

absorption of her friend Emerson. She apparently shared the suspicion of him the Italian leader Giuseppe Mazzini expressed in a letter: "I feel fearful that he leads or will lead men to too much contemplation. . . . We stand in need of one who will . . . appeal to the collective influence and inspiring sources, more than to individual self-improvement."

Thus if individualism triumphed, it was not without a struggle, nor without its critics. Not, indeed, without alternatives

being posed. Frederick Douglass writes his fellow slaves on the plantation of Freeland:

*We were linked and interlinked with other. I loved them with a love stronger than any thing I have experienced since sometimes said that we slaves do not and confide in each other. In answer to assertion, I can say, I never loved or confided in any people more than my fellow slaves. . . . We never undertook to do*

*Individualism* is a novel expression, to which a novel idea has given birth. Our fathers were only acquainted with *égoïsme* (selfishness). Selfishness is a passionate and exaggerated love of self, which leads a man to connect everything with himself and to prefer himself to everything in the world. Individualism is a mature and calm feeling, which disposes each member of the community to sever himself from the mass of his fellows and to draw apart with his family and his friends, so that after he has thus formed a little circle of his own, he willingly leaves society at large to itself. Selfishness originates in blind instinct; individualism proceeds from erroneous judgment more than from depraved feelings; it originates as much in deficiencies of mind as in perversity of heart.

Selfishness blights the germ of all virtue; individualism, at first, only saps the virtues of public life; but in the long run it attacks and destroys all others and is at length absorbed in downright selfishness. Selfishness is a vice as old as the world, which does not belong to one form of society more than to another; individualism is of democratic origin, and it threatens to spread in the same ratio as the equality of condition. . . .

As social conditions become more equal, the number of persons increases who, although they are neither rich nor powerful enough to exercise any great influence over their fellows, have nevertheless acquired or retained sufficient education and fortune to satisfy their own wants. They owe nothing to any man, they expect nothing from any man; they acquire the habit of always considering themselves as standing alone, and they are apt to imagine that their whole destiny is in their own hands.

Thus not only does democracy make every man forget his ancestors, but it hides his descendants and separates his contemporaries from him; it throws him back forever upon himself alone and threatens in the end to confine him entirely within the solitude of his own heart.

Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Part II, 1840

Unbelievers in Europe attack Christians more as political enemies than as religious opponents; they detest faith more as a party opinion than as a mistaken doctrine; when they reject the priest, it is less as a representative of God than as a friend of authority.

In Europe, Christianity has allowed itself to be closely linked with the powers of this world. Today these powers are collapsing and it is virtually buried beneath their ruins. It has become a living body tied to the dead; if the bonds holding it were cut, it would rise again.

I do not know what would have to be done to restore youthful energy to European Christianity. God alone could do this; but at least it depends upon men to leave to faith the deployment of all the strength it still has.

HOW THE EDUCATION, HABITS AND PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE OF AMERICANS CONTRIBUTE TO THE SUCCESS OF DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

*What must be understood by the education of the American people—In the United States the human mind has received a training much less extensive than in Europe—No one has remained uneducated—Why—The speed at which opinions circulate in the half-populated states of the West—How practical experience is of more use to Americans than book-learning.*

Throughout this book I have reminded readers of the influence which the education and habits of the Americans have had upon the maintenance of their political institutions. Therefore, it now remains for me to add little new to that.

Up until now America has had only a small number of noteworthy authors, no great historians, and not a single poet. Its inhabitants look upon real literature with disapproval and any third-rank European town publishes annually more literary works than the twenty-four states of the Union put together.

The American mind keeps its distance from general ideas and does not direct its attention to theoretical discoveries. Neither

politics nor industry inspires such a course. In the United States new laws constantly appear on the statute books but no great writers have yet inquired into the general principles of these laws.

Americans have legal experts and commentators but no publicists and in politics they give examples for the world to follow without teaching it anything.

The same is true for the mechanical arts.

In America, European inventions are shrewdly adopted and, when they have been perfected, they are adapted with admirable skill to the country's needs. Men are industrious but they do not foster the science of industry. Good workmen exist but few inventors. Fulton<sup>d</sup> hawked his genius around for many years among foreign nations before he could devote himself to his own country.

Anyone wishing to ascertain the state of education among the Anglo-Americans has to view the same facts from two different angles. If he concentrates upon the learned, he will be surprised at how few there are; if he counts up the uneducated, the Americans will strike him as the most enlightened nation in the world.

The entire population falls between these two extremes, as I have already noted elsewhere.

In New England, each citizen learns the elementary concepts of human knowledge; beyond that he is taught the doctrines and evidence of his religion. He undergoes instruction on the history of his country and the principal features of its constitution. In Connecticut and Massachusetts you will seldom find a man who has only an inadequate knowledge of these things and anyone completely unaware of them is quite an oddity.

When I compare the Greek and Roman republics with that of America and the former's libraries full of manuscripts and their rude population with the latter's thousand newspapers and its educated people, when I think of all the efforts made to judge the latter in the light of the former and to anticipate what will happen today by studying what happened two thousand years ago, I am tempted to burn my books in order to apply only brand new ideas in such a newly formed society.

NEW IDEAS

Knowledge

would

However, what I am saying about New England should not be applied in some vague sense to the Union as a whole. The further west or south one goes, the less extensive are the educational opportunities. In those states bordering the Gulf of Mexico,<sup>6</sup> just as in our countries, there are a certain number of individuals to be found who are uneducated in the rudiments of human knowledge but you would be hard pressed to find a single district in the United States which was sunk in complete ignorance. The reason for this is simple: European nations emerged from the Dark Ages and barbarism to move toward civilization and education. Their progress has been uneven: some have run ahead, others have done no more than walk; several have plowed to a halt and still sleep upon the way. This has not happened in the United States.

The Anglo-Americans settled upon the land their descendants now occupy in a completely civilized state; they did not need to be educated; it was enough that they should not forget. Now, it is the sons of these very same Americans who annually transport their homes into the wilds and take with them the knowledge they have already acquired and a respect for learning.

Education has made them realize the usefulness of instruction and has persuaded them to pass on this same instruction to their children. In the United States, society had no infancy; it was born a fully grown man.

Americans never use the word "peasant" because they have no concept for the word to express; the ignorance of primitive times, rural simplicity, and rustic village life have not been preserved with them and they are unacquainted with the virtues, the vices, the crude manners, and the naive charms of a civilization in its earliest stages.

At the extreme borders of the confederated states, where the edges of society and the wilds meet, a population of bold adventurers who have fled from the poverty threatening them beneath their fathers' roofs have not been afraid to plunge into the deserted areas of America in order to seek a new homeland. As soon as the pioneer arrives in his place of refuge, he hurriedly cuts down trees and erects a cabin in the forest. There is no more wretched sight than these remote homesteads. The evening

traveler approaches from far off to see the gleam of a hearth fire through the chinks in the walls and at night, if the wind rises, he hears the noise of the branches moving on the roof amid the forest trees. Who would not suppose that this poor cottage sheltered some coarse and uneducated people? However, one should not assume a connection between the pioneer and his place of refuge. All about him is primitive and wild, whereas he is the result, so to speak, of eighteen centuries of work and experience. He wears the clothes and speaks the language of towns; he is aware of the past, is curious about the future, and is ready to argue about the present. He is a very civilized man prepared to take up a temporary home in the woods, plunging into the wilderness of the New World with his Bible, axe, and newspapers.

It is difficult to imagine the incredible speed with which ideas circulate in these empty spaces.<sup>6</sup>

I do not believe that such a great intellectual activity takes place in the most educated and populated districts of France.<sup>7</sup>

It cannot be doubted that, in the United States, the education of the people powerfully contributes to the maintenance of

6. I have traveled a certain distance of the frontiers of the United States in a sort of open cart called the mail coach. Day and night we made our way at speed along roads not very well marked through huge forests of green trees; when the gloom became impenetrable my driver lighted branches of larch and, illuminated by them, we continued on our way. From time to time we came across a cottage in the woods which was the post office. The postman dropped an enormous bundle of letters at the door of this isolated dwelling and continued on our journey at full gallop, leaving with the inhabitants of that neighborhood the responsibility of fetching their part of the treasure.

7. In 1832 each inhabitant of Michigan gave 1 franc 22 centimes to the post office revenue and each inhabitant of the Floridas 1 franc 5 centimes (see *National Calendar*, 1833, p. 244.) In the same year each inhabitant of the Département du Nord paid 1 franc 4 centimes to the state for the same purpose. (See the *Compte général de l'Administration des Finances*, 1833, p. 623.) Now, Michigan at this time still had no more than seven inhabitants per square league and Florida, five. Education was less widespread and commercial activity less extensive in those two districts than in most of the states of the Union, whereas the Département du Nord, with 3,400 individuals per square league, is one of the most educated and most industrialized parts of France.

the democratic republic. That will always be so, in my view, wherever education to enlighten the mind is not separated from that responsible for teaching morality.

However, I exaggerate in no way this advantage and I am still more reluctant to believe, unlike many Europeans, that teaching men to read and write is enough to turn them immediately into citizens.

True wisdom is mainly born of experience and, if Americans had not gradually become used to self-government, the literary knowledge they possess would not presently be any help at all in bringing success.

I have lived for some time among the people in the United States and I cannot express how much I admire their experience and common sense.

Do not invite an American to speak about Europe; he will usually display great presumption and a rather ridiculous arrogance. He will merely express those vague and general ideas which, in all countries, are such a comfort to the uneducated. But ask him about his own country and you will see the mist clouding his mind melt away at once; his language and his thought will become lucid, sharp, and precise, he will inform you of his rights and how he has to exercise them; he will know the principles which govern the world of politics. You will see that he knows about administrative regulations and that he has familiarized himself with the workings of the law. The citizen of the United States has not drawn this useful knowledge and positive ideas from books; his literary education may have prepared him to receive them but it has not provided them.

An American gains his knowledge of the laws from his participation in legislation: he becomes educated about the formalities of government from governing. The great work of society is performed daily beneath his gaze and, so to speak, in his grasp. In the United States, the general thrust of education is directed toward political life; in Europe, its main aim is to fit men for private life, as the citizens' involvement in public affairs is too rare an event for anything to be done about it in advance.

As soon as you glance at these two social systems, these differences are obvious even from the outside.

In Europe we often introduce ideas and behavior from our private life into our public life and as our experience is to move quickly from the family circle to the government of the state, we are often observed discussing the great concerns of society in the same way that we talk to our friends.

In contrast, Americans almost always carry the habits of public life over into their private lives. With them, the idea of a jury surfaces in playground games and parliamentary rituals are observed even in the organization of a banquet.

LAWS CONTRIBUTE MORE TO THE  
MAINTENANCE OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC  
IN THE UNITED STATES THAN PHYSICAL  
CONDITIONS OF THE COUNTRY AND CUSTOMS  
EVEN MORE THAN LAWS

*All the peoples of America enjoy a democratic state of society.—Yet democratic institutions only exist among Anglo-Americans.—The Spaniards of South America equally favored by geography as the Anglo-Americans are not able to sustain a democratic republic.—Mexico, which has adopted the constitution of the United States cannot do so.—The Anglo-Americans in the West find greater difficulty in maintaining it than those in the East.—Reasons for these differences.*

I have said that the maintenance of democratic institutions in the United States must be attributed to circumstances, laws, and customs.

Most Europeans know only the first of these three causes and give it an undue weight of importance.<sup>8</sup>

It is true that Anglo-Americans have brought equality of social conditions into the New World. You will never come across either commoners or nobles in their ranks; professional prejudices have always been as unknown as prejudices of birth.

8. At this point I remind the reader of the general meaning which I give to the word *customs*: namely that collection of intellectual and moral characteristics which men bring to the social condition.

The state of society being thus democratic, democracy had no difficulty in establishing its authority.

But this fact is not peculiar to the United States; almost all American colonies were founded by men equal amongst themselves or who became so when they settled there. Not a single part of the New World exists where Europeans have been able to create an aristocracy.

Nevertheless, democratic institutions prosper only in the United States.

The American Union has no enemies to fight. It is as solitary in the wilderness as an island in the ocean.

Yet, to the Spaniards of South America, nature gave a similar isolation which did not prevent them from maintaining armies. They have waged war between themselves when foreign enemies did not exist. Only the Anglo-American democracy has so far been able to remain peaceful.

The territory of the Union provides limitless scope to human activity: it offers inexhaustible supplies for industry and labor. The love of wealth, therefore, replaces ambition and prosperity quenches the fires of party disputes.

But where in the world do you come across more fertile wildernesses, broader rivers, and more untouched and inexhaustible wealth than in South America? Yet, South America is unable to sustain a democracy. If all that was needed for nations to be happy was to be placed in a corner of the universe where they could spread out at will over unpopulated areas, then the Spaniards of South America would have no need to complain about their lot. And even if they were not enjoying the same happiness as the inhabitants of the United States, they ought at least to arouse the envy of European nations. However, there are no nations on the earth as wretched as those in South America.

Thus, physical causes not only fail to bring similar results in South and North America but, in the case of the former, they cannot even achieve anything which is superior to what we see in Europe, where geography works against them.

Physical causes, therefore, do not influence the destiny of nations as extensively as is supposed.

I have met men in New England prepared to abandon their homeland, where they might have gained a comfortable living, to seek their fortune in the wilderness. Nearby I saw the French Canadians crowded in an area too narrow for them when the same wilderness lay close at hand; the Canadian paid as high a price for land as he would have done in France, whereas the United States immigrant obtained a whole estate for the price of a few days' work.

Thus nature, in presenting Europeans with the empty lands of the New World, offers them something they do not always know how to use.

I see other peoples of America enjoying the same physical conditions of prosperity as the Anglo-Americans but without their laws and customs, and these nations are miserable. Anglo-American laws and customs represent, therefore, the particular and predominant reason, which I have been seeking, for their greatness.

I am far from claiming that American laws possess an absolute excellence, nor do I believe that they are applicable to all democratic nations and there are several of them, even in the United States, which seem dangerous.

Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that American legislation, all in all, is well adapted to the genius of the nation which it is intended to govern and to the nature of the country.

American laws are, therefore, good and must account for a great part of the success of the democratic government in America but I do not believe they are the principal cause. If they seem to me to have more influence over the social happiness of Americans than the geography of the country, I still have reasons to think that they have less influence than customs.

Federal laws make up, of course, the most important part of United States legislation.

Mexico, which is as fortunately situated as the Anglo-American Union, has adopted these same laws but cannot get used to a democratic form of government.

There is, therefore, another reason, apart from geography and laws, which enables democracy to rule in the United States. But this is where another more powerful proof emerges.

absolute excellence  
NOT MOST IMPORTANT

Almost all the inhabitants of the Union have sprung from the same stock, speak the same language, pray to God in the same way, experience the same physical conditions, and obey the same laws.

So where must the observable differences come from?

Why, in the East of the Union, does the republican government appear strong and orderly, proceeding with mature deliberation? What imprints a character of wisdom and durability upon all its acts?

On the other hand, why, in the states of the West, do social authorities proceed so haphazardly?

Why, in the activity of public affairs, is there something disorderly, passionate, and, one might almost say, feverish, which does not augur well for a long future?

I am no longer comparing Anglo-Americans with foreign nations but am contrasting them with each other, as I seek to understand why they are not alike. At this point, all arguments drawn from the nature of the country and the difference in legal systems are irrelevant. Some other reason must be sought and where shall I find it, if not in a nation's customs?

It is in the East that the Anglo-Americans have been longest accustomed to democratic government and that they have shaped the habits and conceived the ideas which most favor its maintenance. Democracy has gradually permeated their customs, opinions, and social habits; it is to be found in every aspect of social life as much as in the laws. It is in the East that the literary study and practical education of the nation have reached the height of perfection and that religion has joined forces most closely with liberty. What are all these usages, opinions, habits, beliefs, if they are not what I have named "customs"?

But in the West, some of these advantages are still absent. Many Americans of the western states were born in the woods and they mix the ideas and customs of primitive life with the civilization of their fathers. Among them passions are more violent, religious morality has less authority, ideas are less formed. There men have less control over each other for they scarcely know each other. To a certain degree, therefore, the people of the West exhibit the inexperience and disorderly habits

of emerging nations. Even though these western societies are formed from old elements, their arrangement is new.

Thus, of all Americans, it is especially the customs of Americans of the United States which make them capable of supporting a democratic government; and it is customs again that cause the various Anglo-American democracies to be more or less orderly and prosperous.

Europeans, therefore, exaggerate the influence of geography on the duration of democratic institutions. Too much importance is attributed to legislation and too little to customs. These three major causes serve unquestionably to regulate and control American democracy; but if I had to range them in order, I would say that physical causes contribute less than legislation and legislation less than customs.

I am convinced that the luckiest of geographical conditions and the best laws are unable to uphold a constitution in the face of poor customs, whereas the latter can still turn even the most unfavorable conditions and the worst laws to advantage.

The importance of customs is a commonly held truth and we are constantly brought back to it through study and experience. I find that it occupies a central position in my thoughts and all my ideas lead me to it.

I have only one more comment to add on this subject.

If, in the course of this book, I have not succeeded in convincing the reader of the importance I attach to the practical experience, behavior, opinions, and, in a word, the customs of Americans in maintaining their laws, I have failed in the main objective I set myself in writing it.

WHETHER LAWS AND CUSTOMS WOULD BE  
ENOUGH TO MAINTAIN DEMOCRATIC  
INSTITUTIONS IN ANY OTHER COUNTRY  
THAN AMERICA

*Anglo-Americans, if transported to Europe, would have to modify their laws—A distinction has to be made between democratic institutions and American institutions—One can imagine democratic laws better than, or at least*

ready to unite their efforts for this purpose. It is thus a daily surprise to see the huge works achieved without difficulty by a nation which has, so to speak, no wealthy people. The Americans arrived but yesterday upon the ground they inhabit, but already have turned the natural order inside out, to their financial advantage. They have joined the Hudson and Mississippi rivers and linked the Atlantic to the Gulf of Mexico across a continent of more than twelve hundred miles separating the two seas. The longest railroads ever constructed up until the present are in America.

But what strikes me most in the United States is not the extraordinary size of a few projects; it is the countless numbers of small ones.

Almost all the farmers in the United States have incorporated some trade into agriculture; most of them have made their agricultural career into a business.

It is rare for an American farmer to settle forever on the land he occupies. In the new provinces of the West in particular, a field is cleared for its sale not its cultivation; a farmhouse is built in anticipation that as the state of the country will soon be changed by an increase in population, a good price may be obtained for it.

Every year, a swarm of inhabitants comes down from the North to the South to settle in the lands where cotton and sugar cane grow. These men cultivate the earth with the aim of producing wealth within only a few years and they are already looking forward to the time when they will be able to return home to their native land to enjoy the comfortable living they have earned. Thus, Americans transfer to agriculture the spirit of business and their industrial passion is displayed there as elsewhere.

Americans make great progress in industry because they are all engaged in it at once. For this same reason they are subject to very unexpected and formidable crises.

As they all follow commercial careers, trade is exposed to so many complex influences that the snags which may arise are impossible to foresee. Since every single one of them is more or less involved in industry, at the slightest shock experienced by

business all private fortunes stumble and the state begins to totter.

I believe that the recurrence of industrial crises is an endemic sickness for all democracies in our day. It can be made less dangerous but not completely cured because it does not stem from an accident but from the very temperament of such nations.

#### CHAPTER 20

### HOW AN ARISTOCRACY MAY EMERGE FROM INDUSTRY

I have shown how democracy fosters industrial development and multiplies without limit the number of industrialists. We shall see by what out of the way road industry could, in its turn, bring men back to aristocracy.

It is acknowledged that when a worker spends every day solely upon one process, general items are produced more easily, rapidly, and economically.

It is likewise acknowledged that the larger the scale on which an industrial undertaking is conducted with large amounts of capital and extensive credit, the cheaper its products will be.

These truths had long been perceived but they have been proved true in our day. They have already been applied to several very important industries and smaller ones have exploited them in their turn.

I see nothing in the political world which should be of closer concern to the legislator than these two axioms of industrial science.

When a craftsman is constantly and solely engaged upon the making of one single object, he ultimately performs this work with unusual dexterity; but at the same time, he loses the general capacity to apply his concentration on the way he is working. Day by day, he gains in skill but is less industrious; one may say that as he, the workman, improves, so does he, the man, lose his self-respect.

What can be expected of a man who has spent twenty years of his life making pinheads? To what might this powerful human intelligence, which has often stirred the world, apply itself except research into the best ways of making pinheads?

When a workman has spent a considerable part of his existence in such a manner, his thoughts are forever taken up by the object of his daily toil; his body has contracted certain fixed habits which it cannot discard. In short, he no longer belongs to himself but to the profession he has chosen. It is no use laws and customs striving to break down all the barriers around this man or opening up on every side a thousand different paths to wealth. An industrial theory more powerful than custom or law has tied him to a trade and often to a place, which he cannot abandon. It has assigned him a certain station in society which he cannot escape. It has brought him to a stop in the midst of universal movement.

As the principle of the division of labor is applied more completely, the worker becomes weaker, more limited and more dependent. The craft makes progress, the craftsman slips backwards. On the other hand, as it becomes clearer that industrial products are all the better and cheaper as production lines are more extensive and capital is greater, very wealthy and enlightened men appear on the scene to exploit industries which, up to that point, had been left in the hands of ignorant or restless craftsmen. They are attracted by the scale of the efforts required and the huge results to be obtained.

Thus at the very moment that industrial science constantly lowers the standing of workers, it raises that of the bosses.

While the worker, more and more, restricts his intelligence to the study of one single detail, the boss daily surveys an increasing field of operation and his mind expands as the former's narrows. Soon the one will need only physical strength without intelligence; the other needs knowledge and almost genius for success. The one increasingly looks like the administrator of a vast empire, the other, a brute.

So, the employer and the worker share nothing in common on this earth and their differences grow daily. They exist as two links at each end of a long chain. Each holds a place made for

him from which he does not move. The one is dependent upon the other.

The dependency the one has upon the other is never-ending, narrow, and unavoidable; the one is born to obey as the other is to give orders.

What is this, if not aristocracy?

As conditions become more and more equal in the body of the nation, the need for manufactured products is universal and ever greater; the cheap prices which bring goods within the reach of modest fortunes become a great ingredient of success.

Richer and better educated men emerge daily to devote their wealth and knowledge to industry; by opening great workshops with a strict division of labor they seek to satisfy the new demands which are evident on all sides.

Thus, as the mass of the nation turns to democracy, the particular class which runs industry becomes more aristocratic. Men resemble each other more in one context and appear increasingly different in another; inequality grows in the smaller social group as it reduces in society at large.

Thus it is that, when we trace things back to their source, a natural impulse appears to be prompting the emergence of an aristocracy from the very heart of democracy.

But that aristocracy is not like any that preceded it.

In the first place, you will notice that it is an exception, a monstrosity in the general fabric of society, since it applies only to industry and a few industrial professions.

The small aristocratic societies formed by certain industries inside the immense democratic whole of our day contain, as they did in the great aristocracies of ancient times, some men who are very wealthy and a multitude who are wretchedly poor.

These poor men have few ways of escaping from their social conditions to become rich but the wealthy are constantly becoming poor or leave the world of business after realizing their profits. Thus, the elements which form the poorer classes are virtually fixed but those that produce the richer classes are not so. In fact, although there are rich men, richer classes do not exist, for the wealthy do not share a common spirit or objective

or traditions or hopes; there are individual members, therefore, but no definite corporate body.

Not only are the rich not firmly united to each other, but you can also say that no true link exists between rich and poor.

They are not forever fixed, one close to the other; moment by moment, self-interest pulls them together, only to separate them later. The worker depends upon the employer in general but not on any particular employer. These two men see each other at the factory but do not know each other anywhere else; and while they have one point of contact, in all other respects they keep their distance. The industrialist only asks the worker for his labor and the latter only expects his wages. The one is not committed to protect, nor the other to defend; they are not linked in any permanent way, either by habit or duty.

This business aristocracy seldom lives among the industrial population it manages; it aims not to rule them but to use them. An aristocracy so constituted cannot have a great hold over its employees and, even if it succeeded in grabbing them for a moment, they escape soon enough. It does not know what it wants and cannot act.

The landed aristocracy of past centuries was obliged by law, or believed itself obliged by custom, to help its servants and to relieve their distress. However, this present industrial aristocracy, having impoverished and brutalized the men it exploits, leaves public charity to feed them in times of crisis. This is a natural consequence of what has been said before. Between the worker and employer, there are many points of contact but no real relationship.

Generally speaking, I think that the industrial aristocracy which we see rising before our eyes is one of the most harsh ever to appear on the earth; but at the same time, it is one of the most restrained and least dangerous.

However, this is the direction in which the friends of democracy should constantly fix their anxious gaze; for if ever aristocracy and the permanent inequality of social conditions were to infiltrate the world once again, it is predictable that this is the door by which they would enter.

## PART 3

# THE INFLUENCE OF DEMOCRACY ON CUSTOMS AS SUCH

### CHAPTER I

## HOW CUSTOMS BECOME SOFTER AS SOCIAL CONDITIONS BECOME MORE EQUAL

We have seen for centuries that social conditions have been growing more equal and at the same time we have realized that customs have softened. Are these two things simply coincidental or is there some secret link between them which ensures that the one cannot make any headway without prompting the other into motion?

Several causes may combine to make the customs of a people less crude; but the most powerful of these seems to me to be the equality of social conditions which, along with the softening of manners, are not only, in my view, coincidental events but also connected.

When the writers of fables wish to interest us in the behavior of animals, they give them human ideas and emotions. The poets do the same when they speak of spirits and angels. There is no misery so profound, nor any happiness so pure, as to affect our minds or move our hearts, unless we are shown to ourselves under a different guise.

This is very relevant to the subject now under scrutiny. When all the men of an aristocratic society take their irrevocable station according to profession, property, and birth, the members of each social class experience a constant and active mutual sympathy from thinking of themselves as all children of