

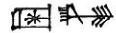
Alexis de Tocqueville

DEMOCRACY
IN AMERICA

Edited by Eduardo Nolla

Translated from the French by James T. Schleifer

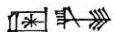
VOLUME 2



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VOLUME 2





CHAPTER I^a

Why Democratic Peoples Show a More Ardent and More Enduring Love for Equality Than for Liberty^b

a. This chapter, one of the best known of *Democracy*, is not found in the manuscript, where you pass directly from the previous chapter (number 19) to the one on individualism (number 20). Nor does it appear in notebook CVf.

A first version of it exists in pages 1 to 14 of notebook CVk, 2. The inclusion in the final version is due to the insistence of Louis de Kergorlay, as is witnessed by this note on the jacket that contains it:

Louis (ed.)]. thinks that this piece must *absolutely* appear in the work, either in the current form or by transporting the ideas elsewhere. I believe in fact that he is right. I see that it could be introduced in this way into the present chapter, which would then be divided into three principal ideas:

1. How equality gives the idea and the taste for political liberty.
2. How in the centuries of equality men are much less attached to being free than to remaining equal.
3. How equality suggests ideas and tastes to them that can make them lose liberty and lead them to servitude.

In this way the piece would remain more or less as it is. It would only have to be concluded differently and in such a way as to fit into the general idea of the chapter, more or less like this:

"Thus, love of liberty cannot be the principal passion of men during democratic centuries and it occupies in their heart only the space left for it by another passion."

Before including this section, to see clearly whether all that I say there is not a useless repetition of what I already said in the following sections. I am afraid it is (YTC, CVk, 2, pp. 1-2). See note a for p. 1200.

b. The *rubish* of chapter 10 of this part contains a jacket cover on which you can read: "How equality of ranks suggests to men the taste for liberty [v: equality] and why democratic peoples love equality better than liberty./

"Piece that I will probably make the second section of the chapter and that must be

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

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

reexamined with care while reviewing this chapter. 4 September 1838" (*Rubish*, 1). The notes that are found in this jacket belong in large part to the final chapter of the book. In a partial copy from the *Rubish*, they are found precisely with the rough drafts of the fourth part (YTC, CVg, 2, p. 16 and following). Among these notes you find this one:

Some ideas on the sentiment of equality (2 February 1836)./^d

What must be understood by the sentiment of equality among democratic peoples/

The taste for equality among most men is not: that no one be lower than I, but: that no one be higher than I, which, in practice, can come to the same thing, but which is far from meaning the same thing./

So does a real and true taste for equality exist in this world? Among some elite souls. But you must not base your reasoning on them./

What produced aristocracies? The desire among a few to raise themselves. What leads to democracy? The desire of all to raise themselves. The sentiment is the same; there is only a difference in the number of those who feel it. Each man aims as high as possible, and a level comes about naturally, without anyone wanting to be leveled.

When everyone wants to rise at once, the rule of equality is quite naturally found to be what is most suitable for each man. A thousand runners all have the same goal. Each one burns with the desire of coming in first. For that, it would be good to precede the others in the course. But if I do that, who will assure me that the others will not do so? If there were only five or six who had to run with me, I could perhaps attempt it, but racing with a thousand, you cannot succeed in doing so. What to do? The only means is to prevent anyone from having any privilege and to leave each one to his natural resources. [v: All, however, agree to depart at the same time from the same place.] It is not that they truly love equality, but they are all obliged to resort to it./

To reflect again about all of that (*Rubish*, 1). See note d for p. 1203.

c. First draft of this opening of the chapter:

When conditions are more or less equal among men, each one, feeling independent of his fellows, contracts the habit and the need to follow only his will in his particular

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

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

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

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

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

A kind of equality can even become established in the political world, even if political liberty does not exist. Everyone is equal to all his fellows,

actions. This naturally leads the human mind to the idea of political liberty and suggests the taste for it.

Take one man at random from within a democratic people [v: in a country where equality reigns], put him if possible outside of his prejudices, of his interests of the moment, of his memories, so that he gives himself only to the sole interests that the social state suggests to him, and you will discover that among all governments the one that he most easily imagines first and that he loves best is government based on sovereignty of the people.

<So, as the social state of a people becomes democratic, you see the spirit of liberty born within it. These two things generally go together so closely that one makes me consider the other. The attempts that a nation makes to establish liberty within it only teach me that the principle of equality is developing there, and the equality that I see reigning among a people makes me suppose the approach of revolutions.>

So equality of conditions cannot be established among a people without the spirit of liberty being revealed there, and it is never entirely extinguished as long as equality of conditions remains.

Love of political liberty, however, is not the principal passion of these democratic peoples.

You can imagine an extreme point . . . (YTC, CVk, 2, pp. 2-4).

except one, who is, without distinction, the master of all, and who takes the agents of his power equally from among all.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

d. <Equality of conditions does not lead to liberty in an irresistible way, but it leads to it; this is our plank of salvation> (YTC, CVk, 2, p. 6).

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

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

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

You do not find men so limited and so superficial that they do not discover that political liberty may, by its excesses, compromise tranquillity, patrimony, and the life of individuals. But only attentive and clear-sighted men see the dangers with which equality threatens us, and ordinarily they avoid pointing these dangers out. They know that the miseries that they fear are remote, and they imagine that those miseries affect only the generations to come, about whom the present generation scarcely worries. The evils that liberty sometimes brings are immediate; they are visible to all, and more or less everyone feels them. The evils that extreme equality can produce appear only little by little; they gradually insinuate themselves into the social body; they are seen only now and then, and, at the moment when they become most violent, habit has already made it so that they are no longer felt.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Among most modern nations, and in particular among all the peoples of the continent of Europe, the taste and the idea of liberty only began to arise and to develop at the moment when conditions began to become equal, and as a consequence of this very equality. It was absolute kings who worked hardest to level ranks among their subjects. Among these peoples, equality preceded liberty; so equality was an ancient fact, when liberty was still something new; the one had already created opinions, customs, laws that were its own, when the other appeared alone, and for the first time, in full view. Thus, the second was still only in ideas and in tastes, while the first had already penetrated habits, had taken hold of mores, and had given a particular turn to the least actions of life. Why be surprised if men today prefer the one to the other?^e

e. Not only are these two things different, but I can easily prove that they are some-

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

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

times opposed. It is clear for example that men must exercise political rights only to the extent that they are capable of doing so. Without that you would arrive at anarchy, which is only a particular form of tyranny. Now, it is certain that the sentiment of equality is less offended by the subjugation of all to one master, than by the submission of a great number to the government of a few. So the sentiment of equality leads here either to giving (illegible word) rights to everyone, which leads to anarchy, or to giving them to no one, which establishes despotism.

[To the side: "The despot is a distant enemy, the noble is an enemy who touches you."]

You can satisfy the taste of men for equality, without giving them liberty. Often they must even sacrifice a part of the second in order fully to enjoy the first.

So these two things are easily separable.

The very fact that they are not intimately united and that the one is infinitely more precious than the other would make it very easy and natural to neglect the second in order to run after the first./

So let us hold onto liberty with a desperate attachment, let us hold on to it as a good to which all other good things are attached.

[To the side] If, on the one hand, among a democratic people, men are more generally enlightened about their rights, on the other hand, it must be acknowledged that they are less able to defend them, because individually they are very weak and the art of acting in common is difficult and demands institutions that are not provided and an apprenticeship that is not allowed to be undertaken (YTC, CVd, pp. 24-25).

f. [On the jacket of a draft] Equality is not suitable for barbaric peoples; it prevents them from becoming enlightened and civilized./

Idea to introduce perhaps in the chapters on literature or the sciences.

[The beginning is missing (ed.)] and first, I do not believe that in all the ages of the life of peoples a democratic social state must produce the effects that I have just pointed out.

I have never thought that equality of conditions was suitable for the infancy of societies. When men are uncivilized as well as equal, each one of them feels too weak and too limited to look for enlightenment separately and it is almost impossible for all to try to find it at the same time by a common accord.

Nothing is so difficult to take as the first step out of barbarism. I do not doubt that more effort is required for a savage to discover the art of writing than for a civilized man to penetrate the general laws that regulate the world. Now it is not believable that men could ever conceive the need for such an effort without having it clearly shown to them, or that they would make such an effort without grasping the result in advance. In a society of barbarians equal to each other, since the attention of each man is equally absorbed by the first needs and the most coarse interests of life, the idea of intellectual progress can come to the mind of any one of them only with difficulty, and if by chance it is born, it would soon be as if suffocated amid the nearly instructive [instinctive? (ed.)] thoughts to which the poorly satisfied needs of the body always give birth. The savage lacks at the very same time the idea of study and the possibility of devoting himself to it.

I do not believe that history presents a single example of a democratic people who have risen gradually and by themselves toward enlightenment and that is easily understood. We have seen that among a nation where equality and barbarism reign at the same time it was very difficult for an individual to develop his intelligence separately. But if, exceptionally, he happens to do so, the superiority of his knowledge suddenly gives him such a great preponderance over all those who surround him that he does not take long to want to make use of it to put an end to equality to his advantage. So, if peoples {an emerging people} remain democratic, civilization cannot arise within them, and if civilization comes by chance to penetrate among them, they cease to be democratic. I am persuaded that humanity owes its enlightenment to such strokes of fortune, and I # {think that it is in losing their liberty that men acquired the means to reconquer it}# that it is under an aristocracy or under a prince that men still half-savage have gathered the various notions that later would allow them to live civilized, equal and free.

[In the margin: So I think that this same equality of conditions that seems to me very appropriate for precipitating the march of the human mind could prevent it from taking its first steps.]

If I admit that boldness of mind and the taste for general ideas are not necessarily found among peoples whose social state is democratic, I am equally far from claiming that you can hope to find them only there.

There are particular accidents that, among certain peoples, can give a particular impulse to the human mind. Among the accidents, I will put in the first rank the influence that some men exercise over the fate of societies. It seems that Providence, after tracing the various paths that nations can follow and fixing the final end of their



CHAPTER 2^a

Of Individualism in Democratic Countries

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

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

a. 1. What individualism is; how it differs from egoism and ends by coming back to it.

2. Individualism is a sickness peculiar to the human heart in democratic times. Why?

1. Democracy makes you forget ancestors.

2. It hides descendants.

3. It separates contemporaries by destroying classes and by making them men independent of each other.

3. So in democratic centuries man is constantly brought back to himself alone and is preoccupied only with himself.

4. It is so above all at the outset of democratic centuries because of the jealousies and hatreds to which the democratic revolution has given birth (YTC, CVf, p. 23).

Tocqueville had thought about beginning the 1840 *Democracy* with this chapter (see note a for p. 697).

b. In the *rubish*, the chapter, which bears the title OF INDIVIDUALISM IN DEMOCRACIES AND OF THE MEANS THAT THE AMERICANS USE TO COMBAT IT, begins in this way: "I am not afraid to use new words when they are necessary to portray a new thing. Here the occasion to do so presents itself. Individualism is a recent expression . . ." (*Rubish*, 1).

The word *individualism*, which seems to echo the *amour propre* (self-love) of Rousseau, was not invented by Tocqueville, but he is largely responsible for its definition and its usage. The word appears for the first time in this volume. James T. Schleifer dated its first use as 24 April 1837 (see note u for pp. 709–10). The novelty of the word must not

course, leaves to individuals the task of slowing or hurrying this march of humanity that they can neither divert nor halt.

Men are found here and there whose vigorous and unyielding minds scoff at the impediments that the social state and laws have formed, and whose minds enjoy pursuing their course even amid the obstacles that are strewn over it.

Such men rarely gain great sway over their fellow-citizens, but in the long run they exercise a powerful influence over their society and they draw the ideas of their descendants in their direction.

When political liberty . . . [interrupted text (ed.)] (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 18–21).

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

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

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

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

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

make us forget that Tocqueville several times used the expression *individual egoism* in a rather similar sense (as in note e of p. 511 in the first volume, and in p. 448, also in the first volume). During his 1835 voyage in England (*Voyage en Angleterre*, OC, V, 2, p. 60), Tocqueville also used another expression to designate almost the same idea. He spoke about the *spirit of exclusion*, a sentiment that "leads each man or each association of men to enjoy its advantages as much as possible by itself all alone, to withdraw as much as possible into its personality and not to allow whomever to see or to put a foot inside." The interesting concept of collective individualism appears only in *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution* (OC, II, 1, p. 158).

Some of Tocqueville's reading, the influence of Kergorlay (who knew Saint-Simonianism well), or the popularization of the word perhaps pushed Tocqueville afterward to use the word *individualism*. In his theory, the term is always accompanied by its opposite, the *spirit of individuality*, which Tocqueville defines in note 2 for p. 1179. Sometimes he also adopts the terms *individual strength*, *spirit of independence*, and *individual independence*.

Koenrad W. Swart ("Individualism in the Mid-Nineteenth Century, 1826–1860," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 23, 1962, pp. 77–86) points out that Tocqueville perhaps borrowed the term from Saint-Simon. For a discussion of the ideas of Tocqueville on individualism, see Jean-Claude Lamberti, *Tocqueville et les deux Démocraties* (Paris: PUF, 1983), pp. 217–40, and *La Notion d'individualisme chez Tocqueville* (Paris: PUF, 1970); see James T. Schleifer, *The Making of Tocqueville's "Democracy in America,"* pp. 252–57.

c. In the manuscript: "prefer himself to all others."

d. "#Egoism, vice of the heart.

"Individualism, of the mind#" (*Rubish*, 1).

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

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

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

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

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

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

e. Aristocracy, which makes citizens depend on each other, leads them sometimes to great devotion, often to implacable hatreds. Democracy tends to make them indifferent to each other and disposes them to act as if they were alone.

Aristocracy forces man at every moment to go outside of himself in order to attend to others [v: interests other than his own], democracy constantly leads him back toward himself and threatens finally to enclose him entirely within the solitude of his own heart.

If democratic peoples abandon themselves immoderately to this tendency, it is easy to foresee that great evils will result for humanity.

[In the margin] Period of transition. Isolation much more complete. The hatreds of aristocracy and the indifference of democracy are combined. You isolate yourself by instinct and by will (*Rubish*, 1).

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

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

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

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

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



CHAPTER 3

How Individualism Is Greater at the End of a Democratic Revolution than at Another Time^a

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

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

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

Those among the citizens who were first in the destroyed hierarchy cannot immediately forget their former greatness; for a long time they consider themselves like strangers within the new society. They see in all the men made equal to them by this society, oppressors whose destiny cannot pro-

a. On the jacket of the manuscript: "Idea treated further on in the *political* chapters that end the book. Only after examining it in the two places will I be able to see if it must be deleted in one of the two or if it must only be expressed in a different way." This chapter, which is not found on the list of notebook CVf and does not exist in the Rubish, bears the number 2obis in the manuscript.

b. "Aristocracies have been seen that protected liberty. But every contested aristocracy becomes tyrannical. This is what is happening to the doctrinaires" (YTC, CVa, p. 1).

[*]. I believe that if I leave the piece that follows on the *period of transition*, it must simply be put there without making it a separate chapter.

voke sympathy; they have lost sight of their former equals and no longer feel tied by a common interest to their fate; so each one, withdrawing apart, thinks he is reduced to being concerned only with himself. Those, on the contrary, who formerly were placed at the bottom of the social ladder, and who had been brought closer to the general level by a sudden revolution, enjoy only with a kind of secret uneasiness their newly acquired independence; if they find at their side a few of their former superiors, they look at them with triumph and fear, and move apart from them.

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

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

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

c. Idea to bring very much forward.

[In the margin: Idea to show fully at the head or at the end of the book and also to present in outline in different parts.]

Effects of democracy and particularly harmful effects that are exaggerated in the period of revolution when the democratic social state, mores and laws become established.

Example: democracy has the end of making beliefs less stable, like fortunes and ranks. But at the moment when democracy comes to be established, a shaking of everything occurs that makes doubtful even the notion of good and evil, which is nonetheless the notion that men most easily understand.

That comes not only from {the state of} democracy, but also from the state of revolution. Produced by whatever cause, it will produce effects if not as great at least analogous. A revolution is an accident that temporarily makes all things unstable, and above all it has this effect when it (illegible word) to establish a permanent state whose tendency is in a way to establish instability. The great difficulty in the study of democracy is to distinguish what is democratic from what is only revolutionary. This is very difficult because examples are lacking. There is no European people among whom democracy has settled down, and America is in an exceptional situation. The state of literature in France is not only democratic, but revolutionary.

Public morality, id.

Religious opinions, id.

Political opinions, id. (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 51–53).



CHAPTER 4^a

How the Americans Combat Individualism with Free Institutions^b

Despotism, which, by its nature, is fearful, sees in the isolation of men the most certain guarantee of its own duration, and it ordinarily puts all its efforts into isolating them. There is no vice of the human heart that pleases it as much as egoism: a despot easily pardons the governed for not loving him, provided that they do not love each other.^c He does not ask them to help him lead the State; it is enough that they do not claim to run it them-

a. i. Despotism tends to isolate men constantly. So it is particularly dangerous in times when the social state has the same tendency.

2. Liberty is, on the contrary, particularly necessary in these times. Why:

1. By occupying citizens with public affairs, it draws them out of themselves.
2. By making them deal in common with their affairs, it makes them feel their reciprocal dependence.

3. By making the choice of magistrates depend on the public, it gives to all those who have some ambition the desire to serve their fellows in order to merit being their choice.

3. Example of all this drawn from the United States. How the Americans are not only content to combat individualism by creating national liberty, but have also established provincial liberties (YTC, CVf, pp. 23–24).

b. At one moment during the writing, this chapter had as a title: HOW THE AMERICANS COMBAT THE TENDENCIES THAT LEAD MEN TO SEPARATE THEMSELVES BY MUNICIPAL INSTITUTIONS AND THE SPIRIT OF ASSOCIATION (*Rubish*, 1).

"The defect of these chapters is that, in those that follow, I have already treated a part of the effects of individualism, without naming it" (*Rubish*, 1).

c. "The circulation of ideas is to civilization what the circulation of blood is to the human body" (*Rubish*, 1).

selves.^d Those who claim to unite their efforts in order to create common prosperity, he calls unruly and restless spirits; and, changing the natural meaning of words, he calls good citizens those who withdraw narrowly into themselves.^e

d. In the margin: "#I have made known how, in democratic centuries, each man looked within himself alone for his *beliefs*; I want to show how in these same centuries he turns all his *sentiments* toward himself alone.#"

e. You must take great notice of the social state of a people before deciding what political laws are suitable for them. When a nation adopts a government whose natural defects are unfortunately in accord with the natural defects of the social state, the nation must expect the latter to grow beyond measure.

Liberty, on the contrary, by creating great common affairs, tends constantly to draw citizens closer together, and it shows them every day in a practical way the tight bond that unites them. Among free peoples, it is the public that distributes honors and power, and it is only by working for the public that you succeed in gaining its favors. So it happens that among these peoples you think about your fellows out of ambition as much as out of disinterestedness, and often you in a way find your interest by forgetting about yourself.

The free institutions that certain peoples can if necessary do without, are therefore particularly necessary to men who are led by a secret instinct constantly to separate themselves from each other and to withdraw within the narrow limits of personal interest.

Despotism . . . [interrupted text (ed.)] (*Rubish*, 1).

In the manuscript this other beginning can be read:

Equality of conditions not only disposes men to be interested only in themselves; it also leads them not to communicate with each other.

In aristocratic countries the members of the upper class get together from time to time for their pleasures, when they have no common affairs.

Among democratic peoples each man, having only a mediocre fortune that he oversees himself, does not have the leisure to seek out the company of his fellows. A great interest must force him to do so.

If the men of democratic countries were abandoned entirely to their natural instincts, they would end up not only by not making use of each other, but by not knowing one another. The circulation of sentiments and ideas would be as if suspended.

[In the margin: <This seems contestable to me for equality suggests a host of restless passions that must necessarily lead men to see each other a great deal even if they are indifferent./

This as well seems contrary to what I said previously that democratic periods were periods when all men came to resemble each other because they saw and heard each other constantly.>]

These are great dangers on which the attention of the legislator must be constantly fixed.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Under a free government, since most public functions are elective, the men who feel cramped in private life because of the loftiness of their souls or the restlessness of their desires, sense every day that they cannot do without the population that surrounds them.

It then happens that you think about your fellows out of ambition, and that often, in a way, you find it in your interest to forget yourself. [This

f. "Despotism would not only destroy liberty among these people, but in a way society" (*Rubish*, 1).

finally produces within democratic nations something analogous to what was seen in aristocracies.

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

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

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

g. <If in my mind I wanted to portray with the aid of a physical image how men are connected to each other in aristocracies, I would imagine a chain all of whose links, of unequal shape and unequal thickness, would be passed [along (ed.)] equal spokes that would all end up attached together at the same center.

And if I wanted to understand how they can be connected to each other in democracies, I would imagine a multitude of equal spokes all ending up at the same center, so that, although all turn together, there would never be two of them that touch each other> (*Rubish*, 1).

h. In the margin: "Probably shorten this paragraph. The last sentence of the chapter is the same thing and better."

j. To the side: "<Perhaps this must be deleted, though good. This gives too much of a role to election in free institutions and perhaps in the mind of many readers damages my cause more than serving it.>"

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

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

This was to behave with wisdom.

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

You draw a man out of himself with difficulty in order to interest him in the destiny of the entire State, because he poorly understands the influence that the destiny of the State can exercise on his fate. But if it is necessary to have a road pass by the end of his property, he will see at first glance that there is a connection between this small public affair and his greatest private affairs, and he will discover, without anyone showing him, the close bond that here unites particular interest to general interest.

So it is by charging citizens with the administration of small affairs, much more than by giving them the government of great ones, that you

k. So the great object of law-makers in democracies must be to create common *affairs* that *force* men to enter into contact with each other.

Laws that lead to this result are useful to all peoples; to democratic peoples they are necessary. Here they increase the well-being of society; there they make society continue to exist, for what is society for thinking beings, if not the communication and connection of minds and hearts?/

That should lead me easily to free institutions that give birth to common *affairs* (*Rubish*, 1).

interest them in the public good and make them see the need that they constantly have for each other in order to produce that good.

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

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

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

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

You would say that in the United States there is no imagination that does not exhaust itself inventing means to increase wealth and to satisfy the needs of the public. The most enlightened inhabitants of each district are constantly using their knowledge to discover new secrets appropriate for

^{m.} This paragraph and the preceding one are not found in the manuscript.

increasing common prosperity; and, when they have found some, they hasten to give them to the crowd.ⁿ

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

It would be unjust to believe that the patriotism of the Americans and the zeal that each of them shows for the well-being of his fellow citizens has nothing real about it. Although private interest directs most human actions in the United States as well as elsewhere, it does not determine all of them.

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

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

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

But when equal men do not take part in government, they almost en-

^{n.} In the margin, in pencil: "Not only, but. Ampère."

^{o.} "#It is not those who are elected to public offices who make democracies prosper, but those who want to be#" (*Rubbish*, i).

^{p.} In the margin, in pencil: "A connection is desired here. Ampère."

tirely lack the occasion to harm each other or to make use of each other. Each one forgets his fellows to think only of the prince and himself.

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

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

CHAPTER 5^a

Of the Use That Americans Make of Association in Civil Life^b

I do not want to talk about those political associations by the aid of which men seek to defend themselves against the despotic action of a majority or against the encroachments of royal power. I have already treated this subject elsewhere. It is clear that, if each citizen, as he becomes individually weaker and therefore more incapable of preserving his liberty by himself alone, did not learn the art of uniting with his fellows to defend his liberty, tyranny

a. 1. Here it is not a matter of political associations. I treated this subject in the first work.

2. The Americans are at the very same time the most *democratic* people and the ones who have made the most use of *association*. These two things go together, in fact.

1. In aristocratic countries there are permanent and established associations, composed of a few powerful men and of all those who depend on them.

2. In democratic countries, where all citizens are equal and weak, temporary and voluntary associations must be formed, or civilization is in danger.

3. Not only are industrial associations necessary, but moral and intellectual associations. Why:

1. In order for sentiments and ideas to be renewed and for the human mind to develop, men must act constantly upon each other.

2. Now, in democratic countries, only the government naturally has this power of action. And it exercises it always incompletely and tyrannically.

3. So there associations must come to replace the powerful individuals who in aristocracies take charge of bringing sentiments and ideas to light.

4. *Summary.* In order for men to remain civilized or to become so, the art of association among them must be developed and perfected in the same proportion as equality (illegible word) (YTC, CVf, pp. 24-25).

b. "#Remark of Édouard: chapter weakly written#" (*Rubish*, 1).

q. "When the government [v: sources of power] is found in the population itself and not above it, you feel for the people something of the good and bad sentiments that kings inspire in absolute monarchies; you fear him, you adulate him, and often you love him passionately. Base souls take him as the object of their flattery and lofty ones as the focus of their devotion" (*Rubish*, 1).

would necessarily grow with equality.^c Here it is a matter only of the associations that are formed in civil life and whose aim has nothing political about it.

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

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

c. A great publicist of today has said:

It is not by exterminating the civilized men of the IVth century that the barbarians managed to destroy the civilization of that time. It was enough for them to come between them so to speak and by separating them to make them like strangers to one another.

[To the side: To finish associations there, to turn G[uizot (ed.)] against himself.] It is by a similar path that the men of today could well return to barbarism, if they were not careful.

[In another place] M. G[uizot (ed.)]. wants to speak about the prevention of *communicating* with rather than about the impossibility of *acting* on each other. These ideas are close but different. In order to *act* on each other, they must first *communicate* with each other. But you can communicate without acting. This is the case of men in democratic countries.

[To the side: If a government forbid citizens to associate or undertook to take away their taste for doing so, it would behave precisely as the barbarians./

to communicate----newspaper

to act----association.] (*Rubish, 1*). See note a of p. 18 of the first volume.

d. "A thousand types of associations in America. Harmony. C. B. 2. Shaking quakers" (*Rubish, 1* and YTC, CVa, p. 4).

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

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

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

Thus the most democratic country on earth is, out of all, the one where men today have most perfected the art of pursuing in common the object of their common desires and have applied this new science to the greatest number of things.^f Does this result from an accident, or could it be that in fact a necessary connection exists between associations and equality?

e. "Three great categories of associations:

"Industrial associations.

"Religious associations. Moral associations: Intellectual."

[In another place] "Legal associations, voluntary associations: Artificial.

"The government, in some fashion, can well take the place of legal associations, but not of voluntary associations. All of that moreover goes together; *legal* associations teach men about voluntary associations and the latter about legal associations./

"Among voluntary associations also distinguish *political* and *civil* associations" (*Rubish, 1*).

f. Means to take to facilitate the spirit of association.

1. Make the will to associate very easy to carry out.

2. Do yourself only what associations can absolutely not carry out. If, on the contrary, the government marches in the direction of the social state, individualism has no limit. This requires that many nuances be pointed out. For if democratic peoples need more than others to be allowed to do things by themselves, they also sometimes have a greater need than others to have things done for them.

[In the margin: Marvels that democracy can accomplish with the aid of the spirit of association. See the railroads in America. *Revue des deux mondes* (1836).]

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

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

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

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

If men who live in democratic countries had neither the right nor the taste to unite for political ends, their independence would run great risks, but they could for a long time retain their wealth and their enlightenment; while, if they did not acquire the custom of associating in ordinary life, civilization itself would be in danger.^h A people among whom individuals

3. Give enlightenment, spread liberty and allow men to solve things by themselves. Comparison with the child that you make walk not in order to have the right to be kept always in leading-strings, but on the contrary to make him able to run all alone someday. But it is not in this way that governments understand it. They treat their subjects more or less as women are treated in China. They force them to wear the shoes of infancy all their lives (*Rubish*, 1).

It is possible that Tocqueville is referring here to the article of Michel Chevalier, "Des chemins de fer comparés aux lignes navigables" (*Revue des deux mondes*, 4th series, 1838, pp. 789–813).

g. "In aristocratic countries, enterprises larger and associations smaller."

"In democratic countries, enterprises smaller and associations larger" (*Rubish*, 1).

h. Civil associations./

[In the margin: Necessary remedy for egoism, more intelligent but more indispensable [and (ed.)] not less natural than sociability.]

Political associations are necessary in democracies as the executive power there is weaker. Without that, the majority is tyrannical.

lost the power to do great things separately without acquiring the ability to achieve them together would soon return to barbarism.

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

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

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

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

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

A government could take the place of a few of the largest American associations, and within the Union several particular states have already

Civil associations are useful in aristocratic countries; they are so necessary in democracies that it may be believed that a democratic people among whom civil associations could not form or could form with difficulty would have difficulty not falling into barbarism.

So the legislator in democracies must work hard to favor and to facilitate in all ways the developments of the right of association.

Unfortunately it is a chimera to believe that civil association can undergo great development where political association cannot exist (*Rubish*, 1).

tried to do so. But what political power would ever be able to be sufficient for the innumerable multitude of small enterprises that the American citizens carry out every day with the aid of the association?

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

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

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

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

When the members of an aristocracy adopt a new idea or conceive of a

j. "If these things are no longer done by anyone, the people gradually return to barbarism, and if you charge the great general association, which is called the government, with them, tyranny is inevitable" (*Rubish*, 1).

k. "It is easy to foresee that the day is approaching when men will be forced to associate in order to carry out a portion of the things most necessary to life. *Fourierism*" (*Rubish*, 1).

m. "Commercial associations are the easiest and the first; they are the ones that a government has the most interest in encouraging" (*Rubish*, 1).

n. "In this, as in nearly everything else, the greatest effort of the government must tend toward teaching citizens the art of doing without its help" (*Rubish*, 1).

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

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

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

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

So it is necessary that it does not act alone.

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

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

The first time I heard in the United States that one hundred thousand men^[*] had publicly pledged not to use strong liquor, the thing seemed to

o. "The dominion of the majority is absolute, but it would be too permanent if there were not associations to combat it and to drag it out of its old ways" (*Rubish*, 1).

p. The manuscript says: ". . . to distinguish in it the *teacher* from the *master*."

[*]. There are more than that. Look for the figure in the *Penitentiary System*.

me more amusing^q than serious, and I did not at first see clearly why these citizens, who were so temperate, would not be content to drink water within their families.

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

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

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

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

q. The manuscript says: "ridiculous."

r. The manuscript cites: "three hundred thousand."

s. "So I am far from claiming that a democratic government must abandon all important enterprises to the industry of individuals, or even that there is not a certain period in the life of a democratic people when the government must more or less mingle in a great number of enterprises, but I do not believe that in that [interrupted text (ed.)]" (*Rubish*, 1).

[Of the Manner in Which American Governments Act toward Associations]^t

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

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

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

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

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

Among an aristocratic people, an association can have very great power and be composed of only a few men. In democratic countries, in order to create a similar association, you must unite a multitude of citizens all with-

t. Short unpublished chapter that is found with the manuscript of the chapter:

This chapter contains some good ideas and some good sentences. Nonetheless, I believe it useful to delete it.

1. Because it treats very briefly and very incompletely a very interesting subject that has been treated at great length by others. Among others, Chevalier.

2. Because it gets into the order of ideas of the great political chapters of the end./

Consult L[louis (ed.)], and B[eaumont (ed.)]./

It is clear in any case that this chapter is too thin to go alone. It must be deleted or joined to another. Perhaps to the general chapter on associations.

Tocqueville is alluding to Michel Chevalier, author of *Lettres sur l'Amérique du Nord*, 1836.

out defenses, keep them together and lead them. So in aristocratic countries the State can rely on individuals and associations for everything. In democratic countries it cannot do the same.

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

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

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

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

So the government [v. social power], even when it lends its support to individuals, must never discharge them entirely from the trouble of helping themselves by uniting; often it must deny them its help in order to let them find the secret of being self-sufficient, and it must withdraw its hand as they better understand the art of doing so.

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

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

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

^u In the margin: "There is the kernel of the thought. There is no correlation between *help* and *obedience*. You can lend help to a man that you do not command."



CHAPTER 6^a

Of the Relation between Associations and Newspapers^b

a. 1. When men are independent of one another you can only make a large number of them act in common by persuading each one separately but simultaneously of the utility of the enterprise.

And only a newspaper can thus succeed in putting the same thought in a thousand ears at the same time.

So newspapers are necessary in proportion as conditions are more equal.

2. A newspaper not only suggests the same plan to a large number of men at the same time, it provides them the means to carry out in common the plans that they had conceived themselves.

1. First, it makes them know each other and it puts them in contact.

2. Then, it binds them together; it makes them talk with each other without seeing each other and march in agreement without gathering together.

3. Since newspapers increase with associations, it is easy to understand that the less centralization there is among a people, the more newspapers there must be. For each district then forms a permanent association in which the need for a newspaper makes itself felt much more than when there is only a large national association.

4. Since a newspaper always represents an association, it explains why, the greater equality is and the weaker each individual is, the stronger the press is. The newspaper overpowers each of its readers in the name of all the others (YTC, CVf, pp. 26-27).

b. The *Rubish* contains two jackets with notes and drafts for this chapter. One bears the same title as the chapter; the other bears the following title:

PARTICULAR UTILITY THAT DEMOCRATIC PEOPLES DRAW FROM LIBERTY OF THE PRESS AND IN PARTICULAR FROM NEWSPAPERS./

Chapter scarcely roughed out and *weakly* conceived, to review and perhaps to delete. To put in the middle of associations./

Édouard notes rightly: 1. that the subject of newspapers is of all democratic subjects the one most familiar to the French, that consequently I must hesitate to treat it. 2. that in any case it is too important to treat it accidentally in relation to associations.

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

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

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

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

I will not deny that, in democratic countries, newspapers often lead cit-

He proposes that I only show the relation that exists between newspapers and associations. A newspaper is the voice of an association. You can consider it as the soul of the association, the most energetic means that the association uses to form itself. If, on the one hand, there is a connection between the number of associations and equality of conditions, there is a connection between the number of newspapers and that of associations.

An association that has only one newspaper to read is only rough-hewn, but it already exists.

To that I propose to join what I say about how the power of newspapers grows in proportion as conditions become equal./

Associations in democracies can form only from a multitude of weak and humble individuals who do not see each other from far away, who do not have the leisure to seek each other out, or the ability to consult and to agree with each other (in aristocracies, on the contrary, a powerful association can form from a small number of powerful citizens; the latter know each other and they do not need newspapers to consult and to agree with each other). All of these things can take place only because of *newspapers* and in general because of the free publications of the press. So newspapers are necessary in democracies in proportion as associations themselves are necessary (*the central idea is found!*) (*Rubish*, 1).

c. "Make a note to point out that it is a matter here not only of political newspapers, but also and above all of scientific, industrial, religious, moral newspapers . . ." (*Rubish*, 1).

izens to do in common very ill-considered undertakings; but if there were no newspapers, there would be hardly any common action. So the evil that they produce is much less than the one they cure.

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

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

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

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

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

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

d. "That also explains the power of newspapers in democracies. They are not naturally stronger than in aristocracies, but they speak amid the universal silence; they act amid the common powerlessness. They take the initiative when no one dares to take it." (*Rubish PARTICULAR UTILITY THAT DEMOCRATIC PEOPLES DRAW FROM LIBERTY OF THE PRESS AND IN PARTICULAR FROM NEWSPAPERS*, *Rubish*, 1).

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

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

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

It is the extraordinary splitting up of administrative power, much more than great political liberty and the absolute independence of the press, that so singularly multiplies the number of newspapers in America. If all the inhabitants of the Union were voters under the rule of a system that limited their electoral right to the choice of the legislators of the State, they would need only a small number of newspapers, because they could have only a few very important, but very rare occasions to act together; but within the great national association, the law established in each province and in each city, and so to speak in each village, small associations

e. "Thus the number of newspapers grows not only according to the number of voluntary associations; it also increases in proportion as the political power [v: administration] becomes decentralized and as the local power passes from the hands of the few into those of all" (*Rubish*, 1).

with the purpose of local administration. The law-maker in this way forced each American to cooperate daily with some of his fellow citizens in a common work, and each of them needs a newspaper to teach him what the others are doing.

I think that a democratic people,¹ who would not have national representation, but a great number of small local powers, would end by having more newspapers than another people among whom a centralized administration would exist alongside an elected legislature. What best explains to me the prodigious development that the daily press has undergone in the United States, is that I see among the Americans the greatest national liberty combined with local liberties of all types.

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

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

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

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

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

The more conditions become equal, the weaker men are individually,

1. *I say a democratic people. The administration can be very decentralized among an aristocratic people, without making the need for newspapers felt, because local powers then are in the hands of a very small number of men who act separately or who know each other and can easily see and understand each other.*

the more they allow themselves to go along easily with the current of the crowd and the more difficulty they have holding on alone to an opinion that the crowd abandons.

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

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



CHAPTER 7^a

Relations between Civil Associations and Political Associations^b

a. 1. When men have contracted the habit of associations in civil life, that gives them great facility for associating in political life.

2. Political associations are on their side very powerful for giving men the thought and the art of associating in civil life.

1. Politics provides common interests to a multitude of men at the same time, provides them with natural occasions to associate, which generalizes the theory of association and makes it studied.

2. You can in general become familiar with the theory of association only by risking your money. Associations are the free schools of association.

3. So political associations neutralize in the long run most of the evils that they create. For if they put the tranquillity of the State at risk, they multiply the number of civil associations that favor this tranquillity (YTC, CVf, p. 27).

b. #This chapter absolutely needs a general reworking. Its movement is confused and difficult, and several of the ideas that it contains are questionable.#/

You would say that I come to prove that civil association arises from political association, which is false according to myself, since I say that in countries where political association is *forbidden*, civil association is *rare*.

1. *The first aim* of the chapter is to show that civil association is always weak, lethargic, limited, clumsy wherever political association does not exist. Civil association does not arise from political association any more than the latter from civil association. They develop mutually. In a country where political associations are very numerous, civil associations cannot fail to be so as well, just as men who already have the habit of associating in civil matters have a great facility for associating in politics.

2. *The second objective of the chapter* is to show that a people can have an interest in allowing liberty of political association in order to favor civil association, which is more necessary to its tranquillity than the other is harmful./

There are *free* associations other than *political* associations, but they are not striking.

You can undoubtedly study the laws of association in the *Norman association*, but who thinks of doing so? (*Rubish*, 1).

f. "The press that much more powerful among a democratic people as the spirit of association is less widespread. It is not that it is itself stronger, but that those whom it wants to dominate are weaker" (*Rubish PARTICULAR UTILITY THAT DEMOCRATIC PEOPLES DRAW FROM LIBERTY OF THE PRESS AND IN PARTICULAR FROM NEWSPAPERS, Rubish*, 1).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Thus politics generalizes the taste and habit of association; it brings

c. In a first version: ". . . there are only two nations."

about the desire to unite and teaches the art of associating to a host of men who would have always lived alone.

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

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

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

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

You can become engaged in most civil associations only by risking a portion of your patrimony; it is so for all industrial and commercial companies. When men are still little versed in the art of associating and are ignorant of its principal rules, they fear, while associating for the first time in this way, paying dearly for their experience. So they prefer doing without a powerful means of success, to running the dangers that accompany it. But they hesitate less to take part in political associations, which seem without danger to them, because in them they are not risking their own money. Now, they cannot take part for long in those associations without discovering how you maintain order among a great number of men, and by what process you succeed in making them march, in agreement and methodically, toward the same goal. They learn to submit their

will to that of all the others, and to subordinate their particular efforts to common action, all things that are no less necessary to know in civil associations than in political associations.

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

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

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

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

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

1. That is true, above all, when it is the executive power that is charged with allowing or forbidding associations according to its arbitrary will.

When the law limits itself to prohibiting certain associations and leaves to the courts the task of punishing those who disobey, the evil is very much less; each citizen then knows in advance more or less what is what; in a way he judges himself before his judges do so, and, avoiding forbidden associations, he devotes himself to permitted associations. All free peoples have always understood that the right of association could be limited in this way. But, if it happened that the legislator charged a man with disentangling in advance which associations are dangerous and which are useful, and left him free to destroy the seed of all associations or to allow them to be born, no one would be able any longer to foresee in advance in what case you can associate and in what other you must refrain from doing so; so the spirit of association would be completely struck with inertia. The first of these two laws attacks only certain associations; the second is addressed to society itself and wounds it. I conceive that a regular government might resort to the first, but I recognize in no government the right to bring about the second.

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

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

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

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

They have, on the contrary, a natural favor for civil associations, because they have easily discovered that the latter, instead of leading the mind of citizens toward public affairs, serve to distract it from these affairs, and by

*d. According to Jean-Claude Lamberti, Tocqueville is referring here to the law on association of 16 February 1834. *Tocqueville et les deux Démocraties* (Paris: PUF, 1983), p. 104, note 42.*

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

If, on the other hand, you come to consider the infinite number of industrial enterprises that are being pursued in common in the United States, and you see on all sides Americans working without letup on the execution of some important and difficult plan, which would be confounded by the slightest revolution, you easily conceive why these men, so very busy, are not tempted to disturb the State or to destroy a public peace from which they profit.

Is it enough to see these things separately? Isn't it necessary to find the hidden bond that joins them? It is within political associations that the Americans of all the states, all minds and all ages, daily acquire the general taste for association and become familiar with its use. There they see each other in great number, talk together, understand each other and become active together in all sorts of enterprises. They then carry into civil life the notions that they have acquired in this way and make them serve a thousand uses.

So it is by enjoying a dangerous liberty that the Americans learn the art of making the dangers of liberty smaller.

If you choose a certain moment in the existence of a nation, it is easy to prove that political associations disturb the State and paralyze industry; but when you take the entire life of a people, it will perhaps be easy to demonstrate that liberty of association in political matters is favorable to the well-being and even to the tranquillity of citizens.

I said in the first part of this work: "The unlimited freedom of association cannot be confused with the freedom to write: the first is both less necessary and more dangerous than the second. A nation can set limits on the first without losing control over itself; sometimes it must set limits in

order to continue to be in control." And later I added: "You cannot conceal the fact that, of all liberties, the unlimited freedom of association, in political matters, is the last one that a people can bear. If unlimited freedom of association does not make a people fall into anarchy, it puts a people on the brink, so to speak, at every moment."

Thus, I do not believe that a nation is free at all times to allow its citizens the absolute right to associate in political matters; and I even doubt that there is any country in any period in which it would be wise to set no limits to the liberty of association.

A certain people, it is said, cannot maintain peace internally, inspire respect for the laws or establish enduring government, if it does not enclose the right of association within narrow limits. Such benefits are undoubtedly precious, and I conceive that, to acquire or to retain them, a nation agrees temporarily to impose great burdens on itself; but still it is good that the nation knows precisely what these benefits cost it.

That, to save the life of a man, you cut off his arm, I understand; but I do not want you to assure me that he is going to appear as dexterous as if he were not a one-armed man.

CHAPTER 8^a

*How the Americans Combat
Individualism by the Doctrine of Interest
Well Understood^b*

[I showed in a preceding chapter how equality of conditions developed among all men the taste for well-being, and directed their minds toward the search for what is useful.

Elsewhere, while talking about individualism, I have just shown how this same equality of conditions broke the artificial bonds that united citizens in aristocratic societies, and led each man to search for what is useful to himself alone.

These various changes in the social constitution and in the tastes of humanity cannot fail to influence singularly the theoretical idea that men form of their duties and their rights.]^c

When the world was led by a small number of powerful and rich individuals, the latter loved to form a sublime idea of the duties of man; they took pleasure in professing that it is glorious to forget self and that it is right

a. 1. As men are more equal and more detached from their fellows, the idea of devotion becomes more foreign, and it is more necessary to show how particular interest merges with general interest.

2. This is what is done in America. Not only is the doctrine of interest well understood *openly* professed there, but it is universally admitted.

3. The doctrine of interest well understood is the most appropriate one for the needs of a democratic people, and the moralists of our time should turn toward it (YTC, CVf, p. 28).

b. Former title in the manuscript: *OF INTEREST WELL UNDERSTOOD AS PHILOSOPHICAL DOCTRINE*.

c. In the margin, with a bracket indicating this beginning: "Probably delete this."

to do good without interest, just like God. That was the official doctrine of this time in the matter of morality [{moral philosophy}].

I doubt that men were more virtuous in aristocratic centuries than in others, but it is certain that they then talked constantly about the beauties of virtue; they only studied in secret how it was useful. But as imagination soars less and as each person concentrates on himself, moralists become afraid of this idea of sacrifice, and they no longer dare to offer it to the human mind; so they are reduced to trying to find out if the individual advantage of citizens would not be to work toward the happiness of all, and, when they have discovered one of these points where particular interest meets with general interest and merges with it, they hasten to bring it to light; little by little similar observations multiply. What was only an isolated remark becomes a general doctrine, and you believe finally that you see that man, by serving his fellows, serves himself, and that his particular interest is to do good.^d

[<But this doctrine is not accepted all at once or by all. Many receive a few parts of it and reject the rest. Some *adopt it at the bottom of their hearts and reject it with disdain* before the eyes of the world.>]^e

I have already shown, in several places in this work, how the inhabitants of the United States almost always knew how to combine their own well-being with that of their fellow citizens. What I want to note here is the general theory by the aid of which they succeed in doing so.^f

d. "Democracy *destroys* the instinct for devotion, *reason* for it [devotion] must be found" (*Rubish*, 1).

e. In the margin: "To delete I think./

"These paragraphs seem to Édouard to merit some small development./
"Explain why some affect to despise this theory."

f. Democracy pushes each man to think only of himself; on the other hand, reason and experience indicate that it is sometimes necessary in his own interest to be concerned about others.

The philosophical doctrine of interest well understood as principal rule of human actions has presented itself to the human mind from time to time in all centuries, but in democratic centuries it besieges the human mind and entirely dominates the moral world.

[To the side] The barbarians forced each man to think only of himself; democracy leads them by themselves to want to do so" (*Rubish*, 1).

In the United States, you almost never say that virtue is beautiful. You maintain that it is useful, and you prove it every day. American moralists do not claim that you must sacrifice yourself for your fellows because it is great to do so; but they say boldly that such sacrifices are as necessary to the person who imposes them on himself as to the person who profits from them.^g

They have noticed that, in their country and time, man was led back toward himself by an irresistible force and, losing hope of stopping him, they have thought only about guiding him.

So they do not deny that each man may follow his interest, but they strive to prove that the interest of each man is to be honest.

Here I do not want to get into the details of their reasons, which would take me away from my subject; it is enough for me to say that they have persuaded their fellow citizens.

A long time ago, Montaigne said: "When I would not follow the right road because of rectitude, I would follow it because I found by experience that in the end it is usually the happiest and most useful path."^h

So the doctrine of interest well understood is not new; but, among the Americans of today, it has been universally admitted; it has become popular; you find it at the bottom of all actions; it pokes through all discussions. You find it no less in the mouths of the poor than in those of the rich.

In Europe the doctrine of interest is much cruder than in America, but at the same time, it is less widespread and above all less evident, and great devotions that are felt no more are still feigned among us every day.

The Americans, in contrast, take pleasure in explaining almost all the

g. In aristocratic centuries, you know your interest, but the philosophical doctrine is to scorn it.

In democratic centuries, you maintain that virtue and interest are in agreement.

[To the side] I need America to prove these two propositions, so I must finish rather than begin with it, in order to gather light on this essential point (*Rubish*, 1).

h. A note of the manuscript indicates that this quotation belongs to book II, chapter XVI of the *Essais*. The library of the Tocqueville château had an edition in three volumes dating from 1600.

actions of their life with the aid of interest well understood; they show with satisfaction how enlightened love of themselves leads them constantly to help each other and disposes them willingly to sacrifice for the good of the State a portion of their time and their wealth. I think that in this they often do not do themselves justice; for you sometimes see in the United States, as elsewhere, citizens give themselves to the disinterested and unconsidered impulses that are natural to man; but the Americans hardly ever admit that they yield to movements of this type; they prefer to honor their philosophy rather than themselves.^j

I could stop here and not try to judge what I have just described. The extreme difficulty of the subject would be my excuse. But I do not want to take advantage of it, and I prefer that my readers, clearly seeing my purpose, refuse to follow me rather than remain in suspense.

Interest well understood is a doctrine not very lofty, but clear and sure. It does not try to attain great objectives, but without too much effort it attains all those it targets. Since the doctrine is within reach of all minds, each man grasps it easily and retains it without difficulty. Accommodating itself marvelously to the weaknesses of men, it easily gains great dominion and it is not difficult for it to preserve that dominion, because the doctrine turns personal interest back against itself and, to direct passions, uses the incentive that excites them.

The doctrine of interest well understood does not produce great devotions; but it suggests small sacrifices every day; by itself, it cannot make a

j. Some enlightenment makes men see how their personal interest differs from that of their fellows. A great deal of enlightenment shows them how the two interests often come to merge./

Three successive states:

1. *Ignorance*. Instinctive devotion.
2. *Half-knowledge*. Egoism.
3. *Complete enlightenment*. Thoughtful sacrifice./

There are two ways to make that understood by a people:

1. Experience.
2. Enlightenment.

The most difficult task of governments is not to govern, but to instruct men in governing them[selves (ed.)]./

The worst effect of a bad government is not the evil that it does, but the one that it suggests (*Rubish*, 1).

man virtuous, but it forms a multitude of steady, temperate, moderate, farsighted citizens who have self-control; and, if it does not lead directly to virtue by will, it imperceptibly draws closer to virtue by habits.^k

If the doctrine of interest well understood came to dominate the moral world entirely, extraordinary virtues would undoubtedly be rarer. But I also think that then the coarsest depravities would be less common. The doctrine of interest well understood perhaps prevents some men from rising very far above the ordinary level of humanity; but a great number of others who fall below encounter the doctrine and cling to it. Consider a few individuals, it lowers them. Envisage the species, it elevates it.

I will not be afraid to say that the doctrine of interest well understood seems to me, of all philosophical theories, the most appropriate to the needs of the men of our time, and that I see in it the most powerful guarantee remaining to them against themselves. So it is principally toward this doctrine that the mind of the moralists of today should turn. Even if they were to judge it as imperfect, it would still have to be adopted as necessary.

I do not believe, everything considered, that there is more egoism among us than in America; the only difference is that there it is enlightened and here it is not. Each American knows how to sacrifice a portion of his particular interests in order to save the rest. We want to keep everything, and often everything escapes us.

I see around me only men who seem to want to teach their contemporaries, every day by their word and their example, that what is useful is never dishonorable. Will I never finally find some men who undertake to make their contemporaries understand how what is honorable can be useful?

There is no power on earth that can prevent the growing equality of

^{k.} "The *beauty* of virtue is the favorite thesis of moralists under aristocracy. Its *utility* under democracy" (*Rubish*, 1).

"Interest well understood is not contrary to the disinterested advance of the good. These are two different things, but not opposite. Great souls for whom this doctrine cannot be enough, pass in a way through it and go beyond it, while ordinary souls stop there" (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 85).

conditions from leading the human mind toward the search for what is useful, and from disposing each citizen to become enclosed within himself.

So you must expect individual interest to become more than ever the principal, if not the sole motivating force of the actions of men; but how each man will understand his individual interest remains to be known.

If citizens, while becoming equal, remained ignorant and coarse, it is difficult to predict to what stupid excess their egoism could be led; and you cannot say in advance into what shameful miseries they would plunge themselves, out of fear of sacrificing something of their well-being to the prosperity of their fellows.^m

I do not believe that the doctrine of interest, as it is preached in America, is evident in all its parts; but it contains a great number of truths so evident that it is enough to enlighten men in order for them to see them. So enlighten them at all cost, for the century of blind devotions and instinctive virtues is already fleeing far from us, and I see the time drawing near when liberty, the public peace and the social order itself will not be able to do without enlightenment.ⁿ

^{m.} "Utility of provincial institutions in order to create centers of common interest in democracy. National interest is not enough. It is necessary to multiply links, to bring men to see each other, understand each other, and have ideas, sentiments in common" (*Rubish*, 1).

^{n.} Fragment that belongs to the *rubbish* of the chapter:

Doctrine of interest./

[To the side: This could be placed as well in sentiments and tastes. To think about it.]

Not very elevated point of view from which the Americans envisage human actions. Doctrine of interest followed elsewhere, *professed* in America. Effort to make it a social doctrine. *Succeeds in fact in making society proceed comfortably, but without grandeur.*

{To put perhaps before or after what I say about religion as political element.}/

This, among the Americans in particular and among democratic peoples in general, is clearly the result: 1. of egoism above all that makes you think only of yourself; 2. of the concentration of the soul in material things.

So this must be treated only after these two ideas are known; this chapter will be only their corollary./

I will first demonstrate that the Americans are led in general to concentrate on their interest and then, that they have made this way of acting into a philosophical theory./

That the legislators of democracies are not able to prevent the establishment and development of this doctrine, that all their effort should be limited to getting the most out of it, to making it so that men have a real interest in doing good, or at least to making this interest clear to all. That is useful in all societies, but very much more useful in those in which men cannot withdraw to the *platonic* enjoyment of doing good and in which they see the other world ready to escape them.

It is equally necessary that men, having reached this point, be enlightened at all cost, for there is enough truth in the notion that man has an interest in doing good, that widespread enlightenment cannot fail to make man discover it.

Proof of this, morality of the well-enlightened man.

Political consequences. Extreme efforts that the legislator must make in democracies to spiritualize man. Particular necessity for religions in democracy; even dogmatic and not very reasonable religions, for lack of anything better. Show heaven even if it is through the worst instruments./

Distinctions to make between the different doctrines of *interest*./

There is a doctrine of interest that consists of believing that you must make the interest of other men yield before your own and that it is natural and reasonable to embrace only the latter. This is an instinctive, crude egoism that hardly merits the name of doctrine.

[In the margin: The doctrine of interest can teach how to live, but not how to die./

The doctrine of interest must not be confused with the doctrine of the *useful*. It is contained in that of the useful, but it is only a part of it.]

There is another doctrine of interest that consists of believing that the best way to be happy is to serve your interest and to be good, honest . . . in a word, that interest well understood requires you often to sacrifice your interest or rather, that to follow your interest over all, you often have to neglect it in detail.

This is a philosophical doctrine that has its value.

[In the margin: Great passions of the *true*, the *beautiful* and the *good*. Analogous things flowing from [the (ed.)] same source, equally rare, producing great men of learning, great men of literature and great virtues.]

There is, finally, a doctrine infinitely purer, more elevated, less material, according to which the basis of actions is duty. Man penetrates divine thought with his intelligence. He sees that the purpose of God is order, and he freely associates himself as much as he is able with this great design. He cooperates with it in his humble sphere, depending on his strength, in order to fulfill his destination and to obey his mandate. There is still personal interest there, for there is a proud and private enjoyment in such points of view and hope for remuneration in a better world; but interest there is as small, as secretive and as legitimate as possible.

Positive religions render this interest more visible; they render these sentiments stronger, more popular. They generally mix the two things in a clever way that facilitates practice. In Christianity, for example, we are told that it is necessary to do good *out of love of God* (magnificent expression of the doctrine that I have just explained) and also to gain eternal life.

Thus Christianity at one end touches the doctrine of interest well understood and at the other the doctrine that I developed afterward and that I could call with Christianity itself, the doctrine of the love of God. In sum, a religion very superior in terms of loftiness to the doctrine of interest well understood because it places interest in the other world and draws us out of this cesspool of human and material interests.

The doctrine of interest well understood can make men honest.

But it is only that of the love of God that makes men virtuous. The one teaches how to live, the other teaches how to die, and how can you make men who do not want to die live well for long?

Why aristocratic peoples are led more than democratic peoples to adopt the second doctrines more than the first.

Class that has material happiness without thinking about it, that can think and is not preoccupied by the trouble to work and to acquire. Another class that by working can scarcely hope to reach material happiness and that turns naturally toward the non-material world.

On the contrary, in democracies each man has just enough material happiness to desire more of it, enough of a chance of gaining it to fix the mind on material happiness or at least that of this world./

Another point of view.

The philosophical doctrine that I spoke about is based on interest.

Religious doctrines are also based on interest.

But there is this great difference between them, that the first places this interest in this world and the others outside of it, which is enough to give actions an infinitely less material and loftier purpose; that the ones out of necessity profess to scorn material goods, while the other, restricting itself to that life, cannot fail to hold material goods in a certain esteem. So although the cause of actions is the same, these actions are very different./

Religions have, by design, made such an intimate union of the doctrine of the love of God and of that of interest, that those who are sincerely devout are constantly mistaken, and it happens that they believe that they are doing actions solely in view of the reward to come, actions that are principally suggested to them by the most pure, most noble and most disinterested instincts of human nature (*Rubish*, 1).