 # # Humans and Computers # #

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HUMANS AND COMPUTERS

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    There was once a point in time, a very long time ago, the

moment when the first computer was invented. Thus began a new

era, the events of which we shall here describe. Despite the

terrible catastrophe that occurred, this historical epoch is

mainly characterised by a fantastic development that transformed

the primitive pre-computer societies and reformed them into the

perfect organization of our time.

    Compared to the computers of our time, the first computers

were very simple. The evolution they have since undergone is to

some extent comparable to the biological evolution from the

first simple animal to humans. But despite their limited

capacity, the first computers were already very useful. They

solved intricate mathematical and technical problems and quickly

became of great importance in the most diverse areas of society.

They became increasingly adapted to the humans' needs and

alleviated their worries. Thanks to their ability to solve

problems that previously seemed insoluble and their ever growing

capacity to take on more routine intellectual work, they offered

humanity a freer and more comfortable way of life.

The adaptation was mutual; humans also adapted to the computers. They devoted ever more time and energy to developing and perfecting the computers, giving them all the service they required and nurturing them with a tenderness that grew commensurate to the value they provided and feelings of indispensability they evoked. The solutions that the computers suggested became increasingly helpful in directing the humans, whether for purely scientific and technical problems or for economic and social issues. Social progress in these and other diverse areas followed guidelines that the computers found to be optimal. In more and more respects, humanity complied with the advice and instruction of computers, sometimes to the point that we might even dare call them commands. Having previously discovered the steam engine, electricity, and the combustion engine, humanity had already been liberated from hard manual labour. Meager human musculature had been replaced by the enormous horsepower of the machine; they no longer had to exert themselves with tiring physical work. But the computers brought humans even more blessings: they eased the tiring and stressful intellectual work. Finally, computers had freed them from the inconvenience of thinking.

The more useful the computers turned out to be, the greater their numbers grew. Computers multiplied and filled the earth as

they simultaneously became increasingly complicated, improving

their fitness to solve even the most difficult tasks. Generation

after generation they evolved and matured, their influence

becoming an increasingly dominant force in social progress.

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