

We speak of social organisms, and what are they? 'The greatest of them are called nations; and just as one author quotes another, so one nation imitates another. The modern reflects the mediæval, the mediæval the ancient. Each echoes the arts, the sciences, religion, customs, and laws of the other until, as we study the past and the present, we are indeed led to believe that, "History repeats itself."

But what is a nation? What are the virtues relative to this social function. Plato's cardinal virtues for his ideal state are, Wisdom, Courage, Temperance and Justice. Courage and temperance for the individual citizen; wisdom and justice for the nation. And if we look back through all history, we can find the nations which have exemplified one or another of these virtues.

'Tis said the Jews have given the world a religion; but what is that but courage, not the mere courage of the battle-field, but the spirit of courage underlying our daily action. The aim of the moral law is to overcome evil. Temptation is, however, but a desire to avoid pain or secure pleasure; and it certainly requires courage to overcome either,—active courage which pursues its course in spite of the probability of pain, or the allurement of pleasure, and passive courage which bears inevitable suffering without flinching.

But how shall we know the right course to pursue? 'Tis by virtue of wisdom; and for this we are indebted to the Greeks. Not that wisdom can be bought or sold, given away, nor yet inherited; but the Greeks, the greatest thinkers that the world has ever known, have taught men to think, and thinking has developed the consciousness until the conscience having been enlightened points out more clearly the right way, develops the ideal, and leads us on to the realization of our highest rational self.

But in the pursuit of our ideal we find ourselves free agents to act as we please. 'Tis easy thus to see why the savage practically has no restraints; but with the advent of learning we find that customs arise which must be respected, and these in turn give way to laws which must be obeyed. We come to realize, in fact, "that we have the most liberty by sacrificing a part of our freedom." This growth or development of law is due to the temperance or self-restraint of the individual. He restrains himself from some act because he thinks it wrong; but if it is wrong for him, then it is wrong for others; and if others cannot see that