2:45-3:15 Break

3:15-5:00 Session 6: American Patriotism
(Discussion Leader: David Azerrad)
Readings:

- Alexis de Tocqueville, "On Public Spirit in United States," in *Democracy in America* (1835), 225-227 (Mansfield and Winthrop trans.)
- Samuel Adams, "On American Independence" (1776)
- John Jay, "The Federalist No. 2" (1787)
- Daniel Webster, "Bunker Hill Monument Oration" (1825)
- Francis Scott Key, "The Star-Spangled Banner" (1814)
- Samuel F. Smith, "My Country, 'Tis of Thee" (1831)
- Julia Ward Howe, "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" (1861)
- Abraham Lincoln, "The Gettysburg Address" (1863)
- Theodore Roosevelt, "True Americanism" (1894)
- Katharine Lee Bates, "America the Beautiful" (1895)
- Irving Berlin, "God Bless America" (1938)
- Martin Luther King, "I Have a Dream" (1963)
- President Donald Trump, "Mount Rushmore Speech" (2020)

5:00 Dinner

Sunday, June 13

12:30-2:00 Lunch

2:00-4:00 Session 7: American Patriotism
(Discussion Leader: David Azerrad)
Readings/Panelists

- James Innes Randolph, "I'm a Good Ol' Rebel" (1860s)
- Stokely Carmichael and Charles Hamilton, *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation* (1967), 34-56
- Stokely Carmichael, "What We Want," *New York Review of Books* (1966), excerpt
- The Combahee River Collective, "The Combahee River Collective Statement" (1977)
- Howard Zinn, "Afterword," *A People's History of the United States* (1999)
- John Rawls, *Justice as Fairness* (2000), II.16.1 (55-56)
- Peter Singer, *One World Now: The Ethics of Globalization* (2016), 1- 15, 196-197

5:00 Dinner

Session 2

tain himself in his state unless there is an extraordinary and excessive force which deprives him of it; and should he be deprived of it, if any mishap whatever befalls the occupier, he reacquires it.

We have in Italy, for example, the duke of Ferrara, who, for no other cause than that his line was ancient in that dominion, did not succumb to the attacks of the Venetians in '84, nor to those of Pope Julius in '10.[4] For the natural prince has less cause and less necessity to offend;[5] hence it is fitting that he be more loved. And if extraordinary vices do not make him hated, it is reasonable that he will naturally have the good will of his own. In the antiquity and continuity of the dominion the memories and causes of innovations are eliminated; for one change always leaves a dentation[6] for the building of another.

4. NM speaks of two dukes of Ferrara as if they were one: Ercole d'Este (1431–1505) and his son Alfonso d'Este (1476–1534). Ercole was defeated by the Venetians in 1484, and Alfonso was temporarily deprived of his principality by Pope Julius in 1510.

5. *Offendere* is not merely to slight, but to harm so as to cause offense.

6. A dentation is a toothed wall left on the side of a building so that another building may be attached to it. NM's metaphor compares the hereditary, or "natural," principality to a row of houses continually added to but never finished and, as it were, not begun from the beginning.

III

Of Mixed Principalities

But the difficulties reside in the new principality. First, if it is not altogether new but like an added member (so that taken as a whole it can be called almost mixed), its instability arises in the first place from a natural difficulty that

exists in all new principalities. This is[1] that men willingly change their lords in the belief that they will fare better: this belief makes them take up arms against him, in which they are deceived because they see later by experience that they have done worse. That follows from another natural and ordinary necessity which requires that one must always offend those over whom he becomes a new prince, both with men-at-arms and with infinite other injuries that the new acquisition brings in its wake. So you have as enemies all those whom you have offended in seizing that principality, and you cannot keep as friends those who have put you there because you cannot satisfy them in the mode they had presumed and because you cannot use strong medicines against them, since you are obligated to them. For even though one may have the strongest of armies, he always needs the support of the inhabitants of a province[2] in order to enter it. Through these causes Louis XII of France quickly occupied Milan, and quickly lost it; and Ludovico's own forces were enough to take it from him the first time.[3] For those people which had opened the gates to him, finding themselves deceived in their opinion and in that future good they had presumed for themselves, were unable to tolerate the vexations of the new prince.

It is indeed true that when countries that have rebelled are later acquired for the second time, they are lost with more difficulty, because the lord, seizing the opportunity offered by the rebellion, is less hesitant[4] to secure himself by

1. lit.: these are.

2. "Province" refers to a country or region that may be larger or smaller than a "state."

3. Ludovico Sforza, il Moro, was duke of Milan from 1494 until Milan was seized from him in September 1499 by Louis XII. He recaptured Milan in February 1500 but was betrayed by his Swiss mercenaries at Novara, when the French acquired it in April "for the second time." The French then lost Milan in 1512 after the battle of Ravenna to the Holy League led by Pope Julius II, "the whole world."

4. *respettivo* is also translated as "cautious"; see especially Chapter 25.

punishing offenders, exposing suspects, and providing for himself in the weakest spots. So it was that, if one Duke Ludovico stirring up a commotion at the borders was enough to make France lose Milan the first time, to make him then lose it the second time, the whole world had to be against him, and his armies eliminated or chased from Italy: this arises from the causes given above. Nonetheless, both the first and the second times it was taken from him.

The universal causes of the first have been discussed; it remains now to say what were the causes of the second, and to see what remedies there were to him, which someone in his situation could use so as to maintain himself better in his acquisition than France did. Now I say, that such states which, when acquired, are added to an ancient state of him who acquires them, are either of the same province and same language, or not. When they are, they may be held with great ease, especially if they are not used to living free; and to possess them securely it is enough to have eliminated the line of the prince whose dominions they were. For when their old conditions are maintained for them in other things and there is no disparity of customs, men live quietly—as it may be seen that Burgundy, Brittany, Gascony, and Normandy, which have been with France for so long a time, have done;[5] and although there may be some disparity of language, nonetheless the customs are similar, and they can easily bear with one another. And whoever acquires them, if he wants to hold them, must have two concerns: one, that the bloodline of their ancient prince be eliminated; the other, not to alter either their laws or their taxes: so that in a very short time it becomes one whole body with their ancient principality.

But when one acquires states in a province disparate in language, customs, and orders, here are the difficulties, and here one needs to have great fortune and great industry to

5. Burgundy since 1477, Brittany 1491, Gascony 1453, and Normandy 1204.

hold them; and one of the greatest and quickest remedies would be for whoever acquires it to go there to live in person. This would make that possession more secure and more lasting, as the Turk has done in Greece. Despite all the other orders observed by him so as to hold that state, if he had not gone there to live, it would not have been possible for him to hold it. For if you stay there, disorders may be seen as they arise, and you can soon remedy them; if you are not there, disorders become understood when they are great and there is no longer a remedy. Besides this, the province is not despoiled by your officials; the subjects are satisfied with ready access to the prince, so that they have more cause to love him if they want to be good and, if they want to be otherwise, more cause to fear him. Whatever outsider might want to attack that state has more hesitation in doing so; hence, when one lives in it, one can lose it with the greatest difficulty.

The other, better remedy is to send colonies that are, as it were, fetters of that state, to one or two places, because it is necessary either to do this or to hold them with many men-at-arms and infantry. One does not spend much on colonies, and without expense of one's own, or with little, one may send them and hold them; and one offends only those from whom one takes fields and houses in order to give them to new inhabitants—who are a very small part of that state. And those whom he offends, since they remain dispersed and poor, can never harm him, while all the others remain on the one hand unhurt, and for this they should be quiet; on the other, they are afraid to err from fear that what happened to the despoiled might happen to them. I conclude that such colonies are not costly, are more faithful, and less offensive; and those who are offended can do no harm, since they are poor and dispersed as was said. For this has to be noted: that men should either be caressed or eliminated, because they avenge themselves for slight offenses but cannot do so for grave ones; so the offense one does to a

man should be such that one does not fear revenge for it. But when one holds a state with men-at-arms in place of colonies, one spends much more since one has to consume all the income of that state in guarding it. So the acquisition turns to loss, and one offends much more because one harms the whole state as one's army moves around for lodgings. Everyone feels this hardship, and each becomes one's enemy: and these are enemies that can harm one since they remain, though defeated, in their homes. From every side, therefore, keeping guard in this way is as useless as keeping guard by means of colonies is useful.

Whoever is in a province that is disparate, as was said, should also make himself head and defender of the neighboring lesser powers, and contrive to weaken the powerful in that province and to take care that through some accident a foreigner as powerful as he does not enter there. And it will always turn out that a foreigner will be brought in by those in the province who are malcontent either because of too much ambition or out of fear, as once the Aetolians were seen to bring the Romans into Greece; and in every other province they entered, they were brought in by its inhabitants. And the order of things is such that as soon as a powerful foreigner enters a province, all those in it who are less powerful adhere to him, moved by the envy they have against whoever has held power over them. So with respect to these lesser powers, he has no trouble in gaining them, because all together they quickly and willingly make one mass with the state that he has acquired there. He has only to worry that these lesser powers may get too much force and too much authority; and with his forces and their support he can easily put down those who are powerful, so as to remain arbiter of that province in everything. And whoever does not conduct this policy well will soon lose what he has acquired, and while he holds it, will have infinite difficulties and vexations within it.

The Romans observed these policies well in the

provinces they took. They sent out colonies, indulged the lesser powers without increasing their power, put down the powerful, and did not allow foreign powers to gain reputation there. And I want the province of Greece alone to suffice as an example. The Achaeans and the Aetolians were indulged by the Romans; the kingdom of the Macedonians was brought down and Antiochus was chased out. Nor did the merits of the Achaeans or those of the Aetolians make the Romans permit them to increase any state of theirs; nor did the persuasions of Philip ever induce them to be his friends without putting him down; nor could the power of Antiochus make them consent to his holding any state in that province. For the Romans did in these cases what all wise princes should do: they not only have to have regard for present troubles[6] but also for future ones, and they have to avoid these with all their industry because, when one foresees from afar, one can easily find a remedy for them but when you wait until they come close to you, the medicine is not in time because the disease has become incurable. And it happens with this as the physicians say of consumption, that in the beginning of the illness it is easy to cure and difficult to recognize, but in the progress of time, when it has not been recognized and treated in the beginning, it becomes easy to recognize and difficult to cure. So it happens in affairs of state, because when one recognizes from afar the evils that arise in a state (which is not given but to one who is prudent), they are soon healed; but when they are left to grow because they were not recognized, to the point that everyone recognizes them, there is no longer any remedy for them.

Thus, the Romans, seeing inconveniences from afar, always found remedies for them and never allowed them to continue so as to escape a war, because they knew that war may not be avoided but is deferred to the advantage of

6. lit.: scandals.

others. So they decided to make war with Philip and Antiochus in Greece in order not to have to do so in Italy; and they could have avoided both one and the other for a time, but they did not want to. Nor did that saying ever please them which is every day in the mouths of the wise men of our times—to enjoy the benefit of time—but rather, they enjoyed the benefit of their virtue and prudence. For time sweeps everything before it and can bring with it good as well as evil and evil as well as good.

But let us return to France and examine whether he has done any of the things spoken of. I will speak of Louis and not of Charles,[7] as the steps of the former, because he held his possession in Italy longer, may be seen better. And you[8] will see that he did the contrary of the things that should be done to hold a state in a disparate province.

King Louis was brought into Italy by the ambition of the Venetians, who wanted to gain half the state of Lombardy for themselves by his coming. I do not want to blame the course adopted by the king; for since he wanted to begin by gaining a foothold in Italy, and having no friends in this province, indeed, having all doors closed to him because of the conduct of King Charles, he was forced to take whatever friendships he could get. And having firmly adopted this course he would have succeeded if in managing other things he had not made some error. Thus, when he had acquired Lombardy, the king regained quickly the reputation that Charles had taken from him: Genoa yielded, and the Florentines became his friends; the marquis of Mantua, duke of Ferrara, Bentivoglio, Madonna of Forlì, the lords of Faenza, of Pesaro, of Rimini, of Camerino, of Piombino, the Luccans, Pisans, and Sienese—everyone came to meet him so as to become his friend. And then the Venetians

7. Of Louis XII, not of Charles VIII; the latter's invasion of Italy in September 1494 lasted only until October 1495.

8. The formal or plural you.

princes and how it should be observed.[13] Thus, King Louis lost Lombardy for not having observed any of the conditions observed by others who have taken provinces and wished to hold them. Nor is this any miracle, but very ordinary and reasonable. And I spoke of this matter at Nantes with Rouen[14] when Valentino (for so Cesare Borgia, son of Pope Alexander, was called by the people) was occupying Romagna. For when the cardinal of Rouen said to me that the Italians do not understand war, I replied to him that the French do not understand the state, because if they understood they would not have let the Church come to such greatness. And it may be seen from experience that the greatness in Italy of the Church and of Spain has been caused by France, and France's ruin caused by them. From this one may draw a general rule that never or rarely fails: whoever is the cause of someone's becoming powerful is ruined; for that power has been caused by him either with industry or with force, and both the one and the other of these two are suspect to whoever has become powerful.

13. See Chapter 18 below.

14. During NM's first diplomatic mission to France; see his letter of November 21, 1500.

IV

Why the Kingdom of Darius Which Alexander Seized Did Not Rebel from His Successors after Alexander's Death

The difficulties that are involved in holding a state newly acquired having been considered, one might marvel at how

tron of a city accustomed to living free and does not destroy it, should expect to be destroyed by it; for it always has as a refuge in rebellion the name of liberty and its own ancient orders which are never forgotten either through length of time or because of benefits received. Whatever one does or provides for, unless the inhabitants are broken up or dispersed, they will not forget that name and those orders, and will immediately recur to them upon any accident as did Pisa after having been kept in servitude a hundred years by the Florentines.[3] But, when cities or provinces are used to living under a prince, and his bloodline is eliminated—since on the one hand they are used to obeying, and on the other they do not have the old prince—they will not agree to make one from among themselves and they do not know how to live free. So they are slower to take up arms, and a prince can gain them with greater ease and can secure himself against them. But in republics there is greater life, greater hatred, more desire for revenge; the memory of their ancient liberty does not and cannot let them rest, so that the most secure path is to eliminate them or live in them.

3. Pisa was acquired by Florence in 1405 and lost in 1494 because of the invasion of the king of France, Charles VIII.

VI

Of New Principalities That Are Acquired through One's Own Arms and Virtue

No one should marvel if, in speaking as I will do of principalities that are altogether new both in prince and in state,

I bring up the greatest examples. For since men almost always walk on paths beaten by others and proceed in their actions by imitation, unable either to stay on the paths of others altogether or to attain the virtue of those whom you imitate, a prudent man should always enter upon the paths beaten by great men, and imitate those who have been most excellent, so that if his own virtue does not reach that far, it is at least in the odor of it. He should do as prudent archers do when the place they plan to hit appears too distant, and knowing how far the strength[1] of their bow carries, they set their aim much higher than the place intended, not to reach such height with their arrow, but to be able with the aid of so high an aim to achieve their plan.

I say, then, that in altogether new principalities, where there is a new prince, one encounters more or less difficulty in maintaining them according to whether the one who acquires them is more or less virtuous. And because the result of becoming prince from private individual presupposes either virtue or fortune, it appears that one or the other of these two things relieves in part many difficulties; nonetheless, he who has relied less on fortune has maintained himself more. To have the prince compelled to come to live there in person, because he has no other states, makes it still easier. But, to come to those who have become princes by their own virtue and not by fortune, I say that the most excellent are Moses, Cyrus, Romulus, Theseus, and the like. And although one should not reason about Moses, as he was a mere executor of things that had been ordered for him by God, nonetheless he should be admired if only for that grace which made him deserving of speaking with God. But let us consider Cyrus and the others who have acquired or founded kingdoms: you[2] will find them all admirable; and if their particular actions and orders are considered, they will appear no different from those of Moses, who had so great a teacher. And as one examines their actions and lives, one does not see that they had anything else from fortune than the opportunity, which gave them the matter enabling them to introduce any form they pleased. Without that opportunity their virtue of spirit would have been eliminated, and without that virtue the opportunity would have come in vain.

1. lit.: virtue.
2. The formal or plural you.

It was necessary then for Moses to find the people of Israel in Egypt, enslaved and oppressed by the Egyptians, so that they would be disposed to follow him so as to get out of their servitude. It was fitting that Romulus not be received in Alba, that he should have been exposed at birth, if he was to become king of Rome and founder of that fatherland. Cyrus needed to find the Persians malcontent with the empire of the Medes, and the Medes soft and effeminate because of a long peace. Theseus could not have demonstrated his virtue if he had not found the Athenians dispersed. Such opportunities, therefore, made these men happy, and their excellent virtue enabled the opportunity to be recognized; hence their fatherlands were ennobled by it and became very happy.

Those like these men, who become princes by the paths of virtue, acquire their principality with difficulty but hold it with ease; and the difficulties they have in acquiring their principality arise in part from the new orders and modes that they are forced to introduce so as to found their state and their security. And it should be considered that nothing is more difficult to handle, more doubtful of success, nor more dangerous to manage, than to put oneself at the head of introducing new orders. For the introducer has all those who benefit from the old orders as enemies, and he has lukewarm defenders in all those who might benefit from the new orders. This lukewarmness arises partly from fear of adversaries who have the laws on their side and partly from the incredulity of men, who do not truly be-

lieve in new things unless they come to have a firm experience of them. Consequently, whenever those who are enemies have opportunity to attack, they do so with partisan zeal, and the others defend lukewarmly so that one is in peril along with them. It is however necessary, if one wants to discuss this aspect well, to examine whether these innovators stand by themselves or depend on others; that is, whether to carry out their deed they must beg[3] or indeed can use force. In the first case they always come to ill and never accomplish anything; but when they depend on their own and are able to use force, then it is that they are rarely in peril. From this it arises that all the armed prophets conquered and the unarmed ones were ruined. For, besides the things that have been said, the nature of peoples is variable; and it is easy to persuade them of something, but difficult to keep them in that persuasion. And thus things must be ordered in such a mode that when they no longer believe, one can make them believe by force. Moses, Cyrus, Theseus, and Romulus would not have been able to make their peoples observe their constitutions for long if they had been unarmed, as happened in our times to Brother Girolamo Savonarola. He was ruined in his new orders as soon as the multitude began not to believe in them, and he had no mode for holding firm those who had believed nor for making unbelievers believe.[4] Men such as these, therefore, find great difficulty in conducting their affairs; all their dangers are along the path, and they must overcome them with virtue. But once they have overcome them and they begin to be held in veneration, having eliminated those who had

3. Or pray.

4. Savonarola (1452–98) was a Dominican friar who came to Florence to preach in 1481, and succeeded in convincing the Florentines, who thought themselves "neither rude nor ignorant," that "he spoke with God." Cf. *Discourses on Livy* I 11, where NM praises this accomplishment and does not refer, as he does here, to Savonarola's terrible end by burning at the stake.

envied them for their quality, they remain powerful, secure, honored, and happy.

To such high examples I want to add a lesser example, but it will have some proportion with the others and I want it to suffice for all other similar cases: this is Hiero of Syracuse. From private individual he became prince of Syracuse, nor did he receive anything more from fortune than the opportunity. For when the Syracusans were oppressed, they chose him as their captain, and from there he proved worthy of being made their prince. And he was of such virtue, even in private fortune, that he who wrote of him said "that he lacked nothing of being a king except a kingdom."[5] Hiero eliminated the old military and organized a new one; he left his old friendships and made new ones; and when he had friendships and soldiers that were his own, he could build any building on top of such a foundation; so he went through a great deal of trouble to acquire, and little to maintain.

5. Possible sources: Polybius, I 8, 16; VII 8; Livy XXIV 4; Justin, XXIII 4; I Samuel 18: 8. Cf. the Dedicatory Letter to the *Discourses on Livy*.

VII

Of New Principalities That Are Acquired by Others' Arms and Fortune

Those who become princes from private individual solely by fortune become so with little trouble, but maintain themselves with much. They have no difficulty along the path because they fly there, but all the difficulties arise when

they are in place. And such princes come to be when a state is given to someone either for money or by the favor of whoever gives it, as happened to many in Greece, in the cities of Ionia and of the Hellespont, where they were made princes by Darius so that they might hold on to those cities for his security and glory;[1] as also those emperors were made who from private individual attained the empire through corrupting the soldiers.[2] These persons rest simply on the will and fortune of whoever has given a state to them, which are two very inconstant and unstable things. They do not know how to hold and they cannot hold that rank: they do not know how, because if one is not a man of great ingenuity and virtue, it is not reasonable, that having always lived in private fortune, he should know how to command; they cannot hold that rank because they do not have forces that can be friendly and faithful to them. Then, too, states that come to be suddenly, like all other things in nature that are born and grow quickly, cannot have roots and branches, so that the first adverse weather[3] eliminates them—unless, indeed, as was said, those who have suddenly become princes have so much virtue that they know immediately how to prepare to keep what fortune has placed in their laps; and the foundations that others have laid before becoming princes they lay afterwards.

To both of the modes mentioned of becoming prince, by virtue or by fortune, I want to bring up two examples that have occurred in days within our memory; and these are Francesco Sforza and Cesare Borgia. Francesco became duke of Milan from private individual by proper means[4] and with a great virtue of his own; and that which he had acquired with a thousand pains he maintained with little trouble. On the other hand Cesare Borgia, called Duke

1. Darius I (521–486 B.C.), not Darius III of Chapter 4.
2. On the election of Roman emperors by soldiers, see Chapter 19.
3. Or time.
4. For this phrase see NM, *Discourses on Livy* I 41.

Valentino by the vulgar, acquired his state through the fortune of his father and lost it through the same, notwithstanding the fact that he made use of every deed and did all those things that should be done by a prudent and virtuous man to put his roots in the states that the arms and fortune of others had given him. For, as was said above, whoever does not lay his foundations at first might be able, with great virtue, to lay them later, although they might have to be laid with hardship for the architect and with danger to the building. Thus, if one considers all the steps of the duke, one will see that he had laid for himself great foundations for future power, which I do not judge superfluous to discuss; for I do not know what better teaching I could give to a new prince than the example of his actions. And if his orders did not bring profit to him, it was not his fault, because this arose from an extraordinary and extreme malignity of fortune.

Alexander VI had very many difficulties, both present and future, when he decided to make his son the duke great. First, he did not see the path to being able to make him lord of any state that was not a state of the Church; and when he decided to take that of the Church, he knew that the duke of Milan and the Venetians would not consent to it because Faenza and Rimini had for long been under the protection of the Venetians. Besides this, he saw that the arms of Italy, and especially the arms of anyone whom he might have been able to make use of, were in the hands of those who had to fear the greatness of the pope; and so he could not trust them, as they were all with the Orsini and the Colonna and their accomplices.[5] It was thus necessary to upset those orders and to bring disorder to their states so as to be able to make himself lord securely of part of them. This was easy for him, because he found that the Venetians, moved by other causes, were engaged in getting the French to come

5. The Orsini and Colonna were the two principal noble families of Rome which had long fought for control of Rome and the papacy.

back into Italy, which he not only did not oppose but made easier by the dissolution of the former marriage of King Louis. So the king came into Italy with the aid of the Venetians and the consent of Alexander, and he was no sooner in Milan than the pope got men from him for a campaign in Romagna, which was granted to him because of the reputation of the king. So after the duke had acquired Romagna and beaten down the Colonna, two things prevented him from maintaining that and going further ahead: one, that his arms did not appear to him to be faithful; the other, the will of France: that is, the Orsini arms of which he had availed himself might fail under him, and not only prevent him from acquiring but also take away what he had acquired; and the king might also do the same to him. He had a test of the Orsini when, after the capture of Faenza, he attacked Bologna and saw them go coolly to that attack; and regarding the king, the duke knew his mind when after he had taken the duchy of Urbino, he attacked Tuscany, and the king made him desist from that campaign. Hence the duke decided to depend no longer on the arms and fortune of others. And the first thing he did was to weaken the Orsini and Colonna parties in Rome. For he gained to himself all their adherents, who were gentlemen, by making them his gentlemen and by giving them large allowances; and he honored them, according to their qualities, with commands and with government posts, so that in a few months the partisan affections in their minds were eliminated, and all affection turned toward the duke. After this he waited for an opportunity to eliminate the heads of the Orsini, since he had dispersed those of the Colonna house. A good one came to him, and he used it better; for when the Orsini became aware, late, that the greatness of the duke and of the Church was ruin for them, they held a meeting at Magione, near Perugia.[6] From that arose rebellion in Urbino, tumults in

6. October 9, 1502.

Romagna, and infinite dangers for the duke, who overcame them all with the aid of the French. And when his reputation had been restored, he trusted neither France nor other external forces, and so as not to put them to the test, he turned to deceit. He knew so well how to dissimulate his intent that the Orsini themselves, through Signor Paolo, became reconciled with him. The duke did not fail to fulfill every kind of duty to secure Signor Paolo, giving him money, garments, and horses, so that their simplicity brought them into the duke's hands at Sinigaglia.[7] So, when these heads had been eliminated, and their partisans had been turned into his friends, the duke had laid very good foundations for his power, since he had all Romagna with the duchy of Urbino. He thought, especially, that he had acquired the friendship of Romagna, and that he had gained all those peoples to himself since they had begun to taste well-being.

And because this point is deserving of notice and of being imitated by others, I do not want to leave it out. Once the duke had taken over Romagna, he found it had been commanded by impotent lords who had been readier to despoil their subjects than to correct them, and had given their subjects matter for disunion, not for union. Since that province was quite full of robberies, quarrels, and every other kind of insolence, he judged it necessary to give it good government, if he wanted to reduce it to peace and obedience to a kingly arm. So he put there Messer Remirro de Orco, a cruel and ready man, to whom he gave the fullest power.[8] In a short time Remirro reduced it to peace and unity, with the very greatest reputation for himself. Then

7. See NM's narration of this event in "A Description of the Method Used by Duke Valentino in Killing Vitellozzo Vitelli, Oliverotto da Fermo, and Others," in Allan Gilbert, trans., *Chief Works of Machiavelli,* 3 vols. (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1965), 1:163–69.

8. power: *potestà,* not *potenzia;* the phrase recalls the papal claim of *plenitudo potestatis.*

the duke judged that such excessive authority was not necessary, because he feared that it might become hateful; and he set up a civil court in the middle of the province, with a most excellent president, where each city had its advocate. And because he knew that past rigors had generated some hatred for Remirro, to purge the spirits of that people and to gain them entirely to himself, he wished to show that if any cruelty had been committed, this had not come from him but from the harsh nature of his minister. And having seized this opportunity, he had him placed one morning in the piazza at Cesena in two pieces, with a piece of wood and a bloody knife beside him. The ferocity of this spectacle left the people at once satisfied and stupefied.

But let us return to where we left off. I say that when the duke found himself very powerful and secure in part against present dangers—since he had armed to suit himself and had in good part eliminated those arms which were near enough to have attacked[9] him—there remained for him, if he wanted to proceed with acquisition, to consider the king of France. For he knew that this would not be tolerated by the king, who had been late to perceive his error. And so he began to seek out new friendships and to vacillate with France in the expedition that the French were making toward the kingdom of Naples against the Spanish who were besieging Gaeta. His intent was to secure himself against them:[10] in which he would soon have succeeded, if Alexander had lived.

And these were his arrangements as to present things. But as to the future, he had to fear, first, that a new successor in the Church might not be friendly to him and might seek to take away what Alexander had given him. He thought he might secure himself against this in four modes: first, to eliminate the bloodlines of all those lords he had

9. lit.: offended.
10. assure himself of Spanish support, or against the French.

despoiled, so as to take that opportunity away from the pope; second, to win over to himself all the gentlemen in Rome, as was said, so as to be able to hold the pope in check with them; third, to make the College of Cardinals as much his as he could; fourth, to acquire so much empire before the pope died that he could resist a first attack[11] on his own. Of these four things he had accomplished three at the death of Alexander; the fourth he almost accomplished. For of the lords he had despoiled he killed as many as he could reach, and very few saved themselves; the Roman gentlemen had been won over to himself; in the College he had a very large party; and as to new acquisition, he had planned to become lord over Tuscany, he already possessed Perugia and Piombino, and he had taken Pisa under his protection. And, as soon as he did not have to pay regard to France (which he did not have to do any longer, since the French had already been stripped of the kingdom by the Spanish, so that each of them was forced of necessity to buy his friendship), he would have jumped on Pisa. After this, Lucca and Siena would have quickly yielded, in part through envy of the Florentines, in part through fear; the Florentines had no remedy. If he had succeeded in this (as he was succeeding the same year that Alexander died), he would have acquired such force and reputation that he would have stood by himself and would no longer have depended on the fortune and force of someone else, but on his own power[12] and virtue. But Alexander died five years after he[13] had begun to draw his sword. He left the duke with only the state of Romagna consolidated, with all the others in the air, between two very powerful enemy armies, and sick to death. And there was such ferocity and such virtue in the duke, and he knew so well how men have to be won over or lost, and

11. lit.: impetus.
12. *potenzia.*
13. Alexander or Cesare?

so sound were the foundations that he had laid in so little time, that if he had not had these armies on his back or if he had been healthy, he would have been equal to every difficulty. And that his foundations were good one may see: Romagna waited for him for more than a month; in Rome, though he was half-alive, he remained secure; and although the Baglioni, Vitelli, and Orsini came to Rome, none followed them against him; if he could not make pope whomever he wanted, at least it would not be someone he did not want. But if at the death of Alexander the duke had been healthy, everything would have been easy for him. And he told me, on the day that Julius II was created,[14] that he had thought about what might happen when his father was dying, and had found a remedy for everything, except that he never thought that at his death he himself would also be on the point of dying.

Thus, if I summed up all the actions of the duke, I would not know how to reproach him; on the contrary, it seems to me he should be put forward, as I have done, to be imitated by all those who have risen to empire through fortune and by the arms of others. For with his great spirit and high intention, he could not have conducted himself otherwise and the only things in the way of his plans were the brevity of Alexander's life and his own sickness. So whoever judges it necessary in his new principality to secure himself against enemies, to gain friends to himself, to conquer either by force or by fraud, to make himself loved and feared by the people, and followed and revered by the soldiers, to eliminate those who can or might offend[15] you, to renew old orders through new modes, to be severe and pleasant, magnanimous and liberal, to eliminate an unfaithful military, to create a new one, to maintain friend-

14. NM was in Rome at the time of the conclave that elected Julius II pope in October-December 1503.

15. *offendere* (here and below) is not merely to slight, but to harm so as to cause offense.

ships with kings and princes so that they must either benefit you with favor or be hesitant to offend you—can find no fresher examples than the actions of that man. One could only accuse him in the creation of Julius as pontiff, in which he made a bad choice; for, as was said, though he could not make a pope to suit himself, he could have kept anyone from being pope. And for the papacy he should never have consented to those cardinals whom he had offended or who, having become pope, would have to be afraid of him. For men offend either from fear or for hatred. Those whom he had offended were, among others, San Piero ad Vincula, Colonna, San Giorgio, Ascanio;[16] all the others, if they had become pope, would have had to fear him, except Rouen and the Spaniards, the latter because of kinship and obligation, the former for his power, because he was connected to the kingdom of France.[17] Therefore the duke, before everything else, should have created a Spaniard pope, and if he could not, should have consented to Rouen, and not San Piero ad Vincula. And whoever believes that among great personages new benefits will make old injuries be forgotten deceives himself.[18] So the duke erred in this choice and it was the cause of his ultimate ruin.

16. In this irreverent listing of cardinals, Giuliano della Rovere (who became Pope Julius II) is named by his church in Rome, San Pietro in Vincoli; Giovanni Colonna; Raffaelo Riario, named for San Giorgio; Ascanio Sforza.

17. Cardinal Georges d'Amboise, bishop of Rouen; see Chapter 3.

18. See NM, *Discourses on Livy* III 4.

use it; and you become either poor and contemptible or, to escape poverty, rapacious and hateful. Among all the things that a prince should guard against is being contemptible and hated, and liberality leads you to both. So there is more wisdom in maintaining a name for meanness, which begets infamy without hatred, than in being under a necessity, because one wants to have a name for liberality, to incur a name for rapacity, which begets infamy with hatred.

XVII

Of Cruelty and Mercy,[1] and Whether It Is Better to Be Loved Than Feared, or the Contrary

Descending next to the other qualities cited before, I say that each prince should desire to be held merciful and not cruel; nonetheless he should take care not to use this mercy badly. Cesare Borgia was held to be cruel; nonetheless his cruelty restored the Romagna, united it, and reduced it to peace and to faith. If one considers this well, one will see that he was much more merciful than the Florentine people, who so as to escape a name for cruelty, allowed Pistoia to be destroyed.[2] A prince, therefore, so as to keep his subjects united and faithful, should not care about the infamy of cruelty, because with very few examples he will be more merciful than those who for the sake of too much mercy allow disorders to continue, from which come killings or

1. Or piety, throughout *The Prince*.

2. From 1500 to 1502 Pistoia, a city subject to Florence, was torn by factional disputes and riots. NM was there as representative of the Florentines on several occasions in 1501.

robberies; for these customarily hurt[3] a whole community,[4] but the executions that come from the prince hurt[5] one particular person. And of all princes, it is impossible for the new prince to escape a name for cruelty because new states are full of dangers. And Virgil says in the mouth of Dido: "The harshness of things and the newness of the kingdom compel me to contrive such things, and to keep a broad watch over the borders."[6]

Nonetheless, he should be slow to believe and to move, nor should he make himself feared, and he should proceed in a temperate mode with prudence and humanity so that too much confidence does not make him incautious and too much diffidence does not render him intolerable.

From this a dispute arises whether it is better to be loved than feared, or the reverse. The response is that one would want to be both the one and the other; but because it is difficult to put them together, it is much safer to be feared than loved, if one has to lack one of the two. For one can say this generally of men: that they are ungrateful, fickle, pretenders and dissemblers, evaders of danger, eager for gain. While you do them good, they are yours, offering you their blood, property, lives, and children, as I said above,[7] when the need for them is far away; but, when it is close to you, they revolt. And that prince who has founded himself entirely on their words, stripped of other preparation, is ruined; for friendships that are acquired at a price and not with greatness and nobility of spirit are bought, but they are not owned and when the time comes they cannot be spent. And men have less hesitation to offend one who makes himself loved than one who makes himself feared; for love is held by a chain of obligation, which, because men are

3. lit.: offend.
4. lit.: a whole universality.
5. lit.: offend.
6. Virgil, *Aeneid* I 563–64.
7. See Chapter 9.

wicked, is broken at every opportunity for their own utility, but fear is held by a dread of punishment that never forsakes you.

The prince should nonetheless make himself feared in such a mode that if he does not acquire love, he escapes hatred, because being feared and not being hated can go together very well. This he will always do if he abstains from the property of his citizens and his subjects, and from their women; and if he also needs to proceed against someone's life,[8] he must do it when there is suitable justification and manifest cause for it. But above all, he must abstain from the property of others, because men forget the death of a father more quickly than the loss of a patrimony. Furthermore, causes for taking away property are never lacking, and he who begins to live by rapine always finds cause to seize others' property; and, on the contrary, causes for taking life[9] are rarer and disappear more quickly.

But when the prince is with his armies and has a multitude of soldiers under his government, then it is above all necessary not to care about a name for cruelty, because without this name he never holds his army united, or disposed to any action. Among the admirable actions of Hannibal is numbered this one: that when he had a very large army, mixed with infinite kinds of men, and had led it to fight in alien lands, no dissension ever arose in it, neither among themselves nor against the prince, in bad as well as in his good fortune. This could not have arisen from anything other than his inhuman cruelty which, together with his infinite virtues, always made him venerable and terrible in the sight of his soldiers; and without it, his other virtues would not have sufficed to bring about this effect. And the writers, having considered little in this, on the one hand admire this action of his but on the other condemn the principal cause of it.

8. lit.: blood.
9. lit.: blood.

And to see that it is true that his other virtues would not have been enough, one can consider Scipio, who was very rare not only in his times but also in the entire memory of things known—whose armies in Spain rebelled against him. This arose from nothing but his excessive mercy, which had allowed his soldiers more license than is fitting for military discipline. Scipio's mercy was reproved in the Senate by Fabius Maximus, who called him the corruptor of the Roman military. After the Locrians had been destroyed by a legate of Scipio's, they were not avenged by him, nor was the insolence of that legate corrected—all of which arose from his agreeable nature, so that when someone in the Senate wanted to excuse him, he said that there were many men who knew better how not to err than how to correct errors. Such a nature would in time have sullied Scipio's fame and glory if he had continued with it in the empire; but while he lived under the government of the Senate, this damaging quality of his not only was hidden, but made for his glory.[10]

I conclude, then, returning to being feared and loved, that since men love at their convenience and fear at the convenience of the prince, a wise prince should found himself on what is his, not on what is someone else's; he should only contrive to avoid hatred, as was said.

10. On the comparison between Hannibal and Scipio, see also *Discourses on Livy* III 19–21. NM's source is in Livy, XXIX 19, 21.

XVIII

In What Mode Faith Should Be Kept by Princes

How praiseworthy it is for a prince to keep his faith, and to live with honesty and not by astuteness, everyone under-

stands. Nonetheless one sees by experience in our times that the princes who have done great things are those who have taken little account of faith and have known how to get around men's brains with their astuteness; and in the end they have overcome those who have founded themselves on loyalty.

Thus, you[1] must know that there are two kinds of combat: one with laws, the other with force. The first is proper to man, the second to beasts; but because the first is often not enough, one must have recourse to the second. Therefore it is necessary for a prince to know well how to use the beast and the man. This role was taught covertly to princes by ancient writers, who wrote that Achilles, and many other ancient princes, were given to Chiron the centaur to be raised, so that he would look after them with his discipline. To have as teacher a half-beast, half-man means nothing other than that a prince needs to know how to use both natures; and the one without the other is not lasting.

Thus, since a prince is compelled of necessity to know well how to use the beast, he should pick the fox and the lion,[2] because the lion does not defend itself from snares and the fox does not defend itself from wolves. So one needs to be a fox to recognize snares and a lion to frighten the wolves. Those who stay simply with the lion do not understand this. A prudent lord, therefore, cannot observe faith, nor should he, when such observance turns against him, and the causes that made him promise have been eliminated. And if all men were good, this teaching would not be good; but because they are wicked and do not observe faith with you, you also do not have to observe it with them. Nor does a prince ever lack legitimate causes to color his failure to observe faith. One could give infinite modern examples of this, and show how many peace treaties and promises have been rendered invalid and

1. The formal or plural you.
2. A possible source for this: Cicero, *De Officiis* I.11.34; 13.41.

vain through the infidelity of princes; and the one who has known best how to use the fox has come out best. But it is necessary to know well how to color this nature, and to be a great pretender and dissembler; and men are so simple and so obedient to present necessities that he who deceives will always find someone who will let himself be deceived.

I do not want to be silent about one of the recent examples. Alexander VI never did anything, nor ever thought of anything, but how to deceive men, and he always found a subject to whom he could do it. And there never was a man with greater efficacy in asserting a thing, and in affirming it with greater oaths, who observed it less; nonetheless, his deceits succeeded at his will, because he well knew this aspect of the world.

Thus, it is not necessary for a prince to have all the above-mentioned qualities in fact, but it is indeed necessary to appear to have them. Nay, I dare say this, that by having them and always observing them, they are harmful; and by appearing to have them, they are useful, as it is to appear merciful, faithful, humane, honest, and religious, and to be so; but to remain with a spirit built so that, if you need not to be those things, you are able and know how to change to the contrary. This has to be understood: that a prince, and especially a new prince, cannot observe all those things for which men are held good, since he is often under a necessity, to maintain his state, of acting against faith, against charity, against humanity, against religion. And so he needs to have a spirit disposed to change as the winds of fortune and variations of things command him, and as I said above, not depart from good, when possible, but know how to enter into evil, when forced by necessity.

A prince should thus take great care that nothing escape his mouth that is not full of the above-mentioned five qualities and that, to see him and hear him, he should appear all mercy, all faith, all honesty, all humanity, all religion. And nothing is more necessary to appear to have than this

last quality. Men in general[3] judge more by their eyes than by their hands, because seeing is given[4] to everyone, touching to few. Everyone sees how you appear, few touch what you are; and these few dare not oppose the opinion of many, who have the majesty of the state to defend them; and in the actions of all men, and especially of princes, where there is no court to appeal to, one looks to the end. So let a prince win and maintain his state: the means will always be judged honorable, and will be praised by everyone. For the vulgar are taken in by the appearance and the outcome of a thing, and in the world there is no one but the vulgar; the few have a place there[5] when the many have somewhere to lean on. A certain prince of present times, whom it is not well to name,[6] never preaches anything but peace and faith, and is very hostile to both. If he had observed both, he would have had either his reputation or his state taken from him many times.

3. lit.: universally.
4. lit.: touches.
5. One manuscript says "the few have no place there . . ."; and the authorities have divided, Casella, Russo, and Sasso accepting "no place," Chabod and Bertelli "a place."
6. Apparently Ferdinand the Catholic, whom NM unhesitatingly names in Chapter 21.

XIX

Of Avoiding Contempt and Hatred

But because I have spoken of the most important of the qualities mentioned above, I want to discourse on the others briefly under this generality, that the prince, as was said above in part, should think how to avoid those things that

make him hateful and contemptible. When he avoids them, he will have done his part and will find no danger in his other infamies. What makes him hated above all, as I said,[1] is to be rapacious and a usurper of the property and the women of his subjects. From these he must abstain, and whenever one does not take away either property or honor from the generality[2] of men, they live content and one has only to combat the ambition of the few which may be checked in many modes and with ease. What makes him contemptible is to be held variable, light, effeminate, pusillanimous, irresolute, from which a prince should guard himself as from a shoal. He should contrive that greatness, spiritedness, gravity, and strength are recognized in his actions, and he should insist that his judgments in the private concerns of his subjects be irrevocable. And he should maintain such an opinion of himself that no one thinks either of deceiving him or of getting around him.

The prince who gives this opinion of himself is highly reputed, and against whoever is reputed it is difficult to conspire, difficult to mount an attack, provided it is understood that he is excellent and revered by his own subjects. For a prince should have two fears: one within, on account of his subjects; the other outside, on account of external powers. From the latter one is defended with good arms and good friends; and if one has good arms, one will always have good friends. And things inside will always remain steady, if things outside are steady, unless indeed they are disturbed by a conspiracy; and even if things outside are in motion, provided he has ordered and lived as I said, as long as he does not forsake himself he will always withstand every thrust, as I said Nabis the Spartan did.[3] But, as to

1. See Chapter 17 above.
2. lit.: universality.
3. Chapter 9 above, where Nabis is featured as a prince of a civil principality. NM does not disclose here, as he does in *Discourses on Livy* III 6, that Nabis was in fact killed by a conspiracy.

subjects, when things outside are not moving, one has to fear that they may be conspiring secretly. From this the prince may secure himself sufficiently if he avoids being hated or despised and keeps the people satisfied with him; this is necessary to achieve, as was said above at length.[4] And one of the most powerful remedies that a prince has against conspiracies is not to be hated by the people generally.[5] For whoever conspires always believes he will satisfy the people with the death of the prince, but when he believes he will offend them, he does not get up the spirit to adopt such a course, because the difficulties on the side of the conspirators are infinite. And one sees from experience that there have been many conspiracies, but few have had a good end. For whoever conspires cannot be alone, but he cannot find company except from those he believes to be malcontents; and as soon as you disclose your intent to a malcontent, you give him the matter with which to become content, because manifestly he can hope for every advantage from it. So, seeing sure gain on this side, and on the other, dubious gain full of danger, he must indeed either be a rare friend, or an altogether obstinate enemy of the prince, to observe his faith with you. And to reduce this to brief terms, I say that on the part of the conspirator there is nothing but fear, jealousy, and the anticipation of terrifying punishment; but on the part of the prince there is the majesty of the principality, the laws, the protection of friends and of the state which defend him, so that when popular good will is added to all these things, it is impossible that anyone should be so rash as to conspire. For whereas a conspirator ordinarily has to fear before the execution of the evil, in this case (having the people as enemies) he must fear afterwards too, when the excess has occurred, nor can he hope for any refuge.

4. Chapters 16, 17.
5. lit.: by the universal.

One might give infinite examples of this matter, but I wish to be content with only one that happened within the memory of our fathers. Messer Annibale Bentivoglio, grandfather of the present Messer Annibale, who was prince in Bologna, was killed by the Canneschi conspiring against him, and no one survived him but Messer Giovanni, who was in swaddling clothes. Immediately after that homicide the people rose up and killed all the Canneschi. This came from the popular good will the house of Bentivoglio had in those times, which was so great that since there remained no one of that house in Bologna who could rule the state, Annibale being dead, and since there was indication that in Florence someone had been born of the Bentivogli who was considered until then the son of a blacksmith, the Bolognese came to Florence for him and gave him the government of their city, which was governed by him until Messer Giovanni reached an age suitable for governing.[6]

I conclude, therefore, that a prince should take little account of conspiracies if the people show good will to him; but if they are hostile and bear hatred for him, he should fear everything and everyone. And well-ordered states and wise princes have thought out with all diligence how not to make the great desperate and how to satisfy the people and keep them content, because this is one of the most important matters that concern a prince.

Among the well-ordered and governed kingdoms in our times is that of France;[7] and in it are infinite good institutions on which the liberty and security of the king depend. The first of these is the parlement and its authority. For the one who ordered that kingdom,[8] knowing the ambition of the powerful and their insolence, and judging it necessary for them to have a bit in their mouths to correct them, and on the other side, knowing the hatred of the generality of people[9] against the great, which is founded in its fear, and wanting to secure them, intended this not to be the particular concern of the king, so as to take from him the blame he would have from the great when he favored the popular side, and from the popular side when he favored the great; and so he constituted a third judge to be the one who would beat down the great and favor the lesser side without blame for the king. This order could not be better, or more prudent, or a greater cause of the security of the king and the kingdom. From this one can infer another notable thing: that princes should have anything blameable administered by others, favors[10] by themselves. Again I conclude that a prince should esteem the great, but not make himself hated by the people.

It might perhaps appear to many, considering the life and death of some Roman emperor, that there were examples contrary to my opinion, since one may find someone who has always lived excellently, and shown great virtue of spirit, and has nonetheless lost the empire or indeed been killed by his own subjects who conspired against him. Since I want, therefore, to respond to these objections, I shall discuss the qualities of certain emperors, showing the causes of their ruin to be not unlike that which I have advanced; and in part I shall offer for consideration things that are notable for whoever reads about the actions of those times. And I want it to suffice for me to take all the emperors who succeeded to the empire, from Marcus the philosopher to Maximinus: these were Marcus, Commodus his son, Pertinax, Julianus, Severus, his son Antoninus Caracalla, Macrinus, Heliogabalus, Alexander,[11] and Max-

6. See NM, *Florentine Histories* VI 9–10.

7. On the kingdom of France, see also *Discourses on Livy* I 16, 17, 55; and NM's *Ritratto di cose di Francia*.

8. Perhaps a reference to Louis IX, by whom the Parlement of Paris was organized out of the preceding king's court. Parlements in the French monarchy were law courts, not legislative assemblies.

9. lit.: of the universal.

10. lit.: things of grace.

11. Alexander Severus.

iminus. And first it is to be noted that whereas in other principalities one has to contend only with the ambition of the great and the insolence of the people, the Roman emperors had a third difficulty, of having to bear with the cruelty and avarice of their soldiers. This was so difficult that it was the cause of the ruin of many, since it was difficult to satisfy the soldiers and the people. For the people loved quiet, and therefore loved modest princes, and the soldiers loved a prince with a military spirit who was insolent, cruel, and rapacious. They wanted him to practice these things on the people so that they could double their pay and give vent to their avarice and cruelty. These things always brought about the ruin of those emperors who by nature or by art did not have a great reputation such that they could hold both in check. And most of them, especially those who came to the principate as new men, once they recognized the difficulty of these two diverse humors, turned to satisfying the soldiers, caring little about injuring the people. This course was necessary; for since princes cannot fail to be hated by someone, they are at first forced not to be hated by the people generally;[12] and when they cannot continue this, they have to contrive with all industry to avoid the hatred of those communities which are most powerful. And so those emperors who because they were new had need of extraordinary support stuck to the soldiers rather than the people, which nonetheless turned out useful for them or not according to whether that prince knew how to keep himself in repute with them. From the causes mentioned above, Marcus, Pertinax, and Alexander, all living a modest life, lovers of justice, enemies of cruelty, humane

12. *università* is singular here, according to some MSS accepted by Chabod; it is plural and translated as "communities" in the next clause; *università* is derived from the medieval Latin *universitas,* which means both a legal body or corporation and (sometimes) the community on which such bodies depend. NM's usage lacks the legalism of medieval usage.

and kind, all, except for Marcus, came to a bad end. Only Marcus lived and died most honorably, because he succeeded to the empire by hereditary right and did not have to acknowledge it as from either the soldiers or the people; then, since he was attended with many virtues that made him venerable, while he lived he always kept the one order and the other within its bounds, and was never either hated or despised. But Pertinax was created emperor against the will of the soldiers, who, since they were used to living in license under Commodus, could not tolerate the decent life to which Pertinax wanted to return them; hence, having created hatred for himself, and to this hatred added disdain since he was old, he was ruined in the first beginnings of his administration.

And here one should note that hatred is acquired through good deeds as well as bad ones; and so, as I said above,[13] a prince who wants to maintain his state is often forced not to be good. For when that community[14] of which you judge you have need to maintain yourself is corrupt, whether they are the people or the soldiers or the great, you must follow their humor to satisfy them, and then good deeds are your enemy. But let us come to Alexander. He was of such goodness that among the other praise attributed to him is this: that in the fourteen years he held the empire no one was ever put to death by him without a trial. Nonetheless, since he was held to be effeminate and a man who let himself be governed by his mother, and for this came to be despised, the army conspired against him and killed him.

Reviewing[15] now, by contrast, the qualities of Commodus, of Severus,[16] Antoninus Caracalla, and Max-

13. Chapter 15.

14. See note 12 above.

15. lit.: discoursing on.

16. Septimius Severus, who in *Discourses on Livy* I 10 is called a criminal.

iminus, you[17] will find them very cruel and very rapacious. To satisfy the soldiers, they would not spare any kind of injury that could be inflicted on the people; and all except Severus came to a bad end. For in Severus was so much virtue that, by keeping the soldiers his friends, although the people were overburdened by him, he was always able to rule happily because his virtues made him so admirable in the sight of the soldiers and the people that the latter remained somehow astonished and stupefied, while the former were reverent and satisfied.

And because the actions of this man were great and notable in a new prince, I want to show briefly how well he knew how to use the persons of the fox and the lion, whose natures I say above[18] are necessary for a prince to imitate. Since Severus knew of the indolence of Emperor Julianus, he persuaded his army, of which he was captain in Slavonia, that it would be good to go to Rome and avenge the death of Pertinax, who had been put to death by the praetorian soldiers. Under this pretext, without showing that he aspired to the empire, he moved his army against Rome; and he was in Italy before his departure was known. When he arrived at Rome, he was elected emperor by the Senate out of fear and Julianus put to death. After this beginning there remained two difficulties for Severus if he wanted to become lord of the whole state: one in Asia, where Pescennius Niger, the head of the Asian armies, had had himself called emperor; and the other in the West, where Albinus also aspired to the empire. And because he judged it dangerous to disclose himself as an enemy to both, he decided to attack Niger and deceive Albinus. To Albinus he wrote that since he had been elected emperor by the Senate he wanted to share that dignity with him; he sent him the title of Caesar, and by decision of the Senate accepted him as colleague. These

17. The formal or plural you.
18. Chapter 18.

things were accepted by Albinus as true. But after Severus had defeated Niger, put him to death, and brought peace to affairs in the East, he returned to Rome and complained in the Senate that Albinus, hardly grateful for the benefits he had received from him, had perfidiously sought to kill him, and for this it was necessary for Severus to go punish his ingratitude. Then he went to meet him in France, and took from him his state and his life.

Thus, whoever examines minutely the actions of this man will find him a very fierce lion and a very astute fox, will see that he was feared and revered by everyone, and not hated by the army, and will not marvel that he, a new man, could have held so much power.[19] For his very great reputation always defended him from the hatred that the people could have conceived for him because of his robberies. But his son Antoninus [Caracalla] was himself a man who had most excellent parts that made him marvelous in the sight of the people and pleasing to the soldiers. For he was a military man, very capable of enduring every trouble, disdainful of all delicate food and of all other softness, which made him loved by all the armies. Nonetheless, his ferocity and cruelty were so great and so unheard of—for after infinite individual killings he had put to death a great part of the people of Rome and all the people of Alexandria—that he became most hateful to all the world. He began to be feared even by those whom he had around him, so that he was killed by a centurion in the midst of his army. Here it is to be noted that deaths such as these, which follow from the decision of an obstinate spirit, cannot be avoided by princes because anyone who does not care about death can hurt[20] him; but the prince may well fear them less because they are very rare. He should only guard against doing grave injury to anyone of those whom he uses and has around him in the

19. lit.: empire.
20. lit.: offend.

service of his principality, as Antoninus had done. He had put to death with disgrace a brother of that centurion, and threatened him every day; yet he kept him in his bodyguard, which was a rash policy likely to bring ruin, as happened to him.[21]

But let us come to Commodus, who held the empire with great ease because he had it by hereditary right, being the son of Marcus. It was enough for him only to follow in the footsteps of his father, and he would have satisfied both the soldiers and the people. But since he had a cruel and bestial spirit, so as to practice his rapacity on the people he turned to indulging the armies and making them licentious. On the other hand, by not keeping his dignity, by descending often into theaters to fight with gladiators, and by doing other very base things hardly deserving of the imperial majesty, he became contemptible in the sight of the soldiers. And since he was hated on one side and despised on the other, he was conspired against and put to death.

It remains now to tell of the qualities of Maximinus. He was a very warlike man; and since the armies were disgusted with the softness of Alexander, whom I discussed above, when he was put to death they elected Maximinus to the empire. He did not possess it for long because two things made him hated and contemptible: one was being of very base origin[22] because he had formerly herded sheep in Thrace (which was very well known everywhere and brought great disdain for him in the sight of everyone); the other was that because at the start of his principality he had deferred going to Rome and taking possession of the imperial throne, he had established an opinion of himself as very

21. See also *Discourses on Livy* III 6, where NM says that the centurion was the instrument or executive of another conspirator, Macrinus, who was Caracalla's prefect and is not said to have suffered "grave injury" from Caracalla. Macrinus proclaimed himself emperor in 217 and was overthrown in 218.

22. lit.: being very base.

cruel, since he had committed many cruelties through his prefects in Rome and everywhere in the empire. So, since the whole world was excited by indignation at the baseness of his blood and by hatred arising from fear of his ferocity, Africa rebelled first, then the Senate with all the people of Rome; and all Italy conspired against him. These were joined by his own army, which, while besieging Aquileia and finding difficulty in capturing it, became disgusted with this cruelty, and fearing him less because it saw he had so many enemies, it killed him.

I do not want to reason about either Heliogabalus or Macrinus or Julianus, who, because they were altogether contemptible, were immediately eliminated; but I shall come to the conclusion of this discourse. And I say that the princes of our times have less of this difficulty of satisfying the soldiers by extraordinary means in their governments. For notwithstanding that one has to show them some consideration, yet this is quickly settled because none of these princes has armies joined together which are entrenched in the government and administration of provinces, as were the armies of the Roman Empire. And so, if at that time it was necessary to satisfy the soldiers rather than the people, it was because the soldiers could do more than the people. Now it is necessary for all princes except the Turk and the Sultan[23] to satisfy the people rather than the soldiers, because the people can do more than the soldiers. I except the Turk from this, since he always keeps around him twelve thousand infantry and fifteen thousand horse on whom the security and strength of his kingdom depend; and it is necessary for that lord to put off every other regard and

23. Apparently "the Turk" is Selim I, sultan of the Ottoman Turks from 1512 to 1520, and "the Sultan" is the last sultan of the Mamelukes in Egypt, Tuman Bey, who was overthrown by Selim I in 1517. Selim I is called "the Grand Turk" by NM in the *Discourses on Livy:* see I 1, 19, 30; II 17; III 6, 35.

keep them his friends. Similarly, since the kingdom of the sultan is in the hands of the soldiers, he also is required to keep them his friends, without respect for the people. And you[24] have to note that the sultan's state is formed unlike all other principalities because it is similar to the Christian pontificate, which cannot be called either a hereditary principality or a new principality. For it is not the sons of the old prince who are the heirs and become the lords, but the one who is elected to that rank by those who have the authority for it. And this being an ancient order, one cannot call it a new principality, because some of the difficulties in new principalities are not in it; for if the prince is indeed new, the orders of that state are old and are ordered to receive him as if he were their hereditary lord.

But let us return to our matter. I say that whoever considers the discourse written above will see that either hatred or disdain has been the cause of the ruin of the emperors named before, and will also know whence it arises that, though some of them proceeded in one mode and some in the contrary mode, in whichever mode, one of them came to a happy end and the others to unhappy ends. For to Pertinax and Alexander, because they were new princes, it was useless and harmful to wish to imitate Marcus, who was in the principate by hereditary right; and similarly, for Caracalla, Commodus, and Maximinus it was a pernicious thing to imitate Severus, because they did not have as much virtue as would allow them to follow in his footsteps. Therefore, a new prince in a new principality cannot imitate the actions of Marcus, nor again is it necessary to follow those of Severus; but he should take from Severus those parts which are necessary to found his state and from Marcus those which are fitting and glorious to conserve a state that is already established and firm.

24. The formal or plural you.

Third Book

I

If One Wishes a Sect or a Republic to Live Long, It Is Necessary to Draw It Back Often toward Its Beginning

1 It is a very true thing that all worldly things have a limit to their life; but generally those go the whole course that is ordered for them by heaven, that do not disorder their body but keep it ordered so that either it does not alter or, if it alters, it is for its safety and not to its harm. Because I am speaking of mixed bodies, such as republics and sects, I say that those alterations are for safety that lead them back toward their beginnings. So those are better ordered and have longer life that by means of their orders can often be renewed or indeed that through some accident outside the said order come to the said renewal. And it is a thing clearer than light that these bodies do not last if they do not renew themselves.

2 The mode of renewing them is, as was said, to lead them back toward their beginnings. For all the beginnings of sects, republics, and kingdoms must have some goodness in them, by means of which they may regain their first reputation and their first increase. Because in the process of time that goodness is corrupted, unless something intervenes to lead it back to the mark, it of necessity kills that body. Speaking of the bodies of men, these doctors of medicine say "that daily something is added that at some time needs cure."[1] Speaking of republics, this return toward the beginning is done through either extrinsic accident or intrinsic prudence. As to the first, one sees that it was necessary that Rome be taken by the French, if one wished that it be reborn and, by being reborn, regain new life and new virtue, and regain the observance of religion and justice, which were beginning to be tainted in it. This is very well understood through Livy's history, where he shows that in taking out the army against the French, and in creating the tribunes with consular power, they did not observe any religious ceremony.[2] So, likewise, not only did they not punish the three Fabii who "against the law of nations"[3] had engaged in combat against the French, but they created them tribunes.[4] It ought to be easily presupposed that they were beginning to take less account of other good institutions ordered by

1. Quoted in Latin; the source has not been found.
2. Livy, V 38.
3. Quoted in Latin from Livy, V 36.
4. Livy, V 37.

of men what had already been eliminated there. Their new orders were so powerful that they are the cause that the dishonesty of the prelates and of the heads of the religion do not ruin it. Living still in poverty and having so much credit with peoples in confessions and sermons, they give them to understand that it is evil to say evil of evil, and that it is good to live under obedience to them and, if they make an error, to leave them for God to punish. So they do the worst they can because they do not fear the punishment that they do not see and do not believe. This renewal, therefore, has maintained and maintains this religion.[23]

5 Kingdoms also have need of renewing themselves and of bringing back their laws toward their beginnings. How much good effect this part produces is seen in the kingdom of France, which lives under laws and under orders more than any other kingdom. Parlements are those who maintain these laws and orders, especially that of Paris.[24] They are renewed by it whenever it makes an execution against a prince of that kingdom and when it condemns the king in its verdicts. Up until now it has maintained itself by having been an obstinate executor against the nobility; but whenever it should leave any of them unpunished and they should come to multiply, without doubt it would arise either that they would have to be corrected with great disorder or that that kingdom would be dissolved.

6 One therefore concludes that nothing is more necessary in a common way of life, whether it is sect or kingdom or republic, than to give back to it the reputation it had in its beginnings, and to contrive that it be either good orders or good men that produce this effect, and not have an extrinsic force to produce it. For although sometimes it is the best remedy, as it was in Rome, it is so dangerous that it is not in any way to be desired. To demonstrate to anyone how much the actions of particular men made Rome great and caused many good effects in that city, I shall come to the narration and discourse of them; within these limits this third book and last part of this first decade will conclude. Although the actions of the kings were great and notable, nonetheless since the history states them thoroughly, I shall omit them; nor shall I speak of them otherwise except for anything they may have worked pertaining to their private advantage; and I shall begin with Brutus, father of Roman liberty.[25]

23. On the corruption of the Franciscans and the Dominicans, cf. Dante, *Paradiso*, XI–XII.
24. See *P* 19.
25. Lucius Junius Brutus.

2

That It Is a Very Wise Thing to Simulate Craziness at the Right Time[1]

There was never anyone so prudent nor esteemed so wise for any emine
work of his than Junius Brutus deserves to be held in his simulation
stupidity. Although Titus Livy expresses but one cause that induced him to su
simulation, which was to be able to live more securely and to maintain his pat
mony, nonetheless when his mode of proceeding is considered, it can be believ
that he also simulated this to be less observed and to have more occasion
crushing the kings and freeing his own fatherland whenever opportunity wo
be given him. That he thought of this may be seen, first, in the interpreting
the oracle of Apollo, when he simulated falling so as to kiss the earth, judg
that through this he would have the gods favorable to his thoughts,[2] and aft
ward, when over the dead Lucretia he was the first among her father and husba
and other relatives to draw the knife from the wound and to make the bystand
swear that they would never endure that in the future anyone should reign
Rome.[3] From his example all those who are discontented with a prince have
learn: they should first measure and first weigh their forces, and if they are
powerful that they can expose themselves as his enemies and make war on h
openly, they should enter on this way, as less dangerous and more honoral
But if they are of such quality that their forces are not enough for making op
war, they should seek with all industry to make themselves friends to him;
to this effect, they should enter on all those ways that they judge to be necess
following his pleasures and taking delight in all those things they see him
lighting in. This familiarity, first, makes you live secure, and without carry
any danger it makes you enjoy the good fortune of that prince together with
and affords you every occasion for satisfying your intent. It is true that some
that with princes one should not wish to stand so close that their ruin inclu
you, nor so far that you would not be in time to rise above their ruin when t
are being ruined. Such a middle way would be the truest if it could be obser
but because I believe that it is impossible, one must be reduced to the two mo
written above—that is, either to distance oneself from or to bind onesel
them. Whoever does otherwise, if he is a man notable for his quality, live

1. Lit.: "in time."
2. Livy, I 56.
3. Livy, I 58–59.

Session 3

INTRODUCTION

Among the new objects that attracted my attention during my stay in the United States, none struck my eye more vividly than the equality of conditions. I discovered without difficulty the enormous influence that this primary fact exerts on the course of society; it gives a certain direction to public spirit, a certain turn to the laws, new maxims to those who govern, and particular habits to the governed.

Soon I recognized that this same fact extends its influence well beyond political mores and laws, and that it gains no less dominion over civil society than over government: it creates opinions, gives birth to sentiments, suggests usages, and modifies everything it does not produce.

So, therefore, as I studied American society, more and more I saw in equality of conditions the generative fact from which each particular fact seemed to issue, and I found it before me constantly as a central point at which all my observations came to an end.

Then I brought my thinking back to our hemisphere, and it seemed to me I distinguished something in it analogous to the spectacle the New World offered me. I saw the equality of conditions that, without having reached its extreme limits as it had in the United States, was approaching them more each day; and the same democracy reigning in American societies appeared to me to be advancing rapidly toward power in Europe.

At that moment I conceived the idea of the book you are going to read.

A great democratic revolution is taking place among us: all see it, but all do not judge it in the same manner. Some consider it a new thing, and taking it for an accident, they still hope to be able to stop it; whereas others judge it irresistible because to them it seems the most continuous, the oldest, and the most permanent fact known in history.

For a moment I take myself back to what France was seven hundred years

ago: I find it divided among a few families who possess the land and govern the inhabitants; at that time right of command passes from generation to generation by inheritance; men have only one means of acting upon one another—by force; only one origin of power is to be discovered—landed property.

But then the political power of the clergy comes to be founded and soon spreads. The clergy opens its ranks to all, to the poor and to the rich, to the commoner and to the lord; equality begins to penetrate through the church to the heart of government, and he who would have vegetated as a serf in eternal slavery takes his place as a priest in the midst of nobles, and will often take a seat above kings.

As society becomes in time more civilized and stable, the different relations among men become more complicated and numerous. The need for civil laws makes itself keenly felt. Then jurists are born; they leave the dark precincts of the courts and the dusty recesses of the registries and go to sit at the court of the prince beside the feudal barons covered with ermine and mail.

The kings ruin themselves in great undertakings; the nobles exhaust themselves in private wars; the commoners enrich themselves in commerce. The influence of money begins to make itself felt in the affairs of the state. Trade becomes a new source opening the way to power, and financiers become a political power that is scorned and flattered.*

Little by little enlightenment spreads; one sees the taste for literature and the arts awaken; then the mind becomes an element in success; science is a means of government, intelligence a social force; the lettered take a place in affairs.

Meanwhile, as new routes for coming to power are discovered, the value of birth is seen to decline. In the eleventh century, nobility had an inestimable price; in the thirteenth it is bought; the first ennobling takes place in 1270,† and equality is finally introduced into government by the aristocracy itself.

During the seven hundred years that have since elapsed, it sometimes happened that the nobles, in order to struggle against royal authority or to take power from their rivals, gave political power to the people.

Even more often one saw the kings have the lower classes of the state participate in the government in order to bring down the aristocracy.

In France, the kings showed themselves to be the most active and constant

*In this sentence, AT uses two different words for "power," *pouvoir* and *puissance*. *Puissance*, used in the first instance, has a connotation of physical strength; *pouvoir*, of formal authority as well as capacity.

†Louis IX (d. 1270) first asserted the exclusive right of the king to confer knighthood; Philip IV issued the first "letter of ennoblement" in about 1290.

levelers. When they were ambitious and strong, they worked to elevate the people to the level of the nobles; and when they were moderate and weak, they permitted the people to be placed above themselves. Some aided democracy by their talents, others by their vices. Louis XI* and Louis XIV† took care to equalize everything beneath the throne, and finally Louis XV‡ himself descended with his court into the dust.

As soon as citizens began to own land other than by feudal tenure, and transferable wealth was recognized, and could in its turn create influence and give power, discoveries in the arts could not be made, nor improvements in commerce and industry be introduced, without creating almost as many new elements of equality among men. From that moment on, all processes discovered, all needs that arise, all desires that demand satisfaction bring progress toward universal leveling. The taste for luxury, the love of war, the empire of fashion, the most superficial passions of the human heart as well as the most profound, seem to work in concert to impoverish the rich and enrich the poor.

Once works of the intellect had become sources of force and wealth, each development of science, each new piece of knowledge, each new idea had to be considered as a seed of power put within reach of the people. Poetry, eloquence, memory, the graces of the mind, the fires of the imagination, depth of thought, all the gifts that Heaven distributed haphazardly, profited democracy, and even if they were found in the possession of its adversaries, they still served its cause by putting into relief the natural greatness of man; its conquests therefore spread with those of civilization and enlightenment, and literature was an arsenal open to all, from which the weak and the poor came each day to seek arms.

When one runs through the pages of our history, one finds so to speak no great events in seven hundred years that have not turned to the profit of equality.

The Crusades§ and the wars with the English‖ decimate the nobles and divide their lands; the institution of townships introduces democratic freedom into the heart of the feudal monarchy; the discovery of firearms# equalizes the villein and the noble on the battlefield; printing** offers equal resources to their intelligence; the mail comes to deposit enlightenment on the

*King of France, 1461–1483.

†King of France, 1643–1715.

‡King of France, 1715–1774.

§1095–1291.

‖The Hundred Years' War, 1337–1453.

#Firearms were developed in the fourteenth century.

**The printing press was invented around 1450.

doorstep of the poor man's hut as at the portal of the palace; Protestantism asserts that all men are equally in a state to find the path to Heaven.* America, once discovered, presents a thousand new routes to fortune and delivers wealth and power to the obscure adventurer.

If you examine what is happening in [France every fifty years from the eleventh century on, at the end of each of these periods you cannot fail to perceive that a double revolution has operated on the state of society. The noble has fallen on the social ladder, and the commoner has risen; the one descends, the other climbs. Each half century brings them nearer, and soon they are going to touch.]

And this is not peculiar to France. In whichever direction we cast a glance, we perceive the same revolution continuing in all the Christian universe.

Everywhere the various incidents in the lives of peoples are seen to turn to the profit of democracy; all men have aided it by their efforts: those who had in view cooperating for its success and those who did not dream of serving it; those who fought for it and even those who declared themselves its enemies; all have been driven pell-mell on the same track, and all have worked in common, some despite themselves, others without knowing it, as blind instruments in the hands of God.

The gradual development of equality of conditions is therefore a providential fact, and it has the principal characteristics of one: it is universal, it is enduring, each day it escapes human power; all events, like all men, serve its development.

Would it be wise to believe that a social movement coming from so far can be suspended by the efforts of one generation? Does one think that after having destroyed feudalism and vanquished kings, democracy will recoil before the bourgeoisie and the rich? Will it be stopped now that it has become so strong and its adversaries so weak?

Where then are we going? No one can say; for we already lack terms for comparison: conditions are more equal among Christians in our day than they have ever been in any time or any country in the world; thus the greatness of what has already been done prevents us from foreseeing what can still be done.

The entire book that you are going to read was written under the pressure of a sort of religious terror in the author's soul, produced by the sight of this irresistible revolution that for so many centuries has marched over all obstacles, and that one sees still advancing today amid the ruins it has made.

It is not necessary that God himself speak in order for us to discover sure signs of his will; it suffices to examine the usual course of nature and the

*Martin Luther published his 95 Theses in 1517.

continuous tendency of events; I know without the Creator's raising his voice that the stars follow the arcs in space that his finger has traced.

If long observation and sincere meditation led men in our day to recognize that the gradual and progressive development of equality is at the same time the past and the future of their history, this discovery alone would give that development the sacred character of the sovereign master's will. [To wish to stop democracy would then appear to be to struggle against God himself, and it would only remain for nations to accommodate themselves to the social state that Providence imposes on them.]

Christian peoples in our day appear to me to offer a frightening spectacle; the movement that carries them along is already strong enough that it cannot be suspended, and it is not yet rapid enough to despair of directing it: their fate is in their hands, but soon it will escape them.

To instruct democracy, if possible to reanimate its beliefs, to purify its mores, to regulate its movements, to substitute little by little the science of affairs for its inexperience, and knowledge of its true interests for its blind instincts; to adapt its government to time and place; to modify it according to circumstances and men: such is the first duty imposed on those who direct society in our day.

A new political science is needed for a world altogether new.

But that is what we hardly dream of: placed in the middle of a rapid river, we obstinately fix our eyes on some debris that we still perceive on the bank, while the current carries us away and takes us backward toward the abyss.

Among no people of Europe has the great social revolution I have just described made more rapid progress than among us; but here it has always proceeded haphazardly.

Never have heads of state thought at all to prepare for it in advance; it is made despite them or without their knowing it. The most powerful, most intelligent, and most moral classes of the nation have not sought to take hold of it so as to direct it. Democracy has therefore been abandoned to its savage instincts; it has grown up like those children who, deprived of paternal care, rear themselves in the streets of our towns and know only society's vices and miseries. One still seemed ignorant of its existence when it unexpectedly took power. Each then submitted with servility to its least desires; it was adored as the image of force; when afterwards it was weakened by its own excesses, legislators conceived the imprudent project of destroying it instead of seeking to instruct and correct it; and since they did not want to teach it to govern, they thought only of driving it from government.

[As a result, the democratic revolution has taken place in the material of society without making the change in laws, ideas, habits, and mores that would have been necessary to make this revolution useful.] Thus we have de-

mocracy without anything to attenuate its vices and make its natural advantages emerge; and while we already see the evils it brings, we are still ignorant of the goods it can bestow.

When royal power, leaning on the aristocracy, peacefully governed the peoples of Europe, society, amid its miseries, enjoyed several kinds of happiness one can conceive and appreciate only with difficulty in our day.

The power of some subjects raised insurmountable barriers against the tyranny of the prince; moreover, the kings, feeling themselves vested in the eyes of the crowd with an almost divine character, drew from the very respect they generated the will not to abuse their power.

The nobles, placed at an immense distance from the people, nevertheless took the sort of benevolent and tranquil interest in the lot of the people that the shepherd accords to his flock; and without seeing in the poor man their equal, they watched over his destiny as a trust placed by Providence in their hands.

The people, not having conceived the idea of a social state other than their own nor imagining that they could ever be equal to their chiefs, received their benefits and did not discuss their rights. They loved their chiefs when the chiefs were lenient and just, and they submitted to their rigors without trouble and without baseness, as they would to inevitable evils sent by the arm of God. Moreover, usage and mores had established boundaries for tyranny and had founded a sort of right in the very midst of force.

As the noble had no thought that anyone wanted to wrest from him privileges that he believed legitimate, and the serf regarded his inferiority as an effect of the immutable order of nature, one conceives a sort of reciprocal benevolence that could have been established between two classes sharing such different fates. One would see inequality and misery in society at that time, but souls were not degraded.

It is not the use of power or the habit of obedience that depraves men, but the use of power that they consider illegitimate, and obedience to a power they regard as usurped and oppressive.

On one side were [material] goods, force, leisure, and with these, pursuits of luxury, refinements of taste, pleasures of the mind, and cultivation of the arts; on the other side, work, coarseness, and ignorance.

But in the hearts of this ignorant and coarse crowd were energetic passions, generous sentiments, profound beliefs, and savage virtues.

Thus organized, the social body could have stability, power, and above all, glory.

But now ranks are confused; the barriers raised among men are lowered; estates are divided, power is partitioned, enlightenment spreads, intelligence is equalized; the social state becomes democratic, and finally the empire of democracy is peacefully established over institutions and mores.

I conceive a society, then, which all, regarding the law as their work, would love and submit to without trouble; in which the authority of government is respected as necessary, not divine, and the love one would bear for a head of state would not be a passion, but a reasoned and tranquil sentiment. Each having rights and being assured of preserving his rights, a manly confidence and a sort of reciprocal condescension between the classes would be established, as far from haughtiness as from baseness.

The people, instructed in their true interests, would understand that to profit from society's benefits, one must submit to its burdens. The free association of citizens could then replace the individual power of nobles, and the state would be sheltered from both tyranny and license.

I understand that in a democratic state constituted in this manner, society will not be immobile; but the movements of the social body can be regular and progressive; if one encounters less brilliance than within an aristocracy, one will find less misery; enjoyments will be less extreme and well-being more general; sciences less great and ignorance rarer; sentiments less energetic and habits milder; one will note more vices and fewer crimes.

In the absence of enthusiasm and ardent beliefs, enlightenment and experience will sometimes obtain great sacrifices from citizens; each man, equally weak, will feel an equal need of those like him; and knowing that he can obtain their support only on condition of his lending them his cooperation, he will discover without difficulty that his particular interest merges with the general interest.

The nation, taken as a body, will be less brilliant, less glorious, less strong, perhaps; but the majority of its citizens will enjoy a more prosperous lot, and the people will show themselves to be peaceful, not because they despair of being better-off, but because they know how to be well-off.

If everything were not good and useful in an order of things like this, society would at least have appropriated all the useful and good that it can present; and men, abandoning forever the social advantages that aristocracy can furnish, would have taken from democracy all the goods it can offer them.

But we, leaving the social state of our forebears, throwing their institutions, their ideas, and their mores pell-mell behind us—what have we gained in its place?

The prestige of royal power has vanished without being replaced by the majesty of the laws; in our day the people scorn authority, but they fear it, and fear extracts more from them than was formerly given out of respect and love.

I perceive that we have destroyed the individual entities that were able to struggle separately against tyranny; but I see that it is government alone that inherits all the prerogatives extracted from families, from corporations, or from men: the force of a small number of citizens, sometimes oppressive, but often protective, has therefore been succeeded by the weakness of all.

The division of fortunes has diminished the distance separating the poor from the rich; but in coming closer they seem to have found new reasons for hating each other, and casting glances full of terror and envy, they mutually repel each other from power; for the one as for the other, the idea of rights does not exist, and force appears to both as the sole argument in the present and the only guarantee of the future.

The poor man has kept most of the prejudices of his fathers without their beliefs; their ignorance without their virtues; he has taken the doctrine of interest as the rule of his actions without knowing the science of it, and his selfishness is as lacking in enlightenment as was formerly his devotion.

[Society is tranquil not because it is conscious of its force and well-being, but on the contrary, because it believes itself weak and infirm; it fears it will die if it makes an effort: each feels the ill, but no one has the courage and energy needed to seek something better; like the passions of old men that end only in impotence, desires, regrets, sorrows, and joys produce nothing visible or lasting.]

Thus we have abandoned what goods our former state could present without acquiring what useful things the current state could offer; we have destroyed an aristocratic society, and having stopped complacently amid the debris of the former edifice, we seem to want to settle there forever.

What is happening in the intellectual world is no less deplorable.

Hindered in its advance or abandoned without any support against its disordered passions, French democracy has overturned all that it has encountered in its way, shaking whatever it has not destroyed. We did not see it as it took hold of society little by little so as to establish its empire peacefully; it has not ceased its advance in the midst of the disorders and agitation of combat. Animated by the heat of the struggle, pushed beyond the natural limits of his opinion by the opinions and excesses of his adversaries, each loses sight of the very object of his pursuits and takes up a language that corresponds poorly to his true sentiments and secret instincts.

Hence the strange confusion we are forced to witness.

I search my memories in vain, and I find nothing that should evoke more sadness and more pity than what is passing before our eyes; it seems that in our day the natural bond that unites opinions to tastes and actions to beliefs has been broken; the sympathy that has been noticeable in all times between the sentiments and ideas of men appears destroyed; [one would say that all the laws of moral analogy have been abolished.]

One still encounters Christians among us, full of zeal, whose religious souls love to nourish themselves from the truths of the other life; doubtless they are going to be moved to favor human freedom, the source of all moral greatness. Christianity, which has rendered all men equal before God, will not be loath to see all citizens equal before the law. But by a strange concurrence of events, religion finds itself enlisted for the moment among the powers democracy is overturning, and it is often brought to reject the equality it loves and to curse freedom as an adversary, whereas by taking it by the hand, it could sanctify its efforts.

Alongside these men of religion I discover others whose regard is turned toward earth rather than Heaven; partisans of freedom not only because they see in it the origin of the noblest virtues, but above all because they consider it the source of the greatest goods, they sincerely desire to assure its empire and to have men taste its benefits: I understand that they are going to hasten to call religion to their aid, for they must know that the reign of freedom cannot be established without that of mores, nor mores founded without beliefs; but they have perceived religion in the ranks of their adversaries, and this is enough for them: some attack it, and others do not dare to defend it.

Past centuries have seen base and venal souls extol slavery, while independent minds and generous hearts were struggling without hope to save human freedom. But in our day one often encounters naturally noble and proud men whose opinions are in direct opposition to their tastes, and who vaunt the servility and baseness they have never known for themselves. There are others, on the contrary, who speak of freedom as if they could feel what is holy and great in it, and who noisily claim for humanity the rights they have always misunderstood.

I perceive virtuous and peaceful men whose pure mores, tranquil habits, ease, and enlightenment naturally place them at the head of the populations that surround them. Full of a sincere love of their native country, they are ready to make great sacrifices for it: nevertheless they are often found to be adversaries of civilization; they confuse its abuses with its benefits, and in their minds the idea of evil is indissolubly united with the idea of the new.

Nearby I see others who, in the name of progress, striving to make man into matter, want to find the useful without occupying themselves with the just, to find science far from beliefs, and well-being separated from virtue: these persons are said to be the champions of modern civilization, and they insolently put themselves at its head, usurping a place that has been abandoned to them, but from which they are held off by their unworthiness.

Where are we then?

[Men of religion combat freedom, and the friends of freedom attack religions; noble and generous spirits vaunt slavery, and base and servile souls extol independence; honest and enlightened citizens are enemies of all progress, while men without patriotism and morality make themselves apostles of civilization and enlightenment!]

Have all centuries, then, resembled ours? Has man, as in our day, always had before his eyes a world where nothing is linked, where virtue is without genius and genius without honor; where love of order is confused with a taste for tyrants and the holy cult of freedom with contempt for laws; where conscience casts only a dubious light on human actions; where nothing seems any longer to be forbidden or permitted, or honest or shameful, or true or false?

Shall I think that the Creator has made man so as to leave him to debate endlessly in the midst of the intellectual miseries that surround us? I cannot believe this: God prepares a firmer and calmer future for European societies; I am ignorant of his designs, but I will not cease to believe in them [merely] because I cannot penetrate them, and I would rather doubt my enlightenment than his justice.

There is one country in the world where the great social revolution I am speaking of seems nearly to have attained its natural limits; there it has operated in a simple and easy manner, or rather one can say that this country sees the results of the democratic revolution operating among us without having had the revolution itself.

The emigrants who came to settle in America at the beginning of the seventeenth century in some fashion disengaged the democratic principle from all those against which it struggled within the old societies of Europe, and they transplanted it alone on the shores of the New World. There it could grow in freedom, and advancing along with mores, develop peacefully in laws.

It appears to me beyond doubt that sooner or later we shall arrive, like the Americans, at an almost complete equality of conditions. I do not conclude from this that we are destined one day necessarily to draw the political consequences the Americans have drawn from a similar social state. I am very far from believing that they have found the only form of government that democracy can give itself; but it is enough that in the two countries the generative cause of laws and mores be the same, for us to have an immense interest in knowing what it has produced in each of them.

Therefore it is not only to satisfy a curiosity, otherwise legitimate, that I have examined America; I wanted to find lessons there from which we could profit. One would be strangely mistaken to think that I wanted to make a

panegyric; whoever reads this book will be well convinced that such was not my design; nor was my goal to advocate such a form of government in general; for I number among those who believe that there is almost never any absolute good in the laws; I have not even claimed to judge whether the social revolution, whose advance seems to me irresistible, was advantageous or fatal to humanity; I have accepted this revolution as an accomplished fact or one about to be accomplished; and among the peoples who have seen it operating in their midst, I have sought the one in whom it has attained the most complete and peaceful development, in order to discern clearly its natural consequences, and to perceive, if possible, the means of rendering it profitable to men. I confess that in America I saw more than America; I sought there an image of democracy itself, of its penchants, its character, its prejudices, its passions; I wanted to become acquainted with it if only to know at least what we ought to hope or fear from it.

In the first part of this work I have therefore tried to show the direction that democracy, left in America to its penchants and abandoned almost without restraint to its instincts, has naturally given to the laws, the course it has imposed on the government, and in general, the power it has obtained over affairs. I wanted to know what have been the goods and ills produced by it. I searched for the precautions the Americans had made use of to direct it, and others they had omitted, and I undertook to distinguish the causes that permit it to govern society.

My goal was, in a second part, to paint the influence that equality of conditions and government by democracy in America exert on civil society, on habits, ideas, and mores; but I am beginning to feel less ardent to achieve this design. Before I could provide for the task I had proposed for myself, my work will have become almost useless. Another will soon show readers the principal features of the American character, and hiding the gravity of the portraits under a light veil, lend to truth charms with which I would not be able to adorn it.[1]

I do not know if I have succeeded in making known what I saw in America, but I am sure of sincerely having had the desire to do so and of

1. At the time I published the first edition of this work, M. Gustave de Beaumont [1802–1866], my traveling companion in America, was still working on his book, entitled *Marie: or, Slavery in the United States,* which has since appeared [published in 1835 as *Marie; ou, L'esclavage aux Etats-Unis: Tableau de moeurs américaines,* in the form of a novel with extensive notes and appendices]. Beaumont's principal goal was to put into relief and make known the situation of Negroes in the midst of Anglo-American society. His work will throw a vivid new light on the question of slavery, a vital question for the united republics. I do not know if I am mistaken, but it seems to me that Beaumont's book, after having keenly interested those who want to draw on its emotion and to find portraits there, will attain a still more solid and lasting success among readers who first of all desire real insights and profound truths.

never having knowingly succumbed to the need to adapt facts to ideas instead of submitting ideas to the facts.

When a point could be established with the aid of written documents, I took care to recur to original texts and to the most authentic and esteemed works.[2] I have indicated my sources in notes, and everyone can verify them. When it was a question of opinions, political usages, or observations of mores I sought the most enlightened men to consult. If it happened that the thing was important or dubious, I did not content myself with one witness, but made my determination only on the basis of all the testimonies together.

Here the reader must necessarily take me at my word. Often I could have cited as support for what I advance the authority of names known to him, or at least worthy of being known; but I have kept myself from doing so. The stranger often learns important truths in the home of his host that the latter would perhaps conceal from a friend; with a stranger one is relieved of obligatory silence; one does not fear his indiscretion because he is passing through. I recorded each of these confidences as soon as I received it, but they will never leave my portfolio;* I would rather diminish the success of my account than add my name to the list of those travelers who send back sorrows and embarrassments in return for the generous hospitality they have received.

I know that, despite my care, nothing will be easier than to criticize this book if anyone ever thinks of criticizing it.

I think those who want to regard it closely will find, in the entire work, a mother thought that so to speak links all its parts. But the diversity of the objects I had to treat is very great, and whoever undertakes to oppose an isolated fact to the sum of facts I cite or a detached idea to the sum of ideas will succeed without difficulty. I should therefore wish that one do me the favor of reading me in the same spirit that presided over my work, and that

*Some of these confidences did leave AT's portfolio after his death. His travel notebooks have been published under the title *Journey to America.*

2. Legislative and administrative documents were furnished to me with a kindness whose memory still prompts my gratitude. Among the American officials who thus favored my researches I shall cite above all Mr. Edward Livingston [1764–1836], then Secretary of State [under Andrew Jackson, 1831–1833] (now Minister Plenipotentiary at Paris [1833–1835]). During my visit to Congress, Mr. Livingston was very willing to hand over to me most of the documents I possess relative to the federal government. Mr. Livingston is one of those rare men whom one likes from having read their writings, whom one admires and honors even before having met them, and to whom one is happy to owe gratitude. [As a member of the state legislature of Louisiana, Livingston wrote his *Civil Code of the State of Louisiana* (1825); although not adopted by the legislature, it gained wide influence in Europe and the United States.]

one judge this book by the general impression it leaves, just as I myself decided, not by such and such a reason, but by the mass of reasons.

Nor must it be forgotten that the author who wants to make himself understood is obliged to push each of his ideas to all its theoretical consequences and often to the limits of the false and impractical; for if it is sometimes necessary to deviate from the rules of logic in actions, one cannot do so in discourse, and a man finds it almost as difficult to be inconsistent in his words as he does ordinarily to be consistent in his actions.

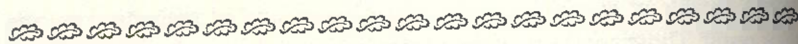
I end by pointing out myself what a great number of readers will consider the capital defect in the work. This book is not precisely in anyone's camp; in writing it I did not mean either to serve or to contest any party; I undertook to see, not differently, but further than the parties; and while they are occupied with the next day, I wanted to ponder the future.

The sympathies of the people in favor of France were however declared with so much violence that nothing less than the inflexible character of Washington and the immense popularity that he enjoyed were needed to prevent war from being declared on England. And, still, the efforts that the austere reason of this great man made to struggle against the generous but unreflective passions of his fellow citizens almost took from him the sole recompense that he had ever reserved for himself, the love of his country. The majority pronounced against his policy; now the entire people approves it.[17]

If the Constitution and public favor had not given the direction of the external affairs of the state to Washington, it is certain that the nation would have done then precisely what it condemns today.

Almost all the peoples that have acted strongly on the world, those who have conceived, followed, and executed great designs, from the Romans to the English, were directed by an aristocracy, and how can one be astonished by that?

That which is most fixed in the world in its views is an aristocracy. The mass of the people can be seduced by their ignorance or their passions; one can surprise the mind of a king and make him vacillate in his projects; and besides, a king is not immortal. But an aristocratic body is too numerous to be captured, too small in number to yield readily to the intoxication of unreflective passions. An aristocratic body is a firm and enlightened man who does not die.



Chapter 6 WHAT ARE THE REAL ADVANTAGES THAT AMERICAN SOCIETY DERIVES FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF DEMOCRACY

Before beginning the present chapter I feel the need to recall to the reader what I have already indicated several times in the course of this book.

The political constitution of the United States appears to me to be one of the forms that democracy can give to its government; but I do not consider American institutions the only ones or the best that a democratic people should adopt.

In making known what goods the Americans derive from the government of democracy I am therefore far from claiming or thinking that such advantages can be obtained only with the aid of the same laws.*

ON THE GENERAL TENDENCY OF THE LAWS UNDER THE EMPIRE OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY, AND ON THE INSTINCT OF THOSE WHO APPLY THEM

The vices of democracy are seen all at once.—Its advantages are perceived only at length.—American democracy is often unskillful, but the general tendency of its laws is profitable.—Public officials under American democracy do not have permanent interests that differ from those of the greatest number. What results from this.

The vices and weaknesses of the government of democracy are seen without trouble; they are demonstrated by patent facts, whereas its salutary influence is exerted in an insensible and, so to speak, occult manner. Its faults strike one at first approach, but its [good] qualities are discovered only at length.

The laws of American democracy are often defective or incomplete; they may happen to violate acquired rights or to sanction dangerous ones: were they good, their frequency would still be a great evil. All this is perceived at first glance.

How is it therefore that the American republics maintain themselves and prosper?

In laws, one ought to distinguish carefully the goal they pursue from the manner in which they advance toward this goal; their absolute goodness, from that which is only relative.

Let me suppose that the object of the legislator is to favor the interests of the few at the expense of the many; his provisions are combined in such a fashion as to obtain the result that is proposed in the least time and with the

*See also *DA* I Intro., 2.9.

17. See the fifth volume of the *Life of Washington*, by Marshall [Marshall, *Vie de George Washington*]. "In a government constituted like that of the United States," he says, page 314, "the first magistrate, cannot, whatever his firmness may be, long hold a dike against the torrent of popular opinion; and the one that prevailed then seemed to lead to war." In fact, in the session of Congress held in that period, it was very frequently perceived that Washington had lost the majority in the House of Representatives. Outside, the violence of language used against him was extreme: in a political gathering they did not fear to compare him indirectly to the traitor Arnold (page 265). "Those who held to the party of the opposition," Marshall also says (page 335) [355], "claimed that the partisans of the administration composed an aristocratic faction that had submitted to England and that, wanting to establish a monarchy, was consequently the enemy of France; a faction whose members constituted a sort of nobility that had the stock of the Bank as securities and that so feared every measure that could influence its funds that it was insensitive to the affronts that the honor and the interest of the nation commanded it equally to repel."

least possible effort. The law will be well made, its goal bad; it will be dangerous in proportion to its very efficacy.

The laws of democracy generally tend to the good of the greatest number, for they emanate from the majority of all citizens, which can be mistaken, but cannot have an interest contrary to itself.*

Those of aristocracy tend, on the contrary, to monopolize wealth and power in the hands of the few because aristocracy by its nature always forms a minority.

One can therefore say in a general manner that the object of democracy in its legislation is more useful to humanity than is the object of aristocracy in its.

But there its advantages end.

Aristocracy is infinitely more skillful in the science of the legislator than democracy can be. Master of itself, it is not subject to getting carried away in passing distractions; it has long designs that it knows how to ripen until a favorable occasion presents itself. Aristocracy proceeds wisely; it knows the art of making the collective force of all its laws converge at the same time toward the same point.

It is not so in democracy: its laws are almost always defective or unseasonable.

The means of democracy are therefore more imperfect than those of aristocracy: often it works against itself, without wanting to; but its goal is more useful.

Imagine a society that nature or its constitution has organized in such a manner as to bear the transient operation of bad laws, and that can await the result of the *general tendency* of the laws without perishing, and you will conceive that the government of democracy, despite its faults, is still the most appropriate of all to make this society prosper.

That is precisely what happens in the United States; I repeat here what I have already expressed elsewhere: the great privilege of the Americans is to be able to have repairable mistakes.†

I shall say something analogous about public officials.

It is easy to see that American democracy is often mistaken in the choice of the men in whom it entrusts power; but it is not so easy to say why the state prospers in their hands.

Remark first that if those who govern in a democratic state are less honest or less capable, the governed are more enlightened and more attentive.

*Cf. Rousseau, *Social Contract*, II 3.
†*DA* I 2.5.

The people in democracies, constantly occupied as they are with their affairs, and jealous of their rights, prevent their representatives from deviating from a certain general line that their interest traces for them.

Remark again that if the democratic magistrate uses power worse than someone else, he generally possesses it for less time.

But there is a more general reason than that one, and more satisfying.

It is doubtless important to the good of nations that those who govern have virtues or talents; but what is perhaps still more important to them is that those who govern do not have interests contrary to the mass of the governed; for in that case the virtues could become almost useless and the talents fatal.

I said that it is important that those who govern not have interests contrary to or different from the mass of the governed; I did not say that it is important that they have interests like those of *all* the governed, because I do not know that the thing has ever been encountered.

A political form that equally favors the development and prosperity of all the classes of which society is composed has not been discovered up to now. These classes have continued to form almost so many distinct nations in the same nation, and experience has proven that it is nearly as dangerous to rely completely on any of them for the fate of the others, as to make one people the arbiter of the destinies of another people. When the rich govern alone, the interest of the poor is always in peril; and when the poor make the law, that of the rich runs great risks. What therefore is the advantage of democracy? The real advantage of democracy is not, as has been said, to favor the prosperity of all, but only to serve the well-being of the greatest number.

Those charged with directing the affairs of the public in the United States are often inferior in capacity and morality to the men that aristocracy would bring to power; but their interest intermingles and is identified with that of the majority of their fellow citizens. They can therefore commit frequent infidelities and grave errors, but they will never systematically follow a tendency hostile to that majority; and they cannot succeed in impressing an exclusive and dangerous style on the government.

Moreover, the bad administration of one magistrate under democracy is an isolated fact that has influence only for the short duration of that administration. Corruption and incapacity are not common interests that can bind men among themselves in a permanent manner.

A corrupt or incapable magistrate will not combine his efforts with another magistrate for the sole reason that the latter is incapable and corrupt like him, and these two men will never work in concert to make corruption and incapacity flourish in their posterity. On the contrary, the ambition and

maneuvers of the one will serve to unmask the other. In democracies, the vices of the magistrate are in general wholly personal to him.

But public men under the government of aristocracy have a class interest which, if it is sometimes intermingled with that of the majority, often remains distinct from it. That interest forms a common and lasting bond among them; it invites them to unite and to combine their efforts toward a goal that is not always the happiness of the greatest number: it not only binds those who govern with one another; it also unites them to a considerable portion of the governed; for many citizens, without being vested with any post, make up a part of the aristocracy.

The aristocratic magistrate therefore encounters constant support in society at the same time that he finds it in the government.

The common object that unites the magistrates in aristocracies to the interest of a part of their contemporaries also identifies them and subjects them, so to speak, to that of future races. They work for the future as well as for the present. The aristocratic magistrate is therefore pushed toward the same point all at once by the passions of the governed, by his own, and I could almost say by the passions of his posterity.

How be surprised if he does not resist? One often also sees the spirit of class in aristocracies carry along even those it does not corrupt and, little by little without their knowing it, make them accommodate the society to their use and prepare it for their descendants.

I do not know if an aristocracy as liberal as that of England has ever existed, which without interruption has furnished men as worthy and enlightened to the government of the country.

It is, however, easy to recognize that in English legislation the good of the poor has in the end often been sacrificed to that of the rich, and the rights of the greatest number to the privileges of some: thus England in our day unites within itself all the most extreme fortunes, and one meets with miseries there that almost equal its power and glory.

In the United States, where public officials have no class interest to make prevail, the general and continuous course of government is beneficent although those who govern are often unskillful and sometimes contemptible.

There is, therefore, at the base of democratic institutions, a hidden tendency that often makes men cooperate for the general prosperity despite their vices or errors, whereas in aristocratic institutions a secret inclination is sometimes discovered that, despite talents and virtues, brings them to contribute to the miseries of those like them. Thus it can happen that in aristocratic governments public men do evil without wanting to, and in democracies they produce good without having any thought of doing so.

ON PUBLIC SPIRIT IN THE UNITED STATES

Instinctive love of native country.—Reflective patriotism.—Their different characteristics.—That people ought to strive with all their strength toward the second when the first disappears.—Efforts the Americans have made to achieve this.—The interest of the individual intimately bound to that of the country.

There exists a love of native country that has its source principally in the unreflective, disinterested, and indefinable sentiment that binds the heart of the man to the place where the man was born. This instinctive love intermingles with the taste for old customs, with respect for ancestors and memory of the past; those who feel it cherish their country as one loves a paternal home. They love the tranquillity they enjoy; they hold to the peaceful habits they have contracted there; they are attached to the memories it presents to them, and even find some sweetness in living there obediently. Often that love of native country is further exalted by religious zeal, and then one sees prodigies done. It is a sort of religion itself; it does not reason, it believes, it feels, it acts. Peoples have been encountered who have, in some fashion, personified the native country and have caught a glimpse of it in the prince. They have therefore carried over to him a part of the sentiment of which patriotism is composed; they have become haughty with his triumphs and have taken pride in his power. There was a time, under the former monarchy, when the French experienced a sort of joy in feeling themselves delivered without recourse to the arbitrariness of the monarch, and they used to say haughtily: "We live under the most powerful king in the world."

Like all unreflective passions, this love of country pushes one to great, fleeting efforts rather than to continuity of efforts. After having saved the state in a time of crisis, it often allows it to decline in the midst of peace.

When peoples are still simple in their mores and firm in their beliefs; when society rests gently on an old order of things whose legitimacy is not contested, one sees this instinctive love of native country reign.

There is another more rational than that one; less generous, less ardent perhaps, but more fruitful and more lasting; this one is born of enlightenment; it develops with the aid of laws, it grows with the exercise of rights, and in the end it intermingles in a way with personal interest. A man understands the influence that the well-being of the country has on his own; he knows that the law permits him to contribute to producing this well-being, and he interests himself in the prosperity of his country at first as a thing that is useful to him, and afterwards as his own work.

But sometimes a moment arrives in the lives of peoples when old customs are changed, mores destroyed, beliefs shaken, the prestige of memories faded

away, and when, however, enlightenment remains incomplete and political rights are badly secured or restricted. Then men no longer perceive the native country except in a weak and doubtful light; they no longer place it in the soil, which has become a lifeless land in their eyes, nor in the usages of their ancestors, which they have been taught to regard as a yoke; nor in the religion which they doubt; nor in the laws they do not make, nor in the legislator whom they fear and scorn. They therefore see it nowhere, no more with its own features than with any other, and they withdraw into a narrow and unenlightened selfishness. These men escape prejudices without recognizing the empire of reason; they have neither the instinctive patriotism of the monarchy nor the reflective patriotism of the republic; but they have come to a stop between the two, in the midst of confusion and miseries.

What is one to do in such a state? Retreat. But peoples no more come back to the sentiments of their youth than do men to the innocent tastes of their first years; they can regret them, but not make them revive. One must therefore go further ahead and hasten to unite in the eyes of the people individual interest to the interest of the country, for disinterested love of one's native country is fleeing away without return.

I am surely far from claiming that, to arrive at this result, one ought to accord the exercise of political rights to all men all at once; but I say that the most powerful means, and perhaps the only one that remains to us, of interesting men in the fate of their native country is to make them participate in its government. In our day, the spirit of the city seems to me inseparable from the exercise of political rights; and I think that from now on one will see the number of citizens in Europe increase or diminish in proportion to the extension of these rights.

How is it that in the United States, where the inhabitants arrived yesterday on the soil they occupy, where they have brought neither usages nor memories; where they meet for the first time without knowing each other; where, to say it in a word, the instinct of the native country can scarcely exist; how is it that each is interested in the affairs of his township, of his district, and of the state as a whole as in his own? It is that each, in his sphere, takes an active part in the government of society.

In the United States, the man of the people understands the influence that general prosperity exerts on his happiness—an idea so simple and yet so little known by the people. Furthermore, he is accustomed to regarding this prosperity as his own work. He therefore sees in the public fortune his own, and he works for the good of the state not only out of duty or out of pride, but I would almost dare say out of cupidity.

One does not need to study the institutions and history of Americans to know the truth of what precedes; mores advertise it enough to you. The

American, taking part in all that is done in this country, believes himself interested in defending all that is criticized there; for not only is his country then attacked, he himself is: thus one sees his national pride have recourse to all the artifices and descend to all the puerilities of individual vanity.

There is nothing more annoying in the habits of life than this irritable patriotism of the Americans. A foreigner would indeed consent to praise much in their country; but he would want to be permitted to blame something, and this he is absolutely refused.

America is therefore a country of freedom where, in order not to wound anyone, the foreigner must not speak freely either of particular persons, or of the state, or of the governed, or of those who govern, or of public undertakings, or of private undertakings; or, finally, of anything one encounters except perhaps the climate and the soil; and still, one finds Americans ready to defend both as if they had helped to form them.

In our day one must know how to resign oneself and dare to choose between the patriotism of all and the government of the few, for one cannot at once unite the social force and activity given by the first with the guarantees of tranquillity sometimes furnished by the second.

ON THE IDEA OF RIGHTS IN THE UNITED STATES

There are no great peoples without an idea of rights.—What is the means of giving the idea of rights to the people.—Respect for rights in the United States.—How it arises.

After the general idea of virtue I know of none more beautiful than that of rights, or rather these two ideas are intermingled. The idea of rights is nothing other than the idea of virtue introduced into the political world.

It is with the idea of rights that men have defined what license and tyranny are. Enlightened by it, each could show himself independent without arrogance and submissive without baseness. The man who obeys violence bows and demeans himself; but when he submits to the right to command that he recognizes in someone like him, he raises himself in a way above the very one who commands him. There are no great men without virtue; without respect for rights, there is no great people: one can almost say that there is no society; for, what is a union of rational and intelligent beings among whom force is the sole bond?

I wonder what, in our day, is the means of inculcating in men the idea of rights and of making it, so to speak, fall upon their senses; and I see only one, which is to give the peaceful exercise of certain rights to all of them: one sees that well among children, who are men except for force and experience. When the child begins to move in the midst of external objects, instinct

brings him to put to his use all that he encounters in his hands; he has no idea of the property of others, not even of its existence; but as he is made aware of the price of things and he discovers that he can be stripped of his in his turn, he becomes more circumspect and ends by respecting in those like him what he wants to be respected in himself.

What happens to the infant with his playthings happens later to the man with all the objects that belong to him. Why in America, country of democracy par excellence, does no one make heard those complaints against property in general that often ring out in Europe? Is there need to say it?—it is that in America there are no proletarians. Each one, having a particular good to defend, recognizes the right of property in principle.

In the political world it is the same. In America, the man of the people has conceived a lofty idea of political rights because he has political rights; so that his own are not violated, he does not attack those of others. And whereas in Europe this same man does not recognize sovereign authority, the American submits without murmur to the power of the least of its magistrates.

This truth appears even in the smallest details of the existence of peoples. In France there are few pleasures reserved exclusively for the upper classes of society; the poor man is admitted almost everywhere the wealthy man can enter: so he is seen to conduct himself with decency, and to respect everything that serves enjoyments he shares. In England, where wealth has the privilege of pleasure like the monopoly of power, they complain that when the poor man comes to introduce himself furtively into the place destined for the pleasures of the rich he likes to cause useless damage: how can one be surprised at this?—they have taken care that he has nothing to lose.

The government of democracy makes the idea of political rights descend to the least of citizens, as the division of goods puts the idea of the right of property in general within reach of all men. There is one of its greatest merits in my eyes.

I do not say that it is an easy thing to teach all men to make use of political rights; I say only that when that can be done, the resulting effects are great.

And I add that if there is a century in which such an undertaking ought to be attempted, that century is ours.

Do you not see that religions are weakening and that the divine notion of rights is disappearing? Do you not find that mores are being altered, and that with them the moral notion of rights is being effaced?

Do you not perceive on all sides beliefs that give way to reasoning, and sentiments that give way to calculations? If in the midst of that universal disturbance you do not come to bind the idea of rights to the personal interest that offers itself as the only immobile point in the human heart, what will then remain to you to govern the world, except fear?

Therefore when I am told that the laws are weak and the governed turbulent; that passions are lively and virtue without power, and that in this situation one must not think of augmenting the rights of democracy, I respond that it is because of these very things that I believe one must think of it; and in truth I think that governments have still more interest in it than society, for governments perish, and society cannot die. Furthermore, I do not want to abuse the example of America.

In America, the people were vested with political rights at a period when it was difficult for them to make bad use of them, because the citizens were few and simple in mores. In becoming larger, Americans did not so to speak increase the powers of democracy; rather, they extended its domain.

One cannot doubt that the moment when one accords political rights to a people who have been deprived of them until then is a moment of crisis, a crisis often necessary, but always dangerous.

The child puts to death when he is ignorant of the price of life; he takes away the property of others before knowing that one can rob him of his. The man of the people, at the instant when he is accorded political rights, finds himself, in relation to his rights, in the same position as the child vis-à-vis all nature, and that is the case in which to apply to him these celebrated words: *Homo puer robustus.**

This truth is exposed in America itself. The states where citizens have enjoyed their rights longest are those where they know best how to make use of them.

One cannot say it too often: There is nothing more prolific in marvels than the art of being free; but there is nothing harder than the apprenticeship of freedom. It is not the same with despotism. Despotism often presents itself as the mender of all ills suffered; it is the support of good law, the sustainer of the oppressed, and the founder of order. Peoples fall asleep in the bosom of the temporary prosperity to which it gives birth; and when they awaken, they are miserable. Freedom, in contrast, is ordinarily born in the midst of storms, it is established painfully among civil discords, and only when it is old can one know its benefits.

ON RESPECT FOR THE LAW IN THE UNITED STATES

Respect of Americans for the law.—Paternal love that they feel for it.—Personal interest that each finds in increasing the power of the law.

*"Man is a robust boy." AT wrote "famous from Hobbes" in a draft note. See Thomas Hobbes, *De Cive,* Preface, though Hobbes says *vir malus* (a wicked man) instead of *homo.* Cf. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality,* part 1.

It is not always permissible to call the entire people, either directly or indirectly, to the making of the law; but one cannot deny that when that is practicable, the law acquires great authority from it. That popular origin, which often harms the goodness and wisdom of legislation, contributes singularly to its power.

There is a prodigious force in the expression of the will of a whole people. When it is uncovered in broad daylight, the very imagination of those who would wish to struggle against it is overwhelmed.

The truth of this is well known to parties.

And so one sees them contest for a majority everywhere they can. When they lack it among those who have voted, they place it among those who have abstained from voting, and when it still happens to escape them there, they find it among those who did not have the right to vote.

In the United States, excepting slaves, domestics, and indigents nourished by the townships, there is no one who is not an elector, and whoever has this title concurs indirectly in the law. Those who want to attack the laws are therefore reduced to doing openly one of these two things: they must either change the opinion of the nation or ride roughshod over its will.

Add to this first reason, another more direct and more powerful, that in the United States each finds a sort of personal interest in everyone's obeying the laws; for whoever does not make up a part of the majority today will perhaps be in its ranks tomorrow; and the respect that he professes now for the will of the legislator he will soon have occasion to require for his. However distressing the law may be, the inhabitant of the United States submits to it without trouble, therefore, not only as the work of the greatest number, but also as his own; he considers it from the point of view of a contract to which he would have been a party.

One therefore does not see in the United States a numerous and always turbulent crowd, which, regarding the law as a natural enemy, casts only glances of fear and suspicion on it. On the contrary, it is impossible not to perceive that all classes show great confidence in the legislation that rules the country and feel a sort of paternal love for it.

I am mistaken in saying all classes. In America, the European ladder of powers being reversed, the rich are found in a position analogous to that of the poor in Europe; it is they who often mistrust the law. I have said it elsewhere: the real advantage of democratic government is not to guarantee the interests of all, as it has sometimes been claimed, but only to protect those of the greatest number.* In the United States, where the poor man governs, the rich always have to fear lest he abuse his power against them.

*DA I 2.6.

This disposition of the mind of the rich can produce a muted discontent; but society is not violently troubled by it; because the same reason that prevents the rich man from granting his confidence to the legislator prevents him from defying his commandments. He does not make the law because he is rich, and he does not dare to violate it because of his wealth. In civilized nations it is generally only those who have nothing to lose who revolt. So, therefore, if the laws of democracy are not always respectable, they are almost always respected; for those who generally violate the laws cannot fail to obey those that they have made and from which they profit, and citizens who could have an interest in breaking them are brought by character and by position to submit to the will of the legislator, whatever it may be. Furthermore, the people in America obey the law not only because it is their work, but also because they can change it when by chance it hurts them; they submit to it in the first place as an evil that is imposed by themselves and after that as a passing evil.

ACTIVITY REIGNING IN ALL PARTS OF THE BODY POLITIC OF THE UNITED STATES; INFLUENCE THAT IT EXERTS ON SOCIETY

It is more difficult to conceive of the political activity reigning in the United States than of the freedom or equality encountered there.—The great movement that constantly agitates legislatures is only an episode, a prolongation of this universal movement.—Difficulty that the American finds in occupying himself only with his own affairs.—Political agitation spreads into civil society.—Industrial activity of the Americans coming in part from this cause.—Indirect advantages that society derives from the government of democracy.

When one passes from a free country into another that is not, one is struck by a very extraordinary spectacle: there, all is activity and movement; here, all seems calm and immobile. In the one, it is only a question of betterment and progress; one would say that society in the other, after having acquired all goods, aspires only to rest in order to enjoy them. Nevertheless, the country that gives itself so much agitation so as to be happy is generally richer and more prosperous than the one that appears so satisfied with its lot. And in considering them both, one has trouble conceiving how so many new needs make themselves felt daily in the first, whereas one seems to feel so few in the second.

If this remark is applicable to free countries that have preserved the monarchical form and to those where aristocracy dominates, it is still more so in democratic republics. There, it is no longer one portion of the people that undertakes to better the state of society; the entire people takes charge of this

care. It is not only a question of providing for the needs and the conveniences of one class, but of all classes at the same time.

It is not impossible to conceive the immense freedom that Americans enjoy; one can get an idea of their extreme equality as well; but what one cannot comprehend without having already been witness to it is the political activity that reigns in the United States.

Scarcely have you descended on the soil of America when you find yourself in the midst of a sort of tumult; a confused clamor is raised on all sides; a thousand voices come to your ear at the same time, each of them expressing some social needs. Around you everything moves: here, the people of one neighborhood have gathered to learn if a church ought to be built; there, they are working on the choice of a representative; farther on, the deputies of a district are going to town in all haste in order to decide about some local improvements; in another place, the farmers of a village abandon their furrows to go discuss the plan of a road or a school. Citizens assemble with the sole goal of declaring that they disapprove of the course of government, whereas others gather to proclaim that the men in place are the fathers of their country.* Here are others still who, regarding drunkenness as the principal source of the evils of the state, come solemnly to pledge themselves to give an example of temperance.[1]

The great political movement that constantly agitates American legislatures, the only one that is perceived from the outside, is only one episode and a sort of prolongation of the universal movement that begins in the lowest ranks of the people and afterwards spreads gradually to all classes of citizens. One cannot work more laboriously at being happy.

It is difficult to say what place the cares of politics occupy in the life of a man in the United States. To meddle in the government of society and to speak about it is the greatest business and, so to speak, the only pleasure that an American knows. This is perceived even in the least habits of life: women themselves often go to political assemblies and, by listening to political discourses, take a rest from household tedium.† For them, clubs replace theatergoing to a certain point. An American does not know how to converse, but he discusses; he does not discourse, but he holds forth. He always speaks to you as to an assembly; and if he happens by chance to become heated, he will say "sirs" in addressing his interlocutor.

* *Patrie*, elsewhere "native country."

†Or "annoyances": *ennuis*.

1. Temperance societies are associations whose members pledge to abstain from strong liquors. On my visit to the United States, temperance societies already counted more than 270,000 members, and their effect had been to diminish consumption of strong liquors in the state of Pennsylvania alone by 500,000 gallons a year.

In certain countries, the inhabitant only accepts with a sort of repugnance the political rights that the law accords him; it seems that to occupy him with common interests is to steal his time, and he likes to enclose himself in a narrow selfishness of which four ditches topped by a hedge form the exact limits.

On the contrary, from the moment when an American were reduced to occupying himself only with his own affairs, he would have been robbed of half of his existence; he would feel an immense void in his days, and he would become incredibly unhappy.[2]

I am persuaded that if despotism ever comes to be established in America, it will find more difficulties in defeating the habits to which freedom has given birth than in surmounting the love of freedom itself.

This agitation, constantly reborn, that the government of democracy has introduced into the political world, passes afterwards into civil society. I do not know if, all in all, that is not the greatest advantage of democratic government, and I praise it much more because of what it causes to be done than for what it does.

It is incontestable that the people often direct public affairs very badly; but the people cannot meddle in public affairs without having the scope of their ideas extended and without having their minds be seen to go outside their ordinary routine. The man of the people who is called to the government of society conceives a certain self-esteem. As he is then a power, very enlightened intellects put themselves at the service of his. People constantly address themselves to him to get his support, and in seeking to deceive him in a thousand different manners, they enlighten him. In politics, he participates in undertakings that he has not conceived, but that give him a general taste for undertakings. Every day people indicate to him new improvements to make to the common property; and he feels the desire being born to improve what is personal to him. He is perhaps neither more virtuous nor happier, but he is more enlightened and more active than his precursors. I do not doubt that democratic institutions, joined to the physical nature of the country, are not the direct cause, as so many people say, but the indirect cause of the prodigious motion of industry to be remarked in the United States. Laws do not give birth to it, but the people learn to produce it by making the law.

When the enemies of democracy claim that one alone does better what he takes charge of than the government of all, it seems to me that they are right.

2. The same fact was already observed in Rome under the Caesars.

Montesquieu remarks somewhere [*On the Greatness of the Romans and Their Decadence*, XIV 12] that nothing equaled the despair of certain Roman citizens who, after the agitations of a political existence, suddenly reentered the calm of private life.

The government of one alone, supposing equality of enlightenment on both sides, puts more coherence into its undertakings than the multitude; it shows more perseverance, more of an idea of an ensemble, more perfection of detail, a more just discernment in the choice of men. Those who deny these things have never seen a democratic republic or have judged by only a few examples. Democracy, even if local circumstances and the dispositions of the people permit it to be maintained, does not present to the eye administrative regularity and methodical order in government; that is true. Democratic freedom does not execute each of its undertakings with the same perfection as intelligent despotism; often it abandons them before having received their fruit, or it risks dangerous ones: but in the long term democracy produces more than despotism; it does each thing less well, but it does more things. Under its empire, what is great is above all not what public administration executes but what is executed without it and outside it. Democracy does not give the most skillful government to the people, but it does what the most skillful government is often powerless to create; it spreads a restive activity through the whole social body, a superabundant force, an energy that never exists without it, and which, however little circumstances may be favorable, can bring forth marvels. Those are its true advantages.

In this century, when the destinies of the Christian world appear to be unresolved, some hasten to attack democracy as an enemy power while it is still getting larger; others already adore it as a new god that issues from nothingness; but both know the object of their hatred or their desire only imperfectly; they do combat in the shadows and strike only haphazardly.

What do you ask of society and its government? We must understand each other.

Do you want to give a certain loftiness to the human spirit, a generous way of viewing the things of this world? Do you want to inspire in men a sort of contempt for material goods? Do you desire to give birth to or to maintain profound convictions and to prepare for great devotions?

Is it a question for you of polishing mores, of elevating manners, of making the arts shine? Do you want poetry, renown, glory?

Do you intend to organize a people in such a manner as to act strongly on all others? Do you destine it to attempt great undertakings and, whatever may be the result of its efforts, to leave an immense mark on history?

If this is, according to you, the principal object that men ought to propose for themselves in society, do not take the government of democracy; it would surely not lead you to the goal.

But if it seems to you useful to turn the intellectual and moral activity of man to the necessities of material life and to employ it in producing well-

being; if reason appears to you to be more profitable to men than genius; if your object is not to create heroic virtues but peaceful habits; if you would rather see vices than crimes, and if you prefer to find fewer great actions on condition that you will encounter fewer enormities; if instead of acting within a brilliant society it is enough for you to live in the midst of a prosperous society; if, finally, the principal object of a government, according to you, is not to give the most force or the most glory possible to the entire body of the nation, but to procure the most well-being for each of the individuals who compose it and to have each avoid the most misery, then equalize conditions and constitute the government of a democracy.

If there is no longer time to make a choice and if a force superior to man already carries you along toward one of the two governments without consulting your desires, seek at least to derive from it all the good that it can do; and knowing its good instincts as well as its evil penchants, strive to restrict the effects of the latter and develop the former.

Chapter 7 ON THE OMNIPOTENCE OF THE MAJORITY IN THE UNITED STATES AND ITS EFFECTS

Natural force of the majority in democracies.—Most of the American constitutions have artificially increased this natural force.—How.—Imperative mandates.—Moral empire of the majority.—Opinion of its infallibility.—Respect for its rights. What augments it in the United States.

It is of the very essence of democratic governments that the empire of the majority is absolute; for in democracies, outside the majority there is nothing that resists it.

Most of the American constitutions have also sought to augment this natural force of the majority artificially.[1]

1. We have seen, during the examination of the federal constitution [*DA* I 1.8], that the legislators of the Union made contrary efforts. The result of these efforts was to render the federal government more independent in its sphere than that of the states. But the federal government is scarcely occupied with any but external affairs; it is the state governments that really direct American society.