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There is probably no cult in which ideals of pecuniary merit have not been called in to supplement the ideals of ceremonial adequacy that guide men's conception of what is right in the matter of sacred apparatus.

To make effective use of the modern system of communication in any way or all of its ramifications (streets, railways, steamship lines, telephone, telegraph, postal service, etc.), men are required to adapt their needs and their motions to the exigencies of the process whereby this civilized method of intercourse is carried into effect. The service is standardized, and therefore the use of it is standardized also... one's plans and projects must be conceived and worked out in terms of those standard units which the system imposes.

The upper classes are by custom exempt or excluded from industrial occupations, and are reserved for certain employments to which a degree of honour attaches.

Without much preliminary exposition and without feeling himself to be out of touch with his contemporaries, Darwin set to work to explain species in terms of the process out of which they have arisen, rather than out of the prime cause to which the distinction between them may be due.

The domestic life of most classes is relatively shabby, as compared with the éclat of that overt portion of their life that is carried on before the eyes of observers.

As felicitous an instance of futile classicism as can well be found, outside of the Far East, is the conventional spelling of the English language. A breach of the proprieties in spelling is extremely annoying and will discredit any writer in the eyes of all persons who are possessed of a developed sense of the true and beautiful. English orthography satisfies all the requirements of conspicuous waste. It is archaic, cumbrous, and ineffective; its acquisition consumes much time and effort; failure to acquire it is easy of detection. Therefore it is the first and readiest test of reputability in learning, and conformity to its ritual is indispensable to a blameless scholastic life.

The sequence of the process involves both the one and the other, both the apparatus and the materials, in such intimate interaction that the process cannot be spoken of simply as an action of the apparatus upon the materials. It is not simply that the apparatus reshapes the materials; the materials reshape themselves by the help of the apparatus... The whole concert of industrial operations is to be taken as a machine process, made up of interlocking detail processes, rather than as a multiplicity of mechanical appliances each doing its particular work in severalty.

The quasi-peaceable gentleman of leisure, then, not only consumes of the staff of life beyond the minimum required for subsistence and physical efficiency, but his consumption also undergoes a specialisation as regards the quality of the goods consumed. He consumes freely and of the best, in food, drink, narcotics, shelter, services, ornaments, apparel, weapons and accoutrements, amusements, amulets, and idols or divinities.

In order to stand well in the eyes of the community, it is necessary to come up to a certain, somewhat indefinite, conventional standard of wealth.

Athletics have an obvious advantage over the classics for the purpose of leisure-class learning, since success as an athlete presumes, not only a waste of time, but also a waste of money, as well as the possession of certain highly unindustrial archaic traits of character and temperament.

The effect of the pecuniary interest and the pecuniary habit of mind upon the growth of institutions is seen in those enactments and conventions that make for security of property, enforcement of contracts, facility of pecuniary transactions, vested interests. Of such bearing are changes affecting bankruptcy and receiverships, limited liability, banking and currency, coalitions of labourers or employers, trusts and pools. The community's institutional furniture of this kind is of immediate consequence only to the propertied classes, and in proportion as they are propertied;

that is to say, in proportion as they are to be ranked with the leisure class. But indirectly these conventions of business life are of the gravest consequence for the industrial process and for the life of the community. And in guiding the institutional growth in this respect, the pecuniary classes, therefore, serve a purpose of the most serious importance to the community, not only in the conservation of the accepted social scheme, but also in shaping the industrial process proper.

The immediate end of this pecuniary institutional structure and of its amelioration is the greater facility of peaceable and orderly exploitation; but its remoter effects far outrun this immediate object. Not only does the more facile conduct of business permit industry and extra-industrial life to go on with less perturbation; but the resulting elimination of disturbances and complications calling for an exercise of astute discrimination in everyday affairs acts to make the pecuniary class itself superfluous. As fast as pecuniary transactions are reduced to routine, the captain of industry can be dispensed with. This consummation, it is needless to say, lies yet in the indefinite future. The ameliorations wrought in favour of the pecuniary interest in modern institutions tend, in another field, to substitute the 'soulless' joint-stock corporation for the captain, and so they make also for the dispensability of the great leisure-class function of ownership. Indirectly, therefore, the bent given

to the growth of economic institutions by the leisure-class influence is of very considerable industrial consequence.

In point of substantial merit the law school belongs in the modern university no more than a school of fencing or dancing.

But while retrogression is difficult, a fresh advance in conspicuous expenditure is relatively easy; indeed, it takes place almost as a matter of course. In the rare cases where it occurs, a failure to increase one's visible consumption when the means for an increase are at hand is felt in popular apprehension to call for explanation, and unworthy motives of miserliness are imputed to those who fall short in this respect. A prompt response to the stimulus, on the other hand, is accepted as the normal effect. This suggests that the standard of expenditure which commonly guides our efforts is not the average, ordinary expenditure already achieved; it is an ideal of consumption that lies just beyond our reach, or to reach which requires some strain. The motive is emulation—the stimulus of an invidious comparison which prompts us to outdo those with whom we are in the habit of classing ourselves. Substantially the same proposition is expressed in the commonplace remark that each class envies and emulates the class next above it in the social scale, while it rarely compares itself with those below or with those who are considerably in advance. That is to say, in other words, our standard of decency in

expenditure, as in other ends of emulation, is set by the usage of those next above us in reputability; until, in this way, especially in any community where class distinctions are somewhat vague, all canons of reputability and decency, and all standards of consumption, are traced back by insensible gradations to the usages and habits of thought of the highest social and pecuniary class—the wealthy leisure class.

The dog commends himself to our favor by affording play to our propensity for mastery.

The institution of a leisure class has emerged gradually during the transition from primitive savagery to barbarism; or more precisely, during the transition from a peaceable to a consistently warlike habit of life.

The latter-day outcome of this evolution of an archaic institution, the wife, who was at the outset the drudge and chattel of the man... has become the ceremonial consumer of goods which he produces. But she still quite unmistakably remains his chattel in theory; for the habitual rendering of vicarious leisure and consumption is the abiding mark of the unfree servant.

The earlier and cruder method of advertisement held its ground so long as the public to which the exhibitor had to appeal comprised large portions of the community who were not trained to detect delicate variations in the

evidences of wealth and leisure. The method of advertisement undergoes refinement when a sufficiently large wealthy class has developed, who have the leisure for acquiring skill in interpreting the subtler signs of expenditure. 'Loud' dress becomes offensive to people of taste, as evincing an undue desire to reach and impress the untrained sensibilities of the vulgar. To the individual of high breeding it is only the more honorific esteem accorded by the cultivated sense of the members of his own high class that is of material consequence. Since the wealthy leisure class has grown so large, or the contact of the leisure-class individual with members of his own class has grown so wide, as to constitute a human environment sufficient for the honorific purpose, there arises a tendency to exclude the baser elements of the population from the scheme even as spectators whose applause or mortification should be sought. The result of all this is a refinement of methods, a resort to subtler contrivances, and a spiritualisation of the scheme of symbolism in dress. And as this upper leisure class sets the pace in all matters of decency, the result for the rest of society also is a gradual amelioration of the scheme of dress. As the community advances in wealth and culture, the ability to pay is put in evidence by means which require a progressively nicer discrimination in the beholder. This nicer discrimination between advertising media is in fact a very large element of the higher pecuniary culture.

...it is also true that the classics have scarcely lost in absolute value as a voucher of scholastic respectability, since for this purpose it is only necessary that the scholar should be able to put in evidence some learning which is conventionally recognized as evidence of wasted time; and the classics lend themselves with great facility to this use.

[Darwin's] inquiry characteristically confines itself to the process of cumulative change. His results, as well as his specific determination of the factors at work in this process of cumulative change, have been questioned; perhaps they are open to all the criticisms levelled against them as well as a few more not thought of; but the scope and method given to scientific enquiry by Darwin and the generation whose spokesman he is has substantially not been questioned, except by that diminishing contingent of the faithful

The need of conspicuous waste... stands ready to absorb any increase in the community's industrial efficiency or output of goods.

In common with other men, the business man is moved by ideals of serviceability and an aspiration to make the way of life easier for his fellows... Motives of this kind detract from business efficiency, and an undue yielding to them on the part of business men is to be deprecated as an infirmity. Still, throughout men's dealings with one another and with

the interests of the community there runs a sense of equity, fair dealing, and workmanlike integrity.

Born in iniquity and conceived in sin, the spirit of nationalism has never ceased to bend human institutions to the service of dissension and distress.

The chief use of servants is the evidence they afford of the master's ability to pay.

The machine process pervades the modern life and dominates it in a mechanical sense. Its dominance is seen in the enforcement of precise mechanical measurements and adjustment and the reduction of all manner of things, purposes and acts, necessities, conveniences, and amenities of life, to standard units.

All business sagacity reduces itself in the last analysis to judicious use of sabotage.

It is much more difficult to recede from a scale of expenditure once adopted than it is to extend the accustomed scale in response to an accession of wealth.

Habituation to bargaining and to the competitive principles of business necessarily brings it about that pecuniary standards of efficiency invade (contaminate) the sense of workmanship; so that work, workmen, equipment and products come to be rated on a scale of money values, which has only a circuitous and often only a putative

relation to their workmanlike efficiency or their serviceability. Those occupations and those aptitudes that yield good returns in terms of price are reputed valuable and commendable, — the accepted test of success, and even of serviceability, being the gains acquired.

Workmanship comes to be confused with salesmanship, until tact, effrontery and prevarication have come to serve as a standard of efficiency, and unearned gain is accepted as the measure of productiveness.

The walking stick serves the purpose of an advertisement that the bearer's hands are employed otherwise than in useful effort, and it therefore has utility as an evidence of leisure.

It is always sound business to take any obtainable net gain, at any cost and at any risk to the rest of the community.

It frequently happens that an element of the standard of living which set out with being primarily wasteful, ends with becoming, in the apprehension of the consumer, a necessary of life.

The thief or swindler who has gained great wealth by his delinquency has a better chance than the small thief of escaping the rigorous penalty of the law.

In order to stand well in the eyes of the community, it is necessary to come up to a certain, somewhat indefinite, conventional standard of wealth.

A civilization which is dominated by this matter-of-fact insight must prevail against any cultural scheme that lacks this element. This characteristic of western civilization comes to a head in modern science, and finds its highest material expression in the technology of the machine industry.

Labor wants pride and joy in doing good work, a sense of making or doing something beautiful or useful - to be treated with dignity and respect as brother and sister.

In the modern industrial communities... the apparatus of living has grown so elaborate and cumbrous... that the consumers of these things cannot make way with them in the required manner without help.

The addiction to sports, therefore, in a peculiar degree marks an arrested development in man's moral nature.

In the priestly life of all anthropomorphic cults the marks of a vicarious consumption of time are visible.

In itself and in its consequences the life of leisure is beautiful and ennobling in all civilised men's eyes.

Any evolutionary science... is a close-knit body of theory. It is a theory of a process, of an unfolding sequence... of cumulative causation. The great deserts of the evolutionist leaders... lie... in their having shown how this colorless

impersonal sequence of cause and effect can be made use of for theory proper, by virtue of its cumulative character.

The abjectly poor, and all those persons whose energies are entirely absorbed by the struggle for daily sustenance, are conservative because they cannot afford the effort of taking thought for the day after tomorrow; just as the highly prosperous are conservative because they have small occasion to be discontented with the situation as it stands today.

The hedonistic conception of man is that of a lightning calculator of pleasures and pains, who oscillates like a homogeneous globule of desire of happiness under the impulse of stimuli that shift him about the area but leave him intact...

He is an isolated, definitive human datum, in stable equilibrium except for the buffets of the impinging forces that displace him in one direction or another. Self-poised in elemental space, he spins symmetrically about his own spiritual axis until the parallelogram of forces bears down on him, whereupon he follows the line of the resultant

While the proximate ground of discrimination may be of another kind, still the pervading principle and abiding test of good breeding is the requirement of a substantial and patent waste of time.

In modern civilized communities... the members of each stratum accept as their ideal of decency the scheme of life in vogue in the next higher stratum.

The outcome of any serious research can only be to make two questions grow where only one grew before.

THE INSTITUTION of a leisure class is found in its best development at the higher stages of the barbarian culture; as, for instance, in feudal Europe or feudal Japan. In such communities the distinction between classes is very rigorously observed; and the feature of most striking economic significance in these class differences is the distinction maintained between the employments proper to the several classes.

In itself and in its consequences the life of leisure is beautiful and ennobling in all civilised men's eyes.

As increased industrial efficiency makes it possible to procure the means of livelihood with less labor, the energies of the industrious members of the community are bent to the compassing of a higher result in conspicuous expenditure, rather than slackened to a more comfortable pace.

The ceremonial differentiation of the dietary is best seen in the use of intoxicating beverages and narcotics. If these articles of consumption are costly, they are felt to be noble and honorific. Therefore the base classes, primarily the

women, practice an enforced continence with respect to these stimulants, except in countries where they are obtainable at a very low cost. From archaic times down through all the length of the patriarchal regime it has been the office of the women to prepare and administer these luxuries, and it has been the perquisite of the men of gentle birth and breeding to consume them. Drunkenness and the other pathological consequences of the free use of stimulants therefore tend in their turn to become honorific, as being a mark, at the second remove, of the superior status of those who are able to afford the indulgence. Infirmities induced by over-indulgence are among some peoples freely recognised as manly attributes. It has even happened that the name for certain diseased conditions of the body arising from such an origin has passed into everyday speech as a synonym for "noble" or "gentle". It is only at a relatively early stage of culture that the symptoms of expensive vice are conventionally accepted as marks of a superior status, and so tend to become virtues and command the deference of the community; but the reputability that attaches to certain expensive vices long retains so much of its force as to appreciably lessen the disapprobation visited upon the men of the wealthy or noble class for any excessive indulgence. The same invidious distinction adds force to the current disapproval of any indulgence of this kind on the part of women, minors, and inferiors. This invidious traditional distinction

has not lost its force even among the more advanced peoples of today. Where the example set by the leisure class retains its imperative force in the regulation of the conventionalities, it is observable that the women still in great measure practise the same traditional continence with regard to stimulants.

The possession of wealth confers honor; it is an invidious distinction.

From the ownership of women the concept of ownership extends itself to include the products of their industry, and so there arises the ownership of things as well as of persons.

All ritual has a notable tendency to reduce itself to a rehearsal of formulas.

The basis on which good repute in any highly organized industrial community ultimately rests is pecuniary strength; and the means of showing pecuniary strength, and so of gaining or retaining a good name, are leisure and a conspicuous consumption of goods.

The current periodical press... is a vehicle for advertisements. ...Exceptions ...are official and minor propagandist periodicals, and, in an uncertain measure, scientific journals. ...The first duty of an editor is to gauge the sentiments of his readers, and the tell them what they like to believe. ...His second duty is to see that nothing is

said which may discountenance ...his advertisers. ...The net result is that both the news columns and the editorial columns are commonly meretricious in a high degree.

[H]ere and now, as always and everywhere, invention is the mother of necessity.

The superior gratification derived from the use and contemplation of costly and supposedly beautiful products is, commonly, in great measure a gratification of our sense of costliness masquerading under the name of beauty.

A standard of living is of the nature of habit. ...it acts almost solely to prevent recession from a scale of conspicuous expenditure that has once become habitual.

The requirement of conspicuous wastefulness is... present as a constraining norm selectively shaping and sustaining our sense of what is beautiful.

Conspicuous consumption of valuable goods is a means of reputability to the gentleman of leisure.

Systematic insincerity on the part of purveyors of information and leaders of opinion may be deplored by persons who stickle for truth and pin their hopes of social salvation on the spread of accurate information. ...[T]he insincerity is guided by a wish to avoid any lesion of the received preconceptions and prejudices. The insincerity of

the newspapers and magazines seems, on the whole, to be of a conservative trend.

"Snobbery" is here used without disrespect, as a convenient term to denote the element of strain involved in the quest for gentility on the part of persons whose accustomed social standing is less high or less authentic than their aspirations.

As a matter of selective necessity, man is an agent. He is, in his own apprehension, a centre of unfolding impulsive activity—teleological activity. He is an agent seeking in every act the accomplishment of some concrete, objective, impersonal end. By force of his being such an agent he is possessed of a taste for effective work, and a distaste for futile effort.

The institution of a leisure class is found in its best development at the higher stages of the barbarian culture; as, for instance, in feudal Europe or feudal Japan.

The means whereby this work of Nature is brought to its consummate issue are forces of Nature working under her Laws by the method of cause and effect. The principle, or "law," of causation is a metaphysical postulate; in the sense that such a fact as causation is unproved and unprovable. No man has ever observed a case of causation, as is a commonplace with the latterday psychologists.

She lives with man on terms of equality, knows nothing of that relation of status which is the ancient basis of all distinctions of worth, honor, and repute, and she does not lend herself with facility to an invidious comparison between her owner and his neighbors.

Leisure held the first place at the start, and came to hold a rank very much above wasteful consumption of goods... From that point onward, consumption has gained ground, until, at present, it unquestionably holds the primacy.

The outcome of any serious research can only be to make two questions grow where only one grew before.

From the foregoing survey of the growth of conspicuous leisure and consumption, it appears that the utility of both alike for the purposes of reputability lies in the element of waste that is common to both. In the one case it is a waste of time and effort, in the other it is a waste of goods. Both are methods of demonstrating the possession of wealth, and the two are conventionally accepted as equivalents.

The choice between them is a question of advertising expediency simply, except so far as it may be affected by other standards of propriety, springing from a different source. On grounds of expediency the preference may be given to the one or the other at different stages of the economic development. The question is, which of the two methods will most effectively reach the persons whose convictions it is desired to affect. Usage has answered this

question in different ways under different circumstances. So long as the community or social group is small enough and compact enough to be effectually reached by common notoriety alone,—that is to say, so long as the human environment to which the individual is required to adapt himself in respect of reputability is comprised within his sphere of personal acquaintance and neighborhood gossip,—so long the one method is about as effective as the other. Each will therefore serve about equally well during the earlier stages of social growth. But when the differentiation has gone farther and it becomes necessary to reach a wider human environment, consumption begins to hold over leisure as an ordinary means of decency. This is especially true during the later, peaceable economic stage. The means of communication and the mobility of the population now expose the individual to the observation of many persons who have no other means of judging of his reputability than the display of goods (and perhaps of breeding) which he is able to make while he is under their direct observation.

But as we descend the social scale, the point is presently reached where the duties of vicarious leisure and consumption devolve upon the wife alone. In the communities of the Western culture, this point is at present found among the lower middle class.

And here occurs a curious inversion. It is a fact of common observance that in this lower middle class there is no

pretence of leisure on the part of the head of the household. Through force of circumstances it has fallen into disuse. But the middle-class wife still carries on the business of vicarious leisure, for the good name of the household and its master. In descending the social scale in any modern industrial community, the primary fact—the conspicuous leisure of the master of the household—disappears at a relatively high point. The head of the middle-class household has been reduced by economic circumstances to turn his hand to gaining a livelihood by occupations which often partake largely of the character of industry, as in the case of the ordinary business man of to-day. But the derivative fact—the vicarious leisure and consumption rendered by the wife, and the auxiliary vicarious performance of leisure by menials—remains in vogue as a conventionality which the demands of reputability will not suffer to be slighted. It is by no means an uncommon spectacle to find a man applying himself to work with the utmost assiduity, in order that his wife may in due form render for him that degree of vicarious leisure which the common sense of the time demands.

The periodical press is not only a purveyor of news, opinions, and admonitions; it also supplies the greater part of the literature currently read. ...The standards of excellence that govern this periodical literature... must in no way hamper the purposes of the advertisers. ...Taken in

the aggregate, the literary output is designed to meet the tastes of that large body of people who are in the habit of buying freely. The successful magazine writers... follow the taste of the class to whom they speak... They must also conform to the fancies and prejudices of this class as regards the ideals—artistic, moral, religious, or social—for which they speak. The class... is that great body of people who are in moderately easy circumstances... the respectable middle class... of various shades of conservatism, affectation, and snobbery.

In the rare cases where it occurs, a failure to increase one's visible consumption when the means for an increase are at hand is felt in popular apprehension to call for explanation, and unworthy motives of miserliness are imputed.

Conspicuous consumption of valuable goods is a means of reputability to the gentleman of leisure.

Born in iniquity and conceived in sin, the spirit of nationalism has never ceased to bend human institutions to the service of dissension and distress.

It is always sound business to take any obtainable net gain, at any cost and at any risk to the rest of the community.

Conspicuous abstention from labour therefore becomes the conventional mark of superior pecuniary achievement and the conventional index of reputability; and conversely, since application to productive labour is a mark of poverty

and subjection, it becomes inconsistent with a reputable standing in the community.

However widely, or equally, or "fairly", it may be distributed, no general increase of the community's wealth can make any approach to satiating this need, the ground of which is the desire of every one to excel every one else in the accumulation of goods.

The classics, and their position of prerogative in the scheme of education to which the higher seminaries of learning cling with such a fond predilection, serve to shape the intellectual attitude and lower the economic efficiency of the new learned generation. They do this not only by holding up an archaic ideal of manhood, but also by the discrimination which they inculcate with respect to the reputable and the disreputable in knowledge. This result is accomplished in two ways: (1) by inspiring an habitual aversion to what is merely useful, as contrasted with what is merely honorific in learning, and so shaping the tastes of the novice that he comes in good faith to find gratification of his tastes solely, or almost solely, in such exercise of the intellect as normally results in no industrial or social gain; and (2) by consuming the learner's time and effort in acquiring knowledge which is of no use, except in so far as this learning has by convention become incorporated into the sum of learning required of the scholar, and has thereby

affected the terminology and diction employed in the useful branches of knowledge.