SIDELIGHTS ON HISTORY

BY HENRI VANDERBYLL

HONESTY will compel us to admit that the mind is a miserably inefficient instrument, in its present condition of development, at least, with which to grasp this immense scheme of existence. It threatens to cease operating should we persist in confronting it with the incomprehensible immeasurability of that which is. Such threats perhaps constitute a source of discouragement for us. We think of this fussy, foolish, weeping, sweating humanity in connection with the utter purposelessness and futility of all its wondering and questioning, of all its seeking, hunting and ferreting out the truth! But a consoling thought is the following: our forefathers were worse off than we are at present. Their minds were more miserably inefficient than ours are today. History clearly hints at the fact that the human race is steadily progressing, intellectually, towards a certain point. It is true that we, the individual, travel but a negligible distance. Nature, however, concerns herself with the future of the race, and not particularly with that of the individual. When we, therefore, find ourselves caught in the maelstrom of life, wondering in despair what it is all about, let us solve the problem half way by realizing that we are, for a fleeting moment, a part of a slowly-progressing whole. Ours is the duty to conspire with nature towards the realization of her schemes concerning the entire human race by being as good a part as lies within our power.

Even if we cannot find a satisfactory answer to the burning question relating to the mystery of being, we should consider that the average intelligence of the whole of which we are a part completely overshadows that of any humanity that existed in the past. Here, then, is a source of hope that casts its searchlight on a future human race: from utter night and inability to think, through the twilight of half-awakeness, towards daylight and understanding, such is the course which humanity is following according to the facts

of history. Our ancestors have left a sufficient number of imprints on the sands of time to enable us to obtain an idea of the general direction in which they were traveling. Their course followed a more or less straight line that extends through the present into the future, and their destination seems to have been at all times the hidden throne of supreme intelligence. But man's journey through existence is a more or less complicated one. The trail is constantly picked up by offspring and next generation where parent and ancestor breathe their last. Succeeding generations travel faster than their predecessors, and their appreciation of the surrounding scenery is different from that of the latter. In the second place, noisy activity that reverberates through the hollow past, and false glory and glitter that cast their deceiving luminosity upon the screen of the present, are liable to divert the attention of the superficial observer from the actual human thing that travels through space and time to the expressions that of necessity accompany it. But, perhaps, we encounter our greatest difficulty in forming an adequate conception of a progressing human race.

Was our present human race born in darkest antiquity, did it slowly and painfully develop into the present product, and is it now toiling towards still greater heights? There seems to be question, at all times, of several human races that simultaneously share the shelter of this globe. One among them, however, is specially favored by nature. It is permitted to lean upon the past, and to gradually raise itself into the golden mist of the future. In time, the other races vanish, almost imperceptibly, from the presence of ascending man. The latter is occasionally reminded of their existence as he sees them wander aimlessly in the vicinity, like distant memories that haunt the present, like tired souls that seek a resting place. *A* humanity is constantly progressing, even if scattered heaps of human debris mark the trail which it follows through eternity. It represents the noblest product which nature has been able to fashion, with age-long, infinite patience, from her original supply of human clay. It is the life-driven core which, stem-like, shoots high above the first ephemeral human leaves, and which eventually must culminate in the full-grown flower that rocks on the breeze of heaven. What sort of flower, and what sort of heaven? We cannot know. But we can surmise. Its growth, like that of all upward-shooting stems, is imperceptible from moment to moment, but measurable when we compare its present development with that of a remote yesterday.

In our endeavor to roughly measure human progress, we should not forget the fact that nature has cast her trial packages of human beings upon the earth, and that many have been found wanting by the gods. The temporary greatness of half-fashioned man echoes through the past, and makes a bit of ancient history. But the contents of the best among the packages is still the basic substance of the God-aspiring human being of today who writes his share of the eternal history of man upon the granite brow of time. True it is that all men spring from a common origin, but not all men traveled the same road, nor did they cover equal distances. Some turned to the left, some to the right, and some went straight ahead. Those who wandered from the main highway of evolution lingered for a while, dreaming their dreams of bygone greatness, then silently and unobserved slid into the abyss of oblivion. Those who traveled straight ahead, the torchbearers of intelligence, ascended the peak of civilization, and their present descendants are still climbing. The latter look down upon the trails made by the wanderers who, ages ago, went to the left and to the right—trails that finally will lose themselves in the scrapheap of evolution. Evolution chooses at all times the best from among its innumerable samples of humanity. The superior product must ye be improved upon, must become another stepping stone in the process of fashioning ideal man.

The task of roughly measuring the progress which man has made during a certain period of time is, therefore, a difficult one. We compare present man with the human being of two thousand years ago, and we conclude that man has progressed considerably during that period of time. But who is man of today, and who was he of two thousand years ago? Human beings live at present that cannot compare very favorably, as far as intelligence is concerned, with men that existed twenty centuries ago. The reverse is true. But when we mention today's human being, we unconsciously refer to the most developed men of the present. We choose, likewise, the leading civilization of twenty centuries ago for a basis of comparison. In fact, in our study of human progress, we should retrace the steps of those that temporarily functioned as torchbearers of human intelligence. That is something which we often neglect to do. As a result, we are unable to join the many dim and time-hidden sections of the human trail in such a manner that the whole becomes a path of uniform progress. We see the very beginning of things, climb in thought through the realm of physical evolution into the domain of human intelligence, continue soaring towards the present and, finally,

behold the immediate doom of the human race. Such conclusions completely puzzle the logical mind. If two hundred thousand, nay, a million years, spell seven consecutive letters of the word, progress, across the desert of the past, should we not expect that the last and completing letter is being written at present, or that it will be written in the near future? And should we not make an effort, at least, to search for indications pointing at the fact that such is the case, rather than throw a million years of progressive creation into the depths of cataclysmic oblivion?

There is a class of thinkers whose failure to see in history a more or less unbroken path of human progress is caused by mistranslating the past rather than by misunderstanding the present. Their ideas, we believe, constitute a greater impediment to the progress of enlightenment than those of the sensationally inclined pessimists who are prepared to throw humanity on the scrapheap of time. They have mixed the sections of the ancient human trail. They have misspelled the word, progress, in such a manner that the final letter was written thousands of years ago. They urge us to be guided by the thoughts and the sayings of people who lived in an age when the simplest phenomena of nature were completely hidden mysteries for the human mind. They would have our intellect cease its further efforts, and accept that which other minds, long ago, managed to unravel from the tangled threads of this baffling existence.

In these days of modernism, the extraordinary spectacle presents itself of antiquity coming back to life. One is modern, apparently, when one's thoughts linger on the level of intelligence of some twenty or thirty centuries ago. Religions and cults are being founded on the "ancient wisdom." Half-forgotten superstitions are being resurrected from the garbage pile of human thought, wrapped in an attractive, modern dress, after which they become excellent sources of income for unscrupulous adventurers. Unless evolution is a myth, however, or unless the mind is exempt from its laws, the pages of history should not be turned back for the purpose of discovering intelligence equal to or greater than the present one. The journey of humanity is, for one thing, a progressively intellectual one. We often fail to penetrate down to intelligence, and we stop at the vividly colored screen of murders, battles, inquisitions, and revolutions that rather effectively camouflage history. But history's distant smoke and thunder are expressions that necessarily belong to the average intelligence of the history makers. When reading with an open mind, we should gather from the records that, as time

progresses, color begins to replace the originally black smoke, and music the rumble of thunder.

The ancients, no doubt, owned their leaders whose intelligence was superior to that of the masses. The prehistoric wizard, pretending to call forth the clouds and to produce rain, was such a leader. The prophet of biblical times who possessed the ability to clearly survey the present and to link it with the immediate future, was another such leader. The important civilizations of antiquity are known to us by the thoughts and deeds of their more intelligent sons who registered on the scroll of time. In fact, we know overwhelmingly more about the intelligent sons than we do about the civilizations themselves. And, so, we commit the error of judging an entire people by the few individuals that shone like stars of the first magnitude in the firmament of humanity. That is one reason why we fail to discover intellectual progress in certain periods of history. Another reason is our absurd attempt to transplant ancient glory into modern soil. That, if we will but consider the nature of both the soil and the atmosphere of the present, is a hopeless attempt. Let us imagine, if we can, a Moses, or a Caesar, or a Paul, in a twentieth century setting!

Intellectual leaders are products of the times, and they fit, more or less, into their surroundings. Though they generally travel ahead of the masses, much like stray clouds that precede the main body of stormclouds, an undeniable relationship nevertheless exists between them and the masses that follow them. They are not too far advanced, intellectually, but their contemporaries are prepared to listen to them. Theirs is the task, whether they are aware of the fact or not, to cut a rough path through regions as yet unexplored by the human mind. Years, sometimes centuries, elapse before the rough-hewn path becomes a beaten trail. Then, another pioneer, more finely equipped mentally, is needed. Human greatness has its setting and is, therefore, relative and ephemeral. It belongs to a particular age with its particular average intelligence. Prevailing thoughts and conceptions form a dark background through which superior intelligence sends its shafts of light. Hammurabi, ancient king of the Babylonians, parts of whose code of laws might not be entirely out of place even in our present civilization, worshipped star-gods. Moses, great leader and legislator of the Hebrews, "went up into the mountain" to hold personal conversation with deity. Solomon, wisest of Jewish kings, in his temple had gathered almost every

symbol belonging to foreign heathen religions. Kepler, astronomical genius, interspersed his writings with a good deal of astrological nonsense. Flammarion, the highly poetic and imaginative astronomer, communicates with the souls of departed dogs.

A good deal of average thought and conception clings to the genius, and the records of the great men of history rather indicate in what sort of world they lived and what sort of intellectual atmosphere was theirs. Can we sever the genius of Shakespeare from the world of kings, merchants of Venice, Romeos and Juliets, in which he lived in a physical and in an intellectual sense? Were it possible to transplant the mind of a Shakespeare into the present, the result would be as disastrous as that of transplanting a flower from its native to a foreign soil and climate. It is doubtful whether such a mind would be able to lead its owner to recognition or fame in our present world of dethroned kings, presidents and Lenines, of eugenics and birthcontrol, of cubists, modernists and impressionists, of women's clubs and women's votes, of Versailles peace treaties and disarmament conferences.

Why, then, this desperate clinging to the past? Humanity shows its appreciation of the rare occurrence of the great man's arrival by indulging in a good deal of Carlyle's hero-worship. Now, hero-worship is an excellent thing at the right time and in the right place. When it persists for too many generations, however, it may cause man to ignore the presence of his contemporary heroes. There is, we think, altogether too much worship of ancient and not sufficient appreciation of present glory and greatness. It seems to be a sort of customary obligation with us to do homage to the past, whether or not this be with the approval of our intelligence. We all think Milton great, for instance. If, however, we had sufficient courage to speak our minds, we would suggest that the poetry of the old bards is mostly artificial speech, and that the subjects which aroused their poetic emotions cannot interest us from a standpoint of intelligence. Garb nonsense in a rhythmic dress of melodious sound, and it nevertheless remains nonsense. What, asks modern intelligent man, do I learn from the person who wrote magnificently concerning the tortures of the damned? Nothing more than this, that our predecessors possessed some extraordinary notions about life after death and about the consequences of sin. That the great man wrote magnificently is of course to our benefit. It gave prolonged life to the fruit of his intellectual labors, as a result of which we own a record of the thoughts and ideas that prevailed centuries

ago. But, in view of our own ripening conceptions and ideas, should we not honestly admit that we prefer one Emerson to a hundred Chaucers, Miltons, Dantes, or Popes?

If average humanity were not constantly becoming more intelligent, greatness would be a thing immortal. As matters stand, however, it fades with the years, and finally becomes a more or less glorious memory. Leadership is made possible by those who are willing to be led. The receptive attitude of the audience determines that thought shall endure for a while. The attitude in question is receptive when the average intelligence of the listener is not so much inferior to that of the teacher but the former is able to glimpse the realm of truth which lies just beyond the one in which he dwells. The nature of the audience, however, is subject to constant change, and for that reason humanity requires new great men every once in a while. These new great men must represent average intelligence, and a little more. The little more constitutes their greatness, and it is the magnet which draws prevailing average intelligence towards the level which is next in order.

But we often see human greatness in the past where in reality there is none. The past has its charms, to which we easily fall victim. Its most barbaric noises not unfrequently sound like music in our ears. Perhaps it is a sort of race-memory that lures us away from the present into the ruins of yesterday. Whether the past be represented by a worm-eaten piece of furniture, or by a dust-covered canvass, or by a thought that has become ridiculous with age, we are prepared to cherish and to worship. Like our individual history, however, that of mankind records the progress from infancy to comparative matuity. And the present stage of comparative maturity is preferable to the innocent but foolish fancy of youth. Undeveloped judgment, naughty tricks, silly behavior, uncontrollable love of possession, childlike fancy, fear of the dark and the unknown, an almost unlimited capacity for believing fairy-tales, such things accompany the youthful stages of a developing human race. The things in which infant humanity believed, its fears and terrors of the unknown, its dreams and its fairy-tales, are dimly reflected in its fussy and noisy activities upon this globe, and saturate its artistic creations. They are indelibly written on the clay tablet, the papyrus and the manuscript of universal literature. Nor should we suppose that the present age of comparative enlightenment indicates that man has entered into the period of full maturity. Eternity has many centuries, periods, cycles and aeons available for a thorough process

of human development, and evolution, thus far, has failed to display signs of either hurry or impatience. We, too, have our naughty tricks our silliness, our fairy-tales, and our incorrigible love of possession. We own them, perhaps, on a higher level of development.

Coupled with our unreasonable love for antiquity is our failure to link greatness with intelligence. The smoke and fog, and the occasional bright glow of history, detract our attention from the fact that behind that curtain of alternate blackness and radiance labors an intelligence of some sort. The things that have been done in the past are interesting because they reveal the actor has progressed on his journey towards enlightenment. Lifting the multi-colored veil that hides naked history, we behold a single scene. We see man stagger from darkness into light. From the very moment that he crawls on all fours from out the underbrush of his primeval forest, his efforts are directed towards following the staight and narrow path of intellectual progress. There is no question of conscious effort. He is unaware of the fact that his early falls and bruises are instrumental in keeping him on the straight and narrow path. He does not dream that his subsequent foolish running hither and thither in the labyrinth of bypaths that lead from the main highway constitutes experience which teaches him how to walk sensibly. After a thousand years, however, we see him turn towards the road that lies behind and that vanishes in the mist of a distant past, and we hear him exclaim: "I have progressed!" The ultimate results of his unconscious efforts is progress, a progress which is, as a rule unnoticeable to the wanderer, himself, but which is clearly marked on the map of time.

The strange things that man does, and the peculiar noises that he utters, on his journey towards the light, really are of secondary importance. They, indeed, do not constitute history. The creature that does and utters, he is history. The nature of his actions and that of his utterings change as he progresses. The things that man, at any time, says and does in the hollowness of this immense universe, belong to the particular lap of his journey as sand belongs to the desert, or as green belongs to the oasis. They are the natural and necessary expressions of a certain degree of human intelligence. Would we have history be a disconnected series of events brought about by the busy aimless doings of man? Or should the nature of the act tell us something about the kind of thought that dwelt in the mind of the actor? When acquainting our children in school with many prominent figures in history, we do not sufficiently em-

phasize the fact that the performances of our ancestors naturally reveal the degree of their intellectual development. We owe the younger generation an apology for requiring that they shall make a knowledge of such performances a part of their education. That apology may well be framed upon the assertion that the human intellect develops slowly and gradually, and that man's activities upon this planet, at any time, roughly reveal the stage of maturity at which the mind has arrived. We, instructors, are to such an extent inclined to offer heroworship to the past, that our pupils plunge into the serious business of life with the conviction that queen Elizabeth was an excellent woman, and that Napoleon was a truly great man.

The question arises, When may we speak of superior intelligence? In what particular manner do highly intelligent people express themselves? Let us consider Sumer of seven thousand years ago. The Sumerians dug canals for irrigating purposes. They fnced their land, plowed it, sowed their seed, and reaped their harvest. Records exist that mention one or two of their real estate transactions. Surely, we must speak of intelligence here! Let us consider Hammurabi, wise king of a Babylonia that flourished more than twenty centuries before the birth of Christ. It was he who prepared a schedule of wages to which employers must adhere. In his famous code of laws he stipulated a sum which the physician might charge, and which the patient must pay, for certain treatments and operations. He reserved a severe penalty for the architect whose carelessness in building a dwelling should result in injury to the tenant. He condemned to death the judge who, knowingly, pronounced sentence in violation of justice. Again, we feel compelled to speak of civilization and intelligence.

Considerations of this sort seem to lead to the conclusion that, after all, intelligence has not made giant strides across the waste of centuries. In choosing the facts, however, by which we arrive at our conclusion, we do not act entirely without prejudice. Hammurabi's code, for instance, contains a larger number of laws the contents of which cause us to shiver with horror. Such laws have no place in our present civilization, and may have been necessary for a much less developed humanity. The few bright points that flicker in the appalling darkness of ancient times should not make us ignore that appalling darkness. Nor should we imagine that everything that we call civilization is necessarily indicative of a highly-developed intelligence. The first expressions of intelligence, especially those of an inventive nature, owed their existence to necessity.

The sort of intelligence which results from necessity is also, to a certain small extent, possessed by animals that probably inherited it from a long line of ancestors. The latter, in turn, acquired it while struggling for self-preservation. We, today, possess it, and use it for the purpose of acquiring the dollar, the thing that buys preservation of family and self. Considered in its naked reality, it is a weapon that must successfully combat the terrors and the threats of the external world, and that must wrest from its bosom the things which the hungry belly craves.

Now, it is a difficult matter to estimate a people's degree of intellectual development solely with the aid of the things which they create or employ for the purpose of ameliorating the conditions of life. Low water in the Swiss lakes revealed, recently, the remains of dwellings which thousands of years ago housed the so-called Lake-dwellers. Necessity in the shape of wild beasts lurking in the vicinity, and of rising and furious waters, stirred a probably very immature intellect to creative activity when these ancient people conceived the idea of building their homes on piles. We find the Javanese and the Malay people of today, however, build their huts in a similar manner. They use bamboo sticks instead of wooden poles. Necessity, in the latter instance, is represented by wild beasts and by swampy ground with its inevitable fever. Should we conclude that the ancient Lake-dwellers were on the same level of development with the present Malay people and Javanese? But, instead of looking backward, let us consider a hypothetical case of the future. Our descendants, ten thousand years hence, endeavor to unearth the long-buried empire of Japan. They find the well-preserved hull of the Mutsu, battleship among ancient battleships. They face concrete evidence of the use of wireless and telegraphy in the ancient days of the empire. In fact, they hit upon identical appearances of civilization when unearthing the ancient American and Japanese cities. Will they conclude that the Americans and the Japanese of ten thousand years ago dwelt on the same level of intelligence?

The material paraphernalia of human life, those things created by man for the purpose of making the business of living a more comfortable one, undoubtedly inform us to a certain extent about his degree of intelligence. Manicure sets and beauty parlors, submarines and bombing planes, street cars and limousines, are creations of a highly intelligent type of human being. Yet, do such things fail to give us a definite idea regarding the stage of development at which the employer of such things has arrived. The American negro, for

example, wears a silk shirt, smokes cigarettes, telephones to his neighbor, rides on street cars and travels in automobiles, celebrates the Fourth and eats Thanksgiving dinner. Is he the American's equal in an intellectual sense? And can we, with certainty, ascertain the development of the peoples of history by making their material paraphernalia of life our basis of judgment? It is not altogether from the manner in which their palaces were built, their armies organized, or their meals served, that we can fully estimate their intelligence. There is another kind of paraphernalia of human life which more definitely points at the particular place which man has reached on his journey towards enlightenment. They are purely intellectual, and they are at all times original with those who invent and accept them. They differ from the material paraphernalia in this, that they result from thought which is impersonal, whereas the material paraphernalia invariably owe their existence to conceptions of necessity or desirability, their immediate purpose being that of protecting, pleasing, or coddling self. The latter, moreover, are easily imitated, and their use is easily adopted by human beings much inferior in intelligence to the original inventors. A savage can be taught to eat with a silver spoon. But, even if a monkey wears a golden ring, he still remains an ugly thing.

The physical objects with which man surrounds himself, even today, more quickly draw our attention and arouse our admiration than the thoughts which he thinks. In the study of history, we are similarly inclined to link superior intelligence with the feat of placing a huge block of sandstone on top of another rather than to see immature civilization in the fact that armies of slaves were compelled to perform that feat. The magnificence and the hugeness of ancient temples make us forget the absurdity of the ideas which they embody. The one-sided genius of a Napoleon blinds us to his modernized primitive make-up. We are perfectly willing to let a million dollars cover a multitude of the most selfish sins. Human existence, however, in one respect at least, is a struggle for supremacy between thought of self and thought of not-self in the individual. Which of the two will eventually reign supreme is as yet a matter of guesswork. Thought of self being associated with the ineradicable instinct of self-preservation, in all probability will always be present in man. But the value that we attach to its expressions will decrease as we learn to correctly estimate that of the products of thought of not-self. Among the latter must be classed laws, institutions, religions, philosophies, science, art, customs, traditions, in short, such

products of intelligence as have nothing to do with the belly or the self.

As examples of what we have named, the intellectual paraphernalia of human life, we would cite a Workman's Compensation Act, an Eight Hour Law, a League of Nations (were it realizable under present conditions). We are well aware that the existence of such laws and institutions, in the opinion of many, is made possible by a more or less mature development of man's moral, ethical or, perhaps, spiritual nature. If by, spiritual nature of man, is meant the nature of something which is identical with the ego or soul, we confess our inability to argue the point. The nature of the soul is a profound mystery to us. As regards the moral and ethical natures of man, we suggest that they are far from being the fundamental things which we often suppose them to be. They were gradually acquired and developed by him in the course of his career, and they are most intimately associated with intelligence, the maturity or immaturity of which they faithfully reflect in the individual's attitude towards the world of not-self, in particular, the human world. Our failure to link morals and ethics with intelligence as a source from which they spring, in many instances gives rise to the conception of a more or less sentimental love which man harbors, or is capable of harboring, for his fellow, be the latter friend or stranger. The modern age, especially, is saturating the world with a theoretical brotherly love which it seems impossible to put into practice. This love, too, is conceived to be something fundamental, and independent of intelligence. We observe, however, that the author of a Workman's Compensation Act was not primarily fired with love for the worker. Before such love can be or express itself, there must be something else. There must be the ability to live in thought beyond the limits of an individual world which is bounded by a solid wall of self-interest. There must be the ability to think about things other than ME. The mind's field of activity must extend beyond house and lot, beyond business interests, beyond private ambitions, into a surrounding world of things and creatures that differ from the self not only in their nature with its accompanying expressions, but also with respect to the immediate goal towards which they are traveling. The mind's field of activity must first have widened, perhaps, into an immeasurable universe of night-depths, with the uncountable things and creatures which it contains. The creature whose interest is centered exclusively in his ME, not only is devoid of generosity, unselfishness, and sympathy for his suffering fellow, he is

also ignorant. Self-centeredness and the inability to be aware of the world of not-self necessarily go together. The individual is not equipped to receive impressions from the external world. In the absence of such impressions, the field which the intellect covers is limited to immediate surroundings, and to things and conditions that are of immediate personal interest. The result is, that an attitude of sympathetic understanding towards the creatures belonging to the external world of which he is hardly aware, is impossible.

Our failure to realize that the moral and ethical nature of man, and his activities in general, are shaped by individual intelligence, prevent us from gaining a clear insight into the meaning of history, and from tracing the steps of a progressive human evolution. We are incapable of deciding which sort of intelligence is inferior and which superior, because we do not penetrate beyond the inevitable expressions of intelligence unto intelligence, itself. We do not here man to assert that human intelligence is a thing fundamental. Where there is intelligence, there necessarily is something which is intelligent. For present practical purposes we need not yet consider this something. We may content ourselves with divesting man from the various cloaks, physical, moral and ethical, that rather effectively conceal him. He then reveals himself as a center of intelligence that travels the road of progress. The progress in question consists of the increased ability of intelligence to reflect upon the world that lies beyond ME. The world that lies beyond ME is the external world. And the external world is a mighty large one. In fact, it is the universe, which owns, or does not own, limits: we are as yet uncertain about the matter.

It is seldom that historians draw our attention to the most important revelation of history. We are asked to witness the growth of intelligence during the last fifty centuries or so. But just exactly where and how this growth is discernible is not definitely stated. Improved morals and broader ideals are distilled from yesterday's materials. Tolerable living conditions, a social life of a fair order, and all the material paraphernalia that are essential to modern civilization, we are told, are the nuggets that remain after thoroughly sifting and washing the apparently valueless muck of history. But, the thousand and one things that pertain to human life evolve with man. Not a tool that he employs, not an institution which is his, not a custom to which he adheres, but it owns its history of development. From the distant past man, himself, emerges a constantly changing creature, and the comet's tail of paraphernalia, material and intellec-

tual, that trail close behind him, reflect the shadows and the glimmers of his progressing self. To see in history the growth of morals, only, or the perfection of tools or an improvement in the social order, is to see merely the whirling eddies in the main stream of human life. That which necessarily belongs to man diverts our attention from fundamental man, himself. The exclusive interest that we display in human expressions is the cause of our ignoring the mysterious nature and the silent and subtle development of the creature that expresses.

Progressive intelligence has the tendency to soar skyward. That statement may be taken literally. Although the intellect has achieved innumerable successes in various directions, it has been mainly busy, and rather successfully, we think, exploring the external world. Man has lived, from the very beginning, in two worlds. The first is, of course, the actual universe, true existence, that which is. The second is the world of his imagination. Perhaps it is more nearly correct to say that it is the world of which he is capable of being aware, dressed in the colors of his imagination. Now, the second world was, at first, a very limited one. Man's immature development is characterized by his being deeply absorbed in self. This high degree of self-centeredness is the cause of his being unaware of the presence of a large and an intricate external world. Only such objects and phenomena as immediately affect the self are observed by him, and are eventually being reflected upon. But the world in which man thought that he lived slowly and gradually expanded. It encircled tribes and hunting grounds. It included thundergods and stargods. It embraced empires and inland seas, oceans and continents. It became the abode of deities. It enveloped the earth, and assumed the proportions of a solar system. It extended towards the luminosity of the Milky Way. At present, it is losing its boundaries in the unutterable magnificence of an infinite immensity of universe. Strange and impractical as the fact may seem, man's chief business upon this earth has been the intelligent discovery of the world that lies outside the self. It is significant, moreover, that the external world of his fancy, which at the start was absolutely unlike the eternal origin, in time began to resemble reality. It would appear that the creation of a faithful image of the original, expressed in terms of reason and understanding, has become man's chief ambition and goal. History suggests that he embarked on his journey towards the light for the purpose of becoming acquainted with his universal home, and for that of giving voice to its glory.

We have described man as a center of intelligence which on its progressive earthly career sent its vibrations deeper and deeper into a bottomless external world. When we divest him from this cloak of intelligence, we should behold him in all his nakedness. We should, but we do not. The ME of man is a presence that cannot be seen or known. It is known by the manner, only, in which it expresses itself through the medium of its servants, the body and the brain. All our scientific methods have thus far failed to correctly label it. This much, however, is known concerning it; it is capable of receiving impressions from an external world, and that capability varies with its degree of development. In its immature condition, the number of impressions is very small. When it is highly developed, that number is staggeringly large.

Man is a center of intensified being journeying through an ocean of rarefied being, a veritable storage battery of existence. Traveling beyond the domain of man into the universe, we find the latter crowded with billions of such nuclei. Although they are subject to an intricate system of classification, the differences which we encounter among them are not differences in kind but differences in degree. All individual existence is wrapped, figuratively speaking, of course, in a more or less profound sleep. The profundity or the lightness of the sleep determines what the individual is, and how far it has progressed on the road of evolution. The universe may be likened to an immense dormitory wherein nature watches over the sleepers. Some are completely unconscious. They exist, but they do not know that thy exist. Others are becoming restless under the influence of impressions that reach them from the external world. And, some, seeing strange things and hearing mysterious sounds, sit up rubbing the sleep from their eyes, wondering where they are and what they are. Consider the impressions that reach the flower, which closes its petals at night, and opens them to absorb the vitalizing rays of the sun. Can you place yourself in the condition of that flower, can you vaguely feel the few impressions that reach it, and can you see the very, very faint glimmer of reality that penetrates into its soul? Consider the animal, capable of receiving many more impressions, capable therefore of expressing itself more freely and in a greater variety of ways. Can you vaguely picture to yourself the considerably larger world in which it dwells? Finally, consider the human being and the numberless impressions that find their way into his soul. He has awakened to such an extent from the original nature-slumber that he is compelled to marvel at and to babble about the

strange world that roused him from his sleep. A certain degree of that awakeness necessitated the creation of the instrument which enables him to babble and to marvel—the human brain.

Penetrating to the very bottom of history, therefore, we do not see human intelligence, but the mysterious ME of man follow the road of progress. We cease mistaking the surface of human life for its foundation. We not merely insist that developing man is an increasingly better thinker, warrior, community-builder, or what not. Behind things thought is the thinker, behind things done is the actor. The material and intellectual paraphernalia of human life change their nature in the course of centuries because the fundamental self changes its nature. What force or forces cause the change in the inner man? A burning question, this, which in importance overshadows all questions concerning the queer sounds that man utters, the toys and the tools that he manufactures, the ant nests, which he builds, of law-woven communities that are concrete representations of contemporary civilization. Another important question is, how does change in the inner man manifest itself in the life of the individual? When we are able to answer these two questions, we cease wondering why John Jones thinks this and does that. We realize that John Jones necessarily acts and thinks as he does because he is what he is. The mention of his name, of course, immediately creates a series of mental images, of his residence, his office, his clothes, his face. We remember his good and bad qualities, and his extraordinary notions about certain matters. This is generally as far as we go. But, the name, John Jones, should enable us, ultimately, to distinguish one nucleus of being from another. The different paraphernalia that accompany the one and the other on their respective journeys through the infinite, reveal the existence of a certain difference between the condition of the one nucleus and that of the other.

Considering the development of fundamental man instead of one or more of his being's necessary expressions, history proves to be more than a mere record of intrigues, murders, wars, and acts of general human misbehavior. It records much more, even, than the steady growth of intelligence. Behind intelligence is that which expresses it: one of the billions of life-centers that compose the universe. What is this life-center? When and where did it originate? Whither is it traveling? In history, we follow the movements of the Divine Finger, for a little while only, that eternally weaves the golden threads of creative evolution. Though we

are unable to scientifically analyze the nature of the particular life-center which is man, we are nevertheless in a position to determine that it has been subjected to a change during a certain period of time. The paraphernalia that accompany this human life-center on its earthly travels help us reach our conclusion. Their nature changes as the inner man changes. As was stated before, however, we should not rely completely on the material paraphernalia of human life for our judgment as to how far the inner man has developed. They owe their existence chiefly to thought of self. And one hundred per cent thought of self marks the beginning of man's career. Those expressions of his that owe their existence to his ability to be aware of not-self, directly and definitely point at the narrowness or the vastness of his mind's field of activity. Indirectly, they furnish some information concerning the condition of the self. They tell us about the insignificantly small or the divinely large section of the universe with which the self is in touch. They draw a circle about the individual, beyond the boundaries of which his soul is incapable of sending its vibrations, and his mind its searchlight of understanding. The things that occur within that imaginary circle happen naturally and necessarily. Its radius, in fact, determines their nature. Within the circle we hear a thought expressed. If we will but consider the fact that the universe is infinitely large, we can roughly deduce from the nature of that thought the length of the radius of the circle of individuality. Within the circle we see an act performed. The nature of the act immediately enables us to draw a dividing line between the world of which the individual is aware and the world of which he is not aware. For the individual, that which is lies within the boundaries of the circle. Beyond the circumference are mystery and the unexplored.

The highest degree of intelligence is expressed by the individual who is least self-centered. Before this truth becomes thoroughly apparent, however, the answers to the following two questions should be first discovered: What force or forces change the inner being of man? How does change in the inner man manifest itself in life?