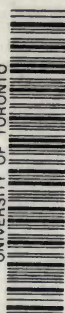


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# JOHN STUART MILL

By JULIUS WEST

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# JOHN STUART MILL.

## BIOGRAPHICAL.

**A** CROSS the bleak desert of intellect which coincides with the first fifty years of the reign of Queen Victoria there run numerous uncertain pathways, all starting from the Temple of Mammon. These pathways meet and mingle in all sorts of unexpected, complicated fashions, and the majority of them lead nowhere. One, known as Carlyle, for example, appears ever to be getting more distant from the Temple, but in the end goes no farther than Chelsea. Another, called Ruskin, leaves the Temple of Mammon with a grand blazing of trumpets, but, going a little way, stops before a Gothic Temple, and the call of the trumpet is converted to the dronings of an organ. Of all the pathways, Mill is perhaps the clearest. It sets out from the front parlour of a man, Bentham, of whom more will be said; it leads down a steep precipice called the Wages Fund Theory (where danger notices have been but lately erected); it traverses a bit of boggy ground which is marked on the maps as the Law of Population; it turns a few curious corners, when, lo, the Promised Land is in sight.

Now, as to this man Bentham. About 1800 there was in existence a body of philosophers who believed that the purpose of all human effort should be the increase of the sum total of human happiness; with real, perfervid energy and emotion they sought, in their own words, "the greatest good of the greatest number." Of these Bentham was the founder, and when he died, in 1832, he left a particularly unpleasant prison at Westminster (the Millbank Penitentiary) as a monument to his endeavours to increase human happiness. In 1808, when Bentham was sixty years of age, he made the acquaintance of a rigid and logical Scotsman named James Mill. Mill sat at Bentham's feet, assimilated his doctrines, made them a shade more rigid, and finally became Bentham's lieutenant. And Mill dedicated his (at that time) only son, John Stuart, that the youngster, who was only born in 1806, should be a worthy successor to the two friends, and should continue to proclaim the truths of Utilitarianism to all the world. The history of the intellectual life of J. S. Mill is contained in his efforts to escape from the narrow individualistic creed of his progenitors, real and spiritual, and his gradual approach towards Socialism.

We need not close our eyes to the fact that Bentham was a power, that he profoundly influenced the evolution of the law and of public administration, to be nevertheless extremely critical of his influence upon J. S. Mill. At this distance from the Benthamites it is difficult to realize how starkly intense was their individualism. "Laissez faire" with them was more than a theory; it was a faith. Bentham, who wrote on almost everything, produced a small

"Manual of Political Economy," from whose dark, unfathomed depths the following gem has been extracted: "With the view of causing an increase to take place in the mass of national wealth, or with a view to increase of the means either of subsistence or enjoyment, without some special reason, the general rule is that nothing ought to be done or attempted by government. The motto or watchword of government on these occasions ought to be—*Be quiet.*"\* He died in 1832, at the age of eighty-four, leaving behind him one hundred and forty boxes of manuscript. For many years his life had been that of a tabulating machine with a mania for neologizing. He invented, for example, seven classes of "Offences against the positive increase of the National Felicity."† These include the heinous crimes of offending against epistemo-threptic, antemblematic and hedomonarchic trusts. He is at present probably tabulating and renaming the numerous varieties of asbestos.

### The Misfortunes of Mill: His Father.

But long before his death James Mill, observing that the mantle of Bentham was in danger of being soiled by continual dragging through the muddy waters of the elder's verbiage, took it from his shoulders and placed it upon his own. (This is no mere figure of speech; for the unpruned language of Bentham's later days was incomprehensible to the public, and so his notes had to be edited and his books written by his disciples.) With James Mill there is little need for us to tarry. He is best remembered by his character and his eldest son.

James Mill came to London from Scotland, and having for some years earned a precarious living by journalism, proceeded to write a History of India. It appeared in 1817, the result of nine years hard work. That he had no first hand knowledge of his subject was, he considered, all to the good. It permitted full play to the objective attitude. But the three substantial resultant volumes of conscientious drought brought him a reward. Established as an authority on the country he had never seen, he succeeded in obtaining a post in the office of the East India Company. In 1836, the year of his death, he was drawing a salary of £2,000.

### The Misfortunes of Mill: His Upbringing.

In the intervals of his journalistic work, and, later, in the leisure accorded by his official duties, James Mill educated his son. The course of instruction prescribed and administered by this, the most ruthless of all parents, was encyclopædic in its scope and devastating in its character. John Stuart Mill, while yet infant and amorphous, was destined by his father for leadership and educated accordingly. In his "Autobiography" (p. 3) he says, "I have no recollection of the time when I began to learn Greek; I have been told it was when I was three years old." At the age of seven he had read the first six dialogues of Plato, and subsequently acted as teacher to his younger brothers and sisters. Such inexorability as his

\* Works, Ed. Bowring, 1843.

† "Principles of Morals and Legislation," Chap. XVI.



father's in teaching young minds to shoot would lead many to suicide. There is little need to detail. The practice of long walks with his father, in which instruction was combined with exercise, was perhaps the principal reason for J. S. Mill's physical survival. Intellectually, his persistence to years of discretion must be credited to his heredity. Of boyhood he had none. Says Mill: "He was earnestly bent upon my escaping not only the corrupting influence which boys exercise over boys, but the contagion of vulgar modes of thought and feeling; and for this he was willing that I should pay the price of inferiority in the accomplishments which school-boys in all countries chiefly cultivate."\* It is astonishing that this system did not convert his brain into a sort of *pâté de foie gras*. But he survived. The worst efforts of his father failed to affect the stability of his marvellous brain. Having left his childhood with his cradle, he proceeded to absorb all that there was to be absorbed of Greek and Latin, mathematics, history, both ancient and modern, and the remaining subjects prescribed by convention and his father's views. At the age when, nowadays, he might be qualifying for a Boy Scout, Mill took to philosophy, psychology and logic. In 1823 (age 17) his father obtained him a clerkship in the India House, where he remained until 1858. About this time he began to write for the *Edinburgh* and *Westminster Reviews*. In 1825 he "edited," in manner aforesaid, Bentham's "Rationale of Judicial Evidence," much to his own edification.

### The Strenuous Life.

Of this period of his life, when the rigidity of parental control had been somewhat relaxed, it would have been not unreasonable to expect that Mill, like Richard Feverel, might have rebelled against the "system." Far from it; the process had been too thorough. Mill never sowed any wild oats of any species whatsoever; he did not even cut down the familial apple-tree. At the age of twenty he virtually founded the "London Debating Society," which seems to have been something like the Fabian Society would have been if it had no Basis and no external objects. To this belonged, amongst others, Macaulay, Edward Bulwer Lytton, a large number of incipient reputations, and the *élite* of the Oxford and Cambridge Unions. Concurrently with the existence of this society, Mill and Grote, the future historian, formed a study circle which met twice a week at the latter's house for the discussion of Economics. When this subject contained no more unexplored regions, the circle took up Logic and Analytical Psychology. In all the meetings extended over five years, giving Mill an additional stratum upon which to base his subsequent work. As one result of these meetings, we should note the "Essays on Unsettled Questions in Political Economy," which was written about 1830-31, but not published until 1844.

Throughout this whole period Mill was a frequent contributor to the *Reviews*. His literary output previous to 1843 was voluminous, but consisted almost entirely of criticism. In that year he published his first classic, "A System of Logic, Ratiocinative and Inductive; being



a connected view of the principles of evidence and the methods of scientific investigation." To this portentous work belonged all the characteristics enumerated above of his father's "India"; it was perhaps the most important book of its time, and its merits were such that eight editions were exhausted in the author's lifetime. Having completed this, Mill shortly turned his attention to his next classic work, which appeared in 1848. Of this, the "Principles of Political Economy," more will be said later, when some of its points will be examined. These two books are Mill's most substantial contributions to human thought. Of those of his smaller works with which we shall be concerned the most important are the "Representative Government" and the "Subjection of Women." These each contain, roughly, the full development of a single idea, and, although by no means trivial, are scarcely entitled to rank with his "classic" works. Before allowing his books to speak for themselves, the outstanding features of the remainder of his life must be stated.

### His Marriage.

In the first place, as to Mill's marriage. At the age of twenty-three Mill became acquainted with a Mrs. Taylor, wife of a City drysalter. He sat at her feet some sixteen years, when she became a widow, and two years afterwards Mill and she were married. He continued to sit at her feet for seven more years, until 1858, when she died. Of her he writes throughout in terms of extreme admiration, which, coming from a man of Mill's dispassionate temperament, approach rhapsody. For example, in dedicating his "Liberty" to her, the year following her death, he concludes with these words: "Were I but capable of interpreting to the world one half the great thoughts and noble feelings which are buried in her grave I should be the medium of a greater benefit to it than is ever likely to arise from anything that I can write, unprompted and unassisted by her all but unrivalled wisdom." Mill's biographers, Leslie Stephen and Bain, are somewhat sceptical. Bain writes, "Grote used to say 'only John Mill's reputation could survive such displays.'"\* There is no point in endeavouring to estimate the accuracy of such declarations; we must take Mill's word and leave it at that, perhaps with the added comment that a woman capable of inspiring such depths of feeling would also be capable of affecting the quality of Mill's work; of improving it without necessarily herself touching it.

In the year of her death the East India Company ceased to exist. The Indian Mutiny had convinced the Government that it was, on the whole, inadvisable to run an empire by private enterprise, and the business of administering India was nationalized. The Company, of course, was unwilling, and resisted the divestment of its interests. It fell to Mill, by this time virtually in command at India House, to draft the Company's petition for reprieve, in a document which was pronounced by Earl Grey "the ablest State paper he had ever read."† But all in vain; the India Office superseded the India House. and Mill was retired on a pension of £1,500.

\* Bain, "J. S. Mill: a Criticism," p. 167.

† Bain, p. 96.

### M.P. for Westminster.

Then Mill went into Parliament. The story of his election, which took place in 1865, is strikingly characteristic of Mill's tenacity of opinion and undeviating pursuit of whatever path of conduct he held to be right. In these days the term "principle" is in danger of obliteration, save only in so far as it enters into the adjective "unprincipled," and Mill's own account of the election has a distinctly humorous touch. Westminster was the favoured constituency. He writes, for example, "I was convinced that no numerous or influential portion of any electoral body really wished to be represented by a person of my opinions. . . . It was, and is, my fixed conviction that a candidate ought not to incur one farthing of expense for undertaking a public duty. . . . I felt, therefore, that I ought not to seek election to Parliament, much less to expend any money in procuring it."\* Authors are not generally gifted with such a degree of self-effacement, not to mention politicians. However, a body of electors came and asked Mill to stand, and he, having "put their disposition to the proof by one of the frankest explanations ever tendered, I should think, to an electoral body by a candidate,"† consented. A well known "literary man was heard to say that the Almighty himself would have no chance of being elected on such a programme."‡ The result of this amazing election was that Mill secured a majority of 700 over W. H. Smith, his Conservative competitor. He attached himself to Gladstone, but in fact retained his independence, and not infrequently opposed his own party. He remained in Parliament for three years, during which he took a prominent part in the troublous passage of the Reform Bill of '67, and otherwise. It was on an occasion connected with this Reform agitation that the Hyde Park railings were pushed down. Mill appears to have mediated between the demonstrators and the Government with the result that serious collisions were prevented. It was not to be expected that the miracle would happen twice; Mill was not re-elected. He himself does not seem to have greatly regretted losing his seat.

### The Last Years.

So he went back to his books and to Avignon, to pass the remaining years of his life near his wife's grave. He there wrote the "Subjection of Women," and planned a book on Socialism, which was left unfinished. These and voluminous replies to correspondents appear to have been the principal occupations of the years 1868-73. In the latter year he died, at Avignon, as the result of a local epidemic disease.

This is but the briefest sketch of Mill's life. The four aspects of his work most likely to interest Socialists will be studied separately. Until his work has been discussed it is useless to attempt framing an estimate of his influence. Moreover, we shall not be dealing at all with some of perhaps his most important aspects. As a Rationalist and as a Philosopher he takes a high place amongst the world's thinkers, but we need only study him in his relation to society.

\* "Autobiography," p. 160.

† Ibid. p. 161.

‡ Ibid. p. 162.

In 1865, the year Mill went into Parliament, he published his substantial "Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy," a work from which most Englishmen drew their philosophy for the subsequent decade. He had already (1863) published "Utilitarianism," wherein the opinions of Bentham and his father were rendered with more qualification than sympathy. "On Liberty" (1859), in which he and his wife collaborated, is a fine piece of writing, but curiously inconsequent, and does not advocate anything more exciting than non-interference, and not always that.

Mill was an honourable, upright man, capable of commanding firm friendships and the greatest respect. "Saint of Rationalism" was the title bestowed on him by Gladstone. Herbert Spencer gives many instances of Mill's generosity, and wrote an almost emotional obituary notice.\* His was a noble, unselfish life, and with it passed perhaps the greatest purifying force of the last century.

## ECONOMIST.

### Economics in 1836.

Roughly speaking, Mill's work as an economist may be summed up by saying that he found economics a body of doctrines and left it a body of doctrine. For the first time the mass of theories evolved by and since Adam Smith were integrated into a coherent and, on the whole, a moderately consistent statement. Adam Smith popularized economics; that is to say, for all practical purposes he founded it. A little later Malthus added the theory of population with considerations arising therefrom. Sir Edward West introduced the notion of the margin of cultivation. Ricardo stated the idea of economic rent. Nassau Senior evolved the quaint "abstinence" theory—abstinence being "a term by which we express the conduct of a person who either abstains from the unproductive use of what he can command, or designedly prefers the production of remote to that of immediate results."† They took this sort of thing very seriously in 1836. It will be readily understood therefore that the seventy years following the publication of the "Wealth of Nations" (1776) had literally made a hash of economics. It had appeared with certain pretensions to be a science; it had degenerated into a gallimaufry. Hence the importance of Mill's work.

### The Perils of Population.

Yet the result was not altogether satisfactory. Mill's unfortunate education was to blame. He had started life upon a Ricardian diet, and absorbed Malthus with depressing avidity. Hence he was incapable of seeing facts for himself: he could squeeze out the full content of other writers' syllogisms, but himself refrained from stating new premises. To the end of his days he was haunted by the bogey of population; he despaired of ever achieving a state where the distribution of wealth should be equitable; multiplication

\* See Appendix G. Spencer, "Autobiography," Vol. II.

† Senior, "Political Economy," p. 58.



would hinder division. It is seldom that philoprogenitiveness was dealt with as severely as by this son of a philoprogenitive father. Sinking for a moment his accustomed humanitarianism, he descends to the level of a hardened official of the Charity Organization Society. "Poverty," he declares, "like most social evils, exists because men follow their brute instincts without due consideration." In a footnote he adds: "Little improvement can be expected in morality until the producing of large families is regarded with the same feelings as drunkenness or any other physical excess."\* His whole attitude towards social reforms is tempered by the fear that, perhaps, they would only increase man's unfortunate liability to be born; that generosity would merely induce generation.

Hence Mill's condemnation of a minimum wage, legal or moral. "If nothing more were necessary than a compulsory accumulation (*i.e.*, of money to be available for wages), sufficient to provide employment at ample wages for the existing numbers of the people, such a proposition would have no more strenuous supporter than myself. Society mainly consists of those who live by bodily labour; and if society, that is, if the labourers lend their physical force to protect individuals in the enjoyment of superfluities, they are entitled to do so, and have always done so, with the reservation of a power to tax those superfluities for purposes of public utility, amongst which purposes the subsistence of the people is the foremost. Since no one is responsible for having been born, no pecuniary sacrifice is too great to be made by those who have more than enough for the purpose of securing enough to all persons already in existence."† All of which shows how Mill's progress towards Socialism was turned aside by an optical illusion. He could not realize, as Sadler had already realized, that comfort was a very potent preventive check, and that Malthus, whose anxieties were justifiable at the time he wrote, would be disproved by the lapse of time.

### Wages and Welfare.

Of Trade Unions and their future development Mill does not seem to have had much idea. On the first occasion when he refers in his published works to unions, in a pleasantly amusing letter to Carlyle, written from Paris, he slightly jests at their expense. On the authority of an "impartial" person, he states of French Unions, that "their object is not so much more money as to elevate their rank in society, since at present the gentlemen will not keep company with them, and they will not keep company with the common labourers."‡ That was in 1833. In later years his views were softened. He could never recognize that trade unions were of much positive utility, even though he would not admit they were actually harmful. But Mill's keen sense of justice made him actually befriend the unions, without admitting their efficiency. Wages, he believed, were settled for the individual by competition between masters and workers. So long as the masters could do as they pleased in order

\* "Principles," Book II., Chap. XIII.

† "Principles," Book II., Chap. XII.

‡ "Letters," p. 74.

to lower wages, so long was it unjust to forbid workers to combine in order to raise wages. He inveighs against combination laws, "laws enacted and maintained for the declared purpose of keeping wages low," because "such laws exhibit the infernal spirit of the slave master, who, to retain the working classes in avowed slavery, has ceased to be practicable."\* He goes even further: "The best interests of the human race imperatively require that all economical experiments, voluntarily undertaken, should have the fullest licence, and that force and fraud should be the only means of attempting to benefit themselves which are interdicted to the less fortunate classes of the community." This last passage was added in the third edition of the "Principles" four years after the original appearance of the book, and illustrates Mill's advancing views.

Holding, as he did, the Malthusian theory of population, it would have been illogical on Mill's part to have definitely gone over to the support of trade unionism. For this theory held a corollary, the wages fund theory, and the two were inseparable: vicious doctrines have extraordinary powers of cohesion. We need not excite ourselves over the esoteric aspects of this particular dogma. Briefly and exoterically they are as follows. Malthus and his followers believed that overpopulation was the cause of most misery, as a quotation made above has illustrated. From this it was permissible to deduce, subalternately, that overpopulation was the cause of low wages. Hence there was supposed to be a connection between population and wages, and the more there was of one, the less there would be of the other. A step further, and we have the idea stated, to quote Senior, "that wages depend" on "the extent of the fund for the maintenance of labourers, compared with the number of labourers to be maintained." This is the celebrated Wages Fund theory, to which Mill was a subscriber. In these enlightened days, when everybody disbelieves in Malthus's theory, but is hyper-Malthusian in his practice, the sister doctrine of the Wages Fund is no longer with us. Moreover, it has been pointed out that wages are not paid out of a fund earmarked, as it were, for that purpose. Wages are paid out of the produce of labour, which can be increased indefinitely until the point is reached when all human wants are satiated and machinery can do no more to stimulate desires, either by producing things cheaper or by producing anything at all that man has not got, but would like to have if he saw it.

Holding this theory, Mill could not but believe (1) that if any body of workers succeeded, by means of a trade union or otherwise, in raising their wages, it could only be at the expense of other workers; (2) that any permanent improvement in the wage position of all the workers must await the time when their rate of multiplication would be considerably decreased.†

\* "Principles," Book V., Chap. X., § 5.

† For full discussion of the Wages Fund Theory see Cannan, "A History of the Theories of Production and Distribution in English Political Economy from 1776 to 1848," *passim*; Marshall, "Principles of Economics," Appendix J; Taussig, "Wages and Capital, an Examination of the Wages Fund Doctrine"; and Webb, "Industrial Democracy," Part III., Chapter I.

It was a distinctly uncomfortable theory and so plausible that it was universally believed. Lassalle's "Iron Law of Wages," emanating from a fervent Socialist, is a restatement of the theory, before which Socialists, as well as the orthodox, were forced, in default of an alternative theory, to prostrate themselves. Mill's is the glory of upsetting the car of Juggernaut, although Frederic Harrison had already noted the fallacy. In a review of a work of Thornton, a fellow economist, in the *Fortnightly Review* in May, 1869, the theory was solemnly stated, examined, and disproved. Economics was never the same after this inroad into its hitherto unquestioned sanctities. Mill himself died shortly afterwards, and it was left to others, notably to Jevons, to collect the tattered fragments of political economy; and by the publication of the "Theory of Political Economy" in 1871, with an exposition of his theory of marginal utility, once more to give the science an appearance of respectability, not to say probability.†

### The Future of Labour.

There are discrepancies between the first and second halves of the "Principles." Mill began as an individualist advocate of peasant proprietorship, converted himself as he went on, and ended almost as a Socialist. But, as nobody held out to the end of the book, and very few got beyond the first half, its influence was in favour of peasant proprietorship.

No essay upon the economic principles of Mill is exempted from referring to Book IV, Chapter VII, of his "Principles." For that bears the title "On the Probable Futurity of the Labouring Classes." In 1817 the House of Commons appointed a "Select Committee on the Education of the Lower Orders." In 1848, in his chapter on the "labouring classes" (the term itself shows an advance), Mill says he uses the term in the conventional sense, as "I do not regard as either just or salutary a state of society in which there is any class which is not labouring, any human beings exempt from bearing their share of the necessary labours of human life, except those unable to labour, or who have fairly earned rest by previous toil" (§ 1). The interest of this passage lies in the change of attitude indicated, not the change which had taken place between 1817 and 1848, but the expressed possibility of social transformation. And this possibility is presented in a description which, if it suffers somewhat from Malthusian squint, yet also contains something of a prophet's vision. The relation between rich and poor is to vanish. Just as feudalism is now dead, so must the poor of to-day emerge from their tutelage. Independence is the key to the future of the workers. "Whatever advice, exhortation, or guidance is held out to the labouring classes must henceforth be tendered to them as equals, and accepted by them with their eyes open." Then he proceeds briefly to survey profit sharing. The results have sometimes been favourable, but the capitalist is not eliminated; in fact his hold is strengthened over his

† See Mill's "Principles of Political Economy," edition Ashley, Appendix O. Longmans, 1910



employees. "The form of association, however, which, if mankind continue to improve, must be expected in the end to predominate, is not that which can exist between a capitalist as chief, but in . . ." (§ 6), and Mill proceeds to narrate the history and the results of co-operative production. Here the prophet's voice was speaking. The future of co-operation is hidden from us, but who knows how far it will evolve? Once the great mass of the people begin to produce the necessities of life for themselves without the needlessly insinuated mediation of predatory capital, the future state will evolve with a swiftness and a certainty unprecedented in the annals of civilization. With the displacement of the capitalist will come, not the millenium, but at the least a society whose basis is not that of our own, capital needlessly deviated from production to advertisement, advertisement, and ever more advertisement. Mill's great position as an economist does not rest, as he considered it to rest, upon a discovery of his concerning distribution, nor, as other persons have considered, upon his treatment of value. It rests upon his humanity and the introduction of the element of humanity into economics. He attempted to apply to what others had regarded as an art, to be treated entirely for art's sake, the saving grace of human fellowship.

### FEMINIST.

The abuse of power and the detrimental effects of involuntary subordination are themes which recur more frequently in Mill's work than any other. It is because he objects to the dominance of capital that he becomes so nearly a Socialist. It is because government by the few is a system too apt to ally itself with tyranny that he is so strong a democrat. It is because he realizes the peculiar evils which arise from the subjection of women that he is a feminist.

There are two species of prophets. One is the man who utilizes the historical method, the inductive method, or what not, and foretells a fragment of the events of the coming year, or perhaps of the next few years—he sees, but has no vision. The other species has no use for the inductive method, and regards a telescope as an anachronism. He sees far ahead and is emphatic. Isaiah belonged to this class, Marx to the former. Mill we may class with Marx in this respect, save only in a single direction. Where the future of women is concerned he ceases to rely on the creaking machinery of the syllogism, and with no thought of inconsistency, speaks the truth that is in him. Although "The Subjection of Women," his most extended statement on the subject, was the last work to be published in his lifetime, yet in every one of his earlier works he had dwelt on the subject, wherever opportunity arose, with insistence, with indomitable iteration. He wished to see the status, legal, political and social, of women raised to that of men, but concentrated on endeavouring to obtain for women the vote on the same terms as men had it, claiming throughout that as men had no abstract right to decide for women, women should be put into a position to decide for themselves. In a letter to Florence Nightingale, written in 1867, he says: "I will confess to you that I have often stood amazed at what has

seemed to me the presumption with which persons who think themselves humble set bounds to the capacities of improvement of their fellow creatures, think themselves qualified to define how much or how little of the divine light of truth can be borne by the world in general, assume that none but the very élite can see what is perfectly clear to themselves, and think themselves permitted to dole out in infinitesimal doses that daily bread of truth upon which they themselves live and without which the world must come to an end."\*

### The Truth about Women.

His "Liberty" bears as its text a quotation from Humboldt's "Sphere and Duties of Government," concluding with "the absolute and essential importance of human development in its richest diversity." The whole case against the present position of women was just that this diversity of development was prohibited, and that even undiversified development was stunted. In a diary he kept for a few months in 1854, wherein Mill inscribed a curious mixture of platitude and epigram, he states his "deliberate opinion that any great improvement in human life is not to be looked for so long as the animal instinct of sex occupies the absurdly disproportionate place it does therein," and that firstly, in order to attain any improvement, "that women should cease to be set aside for this function, and should be admitted to all other duties and occupations on a par with men."† He develops in this place, in fact, an epigram he had put to paper three weeks before, that "What is called morality in these times is a regulated sensuality."‡ Sex is an accident, and should not be a determinant. In the drama of life it is illogical that women should never enact more than a secondary rôle—especially to Mill, who believed that they are usually "of far greater versatility than men."§ Sex is considered "as entirely irrelevant to political rights as difference in height or in the colour of the hair."|| Again, "The ideas and institutions by which the accident of sex is made the groundwork of an inequality of legal rights, and a forced dissimilarity of social functions, must ere long be recognized as the greatest hindrance to moral, social, and even intellectual development."¶ To the objection (how tenacious are these barnacles!) that women are as a matter of fact unequal to men in the character of their achievements, that history, novels, art, etc., proceed from men alone, for all practical purposes, Mill had the reply that women are going along the same paths as men; they have not yet left their leading strings. They have always had men's works set before them; when they cease to copy them, your objections will fall to the ground and you will see that, after all, sex *is* an accident. Besides, "how many of the most original thoughts of male writers came to them from the suggestion and prompting of some woman."\*\* The same case is stated in great

\* "Letters," Vol. II., p. 104.

† Ibid, Vol. II., p. 382.

‡ Ibid, Vol. II., p. 376.

§ "Principles," Book I., Chapter VIII., § 5.

|| "Representative Government," Chapter VIII.

¶ "Principles," Book IV., Chapter VII., § 4.

\*\* "Letters," Vol. II., p. 381.

detail in "The Subjection of Women." In brief, it may be summarized: "Women's work is not, at present, equal to men's work. But women have never been allowed to be original. Release them from their subjection, and the consequences will prove whether or not women are essentially inferior. But don't punish them for their inferiority before they have had a chance to demonstrate their relative worth. And, my dear sir, if I may be permitted to express a personal opinion, I should not be at all surprised if your own morals did not benefit somewhat by such a demonstration."

So much for Mill's attitude. Now as to his acts.

### **The Invasion of Westminster.**

In 1866 Gladstone introduced a Reform Bill, was defeated on it, and resigned. Lord Derby formed a Conservative Government, and Disraeli became the Leader of the House of Commons. In due course he, too, introduced a Reform Bill to enfranchise the small town householder and the lodger. Long and tiresome were the debates, and countless amendments marked the tortuous, serpentine progress of the Bill to the Statute Book. Here Mill had his opportunity. Woman Suffrage was no longer to be a thing unuttered in Parliament. On May 20th, 1867, he moved an amendment to omit "man" and insert "person" in place thereof, and so to make the Bill apply to both sexes. Mill made a long and eloquent speech, which, perhaps, suffered from lack of precedent. He was not to be contented with the mere verbal substitution, but proceeded to dilate on the position of women, economic and legal, to describe the educational disadvantages under which they lived, in short, to give a lecture on the Woman Question. The following is an example; it illustrates his somewhat ponderous style no less than his matter: "The notion of a hard and fast line of separation between women's occupations and men's—of forbidding women to take interest in the things which interest men—belongs to a bygone state of society which is receding further and further into the past. We talk of political revolutions, but we do not sufficiently attend to the fact that there has taken place amongst us a silent domestic revolution—women and men are, for the first time in history, really each other's companions."\* The result was the usual one. There were the immemorial asseverations adduced in opposition, that the amendment, if carried into law, would set a premium upon spinsterhood, that the law was not really unjust to women on the whole ["If an hon. gentleman married a widow with ten children, he had to support every one of them," said one of the hon. gentlemen], that God never interded women to vote, and so on. A "great man who flourished about 500 years before Christ" and the court of Dahomey were brought up and used in evidence against Mill. Gladstone was asked to express an opinion. He said nothing, but voted against the amendment. Seventy-three voted in favour and 196 against. True to posterity, a Lord something Hamilton voted against the proposal. But, including pairs and tellers, at least eighty Members of Parliament forty-five years

\* "Hansard," 30 Vict., 1867, Vol. III., p. 821.



ago found themselves in favour of Woman Suffrage. It was not a triumph, but a highly successful initiation. The London Woman's Suffrage Society was started, and Mill's motion developed into a movement.

### A Summary.

It is no easy task to collect and integrate all Mill's scattered dicta on women. Nor indeed would much interest be attached to the performance, for many of the evils, against which he stormed with his greatest energy, have been lessened, if not eradicated. Property rights have been granted, and the law has generally receded from its former implicit tenet that women form a criminal class. Custom (call it convention, if you will) no longer holds women in thralldom to the extent of forbidding any voluntarily undertaken remedy for economic dependence. It is permitted to women to become educated. Previously, curious as it may appear, women had only been permitted to educate. The self-supporting woman of the middle class is no longer the mid-Victorian governess, anæmic and, perhaps excusably, ready to descend upon the marriageable younger sons of her employers, pictured in many novels of the period. To what extent these changes may be attributed to Mill is only conjecturable. Whatever may be said to minimise his work, it cannot be disputed that he has been the inspirer of progressive women in every country where there are such women to a degree untouched by any predecessor.\*

Generally speaking, Mill's attitude was a very simple one. The well-worn metaphor of the ivy twined lovingly about the sturdy oak was no doubt picturesque and the rights of publication were enjoyed by a thousand minor poets. But the ivy is a parasite, and nobody but a decadent sentimentalist can extract much pleasure from the contemplation of parasitism practised upon a national scale. Let the law treat men and women as equals, and all the rest will follow. Writing on divorce, for example, he says, "I do not think that the conditions of the dissolubility of marriage can be properly determined until women have an equal voice in determining them, nor until there has been experience of the marriage relation as it would exist between equals. Until then I should not like to commit myself to more than the general principle of relief from the contract in extreme cases."† Let women be admitted to qualifying examinations for occupations on the same basis as men, then it will be seen whether women are capable of practising as doctors, lawyers, and the like. If they are found incapable, not much harm has been done; presumably there would be few women anxious to enter a profession, knowing that their predecessors in that profession had been unsuccessful by reason of their inherent and ineradicable sexual qualities. But, on the other hand, if they are successful, then the sources are doubled of the supply of skill, of knowledge, of energy to produce necessary services, to alleviate sufferings, and to add to the positive

\* See Dr. Stanton Coit's introduction to the 1909 edition of the "Subjection of Women."

† "Letters," Vol. II., p. 212.

goods of life. They are more than doubled, for the introduction of fresh skill will be accompanied with a new and keener competition waged between equals and beneficial in its outcome. With the improvement in the position of women, men too would gain. Then and then only will it be possible to imagine an ideal liberty, a state where the vague aspirations of to-day would be translated into achievements and facts enduring and powerful.

## DEMOCRAT.

There are persons to whose mental eyes democracy best presents itself as a great quasi-religious service. Such are Whitman, Carpenter and their followers. The conception lends itself to criticism because to attain good government it is highly undesirable that all the governed should worship at the same shrine; dissent is the very life-blood of harmony in things political. There are other persons, such as Mr. Asquith, for whom democracy is a limited liability affair, with an undistinguished coat of arms, bearing for its device a registration official, couchant, except in the first fortnight of July. Both these conceptions are sincerely held by a large number of excellent people, who firmly believe that the sovereign power resides in the people, and that it is desirable that it should continue to reside there.

It is, however, possible for a man to be a staunch democrat and yet to have the greatest possible detestation for the numerical majority—the “compact majority” at which Ibsen jibes so vigorously. England is, from a numerical point of view, governed to-day by the working classes. The working classes allow government to be conducted along lines which, frequently enough, are detrimental to their own interests, and, as we all believe at times, to the country's interests.

The distinction between the general idea of democracy and Mill's lies in this: by democracy is generally meant one active and combined majority, while Mill preferred to regard it as an agglomeration of minorities.\* The problem of democracy was to him, how to provide for the adequate expression of the different minorities. The greatest minority of all was, and still is, the women. The next greatest minorities were, then more than now, the several sections of the manual workers; and, after that, there were the numerous political minorities for whom the exigencies of parliamentary government prohibited representation in Westminster. For, to Mill, the free and unrestricted discussion of ideas was all-important. A person might hold any opinions under the sun—he might conceivably be a mad eugenicist favouring unnatural selection in the form of mating by *ad hoc* state officials—but it was not for any man or any institution to forbid the discussion of such ideas.

## Labour Representation.

It has just been mentioned that Mill held views on Labour Representation. Indeed, they circumstanced the genesis of the Labour Party. Mill had always maintained the friendliest relations with the

\* See Chapter VII., “Representative Government.”

trade union leaders of his time, especially with George Odger. In 1857 we find that he was encouraging and aiding Holyoake to put up one of the first parliamentary candidatures of a working man.\* John Bright was of opinion that Parliament was above classes and represented all; that the introduction of a labour element would add a class spirit of an unfortunate description. It was all very well to have extreme Radicals, who preached revolution, republicanism, etc., and were at times even punished for treasonable behaviour. But Bright knew very well that Horne Tooke, John Wilkes, and the rest were middle-class men (and Charles James Fox was an aristocrat!), whose sentiments, even in their most vehement moments, were not those of the multitude, and at times shared equally with Burke a certain academicism. Holyoake stood for the Tower Hamlets, but withdrew before the polling took place.

Mill realized, too, that government would not remain as it then was, a hobby of the wealthier class. "We are now, I think, standing on the very boundary line between this new statesmanship and the old, and the next generation will be accustomed to a very different set of political arguments and topics from those of the present and past."† The representation of the unrepresented was all-important. The presence of working men in the House of Commons seemed to him "indispensable to a sufficient discussion of public interests from the particular point of view of the working classes."‡ The policy he favoured was one of "keeping the Liberal out." In a letter written to Odger in 1871, when the latter was standing for Southwark, Mill says: "The working men are quite right in allowing Tories to get into the House to defeat this exclusive feeling of the Whigs (then in office), and may do it without sacrificing any principle. The working men's policy is to insist upon their own representation, and, in default of success, to permit Tories to be sent into the House until the Whig majority is seriously threatened, when, of course, the Whigs will be happy to compromise and allow a few working men representatives in the House."§ Well has experience justified this advice.

### The Heritage of Hare.

As to smaller minorities, for them he strongly supported a plan of proportional representation invented by Thomas Hare, in which Mill found the salvation of "independent opinion." "I saw in this great practical and philosophical idea the greatest improvement of which the system of representative government is susceptible, an improvement which, in the most felicitous manner, exactly meets and cures the grand, and what before seemed the inherent, defect of the representative system. . . . This great discovery, for it is no less, in the political art, inspired me, as I believe it has inspired all thoughtful persons who have adopted it, with new and more sanguine hopes respecting the prospects of human society; by freeing

\* See A. W. Humphrey, "A History of Labour Representation," and Holyoake's Biography (McCabe) and Autobiography.

† "Letters," Vol II., p. 56.

‡ Ibid., p. 268.

§ Webb's "History of Trade Unionism," p. 272.



the form of political institutions towards which the whole civilized world is manifestly and irresistibly tending, from the chief part of what seemed to qualify or render doubtful its ultimate benefits. Minorities, so long as they remain minorities, are, and ought to be, outvoted; but under arrangements which enable any assemblage of voters, amounting to a certain number, to place in the legislature a representative of its own choice, minorities cannot be suppressed. . . . The legislature, instead of being weeded of individual peculiarities and entirely made up of men who simply represent the creed of great political or religious parties, will comprise a large proportion of the most eminent individual minds in the country, placed there, without reference to party, by voters who appreciate their individual eminence."\* This much-belauded plan was a simple variant of the proportional representation idea: to secure election only a quota of votes are necessary, the remainder polled by a successful candidate are transferable to another candidate whose name the voter might himself put on the ballot-paper. Any elector is at liberty to vote for any candidate in any part of the country. These are the main provisions of the scheme. Mill's conversions to new ideas were always of the thoroughgoing nature. He appears to have preached the new invention in season and out of season, and, no doubt, made himself unpopular thereby.

### Proposed Improvements.

Mill subjected the entire Parliamentary system to a fairly searching analysis, both in his "Representative Government" and in a pamphlet "Thoughts on Parliamentary Reform." It must be confessed that he placed rather too high an estimate on the values of various points in the electoral machine. He believes that voting should be public and opposes the ballot. "The *spirit* of an institution," he comments, "the impression it makes on the mind of the citizen, is one of the most important parts of its operation."† Money payments of any sort should not be required of the candidate; they should be borne by his constituents. Members of Parliament should not be paid. If a Member is poor and requires pecuniary aid, his constituents should subscribe for the purpose. Perhaps the most curious of his efforts to tinker with the legislative machine is his recommendation that plurality of votes should be given, "not to property, but to proved superiority of education." This recommendation, however, he pathetically admits, did not meet with widespread approval. "As far as I have been able to observe, it has found favour with nobody."‡ Possibly even Mill had his doubts about it, for he says it was a suggestion "which I had never discussed with my almost infallible counsellor, and I have no evidence that she would have concurred in it." Another suggestion was that Parliament should not be burdened with the details of law making. "Any government fit for a high state of civilization would have as one of its fundamental elements a small body, not exceeding

\* "Autobiography," p. 148.

† "Representative Government," Chapter X.

‡ "Autobiography," p. 148.

in number the members of a Cabinet, who should act as a Commission of legislation, having for its appointed office to make the laws. . . . The Commission would only embody the element of intelligence in their construction; Parliament would represent that of will." \* Parliament was to issue instructions (presumably in the form of general resolutions), the Commission was to draft a Bill accordingly, which Parliament could either accept, reject, or refer back for amendment. Similarly Mill wished to separate the executive and administrative functions. "Instead of the function of governing, for which it is radically unfit, the proper office of a representative assembly is to watch and control the government." †

These suggestions—or, at any rate, some of them—may be considered as of nugatory importance and hardly worth discussing. But although their intrinsic worth may be nominal, they afford an excellent insight into the spirit inherent in all Mill's theories. The mental attitude of the bulk of mankind, so far as it has any, on the subject of democracy is, granted amiability and the absence of political discord, "There are wonderful things latent in democracy. May they remain so." Experimentation in democracy is now inextricably connected with the name Pankhurst. Pressed on the subject, the Bulk of Mankind develops distrust and party views. Mill is different. Believing, too, that there are wonderful things latent in democracy, he wishes them to be made patent. To secure this object no possible method is too minute, too circuitous. To develop every personality to its utmost was his ideal, and democracy was the most obvious of the many means by which that ideal was to be attained. The rights of the individual soul arose with Bentham; Mill adapted the patriarch's ideas to the requirements of his age.

### SOCIALIST.

In the course of its century-old career, the word Socialism has continually been changing its connotation. But, whatever might be its precise meaning about the time when Mill wrote his "Principles of Political Economy," there can be no possible doubt that the revolutions of 1848 gave the word a popular meaning synonymous with the terms applied to political behaviour of the most abominable character. And the sister-term Communism shared the opprobrium. Yet Mill, who always sought the truth, gave the schemes of Fourier, Saint-Simon and Louis Blanc careful attention in his "Principles of Political Economy"; and when the 1852 edition appeared the following extraordinary expression of opinion was included in his study of Communism: "If, therefore, the choice were to be made between Communism with all its chances, and the present state of society with all its sufferings and injustices; if the institution of private property necessarily carried with it as a consequence that the produce of labour should be apportioned as we now see it, almost in an inverse ratio to the labour—the largest portions to those who have never worked at all, the next largest to those whose work is almost

\* "Representative Government," Chapter V.

† Ibid, loc. cit.

nominal, and so in a descending scale, the remuneration dwindling as the work grows harder and more disagreeable, until the most fatiguing and exhausting bodily labour cannot count with certainty on being able to earn even the necessities of life; if this or Communism were the alternative, all the difficulties, great or small, of Communism would be but as dust in the balance."\* It is almost necessary to remind oneself that the writer was the son of James Mill, and the spiritual heir of the individualists.

On the subject of State enterprise he maintains silence, although, generally speaking, he is opposed to any extension of government interference, on the grounds that a multiplicity of functions must lead to inefficiency. Yet he is always anxious to learn by experiment; on no account will he have an experiment hindered because it does not fit in with his views. Writing to Edwin Chadwick in 1867 he says: "I think there is a chance that Ireland may be tried as a *corpus vile* for experimentation on Government management of railways."† In 1898 the Fabian Society published Tract No. 98, "State Railways for Ireland." In 1910 the Vice-Regal Commission on Irish Railways declared by a bare majority in favour of nationalization. The mills of God grind slowly.

### The Individual and the State.

Mill was for ever insisting upon the necessity for a moral as well as an economic improvement. Writing to Auberon Herbert the year before his death, Mill said: "My idea is (but I am open to correction) that, for some time to come, politics and social and economic questions will be the absorbing subjects to most of those working men who have the aspirations and the mental activity to which the appeal would have to be made. . . . You wish to make them feel the importance of the higher virtues. I think this can be most effectually done by pointing out to them how much those virtues are needed to enable a democracy, and above all any approach to Socialism, to work in any satisfactory manner."‡

It is not unfair to suggest that, before the last few years of his life, when Mill made a special study of Socialism, he was by no means clear as to what Socialists wanted, and whether or not he was one of them. The following passage, for example, while it teems with the utmost philanthropy, at the same time reveals a curious indecision. It refers to Mrs. Mill and himself: "While we repudiated with the greatest energy that tyranny of society over the individual which most Socialistic systems are supposed to involve, we yet looked forward to a time when society will no longer be divided into the idle and the industrious; when the rule that they who do not work shall not eat will be applied not to paupers only, but impartially to all; when the division of the produce of labour, instead of depending, as in so great a degree it now does, on the accident of birth, will be made by concert on an acknowledged principle of justice; and when it will no longer either be, or be thought to be, impossible for human

\* "Principles," Book II., Chapter I., § 3.

† "Letters," Vol. II., p. 194.

‡ "Letters," Vol. II., p. 328.



beings to exert themselves strenuously in procuring benefits which are not to be exclusively their own, but to be shared with the society they belong to. The social problem of the future we considered to be how to unite the greatest individual liberty of action with a common ownership in the raw material of the globe, and an equal participation of all in the benefits of combined labour."\* He consistently affirmed what he denied, and it is difficult to place him with absolute accuracy.

Reference has already been made to a work on Socialism planned by Mill in his last years. Of this only four chapters came to be actually written, and were first published in 1879 in the pages of the *Fortnightly Review*. Mill begins by showing that the gradual arrival of manhood suffrage in all countries would lead sooner or later to the thorough discussion of the subject of property. In fact, the Labour Congresses and the "International Society" (probably the International Working Men's Association) were already discussing the subject, and so formulating the future courses of action of the working classes of the different countries of Europe. He then proceeds to study the Socialist indictment. It is curious that he makes neither here nor elsewhere any mention of Marx or the Communist Manifesto.

### The Socialist Indictment.

The Socialist indictment constitutes, he admits, "a frightful case, either against the existing order of society or against the position of man himself in this world." He believes that Socialists generally placed too much emphasis on the evils of competition, without noticing its beneficial consequences. Nevertheless, on this subject "Socialists have really made out the existence not only of a great evil, but of one which grows and tends to grow with the growth of population and wealth." He then himself gives at some length some of the less obvious evils of fraud, bankruptcy, etc., but thinks that in production fraud could be largely "overcome by the institution of co-operative stores." Yet, having examined the expressions of Socialists, and convicted them of exaggeration, he admits that that by no means settles the whole matter, and concludes a chapter with the words, "... the intellectual and moral grounds of Socialism deserve the most attentive study, as affording in many cases the guiding principles of the improvements necessary to give the present economic system of society its best chance." It is instructive to make an analysis, paragraph by paragraph, of his final summing-up. It is then seen that the favourable and unfavourable dicta alternate in an uninterrupted sequence throughout. The conclusion is as follows: "The result of our review of the various difficulties of Socialism has led us to the conclusion that the various schemes for managing the productive resources of the country by public instead of private agency have a case for a trial, and some of them may eventually establish their claims to preference over the existing order of things, but that they are at present workable only by the *elite* of mankind, and have yet to prove their power of training

\* "Autobiography," p. 133.

mankind at large to the state of improvement which they presuppose." As to taking over the whole land and capital of the country and centralizing its administration, that is "obviously chimerical." The revolutionary plan of taking over everything by one blow meets with no grace whatever.

But this does not conclude Mill's survey. He realizes that the root of the matter is the conception of property. He agrees that the right of holding property, and to a still larger extent of transmitting it, is conferred and maintained by the State. Hence this conclusion: "A proposed reform in laws or customs is not necessarily objectionable because its adoption would imply, not the adaptation of all human affairs to the existing idea of property, but the adaptation of existing ideas of property to the growth and improvement of human affairs. . . . Society is fully entitled to abrogate or alter any particular right of property which, on sufficient consideration, it judges to stand in the way of the public good. And assuredly the terrible case which, as we saw in a former chapter, Socialists are able to make out against the present economic order of society, demands a full consideration of all means by which the institution may have a chance of being made to work in a manner more beneficial to that large portion of society which at present enjoys the least share of its direct benefits."

What does all this come to? It may at first sight appear feeble, tentative, undirected. But before pronouncing a final judgment, a glance at Mill's material will be instructive. This consists mainly—almost exclusively—of the visions of Owen, the far-fetched schemes of Fourier, and the aspirations of Louis Blanc.

Yet, in all this amorphous and inchoate matter, Mill was able to discern many of the stable elements. He exclaims against centralization just as he had doubted the possibility of any great growth of joint stock enterprise merely because he could not foresee the extent of its future development. But he sees behind all the cloudinesses of the Socialists of 1848 something substantial, something real. He is able to sketch something very near the actual line of the future evolution of Socialist thought. Had he lived another ten years he would almost certainly have been amongst the founders of the Fabian Society.

### Back to Mill.

The Socialist movement to-day, or rather, the evolutionary section, stands far from the field of combat selected by its progenitors. To-day many ideas are regarded as of secondary importance, or nugatory or actually wrong, which a generation ago were held as dogma, beyond criticism or attack. And the evolutionary Socialist of to-day may find himself opposed to land nationalization, or even to any accepted *ad hoc* nationalization. He may be opposed to the multiplication of State officials; he may support or he may, on the whole, oppose the Labour Party, preferring to throw in his lot for the attainment of his ideals with a party until recently unanimously denounced as bourgeois capitalist. And even then he will, and does, sincerely believe himself to be a Socialist. The idea of what

constitutes Socialism and a Socialist is changing. What is the direction of the change? It appears well within the bounds of probability that the attitude of the evolutionary Socialist upon matters connected with society (granted some few exceptions) is approximating to that of Mill. To the present writer it seems probable that the history of the next few years of the Socialist movement will accentuate the changing attitude. It is almost safe to predict the development of the movement. The next few years of its history will be marked by the augmented value attached to the "moral factor," which will be used by Socialists as a touchstone in matters of legislation. The co-operative movement will meet with support from Socialists, and will probably extend its scope. The Socialist programme will shrink to the dimensions of a single session's possibilities, and will refuse to discuss the nationalization of any services not already, as it were, upon the list. A larger share of attention will be given to problems specially affecting women. These are but a few of the salient probabilities: their derivation is obvious. And long before they emerge as things accomplished Mill will have received his rightful share of recognition as one of the moulders of modern Socialism and the future State.

### Conclusion.

Perhaps the most important point about Mill is his attitude. He was the son of his father in more senses than one. There is an extraordinary parallelism between their works. The father wrote an "Elements of Political Economy," the son wrote the "Principles of Political Economy, with Some of their Applications to Social Philosophy." The father wrote an essay on "Government," the son an "Essay on Representative Government." The father wrote "An Analysis of the Problems of the Human Mind," the son wrote his "Logic" as a sort of introduction and the "Examination of Hamilton" as a sort of supplement. As we have seen, both hereditary and environmental influences were applied in the most thorough manner possible. The mental attitude of J. S. Mill therefore is individual only so far as it differs from his father's. Very largely the broadness of his views, even when they appear opposed to his father's, is simply to be ascribed to the gradual exploitation of the elder's theories. But to whatever degree his work is put down to paternal influence, there can be no doubt that J. S. Mill exerted a wonderfully broadening effect over English political thought. Mill translated the notion of police, as held by Bentham, into the notion of a polity. The study of the affairs of the State was held to be the study of the means of attaining the greatest cheapness. Mill changed the idea of economy into the idea of economics. In Mill's childhood the greatest importance was attached to the study of the humanities; he made the greatest importance attach to the study of humanity. It is as a broadening influence that he is most important, infusing the doctrines of Liberalism with something more approaching liberality, and directing, for the first time, to the claims of labour a substantial portion of public attention.



Another point is worth briefly discussing. There are two lines along which changes in the body politic may arrive: by gradual evolution and by cataclysmic revolution. The method of evolution is slow, sure, and unattractive. The other method is attractive because of its pyrotechnic qualities, and windy philosophies will ever sway the imagination of the politically uninstructed. Mill is noteworthy principally as an excellent doubter. He had no originality; he hesitates always. But out of his hesitations come great things. If his direction be zigzag, nevertheless he marks a path; and in his case, at any rate, his end was worth more than his conclusions.

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