To make fun of those who believe that democracy will lead us to live like the *beavers.* Perhaps true if it had started with societies.

"[To the side: Democracy without liberty would perhaps extinguish the enlightenment of the human mind. You would then have only the vices of the system.]"

Cf. *Pensée* 257 of Pascal (Lafuma edition). Also see *Correspondance avec Kergorlay, OC,* XIII, 1, p. 389.

The library of the Tocqueville château contained at least two works of Buffon: *Histoire naturelle générale et particulière,* 1769, 13 vols.; and *Histoire naturelle des oiseaux,* 1770, 4 vols. (YTC, AIe).

[e.] In the margin: "<The Americans have appeared to concentrate on the material cares of life and they have seemed to believe that intelligence was given to man only to allow him more easily to discover the means to satisfy the needs of the body.>" On this subject, see Teddy Brunius, *Alexis de Tocqueville, the Sociological Aesthetician* (Uppsala: Almqvist and Wicksell, 1960).

[f.] To the side: " ≠America forms like one part of the middle classes of England. ≠" In the *rubish,* inside the jacket that is entitled portions of the old chapter:

Among all the classes which made up the English nation there was particularly one that, placed above the people by its comfort and below the nobles by the mediocrity of its fortune, possessed the tranquil tastes [v: the love of well-being], the simple habits, the incomplete enlightenment, the good practical and [blank (ed.)] sense that in nearly all countries. .-.-.-.-.- middle classes. It was the middle classes that provided to the population of the United States its principal and so to speak its only elements.

Scarcely transported to the shores of the New World, these men were at first assailed by great needs and threatened by great dangers against which they had at first to direct their entire attention in order to satisfy the first and to ward off the second.

After these first obstacles had been conquered, it was found that the country they inhabited offered such incredible possibilities to human industry that there was no one there who could not aspire to comfort and many to wealth, so that the human mind, diverted from the pursuit of the sciences, distracted from the pleasures of the mind, insensitive to the attractions of the arts, found itself as if carried away despite itself by a rapid torrent toward only the acquisition of wealth [v: well-being]" (*Rubish,* 1).

[g.] Fragment in the manuscript:

" ≠If those who think that the sciences, letters and the arts cannot prosper among democratic peoples assumed the existence of the three principal circumstances that I am going to talk about, I would perhaps share their sentiment.

I imagine a people newly emerged from the uncivilized state, among whom conditions remained equal and political power is concentrated in the hands of one man. That among a democratic nation of this type the human mind would be stopped in its development, curbed and as if struck by a sort of intellectual paralysis, I accept without difficulty. ≠

[In the margin: Here take if possible a confident, simple, short, broken, didactic style. Free myself from the oratorical form.

Read Beaumont's piece.

Under democracies that come after an aristocratic order, that are enlightened and free, the sciences, literature and the arts develop, but they develop in a certain way./

America itself can provide us with illuminating details on this point. (Note) The underlined sentence must not be lost from view and try to bind myself to it.

This chapter on general ideas must be short and followed by separate small chapters on the sciences, letters and the arts. Mix America as much as possible with all of that.]

≠But why imagine an imaginary democracy when we can easily conceive of a real one? What good is it to go back to the origin of the world ≠when what is happening before our eyes is enough to enlighten us?

I take the European peoples such as they appear before my eyes, with their aristocratic traditions, their acquired enlightenment, their liberties, and I wonder if by becoming democratic they risk, as some would like to persuade us, falling back into a kind of barbarism.

There exists at the bottom of the human heart a natural taste for things of the mind and the enjoyments of the imagination, as well as an instinctive tendency toward the pleasures of the senses. The mind of man left to itself leans from one side toward the limited, the material and the commercial, the useful, from the other it tends without effort toward the infinite, the non-material, the great and the beautiful.

So when men have once tasted, as among us, the intellectual and delicate pleasures that civilization provides, I cannot believe that he [*sic*] will ever get sick of them. Legislation, social state can direct in a certain way the natural tendency that leads men there, but not destroy it.

[To the side, with a bracket that includes the last two paragraphs: ≠All of that is perhaps too metaphysical, too long . . . ≠]

Give a democratic people enlightenment and liberty and you will see them, you can be sure, bring to the study of the sciences, letters and the arts the same feverish activity that they show in all the rest.

[In the margin: The first idea is this one: A people who has acquired the habit of literary pleasures cannot get out of the habit completely. There will always remain at least a large number of men who will keep it and there will be utility and profit in satisfying the latter.

The second: Among an enlightened and free people equality cannot fail to have limits. Many rich men, men of leisure who perhaps would not by themselves conceive the pleasures of the imagination but who take to those that they see being enjoyed.]"

Beaumont commented on the study of the sciences in America in *Marie,* I, pp. 247–48.

Some years later, Tocqueville had partially changed his opinion. In a letter dating probably from 1856 and perhaps addressed to Mignet, he asserted:

Under the spell that your reading cast on me yesterday, I forgot to make a small observation to you that has recurred to me since and [that (ed.)] I do not want to leave absolutely in silence. It concerns the very amusing portrait that you do of the Americans, above all of their scorn for letters. I know that you do not speak there in your name; nonetheless, I believe that a small correction from you would do well in that place. I am talking above all of the accusation of being indifferent to letters. You know that since then they have made, even in this direction, very notable progress. They begin to count among civilized nations, even in the sciences that relate to pure theory, like metaphysics. A single parenthesis by you on this subject will reestablish equity without reducing any of the charm of the tableau (Private archives).

[h.] ≠Give all citizens equal means [v: instruction and liberty] to achieve wealth and prevent wealth acquired by the individual efforts of one of them from then going to accumulate by itself and being transmitted without difficulty to all of his descendants, and you will very naturally approach the goal toward which the Saint-Simonians claim to go, without using the dangerous and impractical means that they indicate. Leave men alone. They will class themselves according to their capacity, just watch that nothing prevents them from doing so. ≠

[In the margin] These ideas are capital. They clarify my mind and clearly show me the place where it is necessary to build (*Rubish,* 1. A nearly identical passage exists on the page that carries the number 8).

[j.] So I am persuaded that conditions, by becoming more equal among us, will only extend the circle of those who know and value literary pleasures. The whole question is knowing whether or not they will lose on the side of purity of taste what they gain on the side of numbers.

But I am far from believing that among democratic peoples who have enlightenment and liberty, the number of men of leisure will be as small as is supposed (*Rubish,* 1).

1. Among democratic peoples, each man wants to judge by himself; no one likes to believe anyone on his word; no one talks a lot of fine words. All these instincts are found again in the scientific world, and give to the sciences among the latter peoples a free, sure, experimental, but less lofty course.
2.

[a.] Three distinct parts of the sciences, one purely theoretical, another (illegible word) theoretical but close to application, a last absolutely applied.

The Americans excel in the last two and neglect the first one, why:

1. Meditation is needed to make progress in the most theoretical portion of the sciences. The perpetual movement that reigns in democratic societies does not allow devoting oneself to it. It takes away the time and also the desire. In societies where nearly everyone is constantly in action, there is little esteem for meditation.
2. It is the lofty and disinterested love of truth that pushes the human mind toward the abstract portion of the sciences. These great scientific passions show themselves more rarely in democratic centuries than in others, why:
    1. Because the social state does not lead to great passions in general, and does not keep souls on so lofty a tone.
    2.

    Because men who live in democratic societies are constantly in a hurry to enjoy, are discontent with their position and, aspiring to change it, are not led to value the sciences except as means to go by the easiest and shortest roads to wealth. So they reward scientists in this spirit and push them constantly in this direction.

    [In the margin: I know something more striking, clearer, better finally than this deduction, but my mind refuses to grasp it.]

3. In democratic centuries, the government must exercise all its efforts to sustain the theoretical study of the sciences. Practical study develops by itself.
4. If men turned entirely away from theory to occupy themselves only with the practical, they could again become by themselves nearly barbarous. Example of China (YTC, CVf, pp. 11–12).

[b.] Order of ideas./

1.

Three parts in each science: high, middle, low.

This proved by the science of laws.

These three parts hold together but can be cultivated separately.

2. Equality leads men to neglect the first, in order to occupy themselves only with the other two. Why:

1. No meditation possible in the middle of democratic movement.
2.

Great political liberty that deprives science of great geniuses and great passions. This is not necessarily democratic.

First a distinction must be made between nations that possess great political liberty and those that do not have it. This is a great question: *political* genius and *scientific* genius are so different that you can say that one only inflames the other without diverting it.

3. Two types of scientific passions, one *disinterested* and lofty, the other *mercantile* and low (*Rubish,* 1).

[c.] "Under democracy the sciences get rid of useless words, of empty formulas. Efforts of the Americans to get out of the judicial routine of the English. Code of Ohio.

See Beaumont, G. B. Q." (*Rubish,* 1). Cf. *Marie,* I, pp. 247–48.

[d.] Note in the margin: "Louis thinks that this piece should be modified a bit and do three classes of scientists instead of three classes of sciences. For, in fact, he says, there are only two of them."

[e.] At the end of the chapter, you find a jacket with the title: "Development that seemed too long to me, but which is good in itself.":

An example would make my thought easier to grasp: I would choose the science that I know best which is that of the laws. The distinctions that I have just indicated are found in the science of laws and I believe, without being able to assert it in so positive a way, that you should see at least the trace of those distinctions in all of the laws and principally in those that are called exact, because of the rigorous manner in which they proceed.

There is a science of laws whose object is lofty, speculative, general. The former works hard to find the rules by which human societies exist and to determine the laws that various peoples must impose on themselves in order to reach the goal that they propose for themselves.

There is a science of laws that, taking hold of a particular body of laws, or even of the higher portion of a body of laws, demonstrates what general principles dominate there and shows the economy that reigns and the overall view that is revealed.

There is a last one that enters into the administrative or judicial detail of the processes by which the legislator wanted to have his plans carried out, learns how political

assemblies or the courts interpreted their will, and that teaches the art of making good the rights of each citizen with the aid of the laws.

A class of scholars is attached to each of these portions of the science to whom you give the name writers on law, legal experts, jurists (examine these definitions in the best authors).

If you now come to examine how these different men are related to each other, you discover that in the long run the legal expert and the jurist cannot do without the writer on law, but that at a given moment they can easily act and prosper independently of him.

If men limited themselves to studying the whole and the detail of existing laws without ever going as far as the general theory of laws, it is clear that by degrees they would reach the point of seeing in the legislation of their country only a collection of formulas that they would end up using without exactly understanding their sense, and that they would not take long to become miserably lost in the maze of the subtleties of the school. That is how you can truthfully say that there is a necessary relation between Montesquieu and the least bailiff of the kingdom, in such a way that the enlightenment of the first gives light by a far and distant reflection to the works of the second.

But men do not need to return every day to the philosophy of law in order to know the laws in force; without having sought what the legislator must have wanted, they are able to understand what he wanted. They are able to apply the general wills [*volontés générales* —Trans.] to the particular case and draw from legal science its most useful consequences. Therefore each one of these different portions of the science of laws can be cultivated separately, although each cannot prosper in the long run when it is separated absolutely from the others. Coming back now to my subject, I want to know if democracy tends to develop the various parts of science in the same way.

In America, where the practical portion of human knowledge and the theoretical portion immediately necessary for application are admirably cultivated, there is so to speak no example of anyone interested in the essentially theoretical and general part.

I think that you would not do justice by attributing this to democracy alone. The Americans are pushed exclusively toward application by powerful causes that are due neither to the social state nor to the political constitution. I have carefully enumerated them above.

[In the margin] *Quid.*

[f.] Now in all free governments, a great number of men are involved in politics, and in free governments whose social state is democratic, there is hardly anyone who is not occupied by it. So among nations subject to these governments it must be expected that a kind of public scorn for the higher speculations of science and a kind of instinctive repulsion for those who devote themselves to them will be established.

I imagine that a people constituted like the Germans of today, among whom great civil liberty would be found, where enlightenment would be very widespread, where communal independence would not be unknown, but where great political liberty would not exist, would be in a more fortunate position than another to cultivate and to perfect the theoretical portion of the sciences; and I would not be surprised if, of all the countries of Europe, Germany soon became for this reason the principal center of higher human knowledge.

Despotism is hardly able to maintain what it finds existing, and by itself alone it has never produced anything great. So I am not talking about an enslaved nation, but about a people who would not be entirely master of itself.

Great political liberty seems to me so precious a thing in itself and so necessary to the guarantee of all other liberties that, as long as it does not disappear at the same time from all the countries of the earth, I am more or less sure of never inhabiting a country where it will not exist; but I cannot believe that, following the ordinary course of societies, great political liberty must favor the development of the general and theoretical part of the sciences. I recognize in it a thousand other advantages, but not that one (*Rubish,* 1).

[g.] "Of all branches of human studies, philosophy will be, if I am not mistaken, the one that will suffer most from the establishment of democracy. If the men whose social state and habits are democratic wanted to concern themselves with philosophy, I do not doubt that they would bring to this matter the boldness and the freedom of mind that they display elsewhere. But you can believe that they will rarely want to concern themselves with it" (YTC, CVj, 1, p. 66).

[h.] The taste for well-being makes a multitude ask the sciences loudly for *applications* and recompenses with money and with glory those who find them.

And acting on the soul of scientists the multitude leads them to take their research in this direction and even makes them incapable of directing it elsewhere by taking from them the taste for non-material things that is the principal motivating force of the soul (*Rubish,* 1).

[j.] Different motives that can push men toward science.

Material interest.

Desire for glory.

Passion to discover the truth. Personal satisfaction that is impossible to define or to deny its effects.

Perhaps the greatest scientists are due uniquely to this last passion. For will is not enough to bring action; the mind must rush forward by itself toward the object; it must aspire.

Imagine Newton or Pascal in the middle of a democracy. The soul is given a less lofty tone in democracies. It envisages the things of life from a lower perspective (in the *rubish*the influence of democracy on literature,*Rubish,* 1).

[k.] This fragment appears in the *rubish* with this bibliographic reference: "Plutarch, *Vie de Marcellus,* p. 269, vol. III, translation of Augustus." The quotation, longer in the draft, contains a phrase that is missing from the book: ". . . so noble <and an understanding so profound in which there was a hidden treasure of so many geometric inventions>" (*Rubish,* 1).

[m.] This fragment is found on a separate sheet of the manuscript.

[n.] "So if it happens in the United States that there is no innovation in philosophy, in literature, in science, in the fine arts, that does not come from the fact that the social state of the Americans is democratic, but rather from the fact that their passions are exclusively commercial" (YTC, CVj, 1, p. 91).

[o.] With a note, in the manuscript: "<Louis says that he is afraid that this last piece, although good, appears a bit exaggerated given the current state of our notions on China. It now seems certain, he says, that if the Chinese have declined, they have at least never been as advanced as I suppose and as was supposed in Europe sixty years ago.>"

[p.] In the *rubish:*

Louis said to me today (1 June 1838) that what had struck him as more obvious and more clear in the question of the sciences was that the applied sciences or the theoretical part of the sciences most necessary to application had, in all times, been cultivated among men as the taste for material enjoyments, for individual improvements increased, while the cultivation of the advanced sciences had always been joined with a certain taste for intellectual pleasures which found pleasure in encountering great truths, even if they were useless.

This seemed to him applicable to aristocratic peoples like the English or the men of the Middle Ages, in the period of the Renaissance, although some were occupied in this period with the things of heaven; it is clear however that there was a reaction toward the things of the earth. But he admitted that democracy drove this taste and that it could thus be considered as the mediate cause of this scientific impulse whose immediate cause would be the taste for material enjoyments./

It seems clear to me that I do not make the *taste for material well-being* suggested by this social and political state play a large enough role among the causes that lead democracies toward the applied sciences. It is however the greatest, the most incontestable, the truest reason. I have not precisely omitted it, but under-played it. This gap must be repaired. See note (a, b, c).

To cite England. The taste for well-being taking hold of the democratic classes would give these classes, thanks to liberty and commercial possibilities, a great

preponderance, allowing them in a way to give their spirit to the nation, while letting the aristocratic classes subsist in its midst. What follows for [the (ed.)] sciences.

Still more intense taste; class that feels it still more preponderant in America. Practical impulse of the sciences still more exclusive.

[In the margin: Another point of view that is not sufficiently appreciated. Peoples who have strongly devoted themselves to the application of something, very practically occupied with something, find neither the *time* nor the *taste* to be occupied with theory. I said something similar while talking about the sciences among free peoples. But I was talking only about taste.

It is clear that an aristocracy, like a democracy, can be constantly occupied in a practical way with something and neglect all the rest. It is the case of the Romans who were so devoted to the conquest of the world that they were not able to think about the sciences. They have left nothing on that. While the Greeks more *divided* made great scientific progress./

How many things are explained by the taste for material well-being!!] (*Rubish,* 1).

> 1. Democratic institutions and the democratic social state make the human mind tend toward the useful rather than toward the beautiful as regards art. I set forth this idea without proving it. The rest of the chapter comments on it or adds to it.
> 2.
>
> > 1. In aristocracies, artisans, apart from the desire to earn money, have their individual reputation and the reputation of their corps to maintain. The aim of the arts is to make a small number of masterpieces, rather than a large number of imperfect works. It is no longer so when each profession no longer forms one corps and constantly changes members.
> > 2. In aristocracies, consumers are few, very rich and very demanding. In democracies, they are very many, in straitened circumstances and nearly always with more needs than means. Thus the nature of the producer and of the consumer combine to increase the production of the arts and to decrease their merit.
> > 3. An analogous tendency of the arts in democratic times is to simulate in their products a richness that is not there.
> > 4. In the fine arts in particular, the democratic social state and democratic institutions make the aim the elegant and the pretty rather than the great; the representation of the body rather than that of the soul; they turn away from the ideal and concentrate on the real (YTC, CVf, pp. 12–13).

[b.] "Among the fine arts I clearly see something to say only about architecture, sculpture, painting. As for music, dance ..., I see nothing" (in the *rubish* of chapter 5. *Rubish,* 1).

Tocqueville seems not to have appreciated the musical evenings that he attended in the United States. In his correspondence, he speaks of "caterwauling music" and "unbearable squealings." Beaumont thought it good to delete these commentaries from his edition of Tocqueville's complete works.

[c.] What makes the taste for the *useful* predominate among democratic peoples./ [In the margin: Perhaps to philosophy. What makes the doctrine of the useful predominate. *Utilitarians.*]

This idea is necessary, but perhaps it has already been treated either under this title or under another. *It must be treated separately.* It is too important to be found only accidentally in my book. The preeminence granted in all things to the useful is in fact one of the principal and fertile characteristics of democratic centuries.

There are many things that make the taste for the useful predominate in these centuries: the middling level of fortunes, the lack of superfluity, the lack of imagination or rather the perpetual straining for the production of well-being. There is imagination in the ordinary sense of the word only in the upper and lower classes; the middle ones do not have it.

There are still many other causes. Look for them.

12 April 1838 (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 10).

[d.] You find in aristocratic societies as well as in democracies men who cultivate the useful arts, and who even excel if not in all at least in several of them. It suffices to see a few of the engraved breast-plates that the warriors of the Middle Ages left for us, and the gothic churches that still seem to thrust into the sky from the heart of our cities, in order to understand that the armorers and the masons of those times were often skilled men.

But they did not bring to their works the same spirit as the artisans of today (*Rubish,* 1).

[e.] "Democracy leads toward the useful arts not so much because it decreases the number of those who could have demands to make on the fine arts as because it takes away from the latter even the taste to seek the beautiful in the arts" (in rubish of the chapters on the arts,*Rubish,* 1).

[f.] That the perfection of certain products of the arts is not a proof of civilization./

The Mexicans that Cortés conquered so easily had reached a high degree of perfection in the manufacture of cotton. Their fabrics and the colors with which they covered them were admirable, p. 64.

In India cotton fabrics and particularly muslins have always been made and are still made whose softness, brilliance, and toughness, Europeans, with all the perfection of their arts, are still not able to imitate, p. 61.

India, however, is still in a state of semi-barbarism.

The fact is that the perfection of an isolated art proves nothing, only that the people who cultivate it have emerged from the state of a hunting or pastoral people. In this state nothing can be perfected.

Another curious fact that Baines' book provides me with is that the beautiful muslins of Dana were in all their splendor only while India had kings and an aristocracy. They have been in decline since, because of a lack of orders, p. 61 (*Rubish,* 1).

Edward Baines, *History of the Cotton Manufacture in Great Britain* (London: H. Fisher, R. Fisher and P. Jackson, 1835). Reprinted in New York by Augustus M. Kelly, 1966 (Reprints of Economics Classics).

[g.] "So democracy draws a multitude of mediocre products from the arts, but these products are sufficient for the well-being of a multitude of our fellows, while more perfect works would serve only a small number" (in rubish of the chapters on the arts,*Rubish,* 1).

[h.] ". . . an incredible multitude of country houses, as large as little boxes but as carefully worked . . . I was so struck by how comfortable these small houses had to be and by the good effect that they produced on the landscape, that I will try to obtain the design or the plan of one or two of the prettiest ones. Perhaps Émilie would make use of it for Nacqueville. I already know that they are not expensive." (Extract of the letter from Tocqueville to his mother, of 26 April–19 May 1831, YTC, BIa2.) Pocket notebook 1 in fact contains the plan of one of these houses (YTC, BIIa, pp. 2–3).

[j.] In the margin: "To delete if I put this piece before poetry."

[k.] They hasten [to (ed.)] depict battles before the dead are buried and they enjoy exposing to our view scenes that we witness every day.

I do not know when people will tire of comparing the democracy of our time with what bore the same name in antiquity. The differences between these two things reveal themselves at every turn. For me, I do not need to think about slavery or other reasons that lead me to regard the Greeks as very aristocratic nations despite some democratic institutions that are found in their midst. I agree not to open Aristotle to finish persuading me. It is enough for me to contemplate the statues that these peoples have left. I cannot believe that the man who made the Belvedere Apollo emerge from marble worked in a democracy.

[In the margin. Next to the last paragraph.] To delete. That I think raises useless objections (in the *rubish* of the chapter that follows, *Rubish,* 1).

For his part, Beaumont had written: "There exists, in the United States, a type of painting that prospers: these are portraits; it is not the love of art, it is self-love" (*Marie,* I, p. 254).

1.

[a.] In democratic societies, individuals are very weak, but the State is very great. The imagination narrows when you think about yourself; it expands immeasurably when you turn your attention to the State.

In those societies, you see a small number of very small monuments and a multitude of very large ones.

Example of the Americans proves it.

2.

Nor do large monuments prove anything about the prosperity, the enlightenment and the real greatness of the nation.

Example of the Mexicans and the Romans shows it (YTC, CVf, pp. 13–14).

[b.] In a note: "It is their very weakness that makes its strength . . . "A piece from *ambition* could go well there."

[c.] "In democracies the State must take charge of large and costly works not only because these large works are beautiful, but also in order to sustain the taste for what is great and for perfection" (in rubish of the chapters on the arts,*Rubish,* 1).

In Beaumont's papers you find this note drafted during the journey that they made together to England in 1835:

Aristocracy. Democracy.

Public institutions./ One thing strikes me when I examine the public institutions in England: it is the extreme luxury of their construction and maintenance. In the United States I saw the government of democracy do most of its institutions with an extreme economy. Example: prisons, hospitals. It seems to me that these institutions cannot be done more cheaply. In England it is entirely the opposite: the government or the administration appears to try to construct everything at the greatest possible expense. What magnificence in the construction of Milbank! What luxury in the slightest details!! 20 million francs spent to hold 2,000 prisoners! And Beldlan [Bedlam (ed.)]! for 250 of the insane, 2 million 500 thousand francs (cost of construction), 200,000 pounds sterling. Isn't it the spirit of aristocracies to do everything with grandeur, with luxury, with splendor, and with great expenditures! And Greenwich! And Chelsea!

(14 May [1835], London) (YTC, Beaumont, CX).

[d.] Many men judge the state of the civilization of a people by its monuments, that is a very uncertain measure.

I will admit that it proves that these peoples were more aristocratic, but not that they were more civilized and greater.

Ruins of Palenque in Mexico. Mexicans who still knew only hieroglyphic writing and vanquished so easily by the Spanish (*Rubish* of the previous chapter, *Rubish,* 1).

In 1845, concerning French monuments, Tocqueville made the following reflection to his friend Milnes:

France has the appearance of noticing since only ten years ago, that it is still covered with masterpieces of the Middle Ages. The idea of repairing them, of completing them, of preserving them above all from complete ruin preoccupies a great number of cities, several of which have already made great sacrifices. Do not conclude from it that society is returning to old ideas and institutions. It is the sign of precisely the opposite. Nothing indicates better that the Revolution is finished and that the old society is dead. As long as the war between the old France and the new France presented for the first the least chance of success, the nation treated the monuments of the Middle Ages like adversaries; it destroyed them or left them to perish; it saw in them only the physical representation of the doctrines, beliefs, mores and laws that were hostile to it. In the middle of this preoccupation, it did not even notice their beauty. It is because it no longer fears anything from what they represent that it is attached to them as if to great works of art and to curious remnants of a time that no longer exists. The archeologist has replaced the party man (Paris, letter of 14 April 1845. With the kind permission of Trinity College, Cambridge. Houghton papers, 25/201).

[e.] The *rubish* continues:

Large monuments belong to the middle state of civilization rather than to a very advanced civilization. Man ordinarily erects them when his thoughts are already great and his knowledge is still limited and when he does not yet know how to satisfy it except at great expense.

On the other hand, the ruins of a few large monuments cannot teach us if the social state of the people who erected them was aristocratic or democratic since we have just seen that democracy happens to build similar ones.

In the rough drafts of the previous chapter: “They [large monuments (ed.)] are the product of centralization. Here introduce the thought that centralization is not at all the sign of high civilization. It is found neither at the beginning nor at the end of civilization, but in general at the middle” (rubish of chapters on the arts,*Rubish,* 1).

And in another place in the same jacket: “Large monuments prove nothing but the destruction of large monuments proves. Warwick castle, *aristocratic.* Cherbourg sea wall, *democratic”* (*rubish* of the previous chapter. *Rubish,* 1). It was during his stay in England in 1833 that Tocqueville visited the ruins of Warwick castle, setting for *Kenilworth* of Walter Scott. To his future wife, Mary Mottley, he sent a short account of his visit entitled *Visit to Kenilworth* (YTC, CXIb, 12, reproduced in *OCB,* VII, pp. 116–19).

1. The Americans do not have literature so to speak. All their literary works come to them from England, or are written according to English taste.
2. This is due to particular and temporary causes and must not prevent us from searching for what the literature natural to democracy is.
3. All ranks are marked and men immobile in their places, literary life like political existence is concentrated in an upper class. From that fixed rules, traditional literary habits, art, delicacy, finished details, taste for style, for form . . .
4. When ranks are mixed, men of talent and writers have diverse origins, a different education, they constantly change, only a little time can be given to the pleasures of the mind . . . . From that, absence of rules, scorn for style, rapidity, fertility, liberty.
5. There is a moment when the literary genius of democracy and that of aristocracy join, short and brilliant period, French literature of the XVIIIth century (YTC, CVf, pp. 14–15).

[b.] In the *Rubish,* under the title influence of democracy on literature, the chapter begins in this way: " ≠I am speaking about America and America does not yet so to speak have literature, but the subject attracts me and holds me. I cannot pass by without stopping ≠. When you enter . . ." (*Rubish,* 1).

Another title of the chapter, still in the *Rubish,* was this one: general ideas on the effect produced by equality on literature. The initial plan of Tocqueville probably included this sole chapter that, becoming too long, was subsequently divided. The rough drafts of this chapter and of those that follow, up to chapter 18, are found in several jackets; the contents do not always coincide with the title.

The reflections of Tocqueville on literature have given rise to various commentaries: Katherine Harrison, "A French Forecast of American Literature," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 25, no. 4 (1926): 350–56; Donald D. Kummings, "The Poetry of Democracies: Tocqueville's Aristocratic Views," *Comparative Literature Studies* 11, no. 4 (1974): 306–19; Reino Virtanen, "Tocqueville on a Democratic Literature," *French Review* 23, no. 3 (1950): 214–22; Paul West, "Literature and Politics. Tocqueville on the Literature of Democracies," *Essays in Criticism* 12, no. 3 (1972): 5–20; Françoise Mélonio and José-Luis Díaz, editors, *Tocqueville et la littérature* (Paris: Presses de l'Université Paris-Sorbonne, 2005).

[c.] "For these statistical details look in Beaumont" (*Rubish,* 1).

Cf. *Marie,* I, pp. 238–58. Beaumont always showed a more intense interest than Tocqueville in literature. At the time of their voyage in England in 1835, it is Beaumont who questioned J. S. Mill on the relationship between literature and democracy.

Literature./

Democracy./

Conversation with John Mill, 18 June 1835. London./

Question. Up to now I consider democracy as favorable to the material well-being of the greatest number, and from this perspective I am a partisan of it. But a shadow exists in my mind; a doubt troubles me. I do not know if the tendency of democracy is not anti-intellectual; it gives to the greatest number physical well-being; up to a certain point it is even a source of morality for all those whose condition it renders middling, either by destroying great wealth, which corrupts, or by bringing an end to great poverty, which degrades and debases; it also spreads more general, more uniform instruction. There are its benefits; but to what point is it not contrary to the taste for literature, to the development of the advanced sciences, to speculative studies, to intellectual meditations? In order to devote oneself to the love of literature and the pleasures of the mind, leisure is necessary, and who possesses leisure if not the rich? The man who works to live, does he find the leisure to think? Does he have the time, the taste and the ability for it? Isn't it to be feared that at the same time that common instruction spreads among the greatest number, advanced instruction will be abandoned, that the taste for literature will be lost, and that only useful books will be read? that no one will be interested in theories and speculation? that you will think only of application, and no longer of invention?

Answer. I believe that the tendency of democracy is diametrically opposed to the fear that you express. Here we see, as an argument in favor of democracy, the impulse that it gives to the taste for letters and intellectual things. It is true that as democracy spreads, the number of those who work in order to exist increases; at the same time the number of persons with leisure decreases. But it is precisely on this fact that we base our belief. We consider it as a fact established by experience that the men who work the most are those who read and think more; while idle men neither read nor think. The man who does nothing and whose whole life is leisure rarely finds the time to do anything. For him, reading is a trial, and three quarters and a half of the rich do not read a volume a year; they are moreover constantly busy with little nothings, with small interests of luxury, dress, horses, wealth, frivolous cares that are distractions rather than occupations. For them it is such a great difficulty to expand their mind for a single instant that writing the least letter seems a trial, reading the least work is an onerous burden (YTC, Beaumont, CX).

[d.] "<≠These are the works of Mr. Irving, the novels of Mr. Cooper, the eloquent treatises of Doctor Channing ≠>" (*Rubish,* 1).

Unpublished travel note from small notebook A:

Books interesting and good to buy:

1. *Stories of American Life,* by American Writers, edited by Mary Russell Mitford (Colburn and Bentley: London, 1831), 3 vols. A worthwhile review is given in *Westminster Review,* April 1831, page 395. They include portrayals of three types: 1. Historical life or life sixty years ago. 2. Border life that is the life of the outer settlements. 3. City life which embraces pictures of masses as they exist at this

moment in New York, Philadelphia and the great towns (small notebook A, YTC, BIIa).

Tocqueville does not appear to have read this book.

Tocqueville and Beaumont would have been able to have a conversation with the writer Catherine Maria Sedgwick, of whom they had heard a great deal spoken. But, impatient to reach Boston, they just missed her at Stockbridge (George W. Pierson, *Tocqueville and Beaumont in America,* pp. 349–50). Tocqueville seems to have read the letters of Cooper. In travel notebook E, you read: "Find Cooper's letters" (YTC, BIIa, different reading in *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 65). It probably concerns James Fenimore Cooper, *Notions of the Americans; Picked Up By a Travelling Bachelor* (London: Henry Colburn, 1828), 2 vols.

In an unpublished note (alphabetic notebook A, YTC, BIIa) you find the following list: "Living American writers: Verplank—Paulding—Hall—Stone—Neal—Barker—Willis—Miss Sedgwick." It concerns the authors who are included in the book edited by Mary Russell Mitford, and who are cited in the preface of the work.

In *Marie* (I, pp. 392–93) Beaumont cites the following American authors: Miss Sedgwick, James Fenimore Cooper, Washington Irving, Jared Sparks, Robert Walsh, Edward Livingston, Daniel Webster, Henry Clay, Edward Everett, and William Ellery Channing. Reino Virtanen has suggested that Channing's *Remarks on National Literature* perhaps influenced the writing of these chapters on literature. See concerning Channing, Reino Virtanen, "Tocqueville and William Ellery Channing," *American Literature,* 22, 1951, pp. 21–28; and "Tocqueville and the Romantics," *Symposium* 13, no. 2 (1959): 167–85. William Ellery Channing, *The Importance and Means of a National Literature* (Edinburgh: Thomas Clark, 1835), 31 pages, claims that the United States does not yet have literature and proposes means to create one.

Tocqueville could as well have been influenced by an article by Philarète Chasles, published under the title "De la littérature dans l'Amérique du Nord," which appeared in the *Revue des deux mondes,* volume III, 1835, pp. 169–202.

[e.] "The Americans are in the most unfavorable position for having a literature. A new people that each day finds at its disposal the literary works of an ancient people./

Democracy produces a host of bad works; but it does not prevent good ones" (*Rubish,* 1).

[f.] "Look in all the dictionaries for democracy, you will not find there the word *erudition"* (*Rubish,* 1).

[g.] I remember that one day, the pioneer was absent, and while awaiting his return, I took one of these volumes, isolated product of a genius of another hemisphere. Having opened it by chance, I fell upon the first part of the drama of Henry V [v: VI]. Time and the overly active curiosity of my hosts had almost destroyed the rest. During this reading I soon lost sight of the sentiment [of (ed.)] all that surrounded me and all the great characters evoked by the poet arose little by little around me. I

thought I saw them with their language, their beliefs, their passions, their prejudices, their virtues and their vices.

All the memories of the heroic times of our history assailed me at the same time; my imagination filled suddenly with the pomp of feudal society; I saw high turrets, a thousand banners waving in the air; I heard the sound of armor, the burst of clarions, the heavy step of caparisoned war horses. I contemplated for a moment all this mixture of misery and wealth, of strength and weakness, of inequality and grandeur that marked the Middle Ages, and then I opened my eyes and saw myself in my small log cabin built yesterday in the middle of a flowering wilderness that recalled the first days of the world and was inhabited by the descendants of these same Europeans who had become the obscure and peaceful citizens of a democratic republic. I felt gripped, passing my view alternately over these two extreme points of human destiny that I had before me. I was astonished by the immense space that stretched between [them (ed.)] and that humanity had had to cover.

Do you desire to see in all their clarity the extreme mobility and the strange detours of human destiny? Do you want, in a way, to see the raging and irresistible torrent of time flow before your eyes? Go sit down next to the hearth of the American pioneer and there read Shakespeare in the shadow of the virgin forest.

[In the margin] Read the books of Mr. Irving [that (ed.)] have all the merits and all the defects of a translation" (*Rubish,* 1).

[h.] In a first version:

<≠Mr. Fenimore Cooper borrowed his principal scenes from wild nature and not from democratic forms. He portrayed America as it no longer is, with colors foreign to the America of today. Mr. W. Irving is English in content as well as in form; he excels at representing with finesse and grace scenes borrowed from the aristocratic life of England. He is happy amid old feudal ruins and never borrows> anything from the country where he was born. The writers I am speaking about, despite their talent and the quarrelsome patriotism that they often try to use to *enhance* their efforts in the eyes of their fellow citizens, do not excite more real sympathies in the United States than if they were born in England. Thus, they live as little as they can in the country that they praise to us, and in order to enjoy their glory they come to Europe ≠(*Rubish,* 1).

[j.] First version: "America is moreover, taken in mass and despite its efforts to appear independent, still in relation to Europe in the position of a secondary city relative to the capital, and you notice, in its smallest ways of acting, this mixture of pride and servility that is nearly always found in the conduct of the provinces vis-à-vis their capital" (*Rubish,* 1).

[k.] Do you want to clarify my thought by examples? Compare modern literature to that of antiquity.

What fertility, what boldness, what variety in our writings! What wisdom, what art, what perfection, what finish in those of the Greeks and Romans!

What causes the difference? I think of the large number of slaves who existed among the ancients, of the small number of masters, of the concentration of power and wealth in a few hands. This begins to enlighten me, but does not yet satisfy me, for the same causes are more or less found among us. Some more powerful reason is necessary. I discover it finally in the rarity and expense of books and the extreme difficulty of reproducing and circulating them. Circumstances, coming to concentrate the taste for pleasures of the mind in a very small number, formed a small literary aristocracy of the elite within a large political aristocracy" (*Rubish,* 1).

[m.] Note in the manuscript: "Language of Bensserade and of Voiture. Hôtel de Rambouillet. Novel of Scudéry.

"Some *affected.*

"Others *coarse."* Tocqueville had probably read P. L. Rœderer, *Mémoire pour servir à l'histoire de la société polie en France* (Paris: Firmin Didot Frères, 1835).

[1.]*All of this is true above all in aristocratic countries that have been subject to the power of a king for a long time and peacefully.*

When liberty reigns in an aristocracy, the upper classes are constantly obliged to make use of the lower ones; and, by using them, they become closer to them. That often makes something of the democratic spirit penetrate within them. Moreover, among a privileged corps that governs, there develops an energy and habit of enterprise, a taste for movement and noise, that cannot fail to influence all literary works.

[n.]*"Metaphysics.* Perhaps mystical by spirit of reaction" (*Rubish,* 1).

[o.] In the manuscript:

<Per[haps (ed.)] here piece B while removing what I say about style a few lines higher?>

B. Men who live in aristocracies have for style, as in general for all forms, a superstitious respect and an exaggerated love. It happens that they value experience and turns of phrase as much as thought. Those who live in democratic countries are on the contrary led to neglect style too much. Sometimes they show an imprudent scorn for it. There are some of them who think themselves philosophers in that and who are often nothing but coarse ignoramuses.

[p.] "Irving is a model of aristocratic graces.

"Irving must not be considered as an image of democratic literature, but his great success in America proves that democracies themselves are sensitive to great literary merit, whatever it may be" (*Rubish,* 1).

In another place:

The success of Mr. W. Irving in the United States is a proof of this. I know of nothing more firm and more gracious than the spirit of this author. Nothing more polished than his works. They form a collection of small tableaux painted with an infinite [v: admirable] delicacy. Not only has this particular merit not prevented Mr. Irving from gaining a great reputation in America, but evidently he owes it to this merit alone, for it would be difficult to find any other one in him (*Rubish,* 1).

[q.] "The most favorable moment for the development of the sciences, of literature and of the arts is when democracy begins to burst into the midst of an aristocratic society. Then you have movement amid order. Then humanity moves very rapidly, but like an army in battle, without breaking ranks and without discipline losing anything to ardor" (*Rubish,* 1).

[r.] In a letter of 31 July 1834 intended for Charles Stoffels and devoted to literature, Tocqueville formulated the following remarks concerning style:

Buffon assuredly said something false when he claimed that style was the whole man, but certainly style makes a great part of the man. Show me books that have *remained,* having as sole merit the ideas that they contained. They are few. I do not even know of an example to cite, if not perhaps a few books whose style was of an extreme simplicity; this negative defect does not repulse the reader in an absolute way like the opposite vice. You find that the principal quality of style is to *paint* objects and to make them perceptible to the imagination. I am of the same opinion, but the difficulty is not seeing the goal but attaining it. It is this very desire to put the thought *in relief* that preoccupies all those who are involved in writing today and that makes most of them fall into such great extravagances. Without having myself a style that satisfies me in any way, I have however studied a great deal and meditated for a long time about the style of others, and I am persuaded of what I am about to say to you. There is in the great French writers, whatever the period from which you take them, a certain characteristic turn of thought, a certain way of seizing the attention of readers that belongs to each of them. I believe that you come to the world with this particular character; or at least I admit that I see no way to acquire it; for if you want to imitate the particular technique of an author, you fall into what painters call pastiches; and if you do not want to imitate anyone, you are colorless. But there is a quality common to all writers; it serves in a way as the basis of their style; it is on this foundation that they each then place their own colors. This quality is quite simply *good sense.* Study all the writers left to us by the century of Louis XIV, that of Louis XV, and the great writers from the beginning of ours, such as Madame de Staël and M. de Chateaubriand, and you will find among all good sense as the base. So what is good sense applied to style? That would take a very long time to define. It is the care to present ideas in the simplest and easiest order to grasp. It is the attention given to presenting at the same time to the reader only one simple and clear point of view whatever the diversity of the matters treated by the book, so that the thought is [not (ed.)] so to speak on two ideas. It is the care to use words in their true sense, and as much as possible in their most limited and most certain sense, in a way that the reader always positively knows what object or what image you want to present to him. I

know men so clever that, if you quibble with them on the sense of a sentence, they immediately substitute another one without so to speak changing a single word, each of them being *almost* appropriate for the thing. The former men can be good diplomats, but they will never be good writers. What I also call good sense applied to style is to introduce into *the illustrations* only things comparable to the matter that you want to show. This is better understood by examples. Everyone makes illustrations while speaking, as M. Jourdain made prose; the illustration is the most powerful means to put into relief the matter that you want to make known; but still it is necessary that there is some analogy with the matter, or at least that you understand clearly what type of analogy the author wants to establish between them. When Pascal, after depicting the grandeur of the universe, ends with this famous piece: "The world is an infinite sphere whose circumference is everywhere and whose center is nowhere," the soul is gripped by this image, and however gigantic the idea that it presents, the mind conceives it at the first stroke; the object that Pascal uses for his comparison is familiar; the reader knows perfectly the ordinary dimensions of it and the form; with modifications made by the writer, it becomes however an admirable object of comparison with the universe that extends without end around you like an immense circle whose center you think you occupy wherever you go. Pascal's thought makes (illegible word) so to speak and grasps in an exact and (illegible word) fashion what the mind itself cannot conceive. I do not know why I cited this example. I could have cited thousands of others. In the most innocent, most skillful or most delicate ideas of great writers you always see a foundation of good sense and reason that forms the base. I have allowed myself to go on speaking about this part of style more than others because that is where most of the writers of our time err and that is what makes a jargon of P. L. Courrier [Courier (ed.)] be called their style. . . .If you want to write well, you must above all read, while studying *from the viewpoint of style* those who have written the best. The most useful, without comparison, seem to me to be the prose writers of the century of Louis XIV. Not that you must imitate their *turn,* which is dated, but the base of their style is admirable. There, sticking out, you find all the principal qualities that have distinguished good styles in all centuries (YTC, CIc).

The ideas explained in these chapters scarcely differ from those of Chateaubriand, Sainte-Beuve or La Harpe. Tocqueville's literary tastes always included the classics of the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries, such as Pascal, Bossuet and Bourdaloue. In 1838, his readings included Rabelais, Plutarch, Cervantes, Machiavelli, Fontenelle, Saint-Evremond and the Koran. See Charles de Grandmaison, "Séjour d'Alexis de Tocqueville en Touraine," *Correspondant,* 114, 1879, p. 933; and the conversation with Senior on literature in *Correspondence and Conversations of Alexis de Tocqueville with Nassau William Senior* (London: H. S. King and Co., 1872), I, pp. 140–43.

[a.] Democracy not only makes the taste for letters penetrate the industrial classes, it introduces the industrial spirit into literature.

Since readers are very numerous and very easy to satisfy because of the absolute need that they have for something new, you can make your fortune by constantly producing a host of new but imperfect works. You thus easily enough attain a small glory and a great fortune.

Democratic literatures for a small number of great writers swarm with sellers of ideas (YTC, CVf, p. 15).

[b.] On the jacket of the chapter: “Small chapter that seems to me too short (given its merit) and that must, I believe, be combined or even destroyed.” In the manuscript you also find a draft of the chapter, but no *rubish* exists for it. The central idea of this chapter, as Reino Virtanen (“Tocqueville and the Romantics,” *Symposium* 13, no. 2, 1959, p. 180) has remarked, recalls the article of Sainte-Beuve, “De la littérature industrielle,” *Revue des deux mondes,* 19, 1839, pp. 675–91. Cf. *Marie,* I, p. 248.

[c.] In the draft: “It would be very useful to know what Corneille, Racine and Voiture gained from their works.”

[d.] In the draft:

Not only do the Americans make few books, but also most of their books seem written solely with profit in view. You would say that in general their authors see in literature only an industry and cultivate letters in the same spirit that they clear virgin forests. That is easily understood.

[In the margin: This must probably be deleted, for the Americans cannot present the image of opposites.

If in literature they are subject to the aristocratic genius of the English, as I said previously, how can they present the vices of the literary genius of democracies?

That is not yet clear however.]/

The fault comes in the word *literature.* The Americans do not have literature, but they have books and what I am saying about their books is true.

[e.] In the draft: “Authors desire money more than in aristocratic centuries because money is everything./

“They earn money more easily because of the multitude of readers./“And the less they aim for perfection, the more of it they earn.”

1. That the ancient societies always formed true aristocracies, despite their democratic appearance.
2. That their literature was always in an aristocratic state, because of the rarity of books.
3. That their authors show, in fact, very much in relief the qualities natural to those who write in times of aristocracy.
4. That it is therefore very appropriate to study them in democratic times.
5. That does not mean that everyone must be thrown into the study of Greek and Latin.

[a.] What is good for literature can be inappropriate for social and political needs. In democratic centuries it is important to the interest of individuals and to the security of the State that studies are more industrial than literary.

But in these societies there must be schools where one can be nourished by ancient literature.

A few (illegible word) universities and literary (illegible word) would do better for that than the multitude of our bad colleges (YTC, CVf, p. 16).

[b.] [In the margin: To put in the preface when I show the difficulty of the subject.

New state.

Incomplete state.]

It is sufficient to read the *Vies des hommes illustres* of Plutarch to be convinced that antiquity was and always remained profoundly aristocratic in its laws, in its ideas, in its mores [v: opinions], that what was understood by the people of that time does not resemble the people of today, and that the rivalry of plebeians and patricians in Rome compared to what is happening today between the rich and the poor must be considered only as internal quarrels between the elders and the junior members of an aristocracy.

[To the side: that even the democracy of Athens never resembled that of America [v: never could give the idea of the democratic republic].

This idea has been introduced in the chapters on literature and is good there](YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 37–38).

In March and April 1838, Tocqueville read Plutarch. In his letters to Beaumont, Corcelle and Royer-Collard, he admits that he finds in Plutarch a grandeur of spirit that pleases him and makes him forget the moral meanness of the time in which he lives. Various parts of the manuscript retain traces of this reading.

1. Modification that English has experienced in America.
2. Democratic cause of that:
    1. Democratic peoples constantly change their words, because among them things are constantly shifting. Thus, great number of new words, character of democratic languages.
    2. Character of these new words. Most of them are related to the needs of industry, to the science of administration.
    3.

    [a.] Origin of these words. Little of learned etymologies. Some borrowings made from living languages. Above all, gain from itself.

    Three means of gaining from itself: 1. Put forgotten terms back into use. 2. Make expressions belonging to a science or to a profession

enter into general circulation with a figurative meaning. 3. Give to a word in use an uncommon meaning. That is the most widely used and easiest method, but also the most dangerous. By doubling the meaning of a word in this way, you make it uncertain which one you are leaving aside for it and which one you are giving to it.

4. What makes dialects and *patois* disappear with democratic institutions.
5. What makes all artificial and conventional classifications of words disappear as well in the same period.
6. Why democracy multiplies abstract words, generalizes their use and leads to the abuse of them (YTC, CVf, p. 17).

[b.] On the jacket of the manuscript: "The review of this chapter was extremely tiring for me; I do not know if this explains why I currently consider the chapter as too long and boring and miss the original draft, fragments of which I will find moreover in the rubish.

"Read this chapter to men of the world and study their impressions."

[c.] In the margin: " ≠So the language of a people is an excellent indicator for judging their social state, just as knowledge of the social state is sufficient to judge the state of the language in advance. ≠"

[d.] They said that the Americans showed even more propensity than the English for making new words; that when the Americans made a new word, they never looked for its root in learned languages; that they borrowed it from foreign languages or even from their own language by changing the meaning of an already known word or by making a word move from the real meaning to the figurative meaning. These educated Englishmen added that most of these borrowings were made from the vocabulary of artisans, of businessmen, of political men rather than from that of philosophers, so that language had a kind of tendency to become materialized. Finally, they said that the Americans often used indiscriminately the same words in very diverse circumstances; so that the Americans employed on a solemn occasion an expression that the English would have used only in the most ordinary cases and vice versa.

Letter to Mr. Hall (on letter paper, *Rubish,* 1).

The letter to Basil Hall, from which Tocqueville drew this fragment, is found in the library of Princeton University and says this:

Château de Baugy, 19 June 1836./

I cannot thank you enough, Sir, for the letter you kindly sent me on the 4th of this month. I accept with a great deal of gratitude all that it contains of flattery and usefulness. Your opinions on America and on England will always carry a great weight in my view and I love knowing them, even when they do not exactly conform to mine. Controversy between men who esteem one another can only be very profitable. I will prove that your letter pleased me greatly by answering it at great

length. I would like my response to engage you in continuing a correspondence to which I attach great value.

You reproach me for having said: *that the interests of the poor were sacrificed in England to those of the rich.* I confess that this thought, explained in so few words, thrown out in passing, without commentaries, is of a nature to present a much more absolute meaning than the one I meant to give it, and my intention has always been to modify it, when I could get to reviewing my work. What I wanted to say principally is that England is a country in which wealth is the *required preliminary* for a host of things that elsewhere you can gain without it. So that in England there is a host of careers that are much more closed to the poor than they are in several other countries. This would still demand a great number of explanations in order to be well understood. I am obliged to set them aside for the moment when I will have the pleasure of seeing you again. For now, I move to a subject that has a more *current* interest for me, which is America.

You find that I have portrayed too favorably the *domestic happiness* of the Americans. As it is very important for me to clarify this delicate point to which I will be obliged to return in my two last volumes, you will allow me, I hope, to submit a few observations to you. I have not claimed that a great tenderness reigned in the interior of households in the United States; I wanted to say that a great deal of order and purity reigned there, an essential condition for the order and tranquillity of political society itself. I believed that came in part from the principles and the character that American women brought to the conjugal union, and it is in this sense that I said that women exercised a great indirect influence on politics. It seemed to me that in the United States more than in any other country that I know, it was acknowledged and regulated by *unanimous consent* that the woman once married devoted herself entirely to her husband and to her children, and that is what made me say that *nowhere had a higher and more just idea of conjugal happiness been imagined.* The extreme purity of morals in marriage seems to me, after all, the first of all the conditions for this happiness, although it is not the only one, and on this point America seems to me to have the advantage even over England. I proved by my conduct the high idea that I have of English women; but if virtue is, as I do not doubt, the general rule for them, this rule seems to me to allow still fewer exceptions on the other side of the Atlantic. Here is my comment on this subject: I *never* heard a thoughtless remark said in the United States about a married woman; American books always assume chaste women; foreigners themselves, whose tongues would not be bound by custom, confess that there is nothing to say about them. I have even met some of them corrupt enough to be distressed by it, and their regret seemed to me the most complete demonstration of the fact. The same unanimity is not seen in England. I met young fools in England who hardly spared the honor of their female compatriots. I saw moralists who complained that the morality of women, principally in the lower classes, was not as great as formerly. Finally, your writers themselves sometimes assume that conjugal faith is violated. All of that does not exist, to my knowledge, in America. But I see myself that I have allowed myself to be carried much too far in my demonstration. I hope that you will see in what precedes only the extreme desire to enlighten myself on a subject that is infinitely important for me to know.

I will answer almost nothing on what you tell me about the Anglican Church. I do not know England well enough to be able to discuss with you the degree of political utility that your church can have. What I want to say is that in general I believe the union of church and State, not harmful to the State, but harmful to the church. I have seen too closely among us the fatal consequences of this union not to be afraid that something analogous is happening among you. Now, that is a result that you must try to avoid at all cost, for religion is, in my eyes, the first of all the political guarantees, and I do not see any good that can compensate men for the loss of beliefs.

I thank you very much for taking the trouble to inform me about the idiom of the Americans. This subject has interested me greatly recently, and I want to talk about it with you at greater length since you have assured me that my questions would not bother you.

In the United States I met very well bred Englishmen who made the following remarks to me. They struck me all the more at the moment when they were made to me because I had observed something analogous in the modifications that the French language has undergone during the past one hundred years. They said then that the Americans had still more propensity than the English for making new words, that when they made a new word they never looked for its root in learned languages, that they borrowed it from foreign languages or even from their own language by changing the meaning of an already known word or by making a word move from the real meaning to the figurative meaning. They added that most of these borrowings were made from the language of various industries, that they were taken from the vocabulary of artisans, of businessmen, of political men rather than from that of philosophers, so that the language had a tendency to become materialized, in a way. I do not know, Sir, if I am making myself understood. A long conversation would be necessary to explain what I am forced to put into a few lines. Also I am counting more on your sagacity than on my clarity. These same persons also said that it often happened that the Americans used indiscriminately the same words in very diverse circumstances, so that they employed on a solemn occasion an expression that the English would have used only in the most ordinary cases and vice versa.

Does all of that seem well founded to you? If this scribbling suggests some ideas to you and you would be good enough to share them with me, I will be very obliged to you. And now, Sir, it only remains for me to ask you to excuse my detestable writing—that you will perhaps decipher with difficulty—and to accept the assurance of my most profound consideration.

[signed: Alexis de Tocqueville.]

P. S. If your article appears in the review, I will be very pleased to see it, but believe, Sir, that this circumstance will add nothing to the gratitude that I feel at your having written it.

University Library). The article of Basil Hall cited in the postscript is "Tocqueville on the State of America," *Quarterly Review,* 57, 1836, pp. 132–62.

[e.] In the margin: " ≠Canada. ≠"

[f.] M. de Chateaubriand says in his comments on Milton, 1, V, that the latter created five to six hundred new words, nearly all drawn from Greek, Hebrew and Latin. Good example of learned neologism./

Consubstantiality, word created or at least recognized and brought to light by the Council of Nice [Nicea (ed.)] in the fourth century to combat Arius.

Transubstantiation, word created in the XVIth century by the adversaries of Luther who wanted to express by [that (ed.)] that the bread of the host changed substance and became the body of Jesus Christ. See *Histoire des variations,* v. 1, p. 113.

Constitutionality, word created by the French Revolution expressing likewise a new idea. Examples of new words that different causes can invent in all times (*Rubish,* 1).

In the margin of the manuscript, Tocqueville notes another example of neologism: "comfortable—English."

Cf. Chateaubriand, *Essai sur la littérature anglaise* (Paris: Charles Gosselin and Furne, 1836), I, pp. 8–9. Tocqueville authorized Henry Reeve, the English translator of his book, to delete the reference to Milton, which the latter considered inaccurate. Reeve finally left it, probably because Tocqueville had informed him that it was already too late to eliminate it from the French edition (*Correspondance anglaise, OC,* VI, 1, pp. 54–57).

During the summer of 1836, which he spent in Switzerland, Tocqueville read *The Prince,* the *History of Florence* and some letters of Machiavelli, the *Complete Works* of Plato and the *Histoire des variations* of Bossuet (the library of the Tocqueville château contains an edition published in Paris in 1730).

[g.] In the margin, concerning this paragraph: "<To delete, I think.>"

[h.] In America there is no class which speaks the language in a very delicate and very studied manner, but you do not find a *patois.* The same remark applies to Canada. That is due to several causes, but among others to equality of conditions which, by giving to all men an analogous education, by mixing them together constantly, has had to provide them necessarily with similar forms of language.

We see the same revolution taking place in Europe and above all in France. The *patois* are disappearing as conditions become equal (*Rubish,* 1).

[j.] In the margin: "<Perhaps make this into a small chapter having this title: why equality multiplies the number of abstract words, generalizes their use and leads to the abuse of them.

“Probably do so.>”

[k.] General and abstract terms./

Due to the need to give yourself latitude while speaking either to yourself or to others; to the fear of responsibility; to the need to give yourself latitude to the right and to the left of the point where you are placed. Result of life in a changing, uncertain, agitated time, as a democratic time always is, and of the softness of souls in that same time./

All our impressions turn vague when you approach a moral question; they float between praise and blame. Which comes from the softness of souls that demands little effort from others and requires little from yourself (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 23).

Madame de Staël already complained about the uncontrolled creation of abstract words in Chapter VII of the second part of her *De la littérature* (Paris: Charpentier, 1842), p. 501. La Harpe had done the same.

[m.] “At the time of the last insurrection of the Greeks against the Turks, a minister [v: orator], having to speak of Greece and not knowing if he had to designate it as a province in revolt or as a free State, took it into his head to call it a locality. An aristocratic language would never have provided such an expedient to politics” (*Rubish,* 1). See René Georgin, “Tocqueville et le langage de la démocratie,” *Vie et langage* 17, no. 201 (1968):740–44; and Laurence Guellec, *Tocqueville et les langages de la démocratie* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2004).

> 1. Definition of poetry. Search for and portrayal of the ideal. Object of the chapter. Try to find out if among the actions, sentiments and ideas of democratic peoples, some are found that lend themselves to the ideal and can serve as source of poetry.
> 2. Democratic peoples have naturally less taste for the ideal because of the passions that bind them constantly to the pursuit of the real.
> 3. Moreover there are several subjects proper to the portrayal of the ideal that they are lacking.
>
> > 1. Religions are shaken.
> > 2. They become simplified
> > 3. Men take no further interest in the past.
> > 4. They find with difficulty material for the ideal in the present because they are all small and see each other very clearly.
> > 4. So most of the American [ancient? (ed.)] sources of poetry are drying up, but others are opening.
> > 1. Men of democratic centuries readily take an interest in the future.
> > 2. If individuals are small, society seems [blank (ed.)] to them and lends itself to poetry. Each nation sees itself.
> > 3. The human species is seen and it can be portrayed.
> > 4. There is no complete divinity, but the figure of God is greater and clearer and his place relative to the whole of human affairs is more recognizable.

> 5. The external man does not lend himself [to poetry (ed.)] but poets descend into the realm of the soul and there they find the sentiments of not just one man in particular, but of man in general to portray; equality brings forth the image of man in general and is interested in him.

[a.] Thus democracy does not make all the subjects that lend themselves to the ideal disappear. It makes them less numerous and greater (YTC, CVf, pp. 18–19).

In the rubish of these chapters you find this as well:

Poetry of democracy./

Future of democracy, sole poetic idea of our time. Immense, indefinite idea. Period of renewal, of total change in the social system of humanity. This idea alone throws more poetry into souls than there was in the century of Louis XV and in that of Louis XIV.

It is only the past or the future that is poetic. The present very rarely is. There was nevertheless a great deal of poetry in the present in the Middle Ages. Facts to explain (*Rubish,* 1).

[b.] On a jacket that accompanies that of the chapter:

Piece that began the chapter and that must be deleted, I believe, as written in an affected style and above all verbiage./

I would like to portray the influence that democratic institutions exercise in the United States on the poetic genius of man, but beyond the fact that the subject is placed outside of the ordinary circle of my thoughts, a first difficulty stops me.

I do not know if anyone up to now has taken care to provide an uncontested definition of the thing I am attempting to speak about. No one can deny that poetry ≠has not ≠obtained great power over the imagination of men; but who has ever said clearly what poetry was; how many different and often dissimilar things we have gathered under this very name!

[In the margin: Show in a more striking way what is *useful* in poetry. The Romans./

It is not sufficiently understood that men cannot do without poetry./

Poetry and *poetic faculty* to distinguish. Taste for the ideal./

I want to examine not only if democracy leads men to do works of poetry but also if it suggests poetic ideas to them./

The one is not the necessary consequence of the other, for a people can have a great number of poetic ideas and not have the time or the art of writing or the taste for reading. But in general you can say that these two things go together.]

A small rhymed epigram is a work of poetry; a long epic in verse is as well. I see enormous differences between these two productions of the human mind, but they have something similar in the form. I understand that it is to form that the word begins to be attached, and I conclude from it that poetry consists of carefully enclosing the idea in a certain number of syllables symmetrically arranged. But no. I hear that these verses are poetic and that those are not. Some grant that there is poetry in a prose work and others contend that they find no trace of it in a long poem. So poetry rests not only in the form of the thought, but also in the thought itself. It can reside in the two things united or inhabit each one of them separately. So what definitively is poetry? This could become the topic for a dissertation, with which I do not intend to fatigue the reader. So instead of trying to find out what language has wanted to include in the word poetry, I will say what I include in it myself and I will fix the meaning that I give to it in the present chapter.

On a page bearing the title of poetry in america, you read this first beginning of the chapter: “I often wondered while traveling across the United States if, amid this people exclusively preoccupied by the material cares of life [v: commercial enterprises], among so many mercantile speculations, a single poetic idea would be found, and I believed I recognized several of them that appeared to me eminently to have this character.”

[c.] “The greatest proof of the misery of man is poetry. God cannot make poetry; he sees everything clearly” (rubish of these chapters,*Rubish,* 1).

[d.] “You idealize a small object, you are poetic without being great.

“You represent a great thing in its natural state, you are great or sublime, but not poetic” (*Rubish,* 1).

[e.] “I will go still further and without limiting the name of poet to writers I will readily agree to extend it to all those who undertake to offer images to men, provided that they represent by them something superior to what is. Raphael will seem to me to merit this title as well as Homer” (rubish of these chapters,*Rubish,* 1).

[f.] In the margin: “<This sentence is found word for word, I believe, in *revolutions.* Vary it in one place or the other. The idea is necessary to both.>”

[g.] In the margin: “<While the middle classes, although they have more leisure, show it almost not at all. From that you can see clearly that it is less the constraint of work that stops the poetic impulse than the spirit that is brought to work.>”

[h.] “Doubt itself *prosaic* in detail is immensely poetic over all. Byron proved it very well. What poetry in the *why* and the *how* of man in face of God and of nature.

“Audacious doubt is eminently democratic” (rubish of these chapters,*Rubish,* 1).

[j.] “Democracy diverts the human mind from the contemplation of external objects in order to concentrate it on itself. ‘Man is the most beautiful study of man’, Pope said. That is true for all peoples, but there is no more evident truth for a democratic

people. Almost the whole of its literature is contained in this single expression" (*Rubish,* 1).

[k.] "I cited this example of America not only because America is the particular object of my discourse, but also because I believe that in this it provides me with insights about what must happen among democratic peoples in general" (*Rubish,* 1).

[m.] Milton, democratic poet./

"Byron *idem.* /

"The one is democratic because he drew his generative idea from Christianity.

"The other by the natural impulse of his time" (rubish of these chapters,*Rubish,* 1).

[n.] "There is until now only a single writer who has felt and could produce this admirable poetry of wild nature such as the wilderness of America reveals to us, and this great poet is not American" (*Rubish,* 1).

[o.] "So I do not fear that democratic peoples lack poetry, but I am afraid that this poetry aims for the gigantesque rather than for grandeur. For it, I fear the influence of their poets more than their timidity, and I am afraid that the sublime there may be several times closer still to the ridiculous than anywhere else" (rubish of these chapters,*Rubish,* 1).

[p.] In a first draft, this paragraph followed: " ≠The sight of what is happening in the United States makes me reflect on democratic peoples in general, and these new reflections modify the opinion that I had had formerly that democracies could not fail to extinguish the poetic genius of man and to substitute for the empire of the imagination that of good sense. That is true, but to a lesser degree than I had believed at first. So I think that there is a kind of poetry within reach of democratic peoples, and I am persuaded that great writers who will be born among them will not fail to see it and to take hold of it ≠"(*Rubish,* 1).

[q.] Note on the other side of the jacket that contains the *rubish* of the chapter: "In aristocracy, the detail of man poetic. Homer portrays Achilles. In democracy, humanity independently of the particular forms that it can take in certain places and in certain times. Byron, *Childe Harold,* Chateaubriand, *René"* (*Rubish,* 1).

[r.] "What is more poetic than the *Discours sur l'histoire universelle* of Bossuet? Only God and the human species are present there, however" (*Rubish,* 1).

[s.] We have had today (22 April 1837) an interesting conversation on poetry.

We all fell into agreement that the intervention of the divinity in human affairs was essentially poetic by nature and particularly necessary to epic poetry.

The discussion turned on the means of making the intervention of the divinity felt today, of making it perceptible.

By common agreement we abandoned mythological divinities, personified passions ...,as operatic machines that chilled the spectator.

I maintained that today you had equally to avoid using saints, demons and angels, since the spirit of the century was drawn more and more to grasp the idea of the entirely intellectual and non-material action of the divinity on souls, without intermediaries in whom you scarcely believe. But the difficulty arose of making this action, conceived by the mind alone, felt and making this invisible agent seen in the very play of human passions.

Charles [Stoffels? (ed.)] maintained that man was so made that you could never make him conceive of the intervention of the divinity without visible agents. I maintained the opposite, but without being able to develop my thought practically.

[In the margin: Humanitarian poetry.

Poem of man. Human destiny.

Jocelyn. Human condition.

This merits being carefully examined (rubish of these chapters,*Rubish,* 1).

[t.] “Sensual poetry.

Arabs. Appropriate to democratic peoples” (rubish of these chapters,*Rubish,* 1).

[u.] In the manuscript, you find in place of this sentence two paragraphs that repeat ideas present in other places of the chapter.

[v.] Miseries of man./

[In the margin: To put perhaps with sentiments. Transition.

Put somewhere because *good.*

Human will.

In preface probably when I say that I am speaking about the difficulty of the subject.]

If you examine the conduct of men, you easily discover that tastes direct them much more than opinions or ideas.

Where does the instinctive, almost physical sensation that we call taste come from? How is it born, is it supported? Where does it take us and push us? Who knows?

Thus man does not know even the principal motive of his own actions and when, tired of looking for truth in the entire universe, he comes back toward himself, obscurity seems to redouble as he approaches and wants to understand himself.

[In the margin: This text is better.

And when, tired of looking for what makes his fellows act, he tries hard at least to untangle what pushes himself, he still does not know what to believe. He travels across the entire universe and he doubts. He finally comes back toward himself and obscurity seems to redouble as he approaches himself more and wants to understand himself.]

9 March 1836 (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 12–13).

Tocqueville here is referring to Pascal, very specifically to the fragment on the disproportion of man (*pensée* 390 of the Lafuma edition).

In 1831, he had already written to Ernest de Chabrol a letter with accents of Pascal:

The more I examine this country and everything, the more I see and the more I am frightened by seeing the few certainties that man is able to acquire in this world. There is no subject that does not grow larger as you pursue it, no fact or observation at the bottom of which you do not find a doubt. All the objects of this life appear to us only like certain decorations of the opera that you see only through a curtain that prevents you from discerning the contours with precision.

There are men who enjoy living in this perpetual half-light; as for me, it tires me out and drives me to despair. I would like to hold political and moral truths as I hold my pen, and doubt besieges me.

Yesterday there was an American who asked me how I classified human miseries; I answered without hesitating that I put them in this order: chronic illnesses, death, doubt. . . . He stopped me and protested; I have reflected about it since and I persist in my classification, but this is enough philosophy (letter of 19 November 1832, YTC, BIa2).

[w.] Henry Reeve added *Faust* to these examples.

[x.] I do not know if poetry such as I have taken care to define it, poetry that does not consist of a particular form but [of (ed.)] a certain kind of ideas, is not among the literary tastes most natural to democracy <because it is enjoyed without preparation and in a moment and it rapidly removes the soul from the middle of the pettiness and monotony of democratic life.

The great images of poetry seize so to [speak (ed.)] the soul without warning; they draw it as if by force far away from its everyday habits.> The enjoyments that poetry provides are more instinctive than reasoned; you enjoy them without preparation, you obtain them for yourself instantaneously. They seize so to speak the soul without warning and draw it as if by force far away from its everyday routine.

What fits democracy better than all that? (rubish of these chapters,*Rubish,* 1).

1. Men who live in democracies have only very small ideas that relate to themselves or very general ones. As soon as you take them out of themselves, they want the gigantesque.
2. Their writers give it to them readily because they have similar instincts and as well because they have the democratic taste of succeeding quickly and with little cost.
3. Among democratic peoples poetic sources are beautiful, but rare. They are soon exhausted. And then you throw yourself into the monstrous and the imaginary(YTC, CVf, p. 19).

[b.] On the jacket of the manuscript: “Perhaps this chapter is too thin to be put separately and should be joined to the preceding one.”

1. It is in the theater that the literary repercussions of the political revolution first make themselves felt. Spectators are carried away by their secret tastes without having the time to acknowledge it.
2.

[a.] The literary revolution takes place more suddenly in the theater than elsewhere.

Even in aristocracies the people have their voice in the theater. When the social state becomes democratic, the people become sovereign and overthrow by riot the literary laws of the aristocracy.

3. It is in the theater that the literary revolution is always most visible. The theater puts into relief most of the qualities and all of the defects inherent in democratic literatures.
    1. Scorn for erudition. No ancient subjects.
    2. Subjects taken from current society and presenting its inconsistencies.
    3. Few fixed rules.
    4. Style (illegible word) careless.
    5. Improbabilities.
4. The Americans show all these instincts when they go to the theater, but they rarely go. Why (YTC, CVf, p. 20).

[b.] On the jacket of the manuscript:

CH. [perhaps *M* (ed.)] to whom I have just read this chapter (22 December 1838) immediately found 1. that it greatly resembled *literary physiognomy.* 2. that it was a bit serious given the subject. 3. that it would be desirable to introduce more citations and less argumentation./

Doesn’t interest begin to tire and isn’t this chapter, which is only the development of *literary physiognomy,* too much?

Examine the impression of those who hear it./

I believe, taking everything into account, that this chapter should be deleted.

CH could indicate Charles Stoffels or Ernest de Chabrol. Tocqueville read part of his manuscript to Chateaubriand, but a letter to Beaumont obliges us to place this reading in January 1839. If it concerns *M,* Tocqueville's wife, Mary Mottley, must be considered.

On a loose sheet with the manuscript of the chapter:

Perhaps this chapter should be reduced to only the new ideas that it contains, only recalling all the others in passing.

The new ideas are:

1. It is in the theater that the literary revolution first shows itself.
2. It is there that it is most sudden.
3. It is there that it is always most visible.

[c.] In the margin of a first version that is found in the *rubish* of the chapter:

"Shakespeare, Addison: There where authority does not deign to interfere in the theater" (*Rubish,* 1).

[d.] "<What made the men of the century of Louis XIV want to find only princes and kings on the tragic stage was a sentiment analogous to that which made Alexander say, when requested to appear at the Olympic games: I would willingly go if only kings raced there>" (*Rubish,* 1). Tocqueville here takes up a known episode, drawn from the *Life of Alexander* of Plutarch.

[e.] The *rubish* also names Calderón.

[f.] "Memoir of Grimm. Deep discussion of what there is of the improbable" (*Rubish,* 1). It perhaps concerns Friedrich M. Grimm, *Nouveaux mémoires secrets et inédits historiques, politiques, anecdotiques et littéraires* ..., (Paris: Lerouge-Wolf, 1834), 2 vols.

[g.] Variant in the *rubish:* "This is seen in the renaissance of letters among all peoples even aristocracies. See Lope de Vega, Shakespeare and the French before Corneille. When a great genius . . ." (*Rubish,* 1).

[h.] I am moreover obliged to admit, and perhaps it is proper to do so, that in this matter America cannot serve as an example. By what is happening in the United States, it is difficult to judge the direction that the American democracy would give to theatrical art, since the American democracy has so to speak no theaters. Forty years ago I do not think that you would ever have attended a dramatic presentation in this part of the New World. Since then halls for spectacles [v: theaters] have been built in two or three great cities of the Union, but these places of pleasure are closed part of the year and during the rest of the time the native population frequents them little (*Rubish,* 1). Cf. Beaumont, *Marie,* I, pp. 394–96.

[j.] The manuscript reads: “public catastrophes.”

[k.] With a note in the *rubish:* “Ask new clarifications from Niles” (*Rubish,* 1).

> 1. Aristocratic historians attribute all events to a few men. Democratic historians are led to deny the particular influence of men on the destiny of the species and of the people and to search only for general causes. There is exaggeration on both sides. In all events, one part must be attributed to general facts and another to particular influences. But the relationship varies depending on the times. General facts explain more things in democratic centuries and particular influences fewer.
> 2. Democratic historians are led not only to attribute each fact to a great cause, but also to link facts together and to produce historical systems.
> 3. Not only are they inclined to contest the power of individuals to lead peoples, but they are easily led to contest the ability of peoples to modify their destinies by themselves and they subject them to a sort of blind fatality (YTC, CVf, p. 21).

[a.] One of the titles of the chapter in the *rubish* is: influence of equality of conditions on the manner of envisaging and writing history.

[b.] On the jacket of the manuscript, in pencil: “Historians of antiquity did not treat history like Mignet and company.”

[c.] In the margin: “<Perhaps to delete. This relates only to the last idea of the chapter.>” Cf. p. 858.

A note in the *Rubish* explains: “This chapter is very closely linked to that on *general ideas.* It must be *combined* there or be kept very *separate* from it” (*Rubish,* 1).

[d.] “Be careful while treating this subject about wanting to portray *history* and not *historians,* what is happening in the world and not the *manner in which historians* explain it” (*Rubish,* 1).

In the article “Movement of the French Press in 1836,” *Revue des deux mondes,* 4th series, X, 1837, pp. 453–98, which Tocqueville utilized for the draft of chapter 2, you find similar affirmations. “It is no longer only a matter,” you read on p. 464, “as in the past, of putting in the forefront the figures of great men and of moving into the background the vague and unappreciated action of the masses. Our century, which wants to know everything and which doubts everything, seems to prefer facts and proofs to these striking tableaux in which the art of composition and the wisdom of judgments testify to the power of the writer better than the clutter of citations.”

[e.] “<That necessarily leads their minds back toward the search for general causes, about which you always have at least something to say, and often they content themselves with the first one they find>” (*Rubish,* 1).

[f.] There are two ideas in this chapter which must not be confused.

A people can have its destiny modified or changed by the accidental influence of a powerful man, like Napoleon, I suppose.

Or, as well, by an accident due to chance such as a plague, the loss of a battle . . .

You can refuse to believe in the influence of individuals and believe in that of accidents.

In democratic centuries, the influence of *individuals* is infinitely smaller than in aristocratic centuries, but the influence of *accidents* is not less.

Now, the modern historical system consists of saying not only that individuals cannot modify .-.-.-.- peoples, but also that *accidents* cannot do so. So that the nature of some battle, for example, would not have been able definitively to prevent some nation from succumbing, because there was a sequence of old causes that destined it invincibly to perish.

It is clear that all that I say in the preceding chapter applies to *individuals* and not to *accidents*. This is exaggerated because, when you go back to the origin of accidents, you almost always arrive at *individual* action" (*Rubish,* 1).

[g.] In the margin: "<This is not in perfect agreement with what precedes and draws the mind in another direction. What I say above is that historians prefer looking for general causes than for particular facts. What I say here is that they are content with bad general reasons, which is another idea. My comparison applies only to the last one, for the *heaviness of air* is a general cause, as well as the *abhorrence of a vacuum.* Perhaps delete.>"

[h.] Marquis de Lafayette, *Mémoires, correspondance et manuscrits du général Lafayette* (Paris: H. Fournier aîné, 1837–1838), 6 vols. In May 1837, Tocqueville received from Corcelle, who was the editor, the first three volumes of this work. It is probable that the author, who did not sympathize with the general, did not read his memoirs (we know that he considered him to be a well-intentioned man but with a *mediocre mind*), and that he found this quotation in the second part of the review done by Sainte-Beuve(*Revue des deux mondes,* 4th series, 15, 1838, pp. 355–81, in which the same quotation appears on page 359).

[j.] "I believe that in nearly each instant of their existence nations, like men, are free to modify their fate" (*Rubish,* 1).

[k.] "Show how the idea of the powerlessness of individuals over the mass leads them to the idea of the powerlessness of the mass over itself and thus leads them to the fatality of the Moslems" (*Rubish,* 1).

[m.] In the *rubish* you find this small chapter on religious eloquence, deleted in the final version:

religious eloquence or preaching.

.-.-.-.-.- the influence that democracy exercises on works of the human mind, it would probably have been enough for me to reveal how it modifies the language of the pulpit.

[In the margin: Perhaps and even probably delete this chapter. It cannot be applied to America. In America, by exception, religious beliefs are very firm and the language of priests is not a plea in favor of Christianity.]

There is nothing so little variable by their nature as religions and it cannot be otherwise. The true religion rests on absolute truth; other religions claim to be supported by it; so all are immobile, and it is easier to destroy them than to modify them.

This immobility extends to everything that is related to religion no matter how distantly. There is no religious custom so unimportant that it is not more difficult to change [v: destroy] than the constitution of a people.

So when any cause whatsoever leads men to vary style and method in holy things, be sure that this is only one of the last effects of a much more general revolution and that the same cause had already long ago changed the manner of treating all other subjects.

.-.-.-.- Catholic and I enter a church. I see the priest mounting the steps of the pulpit. He is young. He wears priestly vestments, but beyond that there is already nothing of the traditional or of the conventional in his bearing, in his gestures, or in his voice. He doesn't say "My brothers," but "Sirs." He doesn't recite, but he improvises. He does not talk about the growing pain that our sins cause him; our good works do not fill him with ineffable joy. He engages his listener hand to hand, and armed like him, takes him on. He feels that it is no longer a matter of touching us, but of convincing us. He addresses himself not to faith, but to reason; he doesn't impose belief, he discusses it and wants to have it freely accepted. He does not go to search for arguments in the old arsenal of scholastic theology, in the writings of the Doctors, any more than in the decrees of the Popes and the decisions of the Councils. He borrows his proofs from secular science; he draws his comparisons from everyday things; he bases himself on the most general, the clearest and most elementary truths [v: notions] of human philosophy.

He cites the poets and orators of today almost as much as the Fathers of the Church. Rarely does it happen that he speaks Latin, and I cannot prevent myself from suspecting that the *Kyrie Eleison* of the Mass is all the Greek he knows.

Sometimes disorganized, incorrect, incomplete, he is nearly always original, brilliant, unexpected, above all fruitful. Give up reading him, but go to hear him.

If, back in the solitude of your dwelling, you happen to compare the man whom you have just heard with the great Christian orators of past centuries, you will discover, not without terror, what the strange power that moves the world is able to do; and you will understand that democracy, after remaking in passing all the ephemeral [v: changing] institutions of men, finally reaches the things most immobile by their

nature, and that, not able to change the substance of Christianity, which is eternal, it at least modifies the language and the form (*Rubish,* 1).

> 1. The discussions of the English Parliament are led by only a few men, which makes them clear, plain and concise. Why it is not the same in Congress.
>
> 1. In aristocratic countries, the members of the legislature study the parliamentary art in advance and for a longer time. This reason is good, but insufficient.
> 2. The habit of hierarchy and subordination that men have in aristocratic society follows them into the assembly. It is not the same in democratic countries.
> 3. Aristocratic deputies, all being of considerable importance by themselves, are easily consoled about not playing a role in the assembly and do not want a mediocre one. Democratic deputies have in the country only the rank that they have in the assembly; that necessarily pushes them ahead.
> 4. They are, moreover, pushed to speak by the voters; and as they depend much more on the voters, they yield to them on this point.
>
> 2. That is the petty side of democratic discussions. Here is the great one.
>
> 1. Since there are no distinct classes, orators always speak to and about the whole nation.
> 2. Since they cannot rely on the (illegible word) the privileges of wealth, of corps, or of persons, they are obliged to go back to the general truths provided by the examination of human nature. That gives a great character of grandeur to their eloquence and pushes its effects to the furthest ends of the earth (YTC, CVf, pp. 21– 23).

[b.] There would be two subjects that you could still treat here:

> 1. The first would consist of finding out if *eloquence* strictly speaking is as natural to democratic assemblies as to others. I do not think so.
> 2. Why the reports of the Presidents to Congress have always been, until now, so simple, so clear, so noble. This would be more appropriate to the subject" (*Rubish,* 1).

On the first page of a draft of the chapter: "This chapter is an attempt. It probably must be deleted" (*Rubish,* 1). Tocqueville adds in another place: "I believe that nothing must be said about this subject. Since eloquence of the pulpit, which is the most conventional, is modified by democracy, the mind is sufficiently struck by the power of the latter on all types of eloquence" (*Rubish,* 1).

[c.] I do not believe, moreover, that what happens on this point in the United States indicates a general law applicable to all democracies. I believe that there exists at the bottom of the soul of a people a secret disposition that leads it to keep the most capable away from power when it can do so without danger. The people, moreover, when it leads affairs, is like kings who, Montesquieu says, always imagine that their courtiers are their best subjects. Peoples are princes in this. But I believe that this fatal

tendency can be combatted naturally by circumstances or artificially by laws, and in America both favor it (*Rubish,* 1).

[d.] Add that the member of a democratic legislature, just as he does not have the natural taste for parliamentary discipline, does not have a particular interest in submitting himself to it. In aristocracies, the leaders of parties are often men powerful in themselves, or men who have easily at their disposal all of the party forces. They have in their hands great means to serve and to harm. It frequently happens, for example, that they are in a position to impose their choice on the voters. The party itself, hierarchically organized in the society as in the assembly, can force all the members to cooperate toward a general end that it sets.

In democracies, on the contrary, parties are not better organized outside the assemblies than within. Within parties, there exists a common will to act, but not a government that directs it. So the deputy has truly speaking nothing either to hope or to fear except from his constituents (*Rubish,* 1).

[[*]] Note:

This effect is explained by two very perceptible reasons.

The smaller the electoral district, the more limited is the view of the voter and the more his good choice depends on the chance birth of a capable man near him.

So small electoral circumscriptions will necessarily produce a crowd of mediocre representatives, for the superior men of a nation are not spread equally over the different points of its surface.

The smallness of the electoral body will, moreover, very often prevent voters from choosing those men when by chance they are found near them.

When voters are very numerous and spread over a great area, there is only a small number of them who can have personal relationships with the man they choose, and they elect him because of the merit attributed to him. When they are very few in number, they readily name him because of the friendship that they have for him. The election becomes always an affair of a coterie and often of a family. In an election of this type the superior man loses all of his natural advantages. He can scarcely aspire to stay equal.

In YTC, CVk, 1, p. 82, next to this fragment, you find this note: “This should probably be entirely deleted. Constant harping on electoral matters./

“I would in fact delete that.

“To delete.”

[e.] “The English orators of the last century constantly quoted Latin and even Greek at the rostrum.

“Their sons of America quote only Shakespeare, the democratic author par excellence” (*Rubish,* 1).

[f.] The political discussions of a small democratic people cause a stir in the entire universe. Not only because other peoples, also turning toward democracy, have analogous interests, but also because the political discussions of a democratic people, however small it may be, always have a character of generality that makes them interesting to the human species. They talk about man in general and treat rights that he holds by his nature, which is the same everywhere.

Among aristocratic peoples it is almost always a question of the particular rights of a class, which interests only this class or at most the people among whom the class is found.

This explains the influence of the French revolution even apart from the state of Europe, and in contrast, the slight stir caused by the debates of the English Parliament (*Rubish,* 1).

[g.] In the margin: “ ≠I would say something analogous about our time and about ourselves. The debates of our chambers immediately cause a stir in the entire universe and agitate all classes in each country. ≠”

[h.] In the *Rubish,* after the rough drafts of these chapters, you find a jacket with these notes:

[At the head: Influence of equality on education./

There would have been many things to say about this subject, but I have already so many things in the book, that this one must, I believe, be left aside.]

Influence of democracy on the education of men or rather their instruction is a necessary chapter. The useful and practical direction that it gives, the change in methods that it brings about. The study of ancient languages, theoretical sciences, speculative studies that they subordinate to other studies.

To place somewhere in the chapter on *ideas.*

[To the side: To put a small chapter VI before the large chapter on sciences, literature and the arts, which must be the VIIth.] (*Rubish,* 1).

A draft contains, for the chapter on education, the following plan:

[As title on the jacket] Influence of democracy on ideas./

Of academic institutions under democracy.

An academy having the purpose of keeping minds on a certain path, of imposing a method on them, is contrary to the genius of democracy; it is an aristocratic institution.

An academy having the goal of making the men who apply themselves to the arts or to the sciences famous and giving them at State expense the comfort and leisure that the democratic social state often denies to them, is an institution that can be not to the taste of a democratic nation, but one that is never contrary to and can sometimes be necessary to the existence of a democracy. It is an eminently democratic institution.

[Inside, on a page] Of the need for paid learned bodies in democracies. This need increases as peoples turn toward democracy.

This truth understood with difficulty by the democracy. Opposite natural inclination that you must combat. The Americans give way to it.

Effect of this: science left to the ordinary encouragement that democracy can provide, that is to say that the men who are working produce only applications, no theories.

[To the side: Ask Monsieur Biot for ideas.]

That the English set about badly to encourage the sciences. They give easy and honorable rest in the hope of work. These things must be proposed as the fruit of work.

Elsewhere: “Of Education in the United States and in democratic countries in general.

“Perhaps I should begin by portraying man in infancy and in the family before leading him to manhood.

“The trouble with this plan is that egoism dominates even the primordial relations” (YTC, CVa, pp. 2–3). Jean-Baptiste Biot, scientist and political writer of legitimist tendencies, was a professor at the Collège de France. On Tocqueville and the question of education after *Democracy,* see Edward Gargan, “The Silence of Tocqueville on Education,” *Historical Reflections,* 7, 1980, pp. 565–75.

[a.] [As the title] Influence of democracy on sentiments, tastes, or mores./

Ideas that must never be entirely lost from view.

After making known each flaw or each quality inherent in democracy, try to point out with as much *precision* as possible the means that can be taken to attenuate the first and to develop the second. *Example.* Men in democracies are naturally led to concentrate on their interests. To draw them away from their interests as much as possible, to spiritualize them as much as possible, and finally if possible to connect and merge particular interest and general interest, so that you scarcely know how to distinguish the one from the other.

That is the political side of the work that must never be allowed to be entirely lost from view.

But do not do that in a monotonous and tiring way, for fear of boredom, or in too practical and too detailed a way, for fear of leaving myself open to criticism.

Reserve a part of these things for the *introduction of the final chapter* (YTC, CVa, pp. 31–32).

On the back of the jacket of the *Rubish* that contains the drafts of the part on material enjoyments and that bears number X:

First chapters on sentiments./

First system./

Democracy leads men toward the taste for material well-being.

It leads them to commerce, industry, to everything that is produced quickly.

It gives birth to an immoderate desire for happiness in this world.

It favors restlessness of the heart.

Here perhaps spirit of religion (*Rubish,* 1).

[a.] This chapter, one of the best known of *Democracy,* is not found in the manuscript, where you pass directly from the previous chapter (number 19) to the one on individualism (number 20). Nor does it appear in notebook CVf.

A first version of it exists in pages 1 to 14 of notebook CVk, 2. The inclusion in the final version is due to the insistence of Louis de Kergorlay, as is witnessed by this note on the jacket that contains it:

L[ouis (ed.)]. thinks that this piece must *absolutely* appear in the work, either in the current form or by transporting the ideas elsewhere. I believe in fact that he is right. I see that it could be introduced in this way into the present chapter, which would then be divided into three principal ideas:

1. How equality gives the idea and the taste for political liberty.
2. How in the centuries of equality men are much less attached to being free than to remaining equal.
3. How equality suggests ideas and tastes to them that can make them lose liberty and lead them to servitude.

In this way the piece would remain more or less as it is. It would only have to be concluded differently and in such a way as to fit into the general idea of the chapter, more or less like this:

“Thus, love of liberty cannot be the principal passion of men during democratic centuries and it occupies in their heart only the space left for it by another passion.”

Before including this section, to see clearly whether all that I say there is not a useless repetition of what I already said in the following sections. I am afraid it is (YTC, CVk, 2, pp. 1–2). See note a for p. 1200.

[b.] The *rubish* of chapter 10 of this part contains a jacket cover on which you can read: “How equality of ranks suggests to men the taste for liberty [v: equality] and why democratic peoples love equality better than liberty./

“Piece that I will probably make the second section of the chapter and that must be reexamined with care while reviewing this chapter. 4 September 1838” (*Rubish,* 1). The notes that are found in this jacket belong in large part to the final chapter of the book. In a partial copy from the *Rubish,* they are found precisely with the rough drafts of the fourth part (YTC, CVg, 2, p. 16 and following). Among these notes you find this one:

Some ideas on the sentiment of equality (2 February 1836)./

What must be understood by the sentiment of equality among democratic peoples./

The taste for equality among most men is not: that no one be lower than I, but: that no one be higher than I, which, in practice, can come to the same thing, but which is far from meaning the same thing./

So does a real and true taste for equality exist in this world? Among some elite souls. But you must not base your reasoning on them./

What produced aristocracies? The desire among a few to raise themselves. What leads to democracy? The desire of all to raise themselves. The sentiment is the same; there is only a difference in the number of those who feel it. Each man aims as high as possible, and a level comes about naturally, without anyone wanting to be leveled.

When everyone wants to rise at once, the rule of equality is quite naturally found to be what is most suitable for each man. A thousand runners all have the same goal. Each one burns with the desire of coming in first. For that, it would be good to precede the others in the course. But if I do that, who will assure me that the others will not do so? If there were only five or six who had to run with me, I could perhaps attempt it, but racing with a thousand, you cannot succeed in doing so. What to do? The only means is to prevent anyone from having any privilege and to leave each one to his natural resources. [v: All, however, agree to depart at the same time from the same place.] It is not that they truly love equality, but they are all obliged to resort to it./

To reflect again about all of that (*Rubish,* 1). See note d for p. 1203.

[c.] First draft of this opening of the chapter:

When conditions are more or less equal among men, each one, feeling independent of his fellows, contracts the habit and the need to follow only his will in his particular actions. This naturally leads the human mind to the idea of political liberty and suggests the taste for it.

Take one man at random from within a democratic people [v: in a country where equality reigns], put him if possible outside of his prejudices, of his interests of the moment, of his memories, so that he gives himself only to the sole interests that the

social state suggests to him, and you will discover that among all governments the one that he most easily imagines first and that he loves best is government based on sovereignty of the people.

<So, as the social state of a people becomes democratic, you see the spirit of liberty born within it. These two things generally go together so closely that one makes me consider the other. The attempts that a nation makes to establish liberty within it only teach me that the principle of equality is developing there, and the equality that I see reigning among a people makes me suppose the approach of revolutions.>

So equality of conditions cannot be established among a people without the spirit of liberty being revealed there, and it is never entirely extinguished as long as equality of conditions remains.

Love of political liberty, however, is not the principal passion of these democratic peoples.

You can imagine an extreme point . . . (YTC, CVk, 2, pp. 2–4).

[d.] "<Equality of conditions does not lead to liberty in an irresistible way, but it leads to it; this is our plank of salvation>" (YTC, CVk, 2, p. 6).

[e.] Not only are these two things different, but I can easily prove that they are sometimes opposed. It is clear for example that men must exercise political rights only to the extent that they are capable of doing so. Without that you would arrive at anarchy, which is only a particular form of tyranny. Now, it is certain that the sentiment of equality is less offended by the subjugation of all to one master, than by the submission of a great number to the government of a few. So the sentiment of equality leads here either to giving (illegible word) rights to everyone, which leads to anarchy, or to giving them to no one, which establishes despotism.

[To the side: "The despot is a distant enemy, the noble is an enemy who touches you."]

You can satisfy the taste of men for equality, without giving them liberty. Often they must even sacrifice a part of the second in order fully to enjoy the first.

So these two things are easily separable.

The very fact that they are not intimately united and that the one is infinitely more precious than the other would make it very easy and natural to neglect the second in order to run after the first./

So let us hold onto liberty with a desperate attachment, let us hold on to it as a good to which all other good things are attached.

[To the side] If, on the one hand, among a democratic people, men are more generally enlightened about their rights, on the other hand, it must be acknowledged that they are less able to defend them, because individually they are very weak and the art of

acting in common is difficult and demands institutions that are not provided and an apprenticeship that is not allowed to be undertaken (YTC, CVd, pp. 24– 25).

[f.] [On the jacket of a draft] Equality is not suitable for barbaric peoples; it prevents them from becoming enlightened and civilized./

Idea to introduce perhaps in the chapters on literature or the sciences.

[The beginning is missing (ed.)] and first, I do not believe that in all the ages of the life of peoples a democratic social state must produce the effects that I have just pointed out.

I have never thought that equality of conditions was suitable for the infancy of societies. When men are uncivilized as well as equal, each one of them feels too weak and too limited to look for enlightenment separately and it is almost impossible for all to try to find it at the same time by a common accord.

Nothing is so difficult to take as the first step out of barbarism. I do not doubt that more effort is required for a savage to discover the art of writing than for a civilized man to penetrate the general laws that regulate the world. Now it is not believable that men could ever conceive the need for such an effort without having it clearly shown to them, or that they would make such an effort without grasping the result in advance. In a society of barbarians equal to each other, since the attention of each man is equally absorbed by the first needs and the most coarse interests of life, the idea of intellectual progress can come to the mind of any one of them only with difficulty, and if by chance it is born, it would soon be as if suffocated amid the nearly instructive [instinctive? (ed.)] thoughts to which the poorly satisfied needs of the body always give birth. The savage lacks at the very same time the idea of study and the possibility of devoting himself to it.

I do not believe that history presents a single example of a democratic people who have risen gradually and by themselves toward enlightenment and that is easily understood. We have seen that among a nation where equality and barbarism reign at the same time it was very difficult for an individual to develop his intelligence separately. But if, exceptionally, he happens to do so, the superiority of his knowledge suddenly gives him such a great preponderance over all those who surround him that he does not take long to want to make use of it to put an end to equality to his advantage. So, if peoples {an emerging people} remain democratic, civilization cannot arise within them, and if civilization comes by chance to penetrate among them, they cease to be democratic. I am persuaded that humanity owes its enlightenment to such strokes of fortune, and I ≠{think that it is in losing their liberty that men acquired the means to reconquer it} ≠that it is under an aristocracy or under a prince that men still half-savage have gathered the various notions that later would allow them to live civilized, equal and free.

[In the margin: So I think that this same equality of conditions that seems to me very appropriate for precipitating the march of the human mind could prevent it from taking its first steps.]

If I admit that boldness of mind and the taste for general ideas are not necessarily found among peoples whose social state is democratic, I am equally far from claiming that you can hope to find them only there.

There are particular accidents that, among certain peoples, can give a particular impulse to the human mind. Among the accidents, I will put in the first rank the influence that some men exercise over the fate of societies. It seems that Providence, after tracing the various paths that nations can follow and fixing the final end of their course, leaves to individuals the task of slowing or hurrying this march of humanity that they can neither divert nor halt.

Men are found here and there whose vigorous and unyielding minds scoff at the impediments that the social state and laws have formed, and whose minds enjoy pursuing their course even amid the obstacles that are strewn over it.

Such men rarely gain great sway over their fellow-citizens, but in the long run they exercise a powerful influence over their society and they draw the ideas of their descendants in their direction.

When political liberty . . . [interrupted text (ed.)] (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 18–21).

> 1. What individualism is; how it differs from egoism and ends by coming back to it.
> 2. Individualism is a sickness peculiar to the human heart in democratic times. Why?
>
> 1. Democracy makes you forget ancestors.
> 2. It hides descendants.
> 3. It separates contemporaries by destroying classes and by making them men independent of each other.
>
> 3. So in democratic centuries man is constantly brought back to himself alone and is preoccupied only with himself.
> 4. It is so above all at the outset of democratic centuries because of the jealousies and hatreds to which the democratic revolution has given birth (YTC, CVf, p. 23).

[a.] Tocqueville had thought about beginning the 1840 *Democracy* with this chapter (see note a for p. 697).

[b.] In the *rubish,* the chapter, which bears the title of individualism in democracies and of the means that the americans use to combat it, begins in this way: “I am not afraid to use new words when they are necessary to portray a new thing. Here the occasion to do so presents itself. Individualism is a recent expression . . .” (*Rubish,* 1).

The word *individualism,* which seems to echo the *amour propre* (self-love) of Rousseau, was not invented by Tocqueville, but he is largely responsible for its definition and its usage. The word appears for the first time in this volume. James T. Schleifer dated its first use as 24 April 1837 (see note u for pp. 709–10). The novelty of the word must not make us forget that Tocqueville several times used the

expression *individual egoism* in a rather similar sense (as in note e of p. 511 in the second volume, and in p. 448, also in the second volume). During his 1835 voyage in England (*Voyage en Angleterre, OC,* V, 2, p. 60), Tocqueville also used another expression to designate almost the same idea. He spoke about the *spirit of exclusion,* a sentiment that "leads each man or each association of men to enjoy its advantages as much as possible by itself all alone, to withdraw as much as possible into its personality and not to allow whomever to see or to put a foot inside." The interesting concept of collective individualism appears only in *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution* (*OC,* II, 1, p. 158).

Some of Tocqueville's reading, the influence of Kergorlay (who knew Saint-Simonianism well), or the popularization of the word perhaps pushed Tocqueville afterward to use the word *individualism.* In his theory, the term is always accompanied by its opposite, the *spirit of individuality,* which Tocqueville defines in note 2 for p. 1179. Sometimes he also adopts the terms *individual strength, spirit of independence,* and *individual independence.*

Koenrad W. Swart ("Individualism in the Mid-Nineteenth Century, 1826–1860," *Journal of the History of Ideas,* 23, 1962, pp. 77–86) points out that Tocqueville perhaps borrowed the term from Saint-Simon. For a discussion of the ideas of Tocqueville on individualism, see Jean-Claude Lamberti, *Tocqueville et les deux Démocraties* (Paris: PUF, 1983), pp. 217–40, and *La Notion d'individualisme chez Tocqueville* (Paris: PUF, 1970); see James T. Schleifer, *The Making of Tocqueville's "Democracy in America,"* pp. 252–57.

[c.] In the manuscript: "prefer himself to all others."

[d.] " ≠Egoism, vice of the heart.

"Individualism, of the mind ≠"(*Rubish,* 1).

[e.] Aristocracy, which makes citizens depend on each other, leads them sometimes to great devotion, often to implacable hatreds. Democracy tends to make them indifferent to each other and disposes them to act as if they were alone.

Aristocracy forces man at every moment to go outside of himself in order to attend to others [v: interests other than his own], democracy constantly leads him back toward himself and threatens finally to enclose him entirely within the solitude of his own heart.

If democratic peoples abandon themselves immoderately to this tendency, it is easy to foresee that great evils will result for humanity.

[In the margin] Period of transition. Isolation much more complete. The hatreds of aristocracy and the indifference of democracy are combined. You isolate yourself by instinct and by will (*Rubish,* 1).

[[*]] I believe that if I leave the piece that follows on the *period of transition,* it must simply be put there without making it a separate chapter.

[a.] On the jacket of the manuscript: “Idea treated further on in the *political* chapters that end the book. Only after examining it in the two places will I be able to see if it must be deleted in one of the two or if it must only be expressed in a different way.” This chapter, which is not found on the list of notebook CVf and does not exist in the *Rubish,* bears the number 20bis in the manuscript.

[b.] “Aristocracies have been seen that protected liberty. But every contested aristocracy becomes tyrannical. This is what is happening to the doctrinaires” (YTC, CVa, p. 1).

[c.] Idea to bring very much forward.

[In the margin: Idea to show fully at the head or at the end of the book and also to present in outline in different parts.]

Effects of democracy and particularly harmful effects that are exaggerated in the period of revolution when the democratic social state, mores and laws become established.

Example: democracy has the end of making beliefs less stable, like fortunes and ranks. But at the moment when democracy comes to be established, a shaking of everything occurs that makes doubtful even the notion of good and evil, which is nonetheless the notion that men most easily understand.

That comes not only from {the state of} democracy, but also from the state of revolution. Produced by whatever cause, it will produce effects if not as great at least analogous. A revolution is an accident that temporarily makes all things unstable, and above all it has this effect when it (illegible word) to establish a permanent state whose tendency is in a way to establish instability. The great difficulty in the study of democracy is to distinguish what is democratic from what is only revolutionary. This is very difficult because examples are lacking. There is no European people among whom democracy has settled down, and America is in an exceptional situation. The state of literature in France is not only democratic, but revolutionary.

Public morality, id.

Religious opinions, id.

Political opinions, id. (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 51–53).

1. Despotism tends to isolate men constantly. So it is particularly dangerous in times when the social state has the same tendency.
2. Liberty is, on the contrary, particularly necessary in these times. Why:
    1. By occupying citizens with public affairs, it draws them out of themselves.
    2. By making them deal in common with their affairs, it makes them feel their reciprocal dependence.

3. By making the choice of magistrates depend on the public, it gives to all those who have some ambition the desire to serve their fellows in order to merit being their choice.

3. Example of all this drawn from the United States. How the Americans are not only content to combat individualism by creating national liberty, but have also established provincial liberties (YTC, CVf, pp. 23–24).

[b.] At one moment during the writing, this chapter had as a title: how the americans combat the tendencies that lead men to separate themselves by municipal institutions and the spirit of association (*Rubish,* 1).

“The defect of these chapters is that, in those that follow, I have already treated a part of the effects of individualism, without naming it” (*Rubish,* 1).

[c.] “The circulation of ideas is to civilization what the circulation of blood is to the human body” (*Rubish,* 1).

[d.] In the margin: “ ≠I have made known how, in democratic centuries, each man looked within himself alone for his *beliefs;* I want to show how in these same centuries he turns all his *sentiments* toward himself alone. ≠”

[e.] You must take great notice of the social state of a people before deciding what political laws are suitable for them. When a nation adopts a government whose natural defects are unfortunately in accord with the natural defects of the social state, the nation must expect the latter to grow beyond measure.

Liberty, on the contrary, by creating great common affairs, tends constantly to draw citizens closer together, and it shows them every day in a practical way the tight bond that unites them. Among free peoples, it is the public that distributes honors and power, and it is only by working for the public that you succeed in gaining its favors. So it happens that among these peoples you think about your fellows out of ambition as much as out of disinterestedness, and often you in a way find your interest by forgetting about yourself.

The free institutions that certain peoples can if necessary do without, are therefore particularly necessary to men who are led by a secret instinct constantly to separate themselves from each other and to withdraw within the narrow limits of personal interest.

Despotism . . . [interrupted text (ed.)] (*Rubish,* 1).

In the manuscript this other beginning can be read:

Equality of conditions not only disposes men to be interested only in themselves; it also leads them not to communicate with each other.

In aristocratic countries the members of the upper class get together from time to time for their pleasures, when they have no common affairs.

Among democratic peoples each man, having only a mediocre fortune that he oversees himself, does not have the leisure to seek out the company of his fellows. A great interest must force him to do so.

If the men of democratic countries were abandoned entirely to their natural instincts, they would end up not only by not making use of each other, but by not knowing one another. The circulation of sentiments and ideas would be as if suspended.

[In the margin: <This seems contestable to me for equality suggests a host of restless passions that must necessarily lead men to see each other a great deal even if they are indifferent./

This as well seems contrary to what I said previously that democratic periods were periods when all men came to resemble each other because they saw and heard each other constantly.>]

These are great dangers on which the attention of the legislator must be constantly fixed.

[f.] "Despotism would not only destroy liberty among these people, but in a way society" (*Rubish,* 1).

[g.] <If in my mind I wanted to portray with the aid of a physical image how men are connected to each other in aristocracies, I would imagine a chain all of whose links, of unequal shape and unequal thickness, would be passed [along (ed.)] equal spokes that would all end up attached together at the same center.

And if I wanted to understand how they can be connected to each other in democracies, I would imagine a multitude of equal spokes all ending up at the same center, so that, although all turn together, there would never be two of them that touch each other> (*Rubish,* 1).

[h.] In the margin: "Probably shorten this paragraph. The last sentence of the chapter is the same thing and better."

[j.] To the side: "<Perhaps this must be deleted, though good. This gives too much of a role to election in free institutions and perhaps in the mind of many readers damages my cause more than serving it.>"

[k.] So the great object of law-makers in democracies must be to create common *affairs* that *force* men to enter into contact with each other.

Laws that lead to this result are useful to all peoples; to democratic peoples they are necessary. Here they increase the well-being of society; there they make society continue to exist, for what is society for thinking beings, if not the communication and connection of minds and hearts?/

That should lead me easily to free institutions that give birth to common *affairs* (*Rubish,* 1).

[m.] This paragraph and the preceding one are not found in the manuscript.

[n.] In the margin, in pencil: “Not only, but. Ampère.”

[o.] “ ≠It is not those who are elected to public offices who make democracies prosper, but those who want to be ≠”(*Rubish,* 1).

[p.] In the margin, in pencil: “A connection is desired here. Ampère.”

[q.] “When the government [v: sources of power] is found in the population itself and not above it, you feel for the people something of the good and bad sentiments that kings inspire in absolute monarchies; you fear him, you adulate him, and often you love him passionately. Base souls take him as the object of their flattery and lofty ones as the focus of their devotion” (*Rubish,* 1).

1. Here it is not a matter of political associations. I treated this subject in the first work.
2. The Americans are at the very same time the most *democratic* people and the ones who have made the most use of *association.* These two things go together, in fact.
1. In aristocratic countries there are permanent and established associations, composed of a few powerful men and of all those who depend on them.
2. In democratic countries, where all citizens are equal and weak, temporary and voluntary associations must be formed, or civilization is in danger.
3. Not only are industrial associations necessary, but moral and intellectual associations. Why:
1. In order for sentiments and ideas to be renewed and for the human mind to develop, men must act constantly upon each other.
2. Now, in democratic countries, only the government naturally has this power of action. And it exercises it always incompletely and tyrannically.
3. So there associations must come to replace the powerful individuals who in aristocracies take charge of bringing sentiments and ideas to light.
4.*Summary.* In order for men to remain civilized or to become so, the art of association among them must be developed and perfected in the same proportion as equality (illegible word) (YTC, CVf, pp. 24–25).

[b.] “ ≠Remark of Édouard: chapter weakly written ≠”(*Rubish,* 1).

[c.] A great publicist of today has said:

It is not by exterminating the civilized men of the IVth century that the barbarians managed to destroy the civilization of that time. It was enough for them to come between them so to speak and by separating them to make them like strangers to one another.

[To the side: To finish associations there, to turn G[uizot (ed.)] against himself.]

It is by a similar path that the men of today could well return to barbarism, if they were not careful.

[In another place] M. G[uizot (ed.)]. wants to speak about the prevention of *communicating* with rather than about the impossibility of *acting* on each other. These ideas are close but different. In order to *act* on each other, they must first *communicate* with each other. But you can communicate without acting. This is the case of men in democratic countries.

[To the side: If a government forbid citizens to associate or undertook to take away their taste for doing so, it would behave precisely as the barbarians./

to communicate-----newspaper

to act-----association.](*Rubish,* 1). See note a of p. 18 of the first volume.

[d.] "A thousand types of associations in America. Harmony. C. B. 2. Shaking quakers" (*Rubish,* 1 and YTC, CVa, p. 4).

[e.] "Three great categories of associations:

"Industrial associations.

"Religious associations. Moral associations: Intellectual."

[In another place] *"Legal* associations, *voluntary* associations: Artificial.

"The government, in some fashion, can well take the place of legal associations, but not of voluntary associations. All of that moreover goes together; *legal* associations teach men about voluntary associations and the latter about legal associations./

"Among voluntary associations also distinguish *political* and *civil* associations" (*Rubish,* 1).

[f.] Means to take to facilitate the spirit of association.

1. Make the will to associate very easy to carry out.
2.

Do yourself only what associations can absolutely not carry out. If, on the contrary, the government marches in the direction of the social state, individualism has no limit. This requires that many nuances be pointed out. For if democratic peoples need more than others to be allowed to do things by themselves, they also sometimes have a greater need than others to have things done for them.

[In the margin: Marvels that democracy can accomplish with the aid of the spirit of association. See the railroads in America. *Revue des deux mondes* (1836).]

> 3. Give enlightenment, spread liberty and allow men to solve things by themselves. Comparison with the child that you make walk not in order to have the right to be kept always in leading-strings, but on the contrary to make him able to run all alone someday. But it is not in this way that governments understand it. They treat their subjects more or less as women are treated in China. They force them to wear the shoes of infancy all their lives (*Rubish,* 1).

It is possible that Tocqueville is referring here to the article of Michel Chevalier, "Des chemins de fer comparés aux lignes navigables" (*Revue des deux mondes,* 4th series, 1838, pp. 789–813).

[g.] "In aristocratic countries, enterprises larger and associations smaller.

"In democratic countries, enterprises smaller and associations larger" (*Rubish,* 1).

[h.] Civil associations./

[In the margin: Necessary remedy for egoism, more intelligent but more indispensable [and (ed.)] not less natural than sociability.]

Political associations are necessary in democracies as the executive power there is weaker. Without that, the majority is tyrannical.

Civil associations are useful in aristocratic countries; they are so necessary in democracies that it may be believed that a democratic people among whom civil associations could not form or could form with difficulty would have difficulty not falling into barbarism.

So the legislator in democracies must work hard to favor and to facilitate in all ways the developments of the right of association.

Unfortunately it is a chimera to believe that civil association can undergo great development where political association cannot exist (*Rubish,* 1).

[j.] "If these things are no longer done by anyone, the people gradually return to barbarism, and if you charge the great general association, which is called the government, with them, tyranny is inevitable" (*Rubish,* 1).

[k.] "It is easy to foresee that the day is approaching when men will be forced to associate in order to carry out a portion of the things most necessary to life. *Fourierism"* (*Rubish,* 1).

[m.] "Commercial associations are the easiest and the first; they are the ones that a government has the most interest in encouraging" (*Rubish,* 1).

[n.] "In this, as in nearly everything else, the greatest effort of the government must tend toward teaching citizens the art of doing without its help" (*Rubish,* 1).

[o.] "The dominion of the majority is absolute, but it would be too permanent if there were not associations to combat it and to drag it out of its old ways" (*Rubish,* 1).

[p.] The manuscript says: ". . . to distinguish in it the *teacher from the master."*

[[*]] There are more than that. Look for the figure in the *Penitentiary System.*

[q.] The manuscript says: "ridiculous."

[r.] The manuscript cites: "three hundred thousand."

[s.] "So I am far from claiming that a democratic government must abandon all important enterprises to the industry of individuals, or even that there is not a certain period in the life of a democratic people when the government must more or less mingle in a great number of enterprises, but I do not believe that in that [interrupted text (ed.)]" (*Rubish,* 1).

[t.] Short unpublished chapter that is found with the manuscript of the chapter:

This chapter contains some good ideas and some good sentences. Nonetheless, I believe it useful to delete it.

> 1. Because it treats very briefly and very incompletely a very interesting subject that has been treated at great length by others. Among others, Chevalier.
> 2. Because it gets into the order of ideas of the great political chapters of the end./

Consult L[ouis (ed.)]. and B[eaumont (ed.)]./

It is clear in any case that this chapter is too thin to go alone. It must be deleted or joined to another. Perhaps to the general chapter on associations.

Tocqueville is alluding to Michel Chevalier, author of *Lettres sur l'Amérique du Nord,* 1836.

[u.] In the margin: "There is the kernel of the thought. There is no correlation between *help* and *obedience.* You can lend help to a man that you do not command."

> 1.
>
> [a.] When men are independent of one another you can only make a large number of them act in common by persuading each one separately but simultaneously of the utility of the enterprise.
>
> And only a newspaper can thus succeed in putting the same thought in a thousand ears at the same time.
>
> So newspapers are necessary in proportion as conditions are more equal.

2. A newspaper not only suggests the same plan to a large number of men at the same time, it provides them the means to carry out in common the plans that they had conceived themselves.
1. First, it makes them know each other and it puts them in contact.
2. Then, it binds them together; it makes them talk with each other without seeing each other and march in agreement without gathering together.
3. Since newspapers increase with associations, it is easy to understand that the less centralization there is among a people, the more newspapers there must be. For each district then forms a permanent association in which the need for a newspaper makes itself felt much more than when there is only a large national association.
4. Since a newspaper always represents an association, it explains why, the greater equality is and the weaker each individual is, the stronger the press is. The newspaper overpowers each of its readers in the name of all the others (YTC, CVf, pp. 26–27).

[b.] The *Rubish* contains two jackets with notes and drafts for this chapter. One bears the same title as the chapter; the other bears the following title:

particular utility that democratic peoples draw from liberty of the press and in particular from newspapers. /

Chapter scarcely roughed out and *weakly* conceived, to review and perhaps to delete. To put in the middle of associations./

Édouard notes rightly: 1. that the subject of newspapers is of all democratic subjects the one most familiar to the French, that consequently I must hesitate to treat it. 2. that in any case it is too important to treat it accidentally in relation to associations.

He proposes that I only show the relation that exists between newspapers and associations. A newspaper is the voice of an association. You can consider it as the soul of the association, the most energetic means that the association uses to form itself. If, on the one hand, there is a connection between the number of associations and equality of conditions, there is a connection between the number of newspapers and that of associations.

An association that has only one newspaper to read is only rough-hewn, but it already exists.

To that I propose to join what I say about how the power of newspapers grows in proportion as conditions become equal./

Associations in democracies can form only from a multitude of weak and humble individuals who do not see each other from far away, who do not have the leisure to seek each other out, or the ability to consult and to agree with each other (in aristocracies, on the contrary, a powerful association can form from a small number of powerful citizens; the latter know each other and they do not need newspapers to consult and to agree with each other). All of these things can take place only because

of *newspapers* and in general because of the free publications of the press. So newspapers are necessary in democracies in proportion as associations themselves are necessary (*the central idea is found!*)(*Rubish,* 1).

[c.] "Make a note to point out that it is a matter here not only of political newspapers, but also and above all of scientific, industrial, religious, moral newspapers . . ." (*Rubish,* 1).

[d.] "That also explains the power of newspapers in democracies. They are not naturally stronger than in aristocracies, but they speak amid the universal silence; they act amid the common powerlessness. They take the initiative when no one dares to take it." (*Rubish*particular utility that democratic peoples draw from liberty of the press and in particular from newspapers,*Rubish,* 1).

[e.] "Thus the number of newspapers grows not only according to the number of voluntary associations; it also increases in proportion as the political power [v: administration] becomes decentralized and as the local power passes from the hands of the few into those of all" (*Rubish,* 1).

[1.]*I say a* democratic people. *The administration can be very decentralized among an aristocratic people, without making the need for newspapers felt, because local powers then are in the hands of a very small number of men who act separately or who know each other and can easily see and understand each other.*

[f.] "The press that much more powerful among a democratic people as the spirit of association is less widespread. It is not that it is itself stronger, but that those whom it wants to dominate are weaker" (*Rubish*particular utility that democratic peoples draw from liberty of the press and in particular from newspapers,*Rubish,* 1).

> 1. When men have contracted the habit of associations in civil life, that gives them great facility for associating in political life.
> 2. Political associations are on their side very powerful for giving men the thought and the art of associating in civil life.
> 1. Politics provides common interests to a multitude of men at the same time, provides them with natural occasions to associate, which generalizes the theory of association and makes it studied.
> 2. You can in general become familiar with the theory of association only by risking your money. Associations are the free schools of association.
> 3. So political associations neutralize in the long run most of the evils that they create. For if they put the tranquillity of the State at risk, they multiply the number of civil associations that favor this tranquillity (YTC, CVf, p. 27).

[b.] ≠This chapter absolutely needs a general reworking. Its movement is confused and difficult, and several of the ideas that it contains are questionable. ≠/

You would say that I come to prove that civil association arises from political association, which is false according to myself, since I say that in countries where political association is *forbidden,* civil association is *rare.*

1.*The first aim* of the chapter is to show that civil association is always weak, lethargic, limited, clumsy wherever political association does not exist. Civil association does not arise from political association any more than the latter from civil association. They develop mutually. In a country where political associations are very numerous, civil associations cannot fail to be so as well, just as men who already have the habit of associating in civil matters have a great facility for associating in politics.
2.*The second objective of the chapter* is to show that a people can have an interest in allowing liberty of political association in order to favor civil association, which is more necessary to its tranquillity than the other is harmful./

There are *free* associations other than *political* associations, but they are not striking.

You can undoubtedly study the laws of association in the *Norman association,* but who thinks of doing so? (*Rubish,* 1).

[c.] In a first version: ". . . there are only two nations."

[1.]*That is true, above all, when it is the executive power that is charged with allowing or forbidding associations according to its arbitrary will.*

When the law limits itself to prohibiting certain associations and leaves to the courts the task of punishing those who disobey, the evil is very much less; each citizen then knows in advance more or less what is what; in a way he judges himself before his judges do so, and, avoiding forbidden associations, he devotes himself to permitted associations. All free peoples have always understood that the right of association could be limited in this way. But, if it happened that the legislator charged a man with disentangling in advance which associations are dangerous and which are useful, and left him free to destroy the seed of all associations or to allow them to be born, no one would be able any longer to foresee in advance in what case you can associate and in what other you must refrain from doing so; so the spirit of association would be completely struck with inertia. The first of these two laws attacks only certain associations; the second is addressed to society itself and wounds it. I conceive that a regular government might resort to the first, but I recognize in no government the right to bring about the second.

[d.] According to Jean-Claude Lamberti, Tocqueville is referring here to the law on association of 16 February 1834. *Tocqueville et les deux Démocraties* (Paris: PUF, 1983), p. 104, note 42.

1. As men are more equal and more detached from their fellows, the idea of devotion becomes more foreign, and it is more necessary to show how particular interest merges with general interest.
2. This is what is done in America. Not only is the doctrine of interest well understood *openly* professed there, but it is universally admitted.

3. The doctrine of interest well understood is the most appropriate one for the needs of a democratic people, and the moralists of our time should turn toward it (YTC, CVf, p. 28).

[b.] Former title in the manuscript: of interest well understood as philosophical doctrine.

[c.] In the margin, with a bracket indicating this beginning: “Probably delete this.”

[d.] “Democracy *destroys* the instinct for devotion, *reason* for it [devotion] must be found” (*Rubish,* 1).

[e.] In the margin: “To delete I think./

“These paragraphs seem to Édouard to merit some small development./

“Explain why some affect to despise this theory.”

[f.] Democracy pushes each man to think only of himself; on the other hand, reason and experience indicate that it is sometimes necessary in his own interest to be concerned about others.

The philosophical doctrine of interest well understood as principal rule of human actions has presented itself to the human mind from time to time in all centuries, but in democratic centuries it besieges the human mind and entirely dominates the moral world.

[To the side] The barbarians forced each man to think only of himself; democracy leads them by themselves to want to do so” (*Rubish,* 1).

[g.] In aristocratic centuries, you know your interest, but the philosophical doctrine is to scorn it.

In democratic centuries, you maintain that virtue and interest are in agreement.

[To the side] I need America to prove these two propositions, so I must finish rather than begin with it, in order to gather light on this essential point (*Rubish,* 1).

[h.] A note of the manuscript indicates that this quotation belongs to book II, chapter XVI of the *Essais.* The library of the Tocqueville château had an edition in three volumes dating from 1600.

[j.] Some enlightenment makes men see how their personal interest differs from that of their fellows. A great deal of enlightenment shows them how the two interests often come to merge./

Three successive states:

1.*Ignorance.* Instinctive devotion.

2.*Half-knowledge.* Egoism.
3.*Complete enlightenment.* Thoughtful sacrifice./

There are two ways to make that understood by a people:

1. Experience. 2. Enlightenment.

The most difficult task of governments is not to govern, but to instruct men in governing them[selves (ed.)]./

The worst effect of a bad government is not the evil that it does, but the one that it suggests (*Rubish,* 1).

[k.] "The *beauty* of virtue is the favorite thesis of moralists under aristocracy. Its *utility* under democracy" (*Rubish,* 1).

"Interest well understood is not contrary to the disinterested advance of the good. These are two different things, but not opposite. Great souls for whom this doctrine cannot be enough, pass in a way through it and go beyond it, while ordinary souls stop there" (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 85).

[m.] "Utility of provincial institutions in order to create centers of common interest in democracy. National interest is not enough. It is necessary to multiply links, to bring men to see each other, understand each other, and have ideas, sentiments in common" (*Rubish,* 1).

[n.] Fragment that belongs to the *rubish* of the chapter:

Doctrine of interest./

[To the side: This could be placed as well in sentiments and tastes. To think about it.]

Not very elevated point of view from which the Americans envisage human actions. Doctrine of interest followed elsewhere, *professed* in America. Effort to make it a social doctrine. *Succeeds in fact in making society proceed comfortably, but without grandeur.*

{To put perhaps before or after what I say about religion as political element.}/

This, among the Americans in particular and among democratic peoples in general, is clearly the result: 1. of egoism above all that makes you think only of yourself; 2. of the concentration of the soul in material things.

So this must be treated only after these two ideas are known; this chapter will be only their corollary./

I will first demonstrate that the Americans are led in general to concentrate on their interest and then, that they have made this way of acting into a philosophical theory./

That the legislators of democracies are not able to prevent the establishment and development of this doctrine, that all their effort should be limited to getting the most out of it, to making it so that men have a real interest in doing good, or at least to making this interest clear to all. That is useful in all societies, but very much more useful in those in which men cannot withdraw to the *platonic* enjoyment of doing good and in which they see the other world ready to escape them.

It is equally necessary that men, having reached this point, be enlightened at all cost, for there is enough truth in the notion that man has an interest in doing good, that widespread enlightenment cannot fail to make man discover it.

Proof of this, morality of the well-enlightened man.

Political consequences. Extreme efforts that the legislator must make in democracies to spiritualize man. Particular necessity for religions in democracy; even dogmatic and not very reasonable religions, for lack of anything better. Show heaven even if it is through the worst instruments./

Distinctions to make between the different doctrines of *interest.* /

There is a doctrine of interest that consists of believing that you must make the interest of other men yield before your own and that it is natural and reasonable to embrace only the latter. This is an instinctive, crude egoism that hardly merits the name of doctrine.

[In the margin: The doctrine of interest can teach how to live, but not how to die./

The doctrine of interest must not be confused with the doctrine of the *useful.* It is contained in that of the useful, but it is only a part of it.]

There is another doctrine of interest that consists of believing that the best way to be happy is to serve your interest and to be good, honest . . . in a word, that interest well understood requires you often to sacrifice your interest or rather, that to follow your interest over all, you often have to neglect it in detail.

This is a philosophical doctrine that has its value.

[In the margin: Great passions of the *true,* the *beautiful* and the *good.* Analogous things flowing from [the (ed.)] same source, equally rare, producing great men of learning, great men of literature and great virtues.]

There is, finally, a doctrine infinitely purer, more elevated, less material, according to which the basis of actions is duty. Man penetrates divine thought with his intelligence. He sees that the purpose of God is order, and he freely associates himself as much as he is able with this great design. He cooperates with it in his humble sphere, depending on his strength, in order to fulfill his destination and to obey his mandate. There is still personal interest there, for there is a proud and private enjoyment in such points of view and hope for remuneration in a better world; but interest there is as small, as secretive and as legitimate as possible.

Positive religions render this interest more visible; they render these sentiments stronger, more popular. They generally mix the two things in a clever way that facilitates practice. In Christianity, for example, we are told that it is necessary to do good *out of love of God* (magnificent expression of the doctrine that I have just explained) and also to gain eternal life.

Thus Christianity at one end touches the doctrine of interest well understood and at the other the doctrine that I developed afterward and that I could call with Christianity itself, the doctrine of the love of God. In sum, a religion very superior in terms of loftiness to the doctrine of interest well understood because it places interest in the other world and draws us out of this cesspool of human and material interests.

The doctrine of interest well understood can make men honest.

But it is only that of the love of God that makes men virtuous. The one teaches how to live, the other teaches how to die, and how can you make men who do not want to die live well for long?

Why aristocratic peoples are led more than democratic peoples to adopt the second doctrines more than the first.

Class that has material happiness without thinking about it, that can think and is not preoccupied by the trouble to work and to acquire. Another class that by working can scarcely hope to reach material happiness and that turns naturally toward the non-material world.

On the contrary, in democracies each man has just enough material happiness to desire more of it, enough of a chance of gaining it to fix the mind on material happiness or at least that of this world./

Another point of view.

The philosophical doctrine that I spoke about is based on interest.

Religious doctrines are also based on interest.

But there is this great difference between them, that the first places this interest in this world and the others outside of it, which is enough to give actions an infinitely less material and loftier purpose; that the ones out of necessity profess to scorn material goods, while the other, restricting itself to that life, cannot fail to hold material goods in a certain esteem. So although the cause of actions is the same, these actions are very different./

Religions have, by design, made such an intimate union of the doctrine of the love of God and of that of interest, that those who are sincerely devout are constantly mistaken, and it happens that they believe that they are doing actions solely in view of the reward to come, actions that are principally suggested to them by the most pure, most noble and most disinterested instincts of human nature (*Rubish,* 1).

1. If the doctrine of interest well understood had only this life in view, it would be far from enough; so we must see if it is not contrary to religions that promote action with the other in view.
2.

[a.] If you look closely you will see that interest is the motivating force of nearly all religious men, and the lever used by nearly all the founders of religion.

So the doctrine of interest well understood in itself is not contrary to religions, since religions only apply it in another way.

It is easy as well to prove that the men who adopt it are very disposed than [*sic*] others to submit to religious beliefs and practices.

3. Examples of the Americans (YTC, CVf, pp. 28–29). There is no *rubish* for this chapter.

[b.] At the first page of the manuscript: "<I am afraid of being superficial and incomplete and commonplace in these two chapters, while there is no matter that requires more knowledge and depth and originality.>"

[c.] In the margin: "and that alone is enough to give to religions a great advantage over philosophy . . ."

[d.] To the side: "This thought, which does not seem to me worthy of the great soul of Pascal, sums up perfectly well the state of souls in the countries where reason is becoming enlightened and stronger at the same time that religious beliefs falter." *Pensée* 36 in the Lafuma edition.

[e.] In the margin: "<So the doctrine of interest well understood can become the ruling philosophy among a people without harming the spirit of religion; but it cannot fail to give the spirit of religion a certain character, and you must expect that, in the soul of the *devout,* it will make the desire to gain heaven predominate over the pure love of God.>"

1. The taste for material well-being is universal in America. Why?
1. In aristocracies, the upper classes, since they have never acquired well-being or feared losing it, readily apply their passions elsewhere and on a more lofty level. Since the lower classes do not have the idea of bettering their lot and are not close enough to well-being to desire it, their imagination is thrown toward the other world.
2. In democratic centuries, on the contrary, each person tries hard to attain well-being or fears losing it. That constantly keeps the soul in suspense on this point (YTC, CVf, p. 29).

[a.] First organization of this part of the book in the *Rubish:*

of the taste for material enjoyments in democracies. /

1. Of the taste for material enjoyments in America.
2. Of the different effects that the taste for material enjoyments produces in an aristocracy and in a democracy.
3. Of some bizarre sects that are arising in America.
4. Of restlessness of the heart in America.
5. How the taste for material enjoyments is combined among the Americans with love of liberty and concerns for public affairs.
6. How equality of conditions (or democracy) leads Americans toward industrial professions.
7. How the religious beliefs of the Americans hold within certain limits the excessive taste for material well-being (*Rubish* of chapter 15 of this part, *Rubish,* 1).

[b.] In the *Rubish* there is a voluminous sheaf bearing the title rubish and ideas relating to the chapters on material enjoyments. It contains notes and pages of *rubish* for this chapter and for those that follow, up to and including chapter 18. The *rubish* for this chapter retains another sheaf with this note on the cover:

what makes the love of riches predominate over all other passions in democratic centuries. /

Chapter to insert in the course of the book, probably before industrial careers./

At ambition, what diverts from great ambition, it is the petty ambition for money.

You devote yourself to the petty ambition for money as preliminary to the other and, when you have devoted yourself to it for a long time, you are incapable of moving away from it./

To put I think before material enjoyments. The desire for wealth is close to the desire for material enjoyments, but is distinct.

The only page of the sheaf bears particularly the following notes:

“Regularity. Monotony of life./

“That is not democratic but commercial, or at least it is democratic only in so far as democracy pushes toward commerce and industry.

“There are also religious habits in the middle of that.”

In another place: “In aristocracies, even the life of artisans is varied; they have games, ceremonies, a form of worship that serves as a diversion from the monotony of their works. Their body is attached to their profession, not their soul.

“It is not the same thing with democratic peoples” (*Rubish,* 1).

[c.] “ ≠Byron remarks somewhere that in his voyages, he easily bore and suffered almost without complaint the privations that made his valet despair. The same remark

could have been made by a thousand others ≠"(*Rubish,* 1). Letter of Byron to his mother, Athens, 17 January 1831; reproduced in *Correspondence of Lord Byron with a Friend* ... (Paris: A. and W. Calignani, 1825), I, pp. 21–22; the same publishing house published a French version of this text.

[d.] How the different forms of government can more or less favor the taste for money among men./

Among nations that have an *aristocracy* you seek money because it leads to power. Among nations that have a *nobility* you seek it to console yourself for being excluded from power. It seems that it is among democratic peoples that you have to seek it the least. There as elsewhere, ordinary souls undoubtedly continue to be attached to it; but ambitious spirits take it neither as principal goal and as a makeshift equivalent [? (ed.)].

You object to me in vain that in the United States, which forms a democracy, the love of money is excessive and that in France, where we turn daily toward democracy, love of money is becoming more and more the dominant passion. I will reply that political institutions definitively exercise only a limited influence over the inclinations of the human heart. If love of money is great in France and in the United States, that comes from the fact that in France mores, beliefs and characters are becoming depraved, and that in the United States the material condition of the country presents continual opportunities to the passion to grow rich. In the two countries you love money not because there are democratic institutions, but even though there are democratic institutions (YTC, CVa, pp. 53–54).

On 28 May 1831, Tocqueville writes from New York to his brother, Édouard:

We are very truly here in another world; political passions here are only on the surface. The profound passion, the only one that profoundly moves the human heart, the passion of every day, is the acquisition of wealth, and there are a thousand means to acquire it without disturbing the State. You have to be very blind in my opinion to want to compare this country to Europe and to adapt to one what suits the other; I believed it before leaving France; I believe it more and more while examining the society in the midst of which I now live; it is a people of merchants who are busy with public affairs when its [*sic*] work leaves it the leisure (YTC, BIa2).

[e.] "What makes democratic nations egotistic is not even so much the great number of independent citizens that they contain as the great number of citizens who are constantly reaching independence" (YTC, CVa, pp. 7–8).

[f.] To the side: "<This sentence is good, but interrupts the flow of the idea.>"

[g.] "*Other reason.* In a democratic society the only *visible* advantage that you can enjoy over your fellows is wealth. This explains the desire for *riches,* but not that for *material enjoyments.* These two things are close, but are nonetheless distinct. While it comes to the aid of sensuality here, pride in aristocracies often runs counter to it; you want to distinguish yourself from those who do not have money" (*Rubish,* 1).

[a.] When an aristocracy gives itself to the passion for material enjoyments, it aims at extraordinary pleasures; it falls into a thousand excesses that shame human nature and disturb society.

In democratic countries the taste for material enjoyments is a universal passion, constant, but contained. Everyone conceives it and gives himself to it constantly, but it leads no one to great excesses. Everyone seeks to satisfy the slightest needs easily and without cost rather than to obtain great pleasures.

This type of passion for material enjoyments can be reconciled with order and to a certain point with religion and morality. It does not always debilitate souls, but it softens them and silently relaxes their springs of action (YTC, CVf, p. 30).

[b.] Title in the *rubish:*of the different effects that the taste for material enjoyments produces in an aristocracy and in a democracy.

At another place in the *rubish:* " that the taste for well-being and for material enjoyments in democracies is more tranquil, leads to less excess than in aristocracies and can be combined with a sort of spirit of order and morality. 2nd chapter.

"Honest materialism" (*Rubish,* 1). In a letter addressed to an unidentified person, Tocqueville had expressed the same idea in this way:

Author of all these revolutions, carried away himself by the movement that he brought about, the American of the United States ends by feeling pushed by an irresistible need for action; in Europe there are philosophers who preach human perfection; for him, the possible has hardly any limit. To change is to improve; he has constantly before his eyes the image of indefinite perfection that throws deep within his heart an extraordinary restlessness and a great distaste for the present.

Here, the enjoyments of the soul are not very important, the pleasures of imagination do not exist, but an immense door is open for achieving material happiness and each man rushes toward it. In order to reach it, you abandon parents, family, country; you try in the course of one life ten different roads to attain wealth. The same man has been priest, doctor, tradesman, farmer.

I do not know if you live here more happily than elsewhere, but at least you feel existence less; and you arrive at the great abyss without having had the time to notice the road that you followed.

These men call themselves virtuous; I deny it. They are *steady,* that is all that I am able to say in their favor. They steal from the neighbor and respect his wife, which I can only explain to myself because they love money and do not have the time to make love (Letter of 8 November 1831, YTC, BIa2).

[c.] " ≠I know nothing more deplorable than the spectacle presented by an aristocracy that, losing its power, has remained master of its wealth ≠"(*Rubish,* 1).

[d.] "In aristocracies the taste for material well-being breaks the bonds of society, in democracies it tightens them" (*Rubish,* 1).

[e.] In the *rubish,* the sentence says: "cannot be applied except to the poor of democracies." On this subject, you read as well the following note: "The remark of Édouard on this point is this:

" 'I am speaking here,' he says, 'only about the *poor* or at most about people who are *well-off,* but there are rich people in democracies and it must be explained why these rich men are also forced to pursue material enjoyments in small ways and share on this point the instincts of the poor.

" 'True remark' " (*Rubish,* 1).

[a.] Although the Americans have as a dominant passion the acquisition of the goods of this world, spiritualism shows itself from time to time among all, and exclusively among some, with singular forms and a fervor that often goes nearly to extravagance.

Camp meetings.

Bizarre sects.

These different effects come from the same cause.

The soul has natural needs that must be satisfied. If you want to imprison it in contemplation of the needs of the body, it ends by escaping and in its momentum it does not stop even at the limits of common sense (YTC, CVf, pp. 30–31).

[b.] Original title in the *rubish:*of some bizarre sects that arise in america. See the appendix sects in america.

[c.] On the jacket of the manuscript: "Small chapter that must be retained only if someone formally advises me to do so.

"The core of the idea is questionable. Everything considered there were more mystical extravagances in the Middle Ages (centuries of aristocracy) than in America today.

"Moreover, several of these ideas reappear or have already appeared (*I believe*) in the book!"

[d.] In the margin: " ≠All this shows the weakness of the idea by recalling the *monasteries,* institutions quite differently spiritualist than the small associations that I am speaking about. ≠"

[e.] " ≠When I {read the impractical laws of Plato} see Plato in his sublime reveries want to forbid commerce and industry to the citizens and, in order to release them better from coarse desires, want to take away even the possession of their children, I think of his contemporaries, and the sensual democracy of Athens makes me

understand the laws of this imaginary republic whose portrait he has drawn for us ≠"(*Rubish,* 1).

[f.] "I would not be surprised if the first monasteries to be established in America are trappist monasteries" (*Rubish,* 1).

[g.] There is in the very nature of man a natural and permanent disposition that pushes his soul despite habits, laws, customs . . . toward the contemplation of elevated and intellectual things.

This natural disposition is found in democracies as elsewhere. And it can even be exalted and perfected there by a sort of reaction to the *material* and the *ordinary* that abound in these sorts of societies.

When society presents elevated and grand points of view, the kinds of souls that I have just spoken about can allow themselves to be caught by and attach themselves to this half-good, instead of detaching themselves entirely from the earth in order to go to find absolute good.

The dissolute orgies of Rome filled the deserts of Thebaid.

K[ergorlay (ed.)]., 13 March 1836 (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 5).

[h.] " ≠If the Americans had a literature this would be even more perceptible. Some would want to escape from monotony by the bizarre, the singular. You could see a mystical literature within a materialistic society./

"Exalted spiritualism. Intellectual orgies. ≠"(*Rubish,* 1).

[a.] Of restlessness of the heart in America. Although the Americans are a very prosperous people, they seem almost always restless and care-ridden; they constantly change places, careers, desires.

That comes principally from these causes:

Equality makes the love of the enjoyments of this world predominate. Now

> 1. Men who restrict themselves to the pursuit of the enjoyments of this world are always pressed by the idea of the brevity of life. They fear having missed the shortest road that could lead them to happiness.
> 2. The taste for material enjoyments causes intense desires, but leads easily to discouragement. For the effort that you make to attain the enjoyment must not surpass the enjoyment.
> 3. Equality suggests a thousand times more desires than it can satisfy. It excites ambition and deceives it. Men can achieve anything, but their individual weakness and competition limit them (YTC, CVf, p. 31).

This chapter appears with the same title of restlessness of the heart in america in the *rubish* and manuscript. A page of the *rubish* contains the following note: "Small

chapter done with great difficulty. To delete perhaps, but to review in any case. Perhaps in order to avoid the commonplace, I fell into the *forced.* /

"Immoderate desire for happiness in this world, that arises from democracy. *Idea to make emerge better from the chapter"* (*Rubish,* 1).

[b.] I arrived one night in the company of several savages at the house of an American planter. It is the dwelling of a rich planter and at the same time a tavern. You saw reigning there great ease and even a sort of rustic luxury. I was brought into a well-lighted and carefully heated room in which several men of leisure from the neighborhood were already gathered around a table laden with grain whiskey. These men were all more or less drunk, but their drunkenness had a grave and somber character that struck me. They talked painfully about public affairs, about the price of houses, about the hazards of commerce and the cycles of industry. The Indians remained outside, although the night was rainy and they had [only (ed.)] a few bad rags of blankets to cover themselves. They had lighted a large fire and sat around on the humid earth. They spoke happily among themselves. I did not understand the meaning of their speeches, but the noisy bursts of their joy at each instant penetrated the gravity of our banquet (*Rubish,* 1).

[c.] "The inhabitant of the United States has all the goods of this world within reach, but can grasp none of them without effort" (*Rubish,* 1).

[d.] "All of that still much more marked in the *revolutionary* period and in *unbelieving* democracies./

"The Americans are *materialistic* by their *tastes,* but they are not by their *ideas.* They ardently pursue the goods of this world, but they have not ceased believing in the existence of another one" (*Rubish,* 1).

[e.] In a first version of the *rubish:*

I met a man in the United States who, after having for a long time hidden great talents in poverty, finally became the wealthiest man of his profession. At the same time in England lived another individual who, following the same career as the first man, had amassed greater wealth. News of it reached the American and this colleague who was on the other side of the ocean troubled his sleep and kept his joy in check (*Rubish,* 1).

[f.] In the margin: "<This idea must *necessarily* be found in the chapter on ambition. Do not let it *appear* without reviewing both of them at the same time.>"

[g.] The four paragraphs that follow do not appear in the manuscript.

[h.] "<Envy is a sentiment that develops strongly *only among equals,* that is why it is so common and so ardent in democratic centuries>" (*Rubish,* 1).

[j.] To the side: "<Perhaps remove all of this as too strong.>"

[k.] Men of democracies are tormented by desires more immense and more unlimited than those of all other men. Their desires generally lead them however to less sustained, less energetic, less persevering actions. The desires have enough power over them to agitate them, to make them lose hope, and not enough to lead them to these great and persevering efforts that bring great and enduring results. They have enough desires to become disgusted with life and to kill themselves, not enough to overcome themselves and to prevail, live and act. They have constantly recurring weak desires, rather than will.

Examine this phenomenon very closely and portray it, probably in the chapter entitled *of restlessness of the heart,* which comes after *material enjoyments,* true cause of what precedes.

12 March 1838 (*Rubish,* 1).

[a.] Liberty is useful for the production of well-being among all peoples, but principally among democratic peoples.

It often happens among these peoples, however, that the excessive taste for well-being causes liberty to be abandoned.

Men there are so preoccupied by their petty private affairs that they regard the attention that they give to great public affairs as a waste of time. That delivers them easily to the despotism of one man or to the tyranny of a party. The Americans offer the opposite example. They concern themselves with public affairs attentively and with the same ardor as with their private interests, which shows clearly that in their mind these two things go together (YTC, CVf, p. 32).

[b.] The manuscript says “republic.”

[a.] In America, Sunday and the use made of it interrupt each week the course of purely material thoughts and tastes. It breaks the chain of them. Particular advantages of this.

The democratic social state leads the human mind toward materialistic opinions by sometimes developing beyond measure the taste for well-being. That is a tendency that you must struggle against, just as in aristocratic times you must fight against an opposite excess.

Effect of religions which is to keep spiritualism in honor. So religions are particularly necessary among democratic peoples. What the government of these peoples can do to uphold religions and the spiritualistic opinions that they suggest (YTC, CVf, pp. 32–33).

[b.] On the jacket of the chapter in the manuscript: “The utility of religions to temper the taste for material enjoyments in democratic centuries has already been *touched* upon in chapter V, but so lightly that I believe that it can be developed here.” It concerns chapter V of the first part.

[c.] In the margin: " ≠To delete this piece perhaps which *slows,* although it clarifies. I have moreover expressed this idea in the first part while speaking about laws. ≠"

[d.] If I had been born in the Middle Ages, I would have been the enemy of superstitions, for then the social movement led there.

But today, I feel indulgent toward all the follies that spiritualism can suggest.

The great enemy is materialism, not only because it is in itself a detestable doctrine, but also because it is unfortunately in accord with the social tendency (*Rubish,* 1).

[e.] ≠Baden, 2 August 1836.

Of the pride of the materialists. /

There are many things that shock me among the materialists, but the most displeasing in my view is the extreme pride that most of them exhibit. If the doctrine that they profess could be of some use to men, it seems that it would be in inspiring in them a modest idea of themselves and in leading them to humility. But they do not indicate that this is so, and after making a thousand efforts to prove that they are only brutes, they show themselves as proud as if they had demonstrated that they were gods ≠" (In the *rubish* of chapter XVII of this part. *Rubish,* 1).

[f.] To the side: "{Remark by Édouard.}"

[g.] In the margin: " ≠It is above all from there that the piece becomes *weak* because what I say no longer relates exclusively to democracies./

"What follows is a beautiful digression on the general advantages of spiritualisms and nothing more, thrown across the idea of the utility of a religion and of the means for preserving it. ≠"

[h.] Immortality of the soul./

The need for the *infinite* and the sad experience of the *finite* that we encounter at each step, torments [*sic*] me sometimes, but does not distress me. I see in it one of the greatest proofs of the existence of another world and of the immortality of our souls. From all that we know about God by his works, we know that he does nothing without a near or distant end. This is so true that in the physical world, it is enough for us to find an organ in order to conclude from it in a certain way that the animal that possessed this organ used it in this or that way, and experience comes to prove it. Argument by analogy. I cannot believe that God put in our souls the *organ* of the infinite, if I can express myself in this way, in order to give our soul eternally only to the *finite,* that he gave it the *organ* of hope in a future life, without future life (CVa, p. 57).

[j.] In a first version you read:

I am moreover very far from believing that men can[not (ed.)] reconcile the taste for well-being that democracy develops and the religious [v: spiritualistic] beliefs that democracy needs. To prove it, I will not use the example of the Americans; their origin sets them aside. But I will cite before all the others that of the English.

The middle classes of England form an immense democracy in which each man is occupied without respite with the concern of improving his lot, and in which all seem devoted to the love of wealth. But the middle classes of England remain faithful to their religious beliefs and they show in a thousand small ways that these beliefs are powerful and sincere [v: true]. England, with its traditions and its memories, is not however relegated to a corner of the universe. Unbelief is next door. The English themselves have seen several of the most celebrated unbelievers arise within it. But the middle classes of England have remained firmly religious until today and are sincere Christians who have produced these industrial wonders that astonish the world.

So the heart of man is . . . (*Rubish,* 1).

A variant from the *Rubish* specifies: “unbelievers. Several have been powerful because of their genius. Hume, Gibbon, Byron” (*Rubish,* 1).

[k.] To be concerned only with satisfying the needs of the body and to forget about the soul. That is the final outcome to which materialism leads.

To flee into the deserts, to inflict sufferings and privations on yourself in order to live the life of the soul. That is the final outcome of spiritualism. I notice at the one end of this tendency Heliogabalus and at the other St. Jerome.

I would very much want us to be able to find between these two paths a road that would not be a route toward the one or toward the other. For if each of these two opposite roads can be suitable for some men, this middle road is the only one that can be suitable for humanity. Can we not find a path between Heliogabalus and St. Jerome? (*Rubish,* 1).

At another place in the *rubish:*

I proved sufficiently in material tastes that it was to be desired that the taste for well-being did not repress the impulses [of (ed.)] spiritualism of the soul, were it only so that man could obtain for himself those material enjoyments that they [*sic*] desire.

For the subject to be exhausted and my philosophical position clearly established, it would be necessary to be able to add a *small* chapter in which, turning myself away from considering the *fanatical* spiritualists, I would show that in the very interest of the soul the body must prosper; I would *rehabilitate the flesh* as the Saint-Simonians said. I would search for this intermediate path between Saint Jerome and Heliogabalus that will always be the great route of humanity.

I would show there

> 1. That in order to get men to concern themselves with the *needs* of their souls, you must not say to them to neglect the *needs* of the body, for both exist, man being neither a pure *spirit* nor an *animal,* but that the problem to solve is to find a means to reconcile these two needs.
> 2.*That in itself* it is desirable that sublime virtues do not hide under rags (or at least exceptions that show nothing), that a certain well-being of the body is necessary for the development of the soul, that efforts made by the soul to attain that development are healthy for it, that they give it habits of order, work, that they sharpen its abilities . . ./

In a word, it is necessary to tie this world to the other or one of the two escapes us (*Rubish,* 1).

In a letter of 1843, Tocqueville will repeat the same ideas to Arthur de Gobineau:

Our society has moved away much more from theology than from Christian philosophy. Since our religious beliefs have become less firm and the view of the other world more obscure, morality must show itself more indulgent for material needs and pleasures. It is an idea that the Saint-Simonians expressed, I believe, by saying that it *was necessary to rehabilitate the flesh* (*Correspondance avec Gobineau, OC,* IX, p. 46).

See Joshua Mitchell, *The Fragility of Freedom. Tocqueville on Religion, Democracy and the American Future* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

[m.] In the *rubish,* the passage continues in this way: “It is rare moreover that you wisely use a precarious and disputed power that you can exercise only in the shadows. For me, I am so persuaded that the spirit of religion must at all cost be maintained within democracies and I feel, on the contrary, so convinced of the nearly inevitable dangers . . .” (*Rubish,* 1).

[n.] To put after egoism and the material tendency of democracy, when I will say that it is necessary at all cost to throw some non-material ideas, some poetry, some taste for the infinite into the midst of democratic peoples.

Legislators of democracy, if by chance a positive religion exists, respect it, preserve it as a precious flame that is tending to go out, as the most precious heritage of aristocratic centuries . . .

In aristocratic centuries I would work hard to turn the human spirit toward physical studies, in democratic centuries toward the moral sciences. Draw a short parallel between these two tendencies against which you must alternately struggle in order to reveal clearly the higher place at which I position myself and show that I am not a slave to my own ideas (*Rubish,* 1).

[a.] “It is the soul that teaches the body the art of satisfying itself. You cannot neglect the one up to a certain point without decreasing the means to satisfy the other” (YTC, CVf, p. 33).

[b.] "The perfection of the soul serves not only to find new means to satisfy the body, but it also increases the ability that the body has to enjoy.

Idea of L[ouis (ed.)].

"I am persuaded in fact that a man of spirit, imagination, genius, feels material enjoyments a thousand times more when he gives himself to them than a fool, a dull or coarse being" (*Rubish,* 1).

[a.] In centuries of faith, men become accustomed to directing all of their actions in this world with the other in view.

That gives them certain habits and leads them as well to set for themselves very distant goals in life and to march toward them obstinately.

In centuries of unbelief, on the contrary, men are naturally led to want to think only about the next day.

So the great matter for philosophers and for those who govern in the centuries of unbelief and democracy must be to push back the goal of human affairs in the eyes of men. Means that they can use to succeed in doing so (YTC, CVf, pp. 33–34).

[b.] On the jacket of the *rubish:*

How, in centuries of democracy and doubt, all the effort of the social power must tend toward again giving men the taste for the future./

After *all* the chapters on material enjoyments. Democratic peoples have a general taste for easy and quick enjoyments. That is true of material enjoyments as well as others. So this idea must be treated separately from that of material enjoyments, but it must be treated after, because the predominance of the taste for *material* enjoyments is a great cause of the preeminence of the general taste for current enjoyments (*Rubish,* 1).

[c.] The manuscript says: "most religious peoples."

[a.] In America everyone works or has worked. That rehabilitates the idea of work. In America, since fortunes are all mediocre and temporary, the idea of salary is strongly joined with the idea of work.

From the moment when work is honorable and when all work is paid, all professions take on a family resemblance. The salary is a common feature that is found in the physiognomy of all professions (YTC, CVf, p. 34).

[b.] This chapter and the following, until the end of the second part, do not exist in the manuscript, but appear in notebook CVf. There is *rubish* with the title: "(a. b. c.) Rubish./ why democracy pushes men toward commerce and all types of industry and in general toward the taste for material well-being. instincts that follow. " There is also *rubish* for the chapter on the industrial aristocracy.

[a.] Democracy not only multiplies the number of workers among different labors, it makes men chose those of commerce and industry.

Nearly all the passions that arise from equality lead in this direction.

Love of material enjoyments.

Desire to enjoy quickly.

Love of games of chance.

In democratic countries, the rich themselves are constantly carried toward these careers. Democracy diverts them from politics. It makes commerce and industry into the most brilliant objects. In democratic countries the rich are always afraid of declining in wealth. Example of the Americans (YTC, CVf, p. 35).

[b.]*Action.* Equality of conditions leads men toward commerce.

(Idea of L[ouis (ed.)].)

Reaction. Commercial habits, type of commercial morality favorable to the government of democracy. Repress all the overly violent passions of temperaments. No anger, compromise, complicated and compromising [*sic*] interests in times of revolution (*Rubish,* 1).

[c.] Of all the means, the most energetic that you can use to push men exclusively toward love of wealth is the establishment of an aristocracy founded solely on money.

Nearly all the desires that can agitate the human heart are combined in the love of wealth, which becomes like the generative passion and which is seen among the others like the trunk of the tree that supports all the branches.

The taste for money and the ardor for power are then mingled so well in the soul, that it becomes difficult to discern if it is for ambition that men are greedy, or for greed that they are ambitious.

That is what happens in England where someone wants to be rich in order to achieve honors and where someone desires honors as evidence of wealth (*Rubish,* 1).

[1.] It has been noted several times that men of industry and men of commerce possessed an immoderate taste for material enjoyments, and commerce and industry were blamed for that; I believe that here the effect has been taken for the cause.

It is not commerce and industry that suggest the taste for material enjoyments to men, but rather this taste leads men toward industrial and commercial careers, where they hope to be satisfied more completely and more quickly.

If commerce and industry increase the desire for well-being, that results from the fact that every passion becomes stronger as it is exercised more, and grows with all the

efforts that you make to satisfy it. All the causes that make the love of the goods of this world predominate in the human heart develop industry and commerce. Equality is one of these causes. It favors commerce, not directly by giving men the taste for trade, but indirectly, by strengthening and generalizing in their souls the love of well-being.

[d.] .-.-.-.- is not by chance that most aristocracies have shown themselves indifferent to the works of industry or enemies to its progress. Underneath prejudice, it is easy to discern something real, which is like its seed.

Commerce often has admirable results in view, but it almost always uses very petty means to attain them.

In aristocracies, it is the same men who have wealth and who hold power, and their business is as much to direct public fortune as to look after their own. Preoccupied by these great matters, they can only with difficulty turn their mind to the run of small affairs that make up commerce, as well as to the minute and almost infinite concerns that commerce requires. So it is to be believed that they would see trade as a wearisome and secondary occupation and would neglect it even when they did not indeed consider it degrading. If some men were found among them who felt a natural taste for industry, they would carefully refrain from devoting themselves to it. For it is useless to resist the dominion of numbers, you never completely escape its yoke; and even within those aristocratic corps that refuse most stubbornly to acknowledge the rights of the national majority, there is a particular majority that governs.

With democracy the connection that united government and wealth disappears. The rich do not know what to do with their leisure; the restlessness of their desires, the extent of their resources, and the taste for great adventures [v: extraordinary things], which are almost always felt by men who stand in some way above the crowd, presses them to action. Only the road to commerce is open to them. In a democracy there is nothing greater or more brilliant than commerce. That is what attracts the attention and the prompting of the public; and all energetic passions are directed toward commerce. Nothing can keep the rich from devoting themselves to it, neither their own prejudices nor those of anyone else.

Since the great fortunes that are seen within a democracy almost always have a commercial origin, those who possess those fortunes have kept the habits or at least the traditions of trade. On the other hand, the rich never make up among a democratic people, as within aristocracies, a corps that has [interrupted text (ed.)] (*Rubish,* 1).

[2.] See the note at the end of the volume.

[e.] *"England.*

"≠When it is not those who govern who are rich, but the rich who govern≠" (*Rubish,* 1).

[f.] Aristocracy of birth and pure democracy form two extremes of the social state of peoples.

In the middle is found the aristocracy of money. The latter is close to aristocracy of birth in that it confers on a small number of citizens great privileges. It fits into democracy in that these privileges can be successively acquired by all. It forms the natural transition between the two things, and you cannot say whether it is ending the rule of aristocracy on earth, or whether it is already opening the new era of democratic centuries (*Rubish,* 1).

[g.] In the United States, everyone does commerce or has a portion of his fortune placed in commerce. Consequently, you see what is happening at this moment (May 1837) and what will perhaps result from it in the political world.

There is a great part of future humanity to which I must give my attention./

The Americans make immense progress in industry because they are all involved at the same time in industry, and for the same reason, they are subject to very unexpected and very formidable industrial crises (*Rubish,* 1).

[h.] [In the margin: I do not know if I should include this piece or where I should put it.]

I have shown in this chapter how democracy served the developments of industry. I would have been able to show as well how industry in turn hastened the developments of democracy. For these two things go together and react on each other. Democracy gives birth to the taste for material enjoyments that pushes men toward industry, and industry creates a multitude of mediocre fortunes and develops within the very heart of aristocratic nations a separate class in which ranks are ill defined and poorly maintained, in which people rise and fall constantly, in which leisure is not enjoyed, a separate class whose instincts are all democratic. This class forms for a long time within the very heart of aristocratic nations a kind of small democracy that has its separate instincts, opinions, laws. As the people expands its commerce and its industry, this democratic class becomes more numerous and more influential; little by little its opinions pass into the mores and its ideas into the laws, until finally, having become predominant and so to speak unique, it takes hold of power and directs everything at its will and establishes democracy.

[To the side] All that badly digested (YTC, CVj, 2, pp. 16-17).

[a.] Of the aristocratic make-up of some of the industries of today.

I showed how democracy favored the development of industry; I am going to show in what roundabout way industry in return leads back toward aristocracy.

It has been discovered in our time that when each worker was occupied only with the same detail, the work as a whole was more perfect.

It has been discovered as well that to do something with less expense, it is necessary to undertake it immediately on a very vast scale.

The first of the two discoveries lowers [v: ruins] and brutalizes the worker. The second constantly raises the master. They introduce the principles of aristocracy into the industrial class.

Now, as society in general becomes more democratic, since the need for inexpensive manufactured objects becomes more general and more intense, the two discoveries above apply more frequently and more rigorously.

So equality disappears from the small society as it becomes established in the large one (YTC, CVf, pp. 35-36).

Several ideas from this chapter come from the book of Viscount Alban de Villeneuve-Bargemont, *Économie politique chrétienne, ou recherches sur la nature et les causes du paupérisme, en France et en Europe* . . . (Paris: Paulin, 1834), 2 vols., which Tocqueville had used for his memoir on pauperism. Chapter XII of the first volume of Villeneuve-Bargemont's book has precisely this title, "The New Feudalism," and contains in germ the principal arguments of this chapter. See note s of p. 81 of the first volume.

[b.] I do not know where to place this chapter. Three systems:

> 1. It could perhaps be put in the first volume after the chapter that considers *equality* as the universal fact. It would show the exception and would complete the picture. In this case, it must perhaps be developed a bit.
> 2. It could perhaps be put before the chapter on salaries. In this case, it will have to be shortened.
> 3.
>
> I think, for the moment, that the best place would be after the chapter where I say that democracy pushes toward industrial careers. It would then be necessary to get into the matter a bit differently and bring out the link between this chapter and that which precedes. Something like this:
>
> I said that democracy pushes men toward industry, and industry, such as it seems to want to be constituted today, tends to lead them back toward aristocracy./

Every society begins with aristocracy; industry is subject to this law (*Rubish,* 2).

[c.] In the margin, in the *rubish:* "<Now, these discoveries must be considered as the two sources from which aristocracy can escape once again to cover the world.> 2 July 1837" (*Rubish,* 2).

There is perhaps no point on which modern critics of Tocqueville are in more agreement than on his ignorance of the changes that took place in America and in Europe during the first half of the XIXth century in matters of industry, of the process of urbanization, and the little attention that he gave to steamboats, canals, railroads and other technical progress. The publication of his travel notes and the book of Seymour Drescher (*Tocqueville and Beaumont on Social Reform,* New York: Harper

and Row, 1968) show, however, that his description of Manchester is largely devoted to the results of industrialization and that, far from being unaware of the problem, he knew about it and was preoccupied by it.

If Tocqueville evokes the problem of industrialization only rapidly, it is above all because the purpose of his work, like his anti-materialism, scarcely pushes him there. What interests him is the energy (acquiring money and the taste for material well-being) that creates industry and the effects that it produces (the new manufacturing aristocracy). According to Seymour Drescher again (*Tocqueville and England,* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1964, pp. 60-61), the friendship of Senior would have had a real influence on Tocqueville's ideas about the economy. See *Voyage en Angleterre, OC,* V, 2, especially pages 67-68 and 78-85.

[d.] "Examine a bit practically the question of knowing how you could re-create an aristocracy of fortunes, bring together (illegible word), give privileges.

"Piece on the impossibility of a new aristocracy, 2nd vol., p. 425" (YTC, CVc, p. 55). This concerns p. 635 of the second volume.

[1.] I use this modern word without understanding it well. The most natural meaning to give it is the *independence of individual reason"* (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 10–11).

[1.] These two principles are arranged in each century and among each people in various proportions; that is nearly the entire history of humanity (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 3–5).

[1.] ≠The chapters marked (a) are those that still leave me most unsatisfied and that must principally attract my attention at a *last* reading ≠(YTC, CVf, p. 1).

[1.] To see again concerning this piece something analogous written in England in 1835 (*Rubish,* 1).

[1.] Here the example of England. This class that ends by giving its instincts to a people, but that cannot take the aristocratic form away from it. Particular causes such as liberty, maritime commerce, openings to national industries that give this class more intense tastes for well-being (*Rubish,* 1).