15.1 | *History: The Record of Events*

Among the passages included here are quotations from eminent historians—Herodotus and Thucydides, Plutarch and Tacitus, Hume, Gibbon, and Toynbee—in which they reflect about the art of writing history and about the task of the historian as a reporter and interpreter of the past. They are concerned with the credibility of the stories they tell, with the reliability of the evidence they advance for the interpretations they give, with the significance of the past for the present, and with the utility of studying history. Just as the histories they have written differ in style, so they differ in their accounts of the method or approach deemed proper for the historian.

Included also are quotations from philosophers and others who have thought about the character of history as an intellectual discipline and as a distinct branch of human knowledge. In certain respects, history is said to be more like science than like poetry, at least in the kind of truth it claims to have; but in other respects, it is said to be more like poetry, not only in its narrative form but also in its reflections on human life. In addition, there are passages that take opposite sides on the question whether biography is the core of history as the record of the influence that great men have had upon the course of events; and passages that express opposite views about whether the human race has ever learned anything from the study of history, or learned enough not to repeat the mistakes that have been made in the past.

Some of the quotations attempt to distinguish different kinds of history by reference to differences in subject matter, and a few propose the project of a universal history—world history or the history of the human race as a whole. There are passing comments here on the laws or factors that govern the course of history, but a fuller treatment of that subject is reserved for Section 15.3.

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1 For myself, my duty is to report all that is said; but I am not obliged to believe it all alike—a remark which may be understood to apply to my whole History.

Herodotus, *History,* VII, 152

2 The way that most men deal with traditions, even traditions of their own country, is to receive them all alike as they are delivered, without applying any critical test whatever.

Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War,* I, 20

3 With reference to the speeches in this history, some were delivered before the war began, others while it was going on; some I heard myself, others I got from various quarters; it was in all cases difficult to carry them word for word in one's memory, so my habit has been to make the speakers say what was in my opinion demanded of them by the various occasions, of course adhering as closely as possible to the general sense of what they really said. And with reference to the narrative of events, far from permitting myself to derive it from the first source that came to hand, I did not even trust my own impressions, but it rests partly on what I saw myself, partly on what others saw for me, the accuracy of the report being always tried by the most severe and detailed tests possible. My conclusions have cost me some labour from the want of coincidence between accounts of the same occurrences by different eyewitnesses, arising sometimes from imperfect memory, sometimes from undue partiality for one side or the other. The absence of romance in my history will, I fear, detract somewhat from its interest, but if it be judged useful by those inquirers who desire an exact knowledge of the past as an aid to the interpretation of the future, which in the course of human things must resemble if it does not reflect it, I shall be content. In fine, I have written my work, not as an essay which is to win the applause of the moment, but as a posses-

sion for all time.

Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War,* I, 22

4 *The Corinthians.* There is . . . no advantage in reflections on the past further than may be of service to the present.

Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War,* I, 123

5 *Socrates.* Because we do not know the truth about ancient times, we make falsehood as much like truth as we can, and so turn it to account.

Plato, *Republic,* II, 382B

6 A history has to deal not with one action, but with one period and all that happened in that to one or more persons, however disconnected the several events may have been.

Aristotle, *Poetics,* 1459ª22

7 The study of history is in the truest sense an education and a training for political life. . . . The most instructive, or rather the only, method of learning to bear with dignity the vicissitudes of fortune is to recall the catastrophes of others.

Polybius, *Histories,* I, 1

8 By far the greater number of historians concern themselves with isolated wars and the incidents that accompany them: while as to a general and comprehensive scheme of events, their date, origin, and catastrophe, no one as far as I know has undertaken to examine it. I thought it, therefore, distinctly my duty neither to pass by myself, nor allow any one else to pass by, without full study, a characteristic specimen of the dealings of Fortune at once brilliant and instructive in the highest degree.

Polybius, *Histories,* I, 4

9 Men, who are persuaded that they get a competent view of universal from episodical history, are very like persons who should see the limbs of some body, which had once been living and beautiful, scattered and remote; and should imagine that to be quite as good as actually beholding the activity and beauty of the living creature itself.

Polybius, *Histories,* I, 4

10 If you take truth from history what is left is but an idle unprofitable tale. Therefore, one must not shrink either from blaming one's friends or praising one's enemies; nor be afraid of finding fault with and commending the same persons at different times. For it is impossible that men engaged in public affairs should always be right, and unlikely that they should always be wrong. Holding ourselves, therefore, entirely aloof from the actors, we must as historians make statements and pronounce judgment in accordance with the actions themselves.

Polybius, *Histories,* I, 14

11 Surely an historian's object should not be to amaze his readers by a series of thrilling anecdotes; nor should he aim at producing speeches which *might* have been delivered, nor study dramatic propriety in details like a writer of tragedy: but his function is above all to record with fidelity what was actually said or done, however commonplace it may be. For the purposes of history and of the drama are not the same, but widely opposed to each other. In the latter the object is to strike and delight by words as true to nature as possible; in the former to instruct and convince by genuine words and deeds.

Polybius, *Histories,* II, 56

12 To remain ignorant of things that happened before you were born is to remain a child. What is a human life worth unless it is incorporated into the lives of one's ancestors and set in an historical context?

Cicero, *Orator,* XXXIV

13 The study of history is the best medicine for a sick mind; for in history you have a record of the infinite variety of human experience plainly set out for all to see; and in that record you can find for yourself and your country both examples and warnings: fine things to take as models, base things, rotten through and through, to avoid.

Livy, *Early History of Rome,* I, 1

14 In this work of mine, in which I have compared the lives of the greatest men with one another, after passing through those periods which probable reasoning can reach to and real history find a footing in, I might very well say of those that are farther off: "Beyond this there is nothing but prodigies and fictions, the only inhabitants are the poets and inventors of fables; there is no credit, or certainty any farther."

Plutarch, *Theseus*

15 So very difficult a matter is it to trace and find out the truth of anything by history, when, on the one hand, those who afterwards write it find long periods of time intercepting their view, and, on the other hand, the contemporary records of any actions and lives, partly through envy and ill-will, partly through favour and flattery, pervert and distort truth.

Plutarch, *Pericles*

16 It was for the sake of others that I first commenced writing biographies; but I find myself proceeding and attaching myself to it for my own; the virtues of these great men serving me as a sort of looking-glass, in which I may see how to adjust and adorn my own life.

Plutarch, *Timoleon*

17 My method . . . is, by the study of history, and by

the familiarity acquired in writing, to habituate my memory to receive and retain images of the best and worthiest characters. I thus am enabled to free myself from any ignoble, base, or vicious impressions, contracted from the contagion of ill company that I may be unavoidably engaged in, by the remedy of turning my thoughts in a happy and calm temper to view these noble examples.

Plutarch, *Timoleon*

18 As we would wish that a painter who is to draw a beautiful face, in which there is yet some imperfection, should neither wholly leave out, nor yet too pointedly express what is defective, because this would deform it, and that spoil the resemblance; so since it is hard, or indeed perhaps impossible, to show the life of a man wholly free from blemish, in all that is excellent we must follow truth exactly, and give it fully; any lapses or faults that occur, through human passions or political necessities, we may regard rather as the shortcomings of some particular virtue, than as the natural effects of vice; and may be content without introducing them, curiously and officiously, into our narrative, if it be but out of tenderness to the weakness of nature, which has never succeeded in producing any human character so perfect in virtue as to be pure from all admixture and open to no criticism.

Plutarch, *Cimon*

19 Such things as are not commonly known, and lie scattered here and there in other men's writings, or are found amongst the old monuments and archives, I shall endeavour to bring together; not collecting mere useless pieces of learning, but adducing what may make his disposition and habit of mind understood.

Plutarch, *Nicias*

20 If any man undertake to write a history that has to be collected from materials gathered by observation and the reading of works not easy to be got in all places, nor written always in his own language, but many of them foreign and dispersed in other hands, for him, undoubtedly, it is in the first place and above all things most necessary to reside in some city of good note, addicted to liberal arts, and populous; where he may have plenty of all sorts of books, and upon inquiry may hear and inform himself of such particulars as, having escaped the pens of writers, are more faithfully preserved in the memories of men, lest his work be deficient in many things, even those which it can least dispense with.

Plutarch, *Demosthenes*

21 Are you so much better off, O writer of history? Surely
You waste more time and more oil and thousands of pages of paper
Costing a fortune: still, the laws of the craft are demanding,
What with footnotes and research, cross references and index.
But how does the harvest pay off? What profit in all of this delving?
What historian gets as much as a clerk in a courtroom?

Juvenal, *Satire VII*

22 This I regard as history's highest function, to let no worthy action be uncommemorated, and to hold out the reprobation of posterity as a terror to evil words and deeds.

Tacitus, *Annals,* III, 65

23 Now, after a revolution, when Rome is nothing but the realm of a single despot, there must be good in carefully noting and recording this period, for it is but few who have the foresight to distinguish right from wrong or what is sound from what is hurtful, while most men learn wisdom from the fortunes of others. Still, though this is instructive, it gives very little pleasure. . . . I have to present in succession the merciless biddings of a tyrant, incessant prosecutions, faithless friendships, the ruin of innocence, the same causes issuing in the same results, and I am everywhere confronted by a wearisome monotony in my subject matter. Then, again, an ancient historian has but few disparagers, and no one cares whether you praise more heartily the armies of Carthage or Rome.

Tacitus, *Annals,* IV, 33

24 This is a fine saying of Plato: That he who is discoursing about men should look also at earthly things as if he viewed them from some higher place; should look at them in their assemblies, armies, agricultural labours, marriages, treaties, births, deaths, noise of the courts of justice, desert places, various nations of barbarians, feasts, lamentations, markets, a mixture of all things and an orderly combination of contraries.

Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations,* VII, 48

25 The historian's one task is to tell the thing as it happened. This he cannot do if he is Artaxerxes' physician, trembling before him, or hoping to get a purple cloak, a golden chain, a horse of the Nisaean breed in payment for his laudations. A fair historian, a Xenophon, a Thucydides, will not accept that position. He may nurse some private dislikes, but he will attach far more importance to the public good, and set the truth high above his hate; he may have his favorites, but he will not spare their errors. For history, I say again, has this and this only for its own; if a man will start upon it, he must sacrifice to no god but Truth; he must neglect all else; his sole rule and unerring guide is this—to think not of those who are listening to

him now, but of the yet unborn who shall seek his converse.

Lucian, *Way to Write History*

26 I sometimes fall to thinking whether it befits a theologian, a philosopher, and such people of exquisite and exact conscience and prudence, to write history. How can they stake their fidelity on the fidelity of an ordinary person? How be responsible for the thoughts of persons unknown and give their conjectures as coin of the realm? Of complicated actions that happen in their presence they would refuse to give testimony if placed under oath by a judge; and they know no man so intimately that they would undertake to answer fully for his intentions. I consider it less hazardous to write of things past than present, inasmuch as the writer has only to give an account of a borrowed truth.

Montaigne, *Essays,* I, 21, Power of the Imagination

27 I like historians who are either very simple or outstanding. The simple, who have not the wherewithal to mix in anything of their own, and who bring to it only the care and diligence to collect all that comes to their attention and to record everything faithfully without choice or discrimination, leave our judgment intact to discern the truth. . . .

The really outstanding ones have the capacity to choose what is worth knowing; they can pick out of two reports the one that is more likely. From the nature and humors of princes they infer their intentions and attribute appropriate words to them. They are right to assume the authority to regulate our belief by their own; but certainly this privilege belongs to very few people.

Those in between (which are the commonest sort) spoil everything for us. They want to chew our morsels for us; they give themselves the right to judge, and consequently to slant history to their fancy; for once the judgment leans to one side, one cannot help turning and twisting the narrative to that bias. They undertake to choose the things worth knowing, and often conceal from us a given word, a given private action, that would instruct us better; they omit as incredible the things they do not understand. . . . Let them boldly display their eloquence and their reasonings, let them judge all they like; but let them also leave us the wherewithal to judge after them, and not alter or arrange by their abridgments and selection anything of the substance of the matter, but pass it on to us pure and entire in all its dimensions.

Montaigne, *Essays,* II, 10, Of Books

28 The only good histories are those that have been written by the very men who were in command in the affairs, or who were participants in the conduct of them, or who at least have had the fortune to conduct others of the same sort. . . . What can you expect of a doctor discussing war, or a schoolboy discussing the intentions of princes?

Montaigne, *Essays,* II, 10, Of Books

29 We have not the thousandth part of the writings of the ancients: it is Fortune that gives them life, longer or shorter according to her favor; and it is permissible to wonder whether what we have is not the worst, since we have not seen the rest.

Montaigne, *Essays,* II, 16, Of Glory

30 *King.* O God! that one might read the book of fate,
And see the revolution of the times
Make mountains level, and the continent,
Weary of solid firmness, melt itself
Into the sea! and, other times, to see
The beachy girdle of the ocean
Too wide for Neptune's hips; how chances mock,
And changes fill the cup of alteration
With divers liquors! O, if this were seen,
The happiest youth, viewing his progress through,
What perils past, what crosses to ensue,
Would shut the book, and sit him down and die.

Shakespeare, *II Henry IV,* III, i, 45

31 As it happeneth sometimes that the grandchild, or other descendant, resembleth the ancestor more than the son; so many times occurrences of present times may sort better with ancient examples than with those of the later or immediate times.

Bacon, *Advancement of Learning,* Bk. I, II, 3

32 History is natural, civil, ecclesiastical, and literary; whereof the three first I allow as extant, the fourth I note as deficient. For no man hath propounded to himself the general state of learning to be described and represented from age to age, as many have done the works of nature, and the state civil and ecclesiastical; without which the history of the world seemeth to me to be as the statue of Polyphemus with his eye out; that part being wanting which doth most show the spirit and life of the person. And yet I am not ignorant that in divers particular sciences, as of the jurisconsults, the mathematicians, the rhetoricians, the philosophers, there are set down some small memorials of the schools, authors, and books; and so likewise some barren relations touching the invention of arts or usages. But a just story of learning, containing the antiquities and originals of knowledges and their sects, their inventions, their traditions, their diverse administrations and managings, their flourishings, their oppositions, decays, depressions, oblivions, removes, with the causes and occasions of them, and all other events concerning learning, throughout the ages of the world, I may truly affirm to be wanting. The use and end of which work I do not so much design

for curiosity or satisfaction of those that are the lovers of learning, but chiefly for a more serious and grave purpose, which is this in few words, that it will make learned men wise in the use and administration of learning.

Bacon, *Advancement of Learning,* Bk. II, I, 2

33 It is the true office of history to represent the events themselves together with the counsels, and to leave the observations and conclusions thereupon to the liberty and faculty of every man's judgement.

Bacon, *Advancement of Learning,* Bk. II, II, 12

34 It is good to know something of the customs of different peoples in order to judge more sanely of our own, and not to think that everything of a fashion not ours is absurd and contrary to reason, as do those who have seen nothing. But when one employs too much time in travelling, one becomes a stranger in one's own country, and when one is too curious about things which were practised in past centuries, one is usually very ignorant about those which are practised in our own time. Besides, fables make one imagine many events possible which in reality are not so, and even the most accurate of histories, if they do not exactly misrepresent or exaggerate the value of things in order to render them more worthy of being read, at least omit in them all the circumstances which are basest and least notable; and from this fact it follows that what is retained is not portrayed as it really is, and that those who regulate their conduct by examples which they derive from such a source, are liable to fall into the extravagances of the knights-errant of Romance, and form projects beyond their power of performance.

Descartes, *Discourse on Method,* I

35 In a good history, the judgement must be eminent; because the goodness consisteth in the method, in the truth, and in the choice of the actions that are most profitable to be known. Fancy has no place, but only in adorning the style.

Hobbes, *Leviathan,* I, 8

36 When testimonies contradict common experience, and the reports of history and witnesses clash with the ordinary course of nature, or with one another; there it is, where diligence, attention, and exactness are required, to form a right judgment, and to proportion the assent to the different evidence and probability of the thing: which rises and falls, according as those two foundations of credibility, viz. *common observation in like cases,* and *particular testimonies in that particular instance,* favour or contradict it.

Locke, *Concerning Human Understanding,* Bk. IV, XVI, 9

37 I would not be thought here to lessen the credit and use of history: it is all the light we have in many cases, and we receive from it a great part of the useful truths we have, with a convincing evidence. I think nothing more valuable than the records of antiquity: I wish we had more of them, and more uncorrupted. But this truth itself forces me to say, That no probability can rise higher than its first original. What has no other evidence than the single testimony of one only witness must stand or fall by his only testimony, whether good, bad, or indifferent; and though cited afterwards by hundreds of others, one after another, is so far from receiving any strength thereby, that it is only the weaker. Passion, interest, inadvertency, mistake of his meaning, and a thousand odd reasons, or capricios, men's minds are acted by, (impossible to be discovered,) may make one man quote another man's words or meaning wrong. He that has but ever so little examined the citations of writers, cannot doubt how little credit the quotations deserve, where the originals are wanting; and consequently how much less quotations of quotations can be relied on. This is certain, that what in one age was affirmed upon slight grounds, can never after come to be more valid in future ages by being often repeated. But the further still it is from the original, the less valid it is, and has always less force in the mouth or writing of him that last made use of it than in his from whom he received it.

Locke, *Concerning Human Understanding,* Bk. IV, XVI, 11

38 Our new Science must . . . be a demonstration, so to speak, of the historical fact of providence, for it must be a history of the forms of order which, without human discernment or intent, and often against the designs of men, providence has given to this great city of the human race. For though this world has been created in time and particular, the orders established therein by providence are universal and eternal.

Vico, *The New Science,* I

39 In monarchies extremely absolute, historians betray the truth, because they are not at liberty to speak it; in states remarkably free, they betray the truth, because of their liberty itself; which always produces divisions, every one becoming as great a slave to the prejudices of his faction as he could be in a despotic state.

Montesquieu, *Spirit of Laws,* XIX, 27

40 Mankind are so much the same, in all times and places, that history informs us of nothing new or strange in this particular. Its chief use is only to discover the constant and universal principles of human nature, by showing men in all varieties of circumstances and situations, and furnishing us with materials from which we may form our observations and become acquainted with the regu-

lar springs of human action and behaviour. These records of wars, intrigues, factions, and revolutions, are so many collections of experiments, by which the politician or moral philosopher fixes the principles of his science, in the same manner as the physician or natural philosopher becomes acquainted with the nature of plants, minerals, and other external objects, by the experiments which he forms concerning them.

Hume, *Concerning Human Understanding,* VIII, 65

41 In reality, what more agreeable entertainment to the mind, than to be transported into the remotest ages of the world, and to observe human society, in its infancy, making the first faint essays towards the arts and sciences; to see the policy of government, and the civility of conversation refining by degrees, and every thing which is ornamental to human life advancing toward its perfection? To remark the rise, progress, declension, and final extinction of the most flourishing empires; the virtues which contributed to their greatness, and the vices which drew on their ruin? In short, to see all the human race, from the beginning of time, pass, as it were, in review before us, appearing in their true colours, without any of those disguises which, during their lifetime, so much perplexed the judgment of the beholders. What spectacle can be imagined so magnificent, so various, so interesting? What amusement, either of the senses or imagination, can be compared with it?

Hume, *Of the Study of History*

42 History is not only a valuable part of knowledge, but opens the door to many other parts, and affords materials to most of the sciences. And, indeed, if we consider the shortness of human life, and our limited knowledge, even of what passes in our own time, we must be sensible that we should be forever children in understanding, were it not for this invention, which extends our experience to all past ages, and to the most distant nations; making them contribute as much to our improvement in wisdom, as if they had actually lain under our observation. A man acquainted with history may, in some respect, be said to have lived from the beginning of the world, and to have been making continual additions to his stock of knowledge in every century.

Hume, *Of the Study of History*

43 Historians have been, almost without exception, the true friends of virtue, and have always represented it in its proper colours, however they may have erred in their judgments of particular persons.

Hume, *Of the Study of History*

44 The first foundations of all history are the recitals of the fathers to the children, transmitted afterward from one generation to another; at their origin they are at the very most probable, when they do not shock common sense, and they lose one degree of probability in each generation. With time the fable grows and the truth grows less; from this it comes that all the origins of peoples are absurd.

Voltaire, *Philosophical Dictionary:* History

45 Let us judge of what can be done by what has been done.

Rousseau, *Social Contract,* III, 12

46 What are all the records of history but narratives of successive villainies, of treasons and usurpations, massacres and wars?

Johnson, *Rambler No. 175*

47 *Johnson.* Great abilities are not requisite for an historian; for in historical composition, all the greatest powers of the human mind are quiescent. He has facts ready to his hand; so there is no exercise of invention. Imagination is not required in any high degree; only about as much as is used in the lower kinds of poetry. Some penetration, accuracy, and colouring will fit a man for the task, if he can give the application which is necessary.

Boswell, *Life of Johnson (July 6, 1763)*

48 *Johnson.* We must consider how very little history there is; I mean real authentick history. That certain Kings reigned, and certain battles were fought, we can depend upon as true; but all the colouring, all the philosophy of history is conjecture.

Boswell, *Life of Johnson (Apr. 18, 1775)*

49 Antoninus diffused order and tranquillity over the greatest part of the earth. His reign is marked by the rare advantage of furnishing very few materials for history; which is, indeed, little more than the register of the crimes, follies, and misfortunes of mankind.

Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,* III

50 There is not anywhere upon the globe a large tract of country which we have discovered destitute of inhabitants, or whose first population can be fixed with any degree of historical certainty. And yet, as the most philosophic minds can seldom refrain from investigating the infancy of great nations, our curiosity consumes itself in toilsome and disappointed efforts.

Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,* IX

51 The confusion of the times, and the scarcity of authentic memorials, oppose equal difficulties to the historian, who attempts to preserve a clear

and unbroken thread of narration. Surrounded with imperfect fragments, always concise, often obscure, and sometimes contradictory, he is reduced to collect, to compare, and to conjecture: and though he ought never to place his conjectures in the rank of facts, yet the knowledge of human nature, and of the sure operation of its fierce and unrestrained passions, might, on some occasions, supply the want of historical materials.

Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,* X

52 A being of the nature of man, endowed with the same faculties, but with a longer measure of existence, would cast down a smile of pity and contempt on the crimes and follies of human ambition, so eager, in a narrow span, to grasp at a precarious and short-lived enjoyment. It is thus that the experience of history exalts and enlarges the horizon of our intellectual view. In a composition of some days, in a perusal of some hours, six hundred years have rolled away, and the duration of a life or reign is contracted to a fleeting moment: the grave is ever beside the throne; the success of a criminal is almost instantly followed by the loss of his prize.

Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,* XLVIII

53 The Greeks of Constantinople, after purging away the impurities of their vulgar speech, acquired the free use of their ancient language, the most happy composition of human art, and a familiar knowledge of the sublime masters who had pleased or instructed the first of nations. But these advantages only tend to aggravate the reproach and shame of a degenerate people. They held in their lifeless hands the riches of their fathers, without inheriting the spirit which had created and improved that sacred patrimony: they read, they praised, they compiled, but their languid souls seemed alike incapable of thought and action. In the revolution of ten centuries, not a single discovery was made to exalt the dignity or promote the happiness of mankind. Not a single idea has been added to the speculative systems of antiquity, and a succession of patient disciples became in their turn the dogmatic teachers of the next servile generation.

Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,* LIII

54 It was at Rome, on the 15th of October, 1764, as I sat musing amidst the ruins of the Capitol, while the barefoot friars were singing vespers in the Temple of Jupiter, that the idea of writing the decline and fall of the city first started to my mind.

Gibbon, *Autobiography*

55 I have presumed to mark the moment of conception: I shall now commemorate the hour of my final deliverance. It was on the day, or rather night, of the 27th of June 1787, between the hours of eleven and twelve, that I wrote the last lines of the last page, in a summer-house in my garden. After laying down my pen I took several turns in a *berceau,* or covered walk of acacias, which commands a prospect of the country, the lake, and the mountains. The air was temperate, the sky was serene, the silver orb of the moon was reflected from the waters, and all nature was silent. I will not dissemble the first emotions of joy on recovery of my freedom, and, perhaps, the establishment of my fame. But my pride was soon humbled, and a sober melancholy was spread over my mind, by the idea that I had taken an everlasting leave of an old and agreeable companion, and that, whatsoever might be the future date of my *History,* the life of the historian must be short and precarious.

Gibbon, *Autobiography*

56 My English text is chaste, and all licentious passages are left in the decent obscurity of a learned language.

Gibbon, *Autobiography*

57 Men, viewed as a whole, are not guided in their efforts merely by instinct, like the lower animals; nor do they proceed in their actions, like the citizens of a purely rational world, according to a preconcerted plan. And so it appears as if no regular systematic history of mankind would be possible, as in the case, for instance, of bees and beavers. Nor can one help feeling a certain repugnance in looking at the conduct of men as it is exhibited on the great stage of the world. With glimpses of wisdom appearing in individuals here and there, it seems, on examining it externally as if the whole web of human history were woven out of folly and childish vanity and the frenzy of destruction, so that at the end one hardly knows what idea to form of our race, albeit so proud of its prerogatives.

Kant, *Idea of a Universal History,* Intro.

58 A philosophical attempt to work out the universal history of the world according to the plan of nature in its aiming at a perfect civil union must be regarded as possible, and as even capable of helping forward the purpose of nature.

Kant, *Idea of a Universal History,* IX

59 How admirably calculated is this picture of the human race, freed from all these chains, secure from the domination of chance, as from that of the enemies of its progress, and advancing with firm and sure steps towards the attainment of truth, virtue, and happiness, to present to the philosopher a spectacle which shall console him for the errors, the crimes, the injustice, with which the earth is still polluted, and whose victim he

often is! It is in the contemplation of this picture that he receives the reward of his efforts towards the progress of reason and the defense of liberty. He dares then to link these with the eternal chain of human destiny; and thereby he finds virtue's true recompense, the joy of having performed a lasting service, which no fatality can ever destroy by restoring the evils of prejudice and slavery. This contemplation is for him a place of refuge, whither the memory of his persecutors cannot follow him, where, living in imagination with man restored to his rights and his natural dignity, he forgets him whom greed, fear, or envy torment and corrupt; there it is that he exists in truth with his kin, in an elysium which his reason has been able to create for him, and which his love for humanity enhances with the purest enjoyments.

Condorcet, *Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind,* 10

60 Original historians . . . change the events, the deeds, and the states of society with which they are conversant, into an object for the conceptive faculty.

Hegel, *Philosophy of History,* Introduction, 1

61 A history which aspires to traverse long periods of time, or to be universal, must . . . forego the attempt to give individual representations of the past as it actually existed. It must foreshorten its pictures by abstractions; and this includes not merely the omission of events and deeds, but whatever is involved in the fact that thought is, after all, the most trenchant epitomist. A battle, a great victory, a siege, no longer maintains its original proportions, but is put off with a bare mention.

Hegel, *Philosophy of History,* Introduction, 2

62 What experience and history teach is this—that peoples and governments never have learned anything from history, or acted on principles deduced from it.

Hegel, *Philosophy of History,* Introduction, 2

63 The history of the world begins with its general aim, the realization of the idea of spirit, only in an *implicit* form, that is, as nature; a hidden, most profoundly hidden, unconscious instinct; and the whole process of history (as already observed) is directed to rendering this unconscious impulse a conscious one. Thus appearing in the form of merely natural existence, natural will—that which has been called the subjective side—physical craving, instinct, passion, private interest, as also opinion and subjective conception—spontaneously present themselves at the very commencement. This vast congeries of volitions, interests and activities, constitute the instruments and means of the world-spirit for attaining its object; bringing it to consciousness, and realizing it. And this aim is none other than finding itself, coming to itself, and contemplating itself in concrete actuality. But that those manifestations of vitality on the part of individuals and peoples, in which they seek and satisfy their own purposes, are, at the same time, the means and instruments of a higher and broader purpose of which they know nothing—which they realize unconsciously—might be made a matter of question; rather has been questioned, and in every variety of form negatived, decried and contemned as mere dreaming and "philosophy." But on this point I announced my view at the very outset, and asserted our hypothesis—which, however, will appear in the sequel, in the form of a legitimate inference—and our belief that reason governs the world, and has consequently governed its history. In relation to this independently universal and substantial existence—all else is subordinate, subservient to it, and the means for its development.

Hegel, *Philosophy of History,* Introduction, 3

64 Light is a simply self-involved existence; but though possessing thus in itself universality, it exists at the same time as an individuality in the sun. Imagination has often pictured to itself the emotions of a blind man suddenly becoming possessed of sight, beholding the bright glimmering of the dawn, the growing light, and the flaming glory of the ascending sun. The boundless forgetfulness of his individuality in this pure splendor, is his first feeling—utter astonishment. But when the sun is risen, this astonishment is diminished; objects around are perceived, and from them the individual proceeds to the contemplation of his own inner being, and thereby the advance is made to the perception of the relation between the two. Then inactive contemplation is quitted for activity; by the close of day man has erected a building constructed from his own inner sun; and when in the evening he contemplates this, he esteems it more highly than the original external sun. For now he stands in a *conscious relation* to his spirit, and therefore a *free* relation. If we hold this image fast in mind, we shall find it symbolizing the course of history, the great day's work of spirit.

Hegel, *Philosophy of History,* Intro.

65 History, which I like to think of as the contrary of poetry [*historoumenon* (investigated)—*pepoiemenon* (invented)], is for time what geography is for space; and it is no more to be called a science, in any strict sense of the word, than is geography, because it does not deal with universal truths but only with particular details. History has always been the favorite study of those who wish to learn something without having to face the effort demanded by any branch of real knowledge, which taxes the intelligence.

Schopenhauer, *Some Forms of Literature*

66 The preference shown for history by the greater public in all ages may be illustrated by the kind of conversation which is so much in vogue everywhere in society. It generally consists in one person relating something and then another person relating something else; so that in this way everyone is sure of receiving attention. Both here and in the case of history it is plain that the mind is occupied with particular details. But as in science, so also in every worthy conversation, the mind rises to the consideration of some general truth.

This objection does not, however, deprive history of its value. Human life is short and fleeting, and many millions of individuals share in it, who are swallowed by that monster of oblivion which is waiting for them with ever open jaws. It is thus a very thankworthy task to try to rescue something—the memory of interesting and important events, or the leading features and personages of some epoch—from the general shipwreck of the world.

From another point of view, we might look upon history as the sequel to zoology; for while with all other animals it is enough to observe the species, with man individuals, and therefore individual events, have to be studied; because every man possesses a character as an individual. And since individuals and events are without number or end, an essential imperfection attaches to history. In the study of it, all that a man learns never contributes to lessen that which he has still to learn. With any real science, a perfection of knowledge is, at any rate, conceivable.

Schopenhauer, *Some Forms of Literature*

67 Only through history does a nation become completely conscious of itself. Accordingly history is to be regarded as the rational consciousness of the human race, and is to the race what the reflected and connected consciousness is to the individual who is conditioned by reason, a consciousness through the want of which the brute is confined to the narrow, perceptible present. . . . In this sense, then, history . . . takes the place of an immediate self-consciousness common to the whole race, so that only by virtue of it does the human race come to be a whole, come to be a humanity. This is the true value of history.

Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Idea*, III, 38

68 Universal History, the history of what man has accomplished in this world, is at bottom the History of the Great Men who have worked here.

Carlyle, *The Hero as Divinity*

69 I have no expectation that any man will read history aright who thinks that what was done in a remote age, by men whose names have resounded far, has any deeper sense than what he is doing to-day.

Emerson, *History*

70 All history becomes subjective; in other words there is properly no history, only biography.

Emerson, *History*

71 The advancing man discovers how deep a property he has in literature—in all fable as well as in all history. . . . His own secret biography he finds in lines wonderfully intelligible to him, dotted down before he was born. One after another he comes up in his private adventures with every fable of Aesop, of Homer, of Hafiz, of Ariosto, of Chaucer, of Scott, and verifies them with his own head and hands.

Emerson, *History*

72 Whence then this worship of the past? The centuries are conspirators against the sanity and authority of the soul. Time and space are but physiological colors which the eye makes, but the soul is light: where it is, is day; where it was, is night; and history is an impertinence and an injury if it be any thing more than a cheerful apologue or parable of my being and becoming.

Emerson, *Self-Reliance*

73 We go eastward to realize history and study the works of art and literature, retracing the steps of the race; we go westward as into the future, with a spirit of enterprise and adventure.

Thoreau, *Walking*

74 Many are concerned about the monuments of the West and the East—to know who built them. For my part, I should like to know who in those days did not build them.

Thoreau, *Walden:* Economy

75 One nation can and should learn from others. And even when a society has got upon the right track for the discovery of the natural laws of its movement . . . it can neither clear by bold leaps, nor remove by legal enactments, the obstacles offered by the successive phases of its normal development. But it can shorten and lessen the birth-pangs.

Marx, *Capital,* Pref. to 1st Ed.

76 Where speculation ends—in real life—there real, positive science begins: the representation of the practical activity, of the practical process of development of men. Empty talk about consciousness ceases, and real knowledge has to take its place. When reality is depicted, philosophy as an independent branch of activity loses its medium of existence. At the best its place can only be taken by a summing-up of the most general results, abstractions which arise from the observation of the historical development of men. Viewed apart from

real history, these abstractions have in themselves no value whatsoever. They can only serve to facilitate the arrangement of historical material, to indicate the sequence of its separate strata. But they by no means afford a recipe or schema, as does philosophy, for neatly trimming the epochs of history. On the contrary, our difficulties begin only when we set about the observation and the arrangement—the real depiction—of our historical material, whether of a past epoch or of the present.

Marx and Engels, *German Ideology,* I, 1

77 "Yes, universal history! It's the study of the successive follies of mankind and nothing more. The only subjects I respect are mathematics and natural science," said Kolya.

Dostoevsky, *Brothers Karamazov,* Pt. IV, X, 5

78 In historic events, the so-called great men are labels giving names to events, and like labels they have but the smallest connection with the event itself.

Tolstoy, *War and Peace,* IX, 1

79 The movement of humanity, arising as it does from innumerable arbitrary human wills, is continuous.

To understand the laws of this continuous movement is the aim of history. But to arrive at these laws, resulting from the sum of all those human wills, man's mind postulates arbitrary and disconnected units. The first method of history is to take an arbitrarily selected series of continuous events and examine it apart from others, though there is and can be no *beginning* to any event, for one event always flows uninterruptedly from another.

The second method is to consider the actions of some one man—a king or a commander—as equivalent to the sum of many individual wills; whereas the sum of individual wills is never expressed by the activity of a single historic personage.

Historical science in its endeavor to draw nearer to truth continually takes smaller and smaller units for examination. But however small the units it takes, we feel that to take any unit disconnected from others, or to assume a *beginning* of any phenomenon, or to say that the will of many men is expressed by the actions of any one historic personage, is in itself false.

It needs no critical exertion to reduce utterly to dust any deductions drawn from history. It is merely necessary to select some larger or smaller unit as the subject of observation—as criticism has every right to do, seeing that whatever unit history observes must always be arbitrarily selected.

Only by taking infinitesimally small units for observation (the differential of history, that is, the individual tendencies of men) and attaining to the art of integrating them (that is, finding the sum of these infinitesimals) can we hope to arrive at the laws of history.

Tolstoy, *War and Peace,* XI, 1

80 In historic events the rule forbidding us to eat of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge is specially applicable. Only unconscious action bears fruit, and he who plays a part in an historic event never understands its significance. If he tries to realize it his efforts are fruitless.

Tolstoy, *War and Peace,* XII, 4

81 Man's mind cannot grasp the causes of events in their completeness, but the desire to find those causes is implanted in man's soul. And without considering the multiplicity and complexity of the conditions any one of which taken separately may seem to be the cause, he snatches at the first approximation to a cause that seems to him intelligible and says: "This is the cause!" In historical events (where the actions of men are the subject of observation) the first and most primitive approximation to present itself was the will of the gods and, after that, the will of those who stood in the most prominent position—the heroes of history. But we need only penetrate to the essence of any historic event—which lies in the activity of the general mass of men who take part in it—to be convinced that the will of the historic hero does not control the actions of the mass but is itself continually controlled. It may seem to be a matter of indifference whether we understand the meaning of historical events this way or that; yet there is the same difference between a man who says that the people of the West moved on the East because Napoleon wished it and a man who says that this happened because it had to happen, as there is between those who declared that the earth was stationary and that the planets moved round it and those who admitted that they did not know what upheld the earth, but knew there were laws directing its movement and that of the other planets. There is, and can be, no cause of an historical event except the one cause of all causes. But there are laws directing events, and some of these laws are known to us while we are conscious of others we cannot comprehend. The discovery of these laws is only possible when we have quite abandoned the attempt to find the cause in the will of some one man, just as the discovery of the laws of the motion of the planets was possible only when men abandoned the conception of the fixity of the earth.

Tolstoy, *War and Peace,* XIII, 1

82 Science does not admit the conception of the ancients as to the direct participation of the Deity in human affairs, and therefore history ought to give other answers.

Tolstoy, *War and Peace,* II Epilogue, I

83 If the will of every man were free, that is, if each man could act as he pleased, all history would be a series of disconnected incidents.

Tolstoy, *War and Peace,* II Epilogue, VIII

84 A contemporary event seems to us to be indubitably the doing of all the known participants, but with a more remote event we already see its inevitable results which prevent our considering anything else possible. And the farther we go back in examining events the less arbitrary do they appear.

Tolstoy, *War and Peace,* II Epilogue, IX

85 The recognition of man's free will as something capable of influencing historical events, that is, as not subject to laws, is the same for history as the recognition of a free force moving the heavenly bodies would be for astronomy.

Tolstoy, *War and Peace,* II Epilogue, XI

86 It is folly . . . to speak of the "laws of history" as of something inevitable, which science has only to discover, and whose consequences anyone can then foretell but do nothing to alter or avert. Why, the very laws of physics are conditional, and deal with *ifs.* The physicist does not say, "The water will boil anyhow;" he only says it will boil if a fire be kindled beneath it. And so the utmost the student of sociology can ever predict is that *if* a genius of a certain sort shows the way, society will be sure to follow.

William James, *Great Men and Their Environment*

87 Alas! Hegel was right when he said that we learn from history that men never learn anything from history.

Shaw, *Heartbreak House,* Pref.

88 This notion of historians, of history devoid of aesthetic prejudice, of history devoid of any reliance on metaphysical principles and cosmological generalizations, is a figment of the imagination. The belief in it can only occur to minds steeped in provinciality,—the provinciality of an epoch, of a race, of a school of learning, of a trend of interest—, minds unable to divine their own unspoken limitations.

Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas,* I, 1

89 The historian in his description of the past depends on his own judgment as to what constitutes the importance of human life. Even when he has rigorously confined himself to one selected aspect, political or cultural, he still depends on some decision as to what constitutes the culmination of that phase of human experience and as to what constitutes its degradation.

Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas,* I, 1

90 It is a curious delusion that the rock upon which our beliefs can be founded is an historical investigation. You can only interpret the past in terms of the present. The present is all that you have; and unless in this present you can find general principles which interpret the present as including a representation of the whole community of existents, you cannot move a step beyond your little patch of immediacy.

Thus history presupposes a metaphysic. It can be objected that we believe in the past and talk about it without settling our metaphysical principles. That is certainly the case. But you can only deduce metaphysical dogmas from your interpretation of the past on the basis of a prior metaphysical interpretation of the present.

In so far as your metaphysical beliefs are implicit, you vaguely interpret the past on the lines of the present. But when it comes to the primary metaphysical data, the world of which you are immediately conscious is the whole datum.

Whitehead, *Religion in the Making,* III, 1

91 History, in every country, is so taught as to magnify that country: children learn to believe that their own country has always been in the right and almost always victorious, that it has produced almost all the great men, and that it is in all respects superior to all other countries.

Russell, *Education*

92 For whom is there History? The question is seemingly paradoxical, for history is obviously for everyone to this extent, that every man, with his whole existence and consciousness, is a part of history. But it makes a great difference whether anyone lives under the constant impression that his life is an element in a far wider life-course that goes on for hundreds and thousands of years, or conceives of himself as something rounded off and self-contained. For the latter type of consciousness there is certainly no world-history, no *world-as-history.*

Spengler, *Decline of the West,* I, 1

93 Memory itself is an internal rumour; and when to this hearsay within the mind we add the falsified echoes that reach us from others, we have but a shifting and unseizable basis to build upon. The picture we frame of the past changes continually and grows every day less similar to the original experience which it purports to describe.

Santayana, *Life of Reason,* V, 2

94 The historian's politics, philosophy, or romantic imagination furnishes a vital nucleus for reflection. All that falls within that particular vortex is included in the mental picture, the rest is passed over and tends to drop out of sight. It is not possi-

ble to say, nor to think, everything at once; and the private interest which guides a man in selecting his materials imposes itself inevitably on the events he relates and especially on their grouping and significance.

History is always written wrong, and so always needs to be rewritten.

Santayana, *Life of Reason,* V, 2

95 Historical investigation has for its aim to fix the order and character of events throughout past time in all places. The task is frankly superhuman, because no block of real existence, with its infinitesimal detail, can be recorded, nor if somehow recorded could it be dominated by the mind; and to carry on a survey of this social continuum *ad infinitum* would multiply the difficulty.

Santayana, *Life of Reason,* V, 2

96 It is not enough to say that history is historical judgment, it is necessary to add that every judgment is an historical judgment or, quite simply, history. If judgment is a relation between a subject and a predicate, then the subject or the event, whatever it is that is being judged, is always an historical fact, a becoming, a process under way, for there are no immobile facts nor can such things be envisaged in the world of reality. Historical judgment is embodied even in the merest perception of the judging mind (if it did not judge there would not even be perception but merely blind and dumb sensation). . . .

Historical judgment is not a variety of knowledge, but it is knowledge itself; it is the form which completely fills and exhausts the field of knowing, leaving no room for anything else.

Croce, *History as the Story of Liberty,* I, 5

97 We are products of the past and we live immersed in the past, which encompasses us. How can we move towards the new life, how create new activities without getting out of the past and without placing ourselves above it? And how can we place ourselves above the past if we are in it and it is in us? There is no other way out except through thought, which does not break off relations with the past but rises ideally above it and converts it into knowledge. The past must be faced or, not to speak in metaphors, it must be reduced to a mental problem which can find its solution in a proposition of truth, the ideal premise for our new activity and our new life. This is how we daily behave, when, instead of being prostrated by the vexations which beset us, and of bewailing and being shamed by errors we have committed, we examine what has happened, analyse its origin, follow its history, and, with an informed conscience and under an intimate inspiration, we outline what ought and should be undertaken and willingly and brightly get ready to undertake it.

Croce, *History as the Story of Liberty,* I, 8

98 The writing of histories—as Goethe once noted—is one way of getting rid of the weight of the past. . . . The writing of history liberates us from history.

Croce, *History as the Story of Liberty,* I, 8

99 I find it hard to have patience with historians who boast, as some modern Western historians do, that they keep entirely to the facts of history and don't go in for theories. Why, every so-called fact that they present to you had some pattern of theory behind it. Historians who genuinely believe they have no general ideas about history are, I would suggest to them, simply ignorant of the workings of their own minds, and such willful ignorance is, isn't it, really unpardonable.

Toynbee, *Radio Debate (1948)*

100 Historians generally illustrate rather than correct the ideas of the communities within which they live and work.

Toynbee, *A Study of History,* I, 1

101 History, in the sense of the histories of the human societies called civilizations, revealed itself as a sheaf of parallel, contemporary, and recent essays in a new enterprise: a score of attempts, up to date, to transcend the level of primitive human life at which man, after having become himself, had apparently lain torpid for some hundreds of thousands of years.

Toynbee, *Civilization on Trial,* I

15.2 | *Progress, Regress, and Cycles in History*

One of the central issues in the philosophy of history concerns the pattern of change that has occurred in human affairs in the course of time. According to one view, the pattern is cyclical, like that of birth, growth, decline, and death in the life of living organisms. The point is not simply that history repeats itself in the recurrence of similar events, but that the whole sequence of historical development endlessly repeats itself. According to another view, history manifests a regression, a falling away from a golden age. According to still another view, history advances from age to age, either in a line of steady and uninterrupted progress or with intervals of stability or even of regression.

Of these three main views, the first is the one that predominates in the quotations drawn from antiquity, though there are also some expressions of the second view in ancient texts, notably the ones by Hesiod and Ovid; and in addition, the opinion that in all essential respects the future will resemble the past. It is not until the seventeenth century that we find explicit affirmations of progress in human affairs—in the sphere of science, in human institutions, in population, in the production of wealth. Though progress has many votaries among modern writers, it also has its doubters or deniers—those who point out that regressive change counterbalances the evidences of progress, or that advances in such external matters as science, technology, and wealth do not carry with them essential improvements in the quality of human life.

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1 Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us.

There is no remembrance of former things; neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come with those that shall come after.

Ecclesiastes 1:10–11

2 When gods alike and mortals rose to birth,
Th' immortals form'd a golden race on earth
Of many-languaged men; they lived of old
When Saturn reign'd in heaven; an age of gold.
Like gods they lived, with calm, untroubled mind,
Free from the toil and anguish of our kind:
Nor e'er decrepid age mis-shaped their frame,
The hand's, the foot's proportions, still the same.
Pleased with earth's unbought feasts; all ills removed,
Wealthy in flocks, and of the bless'd beloved.
Death as a slumber press'd their eyelids down;
All nature's common blessings were their own.
The life-bestowing tilth its fruitage bore,
A full, spontaneous, and ungrudging store:
They with abundant goods, midst quiet lands,
All willing shared the gatherings of their hands.
When earth's dark breast had closed this race around,
Great Jove as demons raised them from the ground.
Earth-hovering spirits, they their charge began,
The ministers of good, and guards of man.
Mantled with mist of darkling air they glide,
And compass earth, and pass on every side;
And mark, with earnest vigilance of eyes,
Where just deeds live, or crooked wrongs arise;
And shower the wealth of seasons from above,
Their kingly office, delegate from Jove.
The gods then form'd a second race of man,
Degenerate far, and silver years began;
Unlike the mortals of a golden kind,
Unlike in frame of limbs, and mould of mind.
Yet still a hundred years beheld the boy
Beneath the mother's roof, her infant joy,
All tender and unform'd: but when the flower
Of manhood bloom'd, it wither'd in an hour.
Their frantic follies wrought them pain and woe;
Nor mutual outrage would their hands forego:
Nor would they serve the gods, nor altars raise,
That in just cities shed their holy blaze.
Them angry Jove ingulf'd; who dared refuse
The gods their glory and their sacred dues:
Yet named the second bless'd, in earth they lie,
And second honours grace their memory.

The sire of heaven and earth created then

judged what things come verily true from dreams; and to men I gave meaning to the ominous cries, hard to interpret. It was I who set in order the omens of the highway and the flight of crooked-taloned birds, which of them were propitious or lucky by nature, and what manner of life each led, and what were their mutual hates, loves, and companionships; also I taught of the smoothness of the vitals and what color they should have to pleasure the Gods and the dappled beauty of the gall and the lobe. It was I who burned thighs wrapped in fat and the long shank bone and set mortals on the road to this murky craft. It was I who made visible to men's eyes the flaming signs of the sky that were before dim. So much for these. Beneath the earth, man's hidden blessing, copper, iron; silver, and gold—will anyone claim to have discovered these before I did? No one, I am very sure, who wants to speak truly and to the purpose. One brief word will tell the whole story: all arts that mortals have come from Prometheus.

Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound,* 445

4 I shall go forward with my history, describing equally the greater and the lesser cities. For the cities which were formerly great have most of them become insignificant; and such as are at present powerful, were weak in the olden time. I shall therefore discourse equally of both, convinced that human happiness never continues long in one stay.

Herodotus, *History,* I, 5

5 *Critias.* Just when you and other nations are beginning to be provided with letters and the other requisites of civilized life, after the usual interval, the stream from heaven, like a pestilence, comes pouring down, and leaves only those of you who are destitute of letters and education; and so you have to begin all over again like children, and know nothing of what happened in ancient times, either among us or among yourselves.

Plato, *Timaeus,* 23A

6 Human affairs form a circle, and . . . there is a circle in all other things that have a natural movement and coming into being and passing away. This is because all other things are discriminated by time, and end and begin as though conforming to a cycle; for even time itself is thought to be a circle. And this opinion again is held because time is the measure of this kind of locomotion and is itself measured by such. So that to say that the things that come into being form a circle is to say that there is a circle of time; and this is to say that it is measured by the circular movement; for apart from the measure nothing else to be measured is observed; the whole is just a plurality of measures.

Aristotle, *Physics,* $223^{b}25$

7 In most respects the future will be like what the past has been.

Aristotle, *Rhetoric,* $1394^{a}8$

8 We must suppose that human nature . . . was taught and constrained to do many things of every kind merely by circumstances; and that later on reasoning elaborated what had been suggested by nature and made further inventions, in some matters quickly, in others slowly, at some epochs and times making great advances, and lesser again at others.

Epicurus, *Letter to Herodotus*

9 There is in every body, or polity, or business a natural stage of growth, zenith, and decay.

Polybius, *Histories,* VI, 51

10 The aged ploughman shakes his head and sighs again and again to think that the labours of his hands have come to nothing; and when he compares present times with times past, he often praises the fortunes of his sire and harps on the theme, how the men of old rich in piety comfortably supported life on a scanty plot of ground, since the allotment of land to each man was far less of yore than now. The sorrowful planter too of the exhausted and shrivelled vine impeaches the march of time and wearies heaven, and comprehends not that all things are gradually wasting away and passing to the grave, quite forspent by age and length of days.

Lucretius, *Nature of Things,* II

11 Our father's age, than their sires' not so good,
Bred us ev'n worse than they; a brood
We'll leave that's viler still.

Horace, *Odes,* III, 6

12 What is free from the risk of change? Neither earth, nor sky, nor the whole fabric of our universe, though it be controlled by the hand of God. It will not always preserve its present order; it will be thrown from its course in days to come. All things move in accord with their appointed times; they are destined to be born, to grow, and to be destroyed. The stars which you see moving above us, and this seemingly immovable earth to which we cling and on which we are set, will be consumed and will cease to exist. There is nothing that does not have its old age; the intervals are merely unequal at which Nature sends forth all these things towards the same goal. Whatever is will cease to be, and yet it will not perish, but will be resolved into its elements.

Seneca, *Letters to Lucilius,* 71

13 The elements of the earth must all be dissolved or utterly destroyed in order that they may be created anew in innocence, and that no remnant may be left to tutor men in vice. . . . A single day will

see the burial of all mankind. All that the long forbearance of fortune has produced, all that has been reared to eminence, all that is famous and all that is beautiful, great thrones, great nations—all will descend into the one abyss, will be overthrown in one hour. . . .

When the destruction of the human race is consummated, and when wild beasts, whose nature men had come to share, have been consigned together to a like fate, the earth will once more drink up the waters. Nature will force the sea to stay its course, and to expend its rage within its wonted bounds. Ocean will be banished from our abodes into his own secret dwelling place. The ancient order of things will be recalled. Every living creature will be created afresh. The earth will receive a new man ignorant of sin, born under happier stars. But they, too, will retain their innocence only while they are new.

Seneca, *Quaestiones Naturales,* III, 29–30

14 In the beginning was the Golden Age, when men of their own accord, without threat of punishment, without laws, maintained good faith and did what was right. There were no penalties to be afraid of, no bronze tablets were erected, carrying threats of legal action, no crowd of wrong-doers, anxious for mercy, trembled before the face of their judge: indeed, there were no judges, men lived securely without them. Never yet had any pine tree, cut down from its home on the mountains, been launched on ocean's waves, to visit foreign lands: men knew only their own shores. Their cities were not yet surrounded by sheer moats, they had no straight brass trumpets, no coiling brass horns, no helmets and no swords. The peoples of the world, untroubled by any fears, enjoyed a leisurely and peaceful existence, and had no use for soldiers. The earth itself, without compulsion, untouched by the hoe, unfurrowed by any share, produced all things spontaneously, and men were content with foods that grew without cultivation. They gathered arbute berries and mountain strawberries, wild cherries and blackberries that cling to thorny bramble bushes: or acorns, fallen from Jupiter's spreading oak. It was a season of everlasting spring, when peaceful zephyrs, with their warm breath, caressed the flowers that sprang up without having been planted. In time the earth, though untilled, produced corn too, and fields that never lay fallow whitened with heavy ears of grain. Then there flowed rivers of milk and rivers of nectar, and golden honey dripped from the green holm-oak.

When Saturn was consigned to the darkness of Tartarus, and the world passed under the rule of Jove, the age of silver replaced that of gold, inferior to it, but superior to the age of tawny bronze. Jupiter shortened the springtime which had prevailed of old, and instituted a cycle of four seasons in the year, winter, summer, changeable autumn, and a brief spring. Then, for the first time, the air became parched and arid, and glowed with white heat, then hanging icicles formed under the chilling blasts of the wind. It was in those days that men first sought covered dwelling places: they made their homes in caves and thick shrubberies, or bound branches together with bark. Then corn, the gift of Ceres, first began to be sown in long furrows, and straining bullocks groaned beneath the yoke.

After that came the third age, the age of bronze, when men were of a fiercer character, more ready to turn to cruel warfare, but still free from any taint of wickedness.

Last of all arose the age of hard iron: immediately, in this period which took its name from a baser ore, all manner of crime broke out; modesty, truth, and loyalty fled. Treachery and trickery took their place, deceit and violence and criminal greed. Now sailors spread their canvas to the winds, though they had as yet but little knowledge of these, and trees which had once clothed the high mountains were fashioned into ships, and tossed upon the ocean waves, far removed from their own element. The land, which had previously been common to all, like the sunlight and the breezes, was now divided up far and wide by boundaries, set by cautious surveyors. Nor was it only corn and their due nourishment that men demanded of the rich earth: they explored its very bowels, and dug out the wealth which it had hidden away, close to the Stygian shades; and this wealth was a further incitement to wickedness. By this time iron had been discovered, to the hurt of mankind, and gold, more hurtful still than iron. War made its appearance, using both those metals in its conflict, and shaking clashing weapons in bloodstained hands. Men lived on what they could plunder: friend was not safe from friend, nor father-in-law from son-in-law, and even between brothers affection was rare. Husbands waited eagerly for the death of their wives, and wives for that of their husbands. Ruthless stepmothers mixed brews of deadly aconite, and sons pried into their fathers' horoscopes, impatient for them to die. All proper affection lay vanquished and, last of the immortals, the maiden Justice left the blood-soaked earth.

Ovid, *Metamorphoses,* I

15 These two things then thou must bear in mind; the one, that all things from eternity are of like forms and come round in a circle, and that it makes no difference whether a man shall see the same things during a hundred years or two hundred, or an infinite time; and the second, that the longest liver and he who will die soonest lose just the same.

Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations,* II, 14

16 On the occasion of everything which happens

keep this in mind, that it is that which thou hast often seen. Everywhere up and down thou wilt find the same things, with which the old histories are filled, those of the middle ages and those of our own day. . . . There is nothing new: all things are both familiar and short-lived.

Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations,* VII, 1

17 Constantly consider how all things such as they now are, in time past also were; and consider that they will be the same again. And place before thy eyes entire dramas and stages of the same form, whatever thou hast learned from thy experience or from older history . . . for all those were such dramas as we see now, only with different actors.

Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations,* X, 27

18 This controversy some philosophers have seen no other approved means of solving than by introducing cycles of time, in which there should be a constant renewal and repetition of the order of nature; and they have therefore asserted that theses cycles will ceaselessly recur, one passing away and another coming, though they are not agreed as to whether one permanent world shall pass through all these cycles, or whether the world shall at fixed intervals die out and be renewed so as to exhibit a recurrence of the same phenomena—the things which have been and those which are to be coinciding. And from this fantastic vicissitude they exempt not even the immortal soul that has attained wisdom, consigning it to a ceaseless transmigration between delusive blessedness and real misery. For how can that be truly called blessed which has no assurance of being so eternally, and is either in ignorance of the truth, and blind to the misery that is approaching, or, knowing it, is in misery and fear? Or if it passes to bliss, and leaves miseries forever, then there happens in time a new thing which time shall not end. Why not, then, the world also? Why may not man, too, be a similar thing? So that, by following the straight path of sound doctrine, we escape, I know not what circuitous paths, discovered by deceiving and deceived sages.

Augustine, *City of God,* XII, 13

19 Over and above those arts which are called virtues, and which teach us how we may spend our life well, and attain to endless happiness—arts which are given to the children of the promise and the kingdom by the sole grace of God which is in Christ—has not the genius of man invented and applied countless astonishing arts, partly the result of necessity, partly the result of exuberant invention, so that this vigour of mind, which is so active in the discovery not merely of superfluous but even of dangerous and destructive things, betokens an inexhaustible wealth in the nature which can invent, learn, or employ such arts? What wonderful—one might say stupefying—advances has human industry made in the arts of weaving and building, of agriculture and navigation! With what endless variety are designs in pottery, painting, and sculpture produced, and with what skill executed! What wonderful spectacles are exhibited in the theatres, which those who have not seen them cannot credit! How skillful the contrivances for catching, killing, or taming wild beasts! And for the injury of men, also, how many kinds of poisons, weapons, engines of destruction, have been invented, while for the preservation or restoration of health the appliances and remedies are infinite! To provoke appetite and please the palate, what a variety of seasonings have been concocted! To express and gain entrance for thoughts, what a multitude and variety of signs there are, among which speaking and writing hold the first place! what ornaments has eloquence at command to delight the mind! what wealth of song is there to captivate the ear! how many musical instruments and strains of harmony have been devised! What skill has been attained in measures and numbers! with what sagacity have the movements and connections of the stars been discovered! Who could tell the thought that has been spent upon nature, even though, despairing of recounting it in detail, he endeavoured only to give a general view of it? In fine, even the defence of errors and misapprehensions, which has illustrated the genius of heretics and philosophers, cannot be sufficiently declared. For at present it is the nature of the human mind which adorns this mortal life which we are extolling, and not the faith and the way of truth which lead to immortality. And since this great nature has certainly been created by the true and supreme God, Who administers all things He has made with absolute power and justice, it could never have fallen into these miseries, nor have gone out of them to miseries eternal—saving only those who are redeemed—had not an exceeding great sin been found in the first man from whom the rest have sprung.

Augustine, *City of God,* XXII, 24

20 This Sabbath shall appear still more clearly if we count the ages as days, in accordance with the periods of time defined in Scripture, for that period will be found to be the seventh. The first age, as the first day, extends from Adam to the deluge; the second from the deluge to Abraham, equalling the first, not in length of time, but in the number of generations, there being ten in each. From Abraham to the advent of Christ there are, as the evangelist Matthew calculates, three periods, in each of which are fourteen generations—one period from Abraham to David, a second from David to the captivity, a third from the captivity to the birth of Christ in the flesh. There are thus five ages in all. The sixth is now passing, and cannot be measured by any number of generations, as it

has been said, "It is not for you to know the times, which the Father hath put in His own power." After this period God shall rest as on the seventh day, when He shall give us (who shall be the seventh day) rest in Himself. But there is not now space to treat of these ages; suffice it to say that the seventh shall be our Sabbath, which shall be brought to a close, not by an evening, but by the Lord's day, as an eighth and eternal day, consecrated by the resurrection of Christ and prefiguring the eternal repose not only of the spirit, but also of the body. There we shall rest and see, see and love, love and praise. This is what shall be in the end without end. For what other end do we propose to ourselves than to attain to the kingdom of which there is no end?

Augustine, *City of God,* XXII, 30

21 Whoever considers the past and the present will readily observe that all cities and all peoples are and ever have been animated by the same desires and the same passions; so that it is easy, by diligent study of the past, to foresee what is likely to happen in the future in any republic, and to apply those remedies that were used by the ancients, or, not finding any that were employed by them, to devise new ones from the similarity of the events.

Machiavelli, *Discourses,* I, 39

22 Nations, as a rule, when making a change in their system of government pass from order to disorder, and afterwards from disorder to order, because nature permits no stability in human affairs. When nations reach their final perfection and can mount no higher they commence to descend; and equally when they have descended and reached a depth where they can fall no lower, necessity compels them to rise again. Thus states will always be falling from prosperity to adversity, and from adversity they will ascend again to prosperity. Because valour brings peace, peace idleness, idleness disorder, and disorder ruin; once more from ruin arises good order, from order valour, and from valour success and glory.

Machiavelli, *Florentine History,* V

23 And now Don *Quixote* having satisfy'd his Appetite, he took a Handful of Acorns, and looking earnestly upon 'em; O happy Age, cry'd he, which our first Parents call'd the Age of Gold! not because Gold, so much ador'd in this Iron-Age, was then easily purchas'd, but because those two fatal Words, Mine and Thine, were Distinctions unknown to the People of those fortunate Times; for all Things were in common in that holy Age: Men, for their Sustenance, needed only to lift their Hands, and take it from the sturdy Oak, whose spreading Arms liberally invited them to gather the wholsome savoury Fruit; while the clear Springs, and silver Rivulets, with luxuriant Plenty, offer'd them their pure refreshing Water. In hollow Trees, and in the Clefts of Rocks, the labouring and industrious Bees erected their little Commonwealths, that Men might reap with Pleasure and with Ease the sweet and fertile Harvest of their Toils. The tough and strenuous Cork-Trees did of themselves, and without other Art than their native Liberality, dismiss and impart their broad light Bark, which serv'd to cover those lowly Huts, propp'd up with rough-hewn Stakes, that were first built as a Shelter against the Inclemencies of the Air: All then was Union, all Peace, all Love and Friendship in the World: As yet no rude Plough-share presum'd with Violence to pry into the pious Bowels of our Mother Earth, for she without Compulsion kindly yielded from every Part of her fruitful and spacious Bosom, whatever might at once satisfy, sustain and indulge her frugal Children. Then was the Time when innocent beautiful young Shepherdesses went tripping o'er the Hills and Vales: Their lovely Hair sometimes plaited, sometimes loose and flowing, clad in no other Vestment but what was necessary to cover decently what Modesty would always have conceal'd: The *Tyrian* Die, and the rich glossy Hue of Silk, martyr'd and dissembled into every Colour, which are now esteem'd so fine and magnificent, were unknown to the innocent Plainness of that Age; yet bedeck'd with more becoming Leaves and Flowers, they may be said to outshine the proudest of the vain-dressing Ladies of our Age, array'd in the most magnificent Garbs and all the most sumptuous Adorings which Idleness and Luxury have taught succeeding Pride: Lovers then express'd the Passion of their Souls in the unaffected Language of the Heart, with the native Plainness and Sincerity in which they were conceiv'd and divested of all that artificial Contexture, which enervates what it labours to enforce: Imposture, Deceit and Malice had not yet crept in, and impos'd themselves unbrib'd upon Mankind in the Disguise of Truth and Simplicity: Justice, unbiass'd either by Favour or Interest, which now so fatally pervert it, was equally and impartially dispensed; nor was the Judges Fancy Law, for then there were neither Judges, nor Causes to be judg'd; the modest Maid might walk where-ever she pleas'd alone, free from the Attacks of lewd lascivious Importuners. But in this degenerate Age, Fraud and a Legion of Ills infecting the World, no Virtue can be safe, no Honour be secure; while wanton Desires, diffus'd into the Hearts of Men, corrupt the strictest Watches, and the closest Retreats; which, though as intricate and unknown as the Labyrinth of *Crete,* are no Security for Chastity. Thus that Primitive Innocence being vanish'd, and Oppression daily prevailing, there was a Necessity to oppose the Torrent of Violence: For which Reason the Order of Knighthood-Errant was instituted, to defend the Honour of Virgins, protect Wid-

ows, relieve Orphans, and assist all the Distress'd in general. Now I my self am one of this Order, honest Friends; and though all People are oblig'd by the Law of Nature to be kind to Persons of My Order; yet since you, without knowing any thing of this Obligation, have so generously entertain'd me, I ought to pay you my utmost Acknowledgment; and, accordingly, return you my most hearty Thanks for the same.

Cervantes, *Don Quixote,* I, 11

24 By far the greatest obstacle to the advancement of the sciences, and the undertaking of any new attempt or department, is to be found in men's despair and the idea of impossibility; for men of a prudent and exact turn of thought are altogether diffident in matters of this nature, considering the obscurity of nature, the shortness of life, the deception of the senses, and weakness of the judgment. They think, therefore, that in the revolutions of ages and of the world there are certain floods and ebbs of the sciences, and that they grow and flourish at one time, and wither and fall off at another, that when they have attained a certain degree and condition they can proceed no further.

Bacon, *Novum Organum,* I, 92

25 We should notice the force, effect, and consequences of inventions, which are nowhere more conspicuous than in those three which were unknown to the ancients; namely, printing, gunpowder, and the compass. For these three have changed the appearance and state of the whole world: first in literature, then in warfare, and lastly in navigation; and innumerable changes have been thence derived, so that no empire, sect, or star, appears to have exercised a greater power and influence on human affairs than these mechanical discoveries.

Bacon, *Novum Organum,* I, 129

26 Beehives were as well laid out a thousand years ago as today, and each bee forms that hexagon as exactly the first time as the last. It is the same with everything animals make by that hidden motion. Nature teaches them in response to the pressure of necessity; but this frail knowledge dies with its need: as they receive it without study, they do not have the happiness of preserving it; and every time they are given it, they find it new, because nature, whose object is merely to maintain animals in an order of limited perfection, infuses in them this necessary knowledge, always the same, lest they perish, and does not allow them to add to it lest they go beyond the boundaries prescribed to them. It is different with man, made only for infinity. He is ignorant in his life's first age, but he never ceases to learn as he goes forward, for he has the advantage not only of his own experience but also of his predecessors', because he always keeps in his memory the knowledge he has once acquired, and that of the ancients is always at hand in the books they have left. And since he keeps his knowledge, he can also easily increase it, so that men today are in a certain sense in the same condition in which those ancient philosophers would be if they could have prolonged their old age until now, adding to the knowledge they had what their studies might have won for them by the grace of so many centuries. Hence it is that by a special prerogative not only does each man advance from day to day in the sciences, but all men together make a continual progress as the universe grows old, because the same thing happens in the succession of men as in the different ages of an individual man. So that the whole series of men during the course of so many centuries should be considered as one self-same man, always in existence and continually learning. Whence it is seen with what injustice we respect antiquity in the persons of its philosophers; for since old age is the age furthest removed from childhood, who does not see that the old age of this universal man should be sought not in the times near his birth but in those which are most distant from it? Those whom we call ancients were in truth new in every respect, and actually formed the childhood of man; and since we have added to their knowledge the experience of the succeeding centuries, it is in ourselves that that antiquity can be found which we revere in others.

Pascal, *Preface to the Treatise on the Vacuum*

27 *Chorus of All.* All, all of a piece throughout:
Thy chase had a beast in view;
Thy wars brought nothing about;
Thy lovers were all untrue.
'T is well an old age is out,
And time to begin a new.

Dryden, *The Secular Masque (1700)*

28 To realize in its completeness the universal beauty and perfection of the works of God, we must recognize a certain perpetual and very free progress of the whole universe, such that it is always going forward to greater improvement. So even now a great part of our earth has received cultivation and will receive it more and more. And although it is true that sometimes certain parts of it grow wild again, or again suffer destruction or degeneration, yet this is to be understood in the way in which affliction was explained above, that is to say, that this very destruction and degeneration leads to some greater end, so that somehow we profit by the loss itself.

And to the possible objection that, if this were so, the world ought long ago to have become a paradise, there is a ready answer. Although many substances have already attained a great perfection, yet on account of the infinite divisibility of the continuous, there always remain in the abyss of things slumbering parts which have yet to be

awakened, to grow in size and worth, and, in a word, to advance to a more perfect state. And hence no end of progress is ever reached.

Leibniz, *On the Ultimate Origination of Things*

29 I have perused many of their [the Lorbrulgrudians'] books, especially those in history and morality. Among the latter I was much diverted with a little old treatise, which always lay in Glumdalclitch's bed-chamber, and belonged to her governess, a grave elderly gentlewoman, who dealt in writings of morality and devotion. The book treats of the weakness of human kind; and is in little esteem, except among women and the vulgar. However, I was curious to see what an author of that country could say upon such a subject. This writer went through all the usual topicks of European moralists; shewing how diminutive, contemptible, and helpless an animal was man in his own nature; how unable to defend himself from inclemencies of the air, or the fury of wild beasts; how much he was excelled by one creature in strength, by another in speed, by a third in foresight, by a fourth in industry. He added, that nature was degenerated in these latter declining ages of the world, and could now produce only small abortive births, in comparison of those in ancient times. He said, it was very reasonable to think, not only that the species of man were originally much larger, but also, that there must have been giants in former ages; which, as it is asserted by history and tradition, so it hath been confirmed by huge bones and sculls, casually dug up in several parts of the kingdom, far exceeding the common dwindled race of man in our days.

Swift, *Gulliver's Travels,* II, 7

30 Our Science . . . comes to describe . . . an ideal eternal history traversed in time by the history of every nation in its rise, progress, maturity, decline and fall. Indeed we go so far as to assert that whoever meditates this Science tells himself this ideal eternal history only so far as he makes it by that proof "it had, has, and will have to be."

Vico, *The New Science,* I

31 This world without doubt has issued from a mind often diverse, at times quite contrary, and always superior to the particular ends that men had proposed to themselves; which narrow ends, made means to serve wider ends, it has always employed to preserve the human race upon this earth. Men mean to gratify their bestial lust and abandon their offspring, and they inaugurate the chastity of marriage from which the families arise. The fathers mean to exercise without restraint their paternal power over their clients, and they subject them to the civil powers from which the cities arise. The reigning orders of nobles mean to abuse their lordly freedom over the plebeians, and they are obliged to submit to the laws which establish popular liberty. The free peoples mean to shake off the yoke of their laws, and they become subject to monarchs. The monarchs mean to strengthen their own positions by debasing their subjects with all the vices of dissoluteness, and they dispose them to endure slavery at the hands of stronger nations. The nations mean to dissolve themselves, and their remnants flee for safety to the wilderness, whence, like the phoenix, they rise again.

Vico, *The New Science,* Conclusion

32 Thus—thus, my fellow-labourers and associates in this great harvest of our learning, now ripening before our eyes; thus it is, by slow steps of casual increase, that our knowledge physical, metaphysical, physiological, polemical, nautical, mathematical, enigmatical, technical, biographical, romantical, chemical, and obstetrical, with fifty other branches of it, (most of 'em ending as these do, in *ical*) have for these two centuries and more, gradually been creeping upwards towards that acme of their perfections, from which, if we may form a conjecture from the advances of these last seven years, we cannot possibly be far off.

When that happens, it is to be hoped, it will put an end to all kind of writings whatsoever;—the want of all kind of writing will put an end to all kind of reading;—and that in time, As war begets poverty; poverty peace,—must, in course, put an end to all kind of knowledge,—and then—we shall have all to begin over again; or, in other words, be exactly where we started.

Sterne, *Tristram Shandy,* I, 21

33 A famous author, reckoning up the good and evil of human life, and comparing the aggregates, finds that our pains greatly exceed our pleasures: so that, all things considered, human life is not at all a valuable gift. This conclusion does not surprise me; for the writer drew all his arguments from man in civilisation. Had he gone back to the state of nature, his inquiries would clearly have had a different result, and man would have been seen to be subject to very few evils not of his own creation. It has indeed cost us not a little trouble to make ourselves as wretched as we are. When we consider, on the one hand, the immense labours of mankind, the many sciences brought to perfection, the arts invented, the powers employed, the deeps filled up, the mountains levelled, the rocks shattered, the rivers made navigable, the tracts of land cleared, the lakes emptied, the marshes drained, the enormous structures erected on land, and the teeming vessels that cover the sea; and, on the other hand, estimate with ever so little thought, the real advantages that have accrued from all these works to mankind, we cannot help being amazed at the vast disproportion there is between these things, and deploring the infatuation of man, which, to gratify his silly

pride and vain self-admiration, induces him eagerly to pursue all the miseries he is capable of feeling, though beneficent nature had kindly placed them out of his way.

Rousseau, *Origin of Inequality,* Appendix

34 Savage man, when he has dined, is at peace with all nature, and the friend of all his fellow-creatures. If a dispute arises about a meal, he rarely comes to blows, without having first compared the difficulty of conquering his antagonist with the trouble of finding subsistence elsewhere: and, as pride does not come in, it all ends in a few blows; the victor eats, and the vanquished seeks provision somewhere else, and all is at peace. The case is quite different with man in the state of society, for whom first necessaries have to be provided, and then superfluities; delicacies follow next, then immense wealth, then subjects, and then slaves. He enjoys not a moment's relaxation; and what is yet stranger, the less natural and pressing his wants, the more headstrong are his passions, and, still worse, the more he has it in his power to gratify them; so that after a long course of prosperity, after having swallowed up treasures and ruined multitudes, the hero ends up by cutting every throat till he finds himself, at last, sole master of the world. Such is in miniature the moral picture, if not of human life, at least of the secret pretensions of the heart of civilised man.

Rousseau, *Origin of Inequality,* Appendix

35 *Johnson.* It is in refinement and elegance that the civilized man differs from the savage. A great part of our industry, and all our ingenuity is exercised in procuring pleasure; and, Sir, a hungry man has not the same pleasure in eating a plain dinner, that a hungry man has in eating a luxurious dinner.

Boswell, *Life of Johnson (Apr. 14, 1778)*

36 Natural phenomena, governed by constant laws, traverse forever certain fixed cycles of change. All things perish, all things revive; and in those successive generations which mark the reproduction of plants and of animals, time but restores continually the likeness of what it has annihilated.

The succession of mankind, on the contrary, presents from age to age an ever-varied spectacle. Reason, the passions, liberty, continually give rise to new events. All the ages are linked together by a chain of causes and effects which unite the existing state of the world with all that has gone before. The arbitrary signs of speech and of writing, in giving to men the means of insuring the possession of their ideas and of communicating them to others, have made a common treasure-store of all individual knowledge, which one generation bequeaths to the next, a heritage constantly augmented by the discoveries of each age; and mankind, viewed from its origin, appears to the eyes of a philosopher as one vast whole, which itself, like each individual, has its infancy and its growth.

Turgot, *Progress of the Human Mind,* I

37 What a host of inventions unknown to the ancients, and credited to an age of barbarism! Our art of recording music, our bills of exchange, our paper, window-glass, plate-glass, windmills, watches, spectacles, gunpowder, the magnetic needle and the consequent perfection of navigation and commerce. The arts are but the utilization of nature, and the exercise of the arts is a series of physical experiments which progressively unveil her. Facts were accumulating in the darkness of the age of ignorance, and the sciences, whose progress, for all that it was hidden, was none the less actual, were destined to reappear in time increased by these new riches; like those rivers which, after having disappeared from view for a space in some subterranean channel, reappear farther on augmented by all the waters which have filtered through the earth.

Turgot, *Progress of the Human Mind,* I

38 The uniform, constant, and uninterrupted effort of every man to better his condition, the principle from which public and national, as well as private opulence is originally derived, is frequently powerful enough to maintain the natural progress of things towards improvement, in spite both of the extravagance of government and of the greatest errors of administration. Like the unknown principle of animal life, it frequently restores health and vigour to the constitution, in spite, not only of the disease, but of the absurd prescriptions of the doctor.

Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations,* II, 3

39 Laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the human mind. As that becomes more developed, more enlightened, as new discoveries are made, new truths disclosed, and manners and opinions change with the change of circumstances, institutions must advance also, and keep pace with the times.

Jefferson, *Letter to Samuel Kercheval (July 12, 1816)*

40 We imperceptibly advance from youth to age without observing the gradual, but incessant, change of human affairs; and even in our larger experience of history, the imagination is accustomed, by a perpetual series of causes and effects. to unite the most distant revolutions. But if the interval between two memorable eras could be instantly annihilated; if it were possible, after a momentary slumber of two hundred years, to display the *new* world to the eyes of a spectator who still retained a lively and recent impression of the *old,* his surprise and his reflections would furnish the

pleasing subject of a philosophical romance.

Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,* XXXIII

41 Since the first discovery of the arts, war, commerce, and religious zeal have diffused among the savages of the Old and New World these inestimable gifts: they have been successively propagated; they can never be lost. We may therefore acquiesce in the pleasing conclusion that every age of the world has increased and still increases the real wealth, the happiness, the knowledge, and perhaps the virtue, of the human race.

Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,* XXXVIII

42 The history of the human race, viewed as a whole, may be regarded as the realization of a hidden plan of nature to bring about a political constitution, internally, and, for this purpose, also externally perfect, as the only state in which all the capacities implanted by her in mankind can be fully developed.

Kant, *Idea of a Universal History,* VIII

43 I will . . . venture to assume that as the human race is continually advancing in civilisation and culture as its natural purpose, so it is continually making progress for the better in relation to the moral end of its existence, and that this progress although it may be sometimes interrupted, will never be entirely broken off or stopped. It is not necessary for me to prove this assumption; the burden of proof lies on its opponents. For I take my stand upon my innate sense of duty in this connection. Every member in the series of generations to which I belong as a man—although mayhap not so well equipped with the requisite moral qualifications as I ought to be, and consequently might be—is, in fact, prompted by his sense of duty so to act in reference to posterity that they may always become better, and the possibility of this must be assumed. This duty can thus be rightfully transmitted from one member of the generations to another. Now whatever doubts may be drawn from history against my hopes, and were they even of such a kind as, in case of their being demonstrated, might move me to desist from efforts which according to all appearances would be vain, yet so long as this is not made out with complete certainty, I am not entitled to give up the guidance of duty which is clear, and to adopt the prudential rule of not working at the impracticable, since this is not clear but is mere hypothesis. And, however uncertain I may always be as to whether we may rightly hope that the human race will attain to a better condition, yet this individual uncertainty cannot detract from the general rule of conduct, or from the necessary assumption in the practical relation that such a condition *is* practicable.

Kant, *On the Saying: That a Thing may be Right in Theory, but may not Hold in Practice*

44 The question next arises as to the means by which this continuous progress to the better may be maintained and even hastened. When carefully considered, we soon see that as this process must go on to an incalculable distance of time, it cannot depend so much on what we may do of ourselves, for instance, on the education we give to the younger generation, or on the method by which we may proceed in order to realise it, as on what human *Nature* as such will do *in* and with us, to compel us to move in a track into which we would not readily have betaken ourselves. For, it is from human Nature in general, or rather—since supreme wisdom is requisite for the accomplishment of this end—it is from *Providence* alone that we can expect a result which proceeds by relation to the whole and reacts through the whole upon the parts. Men with their *plans* start, on the contrary, only from the parts, and even continue to regard the parts alone, while the whole as such is viewed as too great for them to influence and as attainable by them only in idea.

Kant, *On the Saying: That a Thing may be Right in Theory, but may not Hold in Practice*

45 Human Reason pursues her course in the species in general: she invents, before she can apply; she discovers, though evil hands may long abuse her discoveries. Abuse will correct itself; and, through the unwearied zeal of ever-growing Reason, disorder will in time become order. By contending against passions, she strengthens and enlightens herself: from being oppressed in this place, she will fly to that, and extend the sphere of her sway over the Earth. There is nothing enthusiastical in the hope, that, wherever men dwell, at some future period will dwell men rational, just, and happy: happy, not through the means of their own reason alone, but of the common reason of their whole fraternal race.

Herder, *Philosophy of the History of Man,* XV

46 The organic perfectibility or degeneration of species in the case of plants or of animals can be regarded as one of the general laws of nature.

This law extends to the human race, and no one probably will doubt that progress in preventive medicine, the use of more healthful foods and habitations, a mode of living which should develop the strength through exercise without impairing it through excess, that, finally, the destruction of the two most active causes of degeneracy, extreme poverty and excessive wealth, will necessarily prolong the average duration of man's life and secure him a more constant health and a more robust constitution. It is felt that the progress of preventive medicine, become more efficacious

through the progress of reason and that of the social order, must do away in time with transmissible or contagious diseases, and those general disorders which owe their origin to climates, foods, or the nature of occupations. It would not be difficult to prove that this hope may be extended to nearly all the other maladies, the distant causes of which it is probable will be discovered hereafter. Would it be absurd, then, to suppose that this improvement of the human race may be regarded as susceptible of indefinite progress, that there may come a time when death shall be no more than the result either of extraordinary accidents or of the ever more gradual decay of the vital forces, and that, finally, the average interval elapsing between birth and this decay may itself have no assignable limit? Doubtless man will never become immortal, but may not the distance between the moment when he first receives life and the common period when in the course of nature, without illness and without accident, he finds it no longer possible to exist, grow constantly wider?

Condorcet, *Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind,* 10

47 [The] average duration of human life is destined to increase continually, if physical revolutions do not oppose themselves thereto; but we do not know what limit it is that it can never pass; we do not even know if the general laws of nature have fixed such a limit.

Condorcet, *Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind,* 10

48 It is, undoubtedly, a most disheartening reflection that the great obstacle in the way to any extraordinary improvement in society is of a nature that we can never hope to overcome. The perpetual tendency in the race of man to increase beyond the means of subsistence is one of the general laws of animated nature which we can have no reason to expect will change. Yet, discouraging as the contemplation of this difficulty must be to those whose exertions are laudably directed to the improvement of the human species, it is evident that no possible good can arise from any endeavors to slur it over or keep it in the background.

Malthus, *Population,* XVII

49 *Chorus.* The world's great age begins anew,
The golden years return,
The earth doth like a snake renew
Her winter weeds outworn;
Heaven smiles, and faiths and empires gleam,
Like wrecks of a dissolving dream.

A brighter Hellas rears its mountains
From waves serener far;
A new Peneus rolls his fountains
Against the morning-star.
Where fairer Tempes bloom, there sleep
Young Cyclads on a sunnier deep.

A loftier Argo cleaves the main,
Fraught with a later prize;
Another Orpheus sings again,
And loves, and weeps, and dies.
A new Ulysses leaves once more
Calypso for his native shore.

Oh, write no more the tale of Troy,
If earth Death's scroll must be!
Nor mix with Laian rage the joy
Which dawns upon the free;
Although a subtler Sphinx renew
Riddles of death Thebes never knew.

Another Athens shall arise,
And to remoter time
Bequeath, like sunset to the skies,
The splendor of its prime;
And leave, if nought so bright may live,
All earth can take or Heaven can give.

Saturn and Love their long repose
Shall burst, more bright and good
Than all who fell, than One who rose,
Than many unsubdued;
Not gold, not blood, their altar dowers,
But votive tears and symbol flowers.

Oh, cease! must hate and death return?
Cease! must men kill and die?
Cease! drain not to its dregs the urn
Of bitter prophecy.
The world is weary of the past,
Oh, might it die or rest at last!

Shelley, *Hellas,* 1060

50 In order to understand the true value and character of the Positive Philosophy, we must take a brief general view of the progressive course of the human mind, regarded as a whole; for no conception can be understood otherwise than through its history.

From the study of the development of human intelligence, in all directions, and through all times, the discovery arises of a great fundamental law, to which it is necessarily subject, and which has a solid foundation of proof, both in the facts of our organization and in our historical experience. The law is this:—that each of our leading conceptions—each branch of our knowledge—passes successively through three different theoretical conditions: the Theological, or ficitious; the Metaphysical, or abstract; and the Scientific, or positive. In other words, the human mind, by its nature, employs in its progress three methods of philosophizing, the character of which is essentially different, and even radically opposed: viz., the theological method, the metaphysical, and the positive. Hence arise three philosophies, or general systems of conceptions on the aggregate of phenomena, each of which excludes the others. The first is the necessary point of departure of the hu-

man understanding; and the third is its fixed and definite state. The second is merely a state of transition.

Comte, *Positive Philosophy,* Introduction, 1

51 We have nothing to do here with the metaphysical controversy about the absolute happiness of Man at different stages of civilization. As the happiness of every man depends on the harmony between the development of his various faculties and the entire system of the circumstances which govern his life; and as, on the other hand, this equilibrium always establishes itself spontaneously to a certain extent, it is impossible to compare in a positive way, either by sentiment or reasoning, the individual welfare which belongs to social situations that can never be brought into direct comparison: and therefore the question of the happiness of different animal organisms, or of their two sexes, is merely impracticable and unintelligible. The only question, therefore, is of the effect of the social evolution, which is so undeniable that there is no reasoning with any one who does not admit it as the basis of the inquiry. The only ground of discussion is whether development and improvement,—the theoretical and the practical aspect,—are one; whether the development is necessarily accompanied by a corresponding amelioration, or progress, properly so called. To me it appears that the amelioration is as unquestionable as the development from which it proceeds, provided we regard it as subject, like the development itself, to limits, general and special, which science will be found to prescribe. The chimerical notion of unlimited perfectibility is thus at once excluded. Taking the human race as a whole, and not any one people, it appears that human development brings after it, in two ways, an ever-growing amelioration, first, in the radical condition of Man, which no one disputes; and next, in his corresponding faculties, which is a view much less attended to. There is no need to dwell upon the improvement in the conditions of human existence, both by the increasing action of Man on his environment through the advancement of the sciences and arts, and by the constant amelioration of his customs and manners; and again, by the gradual improvement in social organization. We shall presently see that in the Middle Ages, which are charged with political retrogression, the progress was more political than any other. One fact is enough to silence sophistical declamation on this subject; the continuous increase of population all over the globe, as a consequence of civilization, while the wants of individuals are, as a whole, better satisfied at the same time. The tendency to improvement must be highly spontaneous and irresistible to have persevered notwithstanding the enormous faults—political faults especially—which have at all times absorbed or neutralized the greater part of our social forces. Even throughout the revolutionary period, in spite of the marked discordance between the political system and the general state of civilization, the improvement has proceeded, not only in physical and intellectual, but also in moral respects, though the transient disorganization could not but disturb the natural evolution. As for the other aspect of the question, the gradual and slow improvement of human nature, within narrow limits, it seems to me impossible to reject altogether the principle proposed (with great exaggeration, however) by Lamarck, of the necessary influence of a homogeneous and continuous exercise in producing, in every animal organism, and especially in Man, an organic improvement, susceptible of being established in the race, after a sufficient persistence. If we take the best-marked case—that of intellectual development, it seems to be unquestionable that there is a superior aptitude for mental combinations, independent of all culture, among highly-civilized people; or, what comes to the same thing, an inferior aptitude among nations that are less advanced,—the average intellect of the members of those societies being taken for observation. The intellectual faculties are, it is true, more modified than the others by the social evolution: but then they have the smallest relative effect in the individual human constitution: so that we are authorized to infer from their amelioration a proportionate improvement in aptitudes that are more marked and equally exercised. In regard to morals, particularly, I think it indisputable that the gradual development of humanity favors a growing preponderance of the noblest tendencies of our nature,—as I hope to prove further on. The lower instincts continue to manifest themselves in modified action, but their less sustained and more repressed exercise must tend to debilitate them by degrees; and their increasing regulation certainly brings them into involuntary concurrence in the maintenance of a good social economy; and especially in the case of the least marked organisms, which constitute a vast majority. These two aspects of social evolution, then,—the *development* which brings after it the *improvement,*—we may consider to be admitted as facts.

Comte, *Positive Philosophy,* VI, 3

52 The progress of the race must be considered susceptible of modification only with regard to its speed, and without any reversal in the order of development, or any interval of any importance being overleaped.

Comte, *Positive Philosophy,* VI, 3

53 Society never advances. It recedes as fast on one side as it gains on the other. It undergoes continual changes; it is barbarous, it is civilized, it is christianized, it is rich, it is scientific; but this change is not amelioration. For every thing that is given something is taken. Society acquires new

arts and loses old instincts. What a contrast between the well-clad, reading, writing, thinking American, with a watch, a pencil and a bill of exchange in his pocket, and the naked New Zealander, whose property is a club, a spear, a mat and an undivided twentieth of a shed to sleep under! But compare the health of the two men and you shall see that the white man has lost his aboriginal strength. If the traveller tell us truly, strike the savage with a broad-axe and in a day or two the flesh shall unite and heal as if you struck the blow into soft pitch, and the same blow shall send the white to his grave.

Emerson, *Self-Reliance*

54 The civilized man has built a coach, but has lost the use of his feet. He is supported on crutches, but lacks so much support of muscle. He has a fine Geneva watch, but he fails of the skill to tell the hour by the sun. A Greenwich nautical almanac he has, and so being sure of the information when he wants it, the man in the street does not know a star in the sky.

Emerson, *Self-Reliance*

55 There is not a piece of science but its flank may be turned to-morrow; there is not any literary reputation, not the so-called eternal names of fame, that may not be revised and condemned. The very hopes of man, the thoughts of his heart, the religion of nations, the manners and morals of mankind are all at the mercy of a new generalization.

Emerson, *Circles*

56 As long as our civilization is essentially one of property, of fences, of exclusiveness, it will be mocked by delusions. Our riches will leave us sick; there will be bitterness in our laughter, and our wine will burn our mouth. Only that good profits which we can taste with all doors open, and which serves all men.

Emerson, *Napoleon; or, The Man of the World*

57 Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward let us range,
Let the great world spin for ever down the ringing grooves of change.

Thro' the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger day;
Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay.

Tennyson, *Locksley Hall,* 181

58 Shad are still taken in the basin of Concord River, at Lowell, where they are said to be a month earlier than the Merrimack shad, on account of the warmth of the water. Still patiently, almost pathetically, with instinct not to be discouraged, not to be *reasoned* with, revisiting their old haunts, as if their stern fates would relent, and still met by the Corporation with its dam. Poor shad! where is thy redress? When Nature gave thee instinct, gave she thee the heart to bear thy fate? Still wandering the sea in thy scaly armor to inquire humbly at the mouths of rivers if man has perchance left them free for thee to enter. By countless shoals loitering uncertain meanwhile, merely stemming the tide there, in danger from sea foes in spite of thy bright armor, awaiting new instructions, until the sands, until the water itself, tell thee if it be so or not. Thus by whole migrating nations, full of instinct, which is thy faith, in this backward spring, turned adrift, and perchance knowest not where men do *not* dwell, where there are *not* factories, in these days. Armed with no sword, no electric shock, but mere shad, armed only with innocence and a just cause, with tender dumb mouth only forward, and scales easy to be detached. I for one am with thee, and who knows what may avail a crowbar against that Billerica dam?—Not despairing when whole myriads have gone to feed those sea monsters during thy suspense, but still brave, indifferent, on easy fin there, like shad reserved for higher destinies. Willing to be decimated for man's behoof after the spawning season. Away with the superficial and selfish philanthropy of men—who knows what admirable virtue of fishes may be below low-water-mark, bearing up against a hard destiny, not admired by that fellow-creature who alone can appreciate it! Who hears the fishes when they cry? It will not be forgotten by some memory that we were contemporaries. Thou shalt ere long have thy way up the rivers, up all the rivers of the globe, if I am not mistaken. Yea, even thy dull watery dream shall be more than realized. If it were not so, but thou wert to be overlooked at first and at last, then would not I take their heaven. Yes, I say so, who think I know better than thou canst. Keep a stiff fin, then, and stem all the tides thou mayst meet.

Thoreau, *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers (Saturday)*

59 In the savage state every family owns a shelter as good as the best, and sufficient for its coarser and simpler wants; but I think that I speak within bounds when I say that, though the birds of the air have their nests, and the foxes their holes, and the savages their wigwams, in modern civilized society not more than one half the families own a shelter. In the large towns and cities, where civilization especially prevails, the number of those who own a shelter is a very small fraction of the whole. The rest pay an annual tax for this outside garment of all, become indispensable summer and winter, which would buy a village of Indian wigwams, but now helps to keep them poor as long as they live. I do not mean to insist here on the disadvantage of hiring compared with owning, but it is evident that the savage owns his shelter because

it costs so little, while the civilized man hires his commonly because he cannot afford to own it; nor can he, in the long run, any better afford to hire. But, answers one, by merely paying this tax the poor civilized man secures an abode which is a palace compared with the savage's. An annual rent of from twenty-five to a hundred dollars (these are the country rates) entitles him to the benefit of the improvements of centuries, spacious apartments, clean paint and paper, Rumford fireplace, back plastering, Venetian blinds, copper pump, spring lock, a commodious cellar, and many other things. But how happens it that he who is said to enjoy these things is so commonly a *poor* civilized man, while the savage, who has them not, is rich as a savage? If it is asserted that civilization is a real advance in the condition of man—and I think that it is, though only the wise improve their advantages—it must be shown that it has produced better dwellings without making them more costly; and the cost of a thing is the amount of what I will call life which is required to be exchanged for it, immediately or in the long run. An average house in this neighborhood costs perhaps eight hundred dollars, and to lay up this sum will take from ten to fifteen years of the laborer's life, even if he is not encumbered with a family—estimating the pecuniary value of every man's labor at one dollar a day, for if some receive more, others receive less;—so that he must have spent more than half his life commonly before *his* wigwam will be earned. If we suppose him to pay a rent instead, this is but a doubtful choice of evils. Would the savage have been wise to exchange his wigwam for a palace on these terms?

Thoreau, *Walden:* Economy

60 Some are dinning in our ears that we Americans, and moderns generally, are intellectual dwarfs compared with the ancients, or even the Elizabethan men. But what is that to the purpose? A living dog is better than a dead lion. Shall a man go and hang himself because he belongs to the race of pygmies, and not be the biggest pygmy that he can? Let every one mind his own business, and endeavor to be what he was made.

Thoreau, *Walden:* Conclusion

61 To believe that man was aboriginally civilised and then suffered utter degradation in so many regions, is to take a pitiably low view of human nature. It is apparently a truer and more cheerful view that progress has been much more general than retrogression; that man has risen, though by slow and interrupted steps, from a lowly condition to the highest standard as yet attained by him in knowledge, morals and religion.

Darwin, *Descent of Man,* I, 5

62 Thoughtful men, once escaped from the blinding influences of traditional prejudice, will find in the lowly stock whence Man has sprung, the best evidence of the splendour of his capacities; and will discern in his long progress through the Past, a reasonable ground of faith in his attainment of a nobler Future.

T. H. Huxley, *Relations of Man to the Lower Animals*

63 Men in society are undoubtedly subject to the cosmic process. As among other animals, multiplication goes on without cessation, and involves severe competition for the means of support. The struggle for existence tends to eliminate those less fitted to adapt themselves to the circumstances of their existence. The strongest, the most self-assertive, tend to tread down the weaker. But the influence of the cosmic process on the evolution of society is the greater the more rudimentary its civilization. Social progress means a checking of the cosmic process at every step and the substitution for it of another, which may be called the ethical process; the end of which is not the survival of those who may happen to be the fittest, in respect of the whole of the conditions which obtain, but of those who are ethically the best.

T. H. Huxley, *Evolution and Ethics*

64 In support of the position that Order is intrinsically different from Progress, and that preservation of existing and acquisition of additional good are sufficiently distinct to afford the basis of a fundamental classification, we shall perhaps be reminded that Progress may be at the expense of Order; that while we are acquiring, or striving to acquire, good of one kind, we may be losing ground in respect to others: thus there may be progress in wealth, while there is deterioration in virtue. Granting this, what it proves is not that Progress is generically a different thing from Permanence, but that wealth is a different thing from virtue. Progress is permanence and something more; and it is no answer to this to say that Progress in one thing does not imply Permanence in everything. No more does Progress in one thing imply Progress in everything. Progress of any kind includes Permanence in that same kind; whenever Permanence is sacrificed to some particular kind of Progress, other Progress is still more sacrificed to it; and if it be not worth the sacrifice, not the interest of Permanence alone has been disregarded, but the general interest of Progress has been mistaken.

Mill, *Representative Government,* II

65 No one whose opinion deserves a moment's consideration can doubt that most of the great positive evils of the world are in themselves removable, and will, if human affairs continue to improve, be in the end reduced within narrow limits. Poverty, in any sense implying suffering, may be completely extinguished by the wisdom of

society, combined with the good sense and providence of individuals. Even that most intractable of enemies, disease, may be indefinitely reduced in dimensions by good physical and moral education, and proper control of noxious influences; while the progress of science holds out a promise for the future of still more direct conquests over this detestable foe. And every advance in that direction relieves us from some, not only of the chances which cut short our own lives, but, what concerns us still more, which deprive us of those in whom our happiness is wrapt up. As for vicissitudes of fortune, and other disappointments connected with worldly circumstances, these are principally the effect either of gross imprudence, of ill-regulated desires, or of bad or imperfect social institutions.

Mill, *Utilitarianism,* II

66 It is my belief indeed that the general tendency is, and will continue to be, saving occasional and temporary exceptions, one of improvement—a tendency towards a better and happier state. This, however, is not a question of the method of the social science, but a theorem of the science itself. For our purpose it is sufficient that there is a progressive change, both in the character of the human race and in their outward circumstances so far as moulded by themselves; that in each successive age the principal phenomena of society are different from what they were in the age preceding, and still more different from any previous age: the periods which most distinctly mark these successive changes being intervals of one generation, during which a new set of human beings have been educated, have grown up from childhood, and taken possession of society.

Mill, *System of Logic,* Bk. VI, X, 3

67 A Philosophy of History is generally admitted to be at once the verification and the initial form of the Philosophy of the Progress of Society.

Mill, *System of Logic,* Bk. VI, X, 8

68 Progress is
The law of life, man is not Man as yet.

Browning, *Paracelsus,* V

69 Man knows partly but conceives beside,
Creeps ever on from fancies to the fact,
And in this striving, this converting air
Into a solid he may grasp and use,
Finds progress, man's distinctive mark alone,
Not God's, and not the beasts': God is, they are,
Man partly is and wholly hopes to be.

Browning, *A Death in the Desert*

70 The pursuit of perfection . . . is the pursuit of sweetness and light. He who works for sweetness and light, works to make reason and the will of God prevail. He who works for machinery, he who works for hatred, works only for confusion. Culture looks beyond machinery, culture hates hatred; culture has one great passion, the passion for sweetness and light. It has one even yet greater!—the passion for making them *prevail.* It is not satisfied till we *all* come to a perfect man; it knows that the sweetness and light of the few must be imperfect until the raw and unkindled masses of humanity are touched with sweetness and light. If I have not shrunk from saying that we must work for sweetness and light, so neither have I shrunk from saying that we must have a broad basis, must have sweetness and light for as many as possible. Again and again I have insisted how those are the happy moments of humanity, how those are the marking epochs of a people's life, how those are the flowering times for literature and art and all the creative power of genius, when there is a *national* glow of life and thought, when the whole of society is in the fullest measure permeated by thought, sensible to beauty, intelligent and alive.

Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy,* I

71 Progress . . . is not an accident, but a necessity. Instead of civilization being artificial, it is a part of nature; all of a piece with the development of the embryo or the unfolding of a flower. The modifications mankind have undergone, and are still undergoing, result from a law underlying the whole organic creation; and provided the human race continues, and the constitution of things remains the same, those modifications must end in completeness. As surely as the tree becomes bulky when it stands alone, and slender if one of a group; as surely as the same creature assumes the different forms of cart-horse and race-horse, according as its habits demand strength or speed; as surely as a blacksmith's arm grows large, and the skin of a labourer's hand thick; as surely as the eye tends to become long-sighted in the sailor, and short-sighted in the student; as surely as the blind attain a more delicate sense of touch; as surely as a clerk acquires rapidity in writing and calculation; as surely as the musician learns to detect an error of a semi-tone amidst what seems to others a very babel of sounds; as surely as a passion grows by indulgence and diminishes when restrained; as surely as a disregarded conscience becomes inert, and one that is obeyed active; as surely as there is any efficacy in educational culture, or any meaning in such terms as habit, custom, practice; so surely must the human faculties be moulded into complete fitness for the social state; so surely must the things we call evil and immorality disappear; so surely must man become perfect.

Spencer, *Social Statics,* I, 2

72 The plexus of causes returneth in which I am intertwined,—it will again create me! I myself pertain to the causes of the eternal return.

I come again with this sun, with this earth, with

this eagle, with this serpent—*not* to a new life, or a better life, or a similar life:

—I come again eternally to this identical and selfsame life, in its greatest and its smallest, to teach again the eternal return of all things,—

—To speak again the word of the great noontide of earth and man, to announce again to man the Superman.

Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra,* III, 57

73 This life, as thou livest it now, as thou hast lived it, thou needst must live again, and an infinite number of times; and there will be in it nothing new; but every grief and every joy, every thought and every sigh, all the infinitely great and the infinitely little in thy life must return for thee, and all this in the same sequence and the same order. And also this spider and the moonlight through the trees, and also this moment and myself. The eternal hour-glass of existence will ever be turned again, and thou with it, dust of dust.

Nietzsche, *Joyful Wisdom,* 341

74 The more ignorant men are, the move convinced are they that their little parish and their little chapel is an apex to which civilization and philosophy has painfully struggled up the pyramid of time from a desert of savagery. Savagery, they think, became barbarism; barbarism became ancient civilization; ancient civilization became Pauline Christianity; Pauline Christianity became Roman Catholicism; Roman Catholicism became the Dark Ages; and the Dark Ages were finally enlightened by the Protestant instincts of the English race. The whole process is summed up as Progress with a capital P. And any elderly gentleman of Progressive temperament will testify that the improvement since he was a boy is enormous. . . .

The notion that there has been any such Progress since Cæsar's time (less than 20 centuries) is too absurd for discussion. All the savagery, barbarism, dark ages and the rest of it of which we have any record as existing in the past exists at the present moment.

Shaw, *Caesar and Cleopatra,* Notes

75 We must . . . frankly give up the notion that Man as he exists is capable of net progress. There will always be an illusion of progress, because wherever we are conscious of an evil we remedy it, and therefore always seem to ourselves to be progressing, forgetting that most of the evils we see are the effects, finally become acute, of long-unnoticed retrogressions; that our compromising remedies seldom fully recover the lost ground; above all, that on the lines along which we are degenerating, good has become evil in our eyes, and is being undone in the name of progress precisely as evil is undone and replaced by good on the lines along which we are evolving. This is indeed the Illusion of Illusions; for it gives us infallible and appalling assurance that if our political ruin is to come, it will be effected by ardent reformers and supported by enthusiastic patriots as a series of necessary steps in our progress. Let the Reformer, the Progressive, the Meliorist then reconsider himself and his eternal ifs and ans which never become pots and pans. Whilst Man remains what he is, there can be no progress beyond the point already attained and fallen headlong from at every attempt at civilization; and since even that point is but a pinnacle to which a few people cling in giddy terror above an abyss of squalor, mere progress should no longer charm us.

Shaw, *Man and Superman,* Revolutionist's Handbook

76 The reasonable man adapts himself to the world: the unreasonable one persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore all progress depends on the unreasonable man.

Shaw, *Man and Superman,* Maxims for Revolutionists

77 The differences between the nations and races of mankind are required to preserve the conditions under which higher development is possible. One main factor in the upward trend of animal life has been the power of wandering. Perhaps this is why the armour-plated monsters fared badly. They could not wander. Animals wander into new conditions. They have to adapt themselves or die. Mankind has wandered from the trees to the plains, from the plains to the seacoast, from climate to climate, from continent to continent, and from habit of life to habit of life. When man ceases to wander, he will cease to ascend in the scale of being. Physical wandering is still important, but greater still is the power of man's spiritual adventures—adventures of thought, adventures of passionate feeling, adventures of aesthetic experience. A diversification among human communities is essential for the provision of the incentive and material for the Odyssey of the human spirit. Other nations of different habits are not enemies: they are godsends. Men require of their neighbours something sufficiently akin to be understood, something sufficiently different to provoke attention, and something great enough to command admiration. We must not expect, however, all the virtues. We should even be satisfied if there is something odd enough to be interesting.

Modern science has imposed on humanity the necessity for wandering. Its progressive thought and its progressive technology make the transition through time, from generation to generation, a true migration into uncharted seas of adventure. The very benefit of wandering is that it is dangerous and needs skill to avert evils. We must expect, therefore, that the future will disclose dangers. It is the business of the future to be dangerous; and

it is among the merits of science that it equips the future for its duties. The prosperous middle classes, who ruled the nineteenth century, placed an excessive value upon placidity of existence. They refused to face the necessities for social reform imposed by the new industrial system, and they are now refusing to face the necessities for intellectual reform imposed by the new knowledge. The middle class pessimism over the future of the world comes from a confusion between civilisation and security. In the immediate future there will be less security than in the immediate past, less stability. It must be admitted that there is a degree of instability which is inconsistent with civilisation. But, on the whole, the great ages have been unstable ages.

Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World,* XIII

78 The foundation of all understanding . . . is that no static maintenance of perfection is possible. This axiom is rooted in the nature of things. Advance or Decadence are the only choices offered to mankind. The pure conservative is fighting against the essence of the universe.

Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas,* XIX, 2

79 That Man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving; that his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs, are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms; that no fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought and feeling, can preserve an individual life beyond the grave; that all the labours of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noonday brightness of human genius, are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system, and that the whole temple of Man's achievement must inevitably be buried beneath the debris of a universe in ruins—all these things, if not quite beyond dispute, are yet so nearly certain, that no philosophy which rejects them can hope to stand.

Russell, *A Free Man's Worship*

80 Civilization is the fruit of renunciation of instinctual satisfaction, and from each newcomer in turn it exacts the same renunciation. Throughout the life of the individual, there is a constant replacement of the external compulsion by the internal. The influences of civilization cause an ever-increasing transmutation of egoistic trends into altruistic and social ones, and this by an admixture of erotic elements. In the last resort it may be said that every internal compulsion which has been of service in the development of human beings was originally, that is, in the evolution of the human race, nothing but an external one. Those who are born today bring with them as an inherited constitution some degree of a tendency (disposition) towards transmutation of egoistic into social instincts, and this disposition is easily stimulated to achieve that effect. A further measure of this transformation must be accomplished during the life of the individual himself. And so the human being is subject not only to the pressure of his immediate environment, but also to the influence of the cultural development attained by his forefathers.

Freud, *Thoughts on War and Death,* I

81 It sounds like a fairy-tale, but not only that; this story of what man by his science and practical inventions has achieved on this earth, where he first appeared as a weakly member of the animal kingdom, and on which each individual of his species must ever again appear as a helpless infant—O inch of nature!—is a direct fulfilment of all, or of most, of the dearest wishes in his fairy-tales. All these possessions he has acquired through culture. Long ago he formed an ideal conception of omnipotence and omniscience which he embodied in his gods. Whatever seemed unattainable to his desires—or forbidden to him—he attributed to these gods. One may say, therefore, that these gods were the ideals of his culture. Now he has himself approached very near to realizing this ideal, he has nearly become a god himself. But only, it is true, in the way that ideals are usually realized in the general experience of humanity. Not completely; in some respects not at all, in others only by halves. Man has become a god by means of artificial limbs, so to speak, quite magnificent when equipped with all his accessory organs; but they do not grow on him and they still give him trouble at times. However, he is entitled to console himself with the thought that this evolution will not come to an end in A.D. 1930.

Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents,* III

82 Future ages will produce further great advances in this realm of culture, probably inconceivable now, and will increase man's likeness to a god still more.

Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents,* III

83 The fateful question of the human species seems to me to be whether and to what extent the cultural process developed in it will succeed in mastering the derangements of communal life caused by the human instinct of aggression and self-destruction. In this connection, perhaps the phase through which we are at this moment passing deserves special interest. Men have brought their powers of subduing the forces of nature to such a pitch that by using them they could now very easily exterminate one another to the last man. They know this—hence arises a great part of their current unrest, their dejection, their mood of apprehension. And now it may be expected that the other of the two *heavenly forces,* eternal Eros, will put forth his strength so as to maintain himself

alongside of his equally immortal adversary.

Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents,* VIII

84 If civilization has profoundly modified man, it is by accumulating in his social surroundings, as in a reservoir, the habits and knowledge which society pours into the individual at each new generation. Scratch the surface, abolish everything we owe to an education which is perpetual and unceasing, and you find in the depth of our nature primitive humanity, or something very near it.

Bergson, *Two Sources of Morality and Religion,* II

85 The longing to be primitive is a disease of culture; it is archaism in morals. To be so preoccupied with vitality is a symptom of anæmia. When life was really vigorous and young, in Homeric times for instance, no one seemed to fear that it might be squeezed out of existence either by the incubus of matter or by the petrifying blight of intelligence. Life was like the light of day, something to use, or to waste, or to enjoy. It was not a thing to worship; and often the chief luxury of living consisted in dealing death about vigorously. Life indeed was loved, and the beauty and pathos of it were felt exquisitely; but its beauty and pathos lay in the divineness of its model and in its own fragility. No one paid it the equivocal compliment of thinking it a substance or a material force. Nobility was not then impossible in sentiment, because there were ideals in life higher and more indestructible than life itself, which life might illustrate and to which it might fitly be sacrificed. Nothing can be meaner than the anxiety to live on, to live on anyhow and in any shape; a spirit with any honour is not willing to live except in its own way, and a spirit with any wisdom is not over-eager to live at all. In those days men recognised immortal gods and resigned themselves to being mortal. Yet those were the truly vital and instinctive days of the human spirit. Only when vitality is low do people find material things oppressive and ideal things unsubstantial.

Santayana, *Winds of Doctrine,* I

86 Progress, far from consisting in change, depends on retentiveness. When change is absolute there remains no being to improve and no direction is set for possible improvement: and when experience is not retained, as among savages, infancy is perpetual. Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.

Santayana, *Life of Reason,* I, 12

87 The cry was for vacant freedom and indeterminate progress . . . *Full speed ahead!,* without asking whether directly before you was a bottomless pit.

Santayana, *My Host the World,* Epilogue

88 Everything is transitory and everything is preserved in progress, and if humanity is untiring and has always something further to undertake, if every one of its achievements gives rise to doubt and dissatisfaction and the demand for new achievement, yet now and again there is achievement; something is possessed and enjoyed and the apparently precipitous race is in reality a succession of reposes, of satisfactions in the midst of dissatisfactions, of fleeting moments spent in the joy of contemplation.

Croce, *History as the Story of Liberty,* I, 10

89 It must be realised by any student of civilisation that we pay heavily for our heterogeneous, rapidly changing civilisation; we pay in high proportions of crime and delinquency, we pay in the conflicts of youth, we pay in an ever-increasing number of neuroses, we pay in the lack of a coherent tradition without which the development of art is sadly handicapped. In such a list of prices, we must count our gains carefully, not to be discouraged. And chief among our gains must be reckoned this possibility of choice, the recognition of many possible ways of life, where other civilisations have recognised only one. Where other civilisations give a satisfactory outlet to only one temperamental type, be he mystic or soldier, business man or artist, a civilisation in which there are many standards offers a possibility of satisfactory adjustment to individuals of many different temperamental types, of diverse gifts and varying interests.

Margaret Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa,* XIV

90 We are quite willing to admit now that the revolution of the earth about the sun, or the animal ancestry of man, has next to nothing to do with the uniqueness of our human achievements. If we inhabit one chance planet out of a myriad solar systems, so much the greater glory, and if all the ill-assorted human races are linked by evolution with the animal, the provable differences between ourselves and them are the more extreme and the uniqueness of our institutions the more remarkable. But *our* achievements, *our* institutions are unique; they are of a different order from those of lesser races and must be protected at all costs.

Benedict, *Patterns of Culture,* I

91 There is no doubt about the cultural continuity of the civilization, no matter who its carriers were at the moment. We must accept all the implications of our human inheritance, one of the most important of which is the small scope of biologically transmitted behaviour, and the enormous rôle of the cultural process of the transmission of tradition.

Benedict, *Patterns of Culture,* I

92 Civilization, as we know it, is a movement and not a condition, a voyage and not a harbour. No known civilization has ever reached the goal of civilization yet. There has never been a communion of saints on earth. In the least uncivilized society at its least uncivilized moment, the vast majority of its members have remained very near indeed to the primitive human level. And no society has ever been secure of holding such ground as it has managed to gain in its spiritual advance. All the civilizations that we know of, including the Greek, have already broken down and gone to pieces with the single possible exception of our own Western civilization—and no child of this civilization who has been born into our generation can easily imagine that our own society is immune from the danger of suffering the common fate.

Toynbee, *Civilization on Trial,* IV

93 Humanity is not an animal species, it is a historical reality. Human society is an antiphysis—in a sense it is against nature; it does not passively submit to the presence of nature but rather takes over the control of nature on its own behalf. This arrogation is not an inward, subjective operation; it is accomplished objectively in practical action.

Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex,* III

15.3 | *Fate, Fortune, and Destiny*

The common thread running through the three subjects treated in this section lies in the conception of forces or factors at work in history that are totally beyond the control of man. The notion of fate—of an inexorable and blind necessity governing everything that happens—is most evident in the quotations drawn from antiquity, especially in the many quotations from the ancient poets. Some of them even go so far as to declare that the gods themselves are subject to the decrees of Fate and cannot set them aside. Nevertheless, there are a few ancient writers, Cicero for one, who question the universal domination of Fate or think that man's freedom is not totally obliterated by it.

In the Christian era, the notion of fate tends to be replaced by that of Divine providence and of predestination. Christian theologians, such as Augustine and Aquinas, attempt to reconcile human freedom with predestination and with the providential ordering of things by the will of God. For others, such as Luther and Calvin, providence and predestination have the same inexorability that the ancients accorded fate, a view that is echoed in Spinoza's declaration that everything is necessitated by God. The reader will find other quotations relevant to this subject in Chapter 5 on MIND, Section 5.7 on WILL: FREE CHOICE.

The discussion of fortune is more closely related to the consideration of cause and chance, which are treated in Sections 19.3 and 19.4 of Chapter 19 on NATURE AND THE COSMOS. Here the treatment of fortune stresses its implications for ethics and politics—the role that good fortune plays in the conduct of human life and in the pursuit of happiness; and the way in which it either facilitates or impedes the best laid plans of princes or statesmen to gain the objectives

they have in view. Thus, we find Machiavelli advising the prince to regard Fortune as a woman who will yield only to bold advances.

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1 Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.

Psalm 127:1

2 Man also knoweth not his time: as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare; so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them.

Ecclesiastes 9:12

3 Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.

Ecclesiastes 11:1

4 If a man live many years, and rejoice in them all; yet let him remember the days of darkness; for they shall be many.

Ecclesiastes 11:8

5 *Zeus.* For this among the immortal gods is the mightiest witness
I can give, and nothing I do shall be vain nor revocable
nor a thing unfulfilled when I bend my head in assent to it.

Homer, *Iliad,* I, 525

6 *Hektor.* No man is going to hurl me to Hades, unless it is fated,
but as for fate, I think that no man yet has escaped it
once it has taken its first form, neither brave man nor coward.

Homer, *Iliad,* VI, 487

7 *Achilleus.* There are two urns that stand on the door-sill of Zeus. They are unlike
for the gifts they bestow: an urn of evils, an urn of blessings.
If Zeus who delights in thunder mingles these and bestows them
on man, he shifts, and moves now in evil, again in good fortune.
But when Zeus bestows from the urn of sorrows, he makes a failure
of man, and the evil hunger drives him over the shining
earth, and he wanders respected neither of gods nor mortals.

Homer, *Iliad,* XXIV, 527

8 *Chorus.* Once a man fostered in his house
a lion cub, from the mother's milk
torn, craving the breast given.
In the first steps of its young life
mild, it played with children
and delighted the old.
Caught in the arm's cradle
they pampered it like a newborn child,
shining eyed and broken to the hand
to stay the stress of its hunger.

But it grew with time, and the lion
in the blood strain came out; it paid
grace to those who had fostered it
in blood and death for the sheep flocks,
a grim feast forbidden.
The house reeked with blood run
nor could its people beat down the bane,
the giant murderer's onslaught.
This thing they raised in their house was blessed
by God to be priest of destruction.

Aeschylus, *Agamemnon,* 716

9 *Electra.* The day of destiny waits for the free man as well
as for the man enslaved beneath an alien hand.

Aeschylus, *Libation Bearers,* 103

10 *Chorus.* All providence
Is effortless: throned,
Holy and motionless,
His will is accomplished.

Aeschylus, *Suppliant Maidens,* 97

11 *Prometheus.* It is an easy thing for one whose foot is on the outside of calamity
to give advice and to rebuke the sufferer.
I have known all that you have said: I knew,
I knew when I transgressed nor will deny it.
In helping man I brought my troubles on me;
but yet I did not think that with such tortures
I should be wasted on these airy cliffs,
this lonely mountain top, with no one near.
But do not sorrow for my present suffering;
alight on earth and hear what is to come
that you may know the whole complete: I beg you
alight and join your sorrow with mine: misfortune
wandering the same track lights now upon one
and now upon another.

Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound,* 265

12 *Prometheus.* Craft is far weaker than necessity.
Chorus. Who then is the steersman of necessity?
Prom. The triple-formed Fates and the remembering Furies.

Ch. Is Zeus weaker than these?
Prom. Yes, for he, too, cannot escape what is fated.
Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound,* 513

13 The Egyptians . . . discovered to which of the gods each month and day is sacred; and found out from the day of a man's birth what he will meet with in the course of his life, and how he will end his days, and what sort of man he will be.
Herodotus, *History,* II, 82

14 *Chorus.* Fate has terrible power.
You cannot escape it by wealth or war.
No fort will keep it out, no ships outrun it.
Sophocles, *Antigone,* 951

15 *Chorus.* Nothing painless
has the all-accomplishing King
dispensed for mortal men. But
grief and joy come circling
to all, like the turning paths
of the Bear among the stars.

The shimmering night does not stay
for men, nor does calamity,
nor wealth, but swiftly they are gone,
and to another man it comes
to know joy and its loss.
Sophocles, *Women of Trachis,* 126

16 *Philoctetes.* Look how men live, always precariously balanced between good and bad fortune.
If you are out of trouble, watch for danger.
And when you live well, then consider the most your life, lest ruin take it unawares.
Sophocles, *Philoctetes,* 502

17 *Heracles.* Fortune is dark; she moves, but we cannot see the way
nor can we pin her down by science and study her.
Euripides, *Alcestis,* 785

18 *Attendant.* Don't envy men
Because they seem to have a run of luck,
Since luck's a nine days' wonder. Wait their end.
Euripides, *Heracleidae,* 864

19 *Megara.* The man who sticks it out against his fate shows spirit, but the spirit of a fool.
No man alive can budge necessity.
Euripides, *Heracles,* 309

20 *Iphigenia.* Who knows on whom such strokes of fate will fall? for all that Heaven decrees, proceeds unseen, and no man knoweth of the ills in store; for Fate misleads us into doubtful paths.
Euripides, *Iphigenia in Tauris,* 475

21 *Hermocrates.* The incalculable element in the future exercises the widest influence, and is the most treacherous, and yet in fact the most useful of all things, as it frightens us all equally.
Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War,* IV, 62

22 *Athenian Stranger.* God governs all things, and . . . chance and opportunity co-operate with him in the government of human affairs.
Plato, *Laws,* IV, 709A

23 Chance or fortune is called 'good' when the result is good, 'evil' when it is evil. The terms 'good fortune' and 'ill fortune' are used when either result is of considerable magnitude. Thus one who comes within an ace of some great evil or great good is said to be fortunate or unfortunate. The mind affirms the presence of the attribute, ignoring the hair's breadth of difference. Further, it is with reason that good fortune is regarded as unstable; for chance is unstable, as none of the things which result from it can be invariable or normal.
Aristotle, *Physics,* 197^{a}25

24 It were better to follow the myths about the gods than to become a slave to the Destiny of the natural philosophers; for the former suggests a hope of placating the gods by worship, whereas the latter involves a necessity which knows no placation.
Epicurus, *Letter to Menoeceus*

25 That men, in the infirmity of human nature, should fall into misfortunes which defy calculation, is the fault not of the sufferers but of Fortune, and of those who do the wrong; but that they should from mere levity, and with their eyes open, thrust themselves upon the most serious disasters is without dispute the fault of the victims themselves. Therefore it is that pity and sympathy and assistance await those whose failure is due to Fortune: reproach and rebuke from all men of sense those who have only their own folly to thank for it.
Polybius, *Histories,* II, 7

26 Reason forces us to agree that everything happens by fate. By fate, I mean that orderly succession of causes whereby causes are linked together, and each cause produces an effect. This undying truth has its source in eternity. Therefore everything that has happened was bound to happen. Nothing will happen that does not have an efficient cause in nature. Consequently, fate is that which is, not out of ignorance, but scientifically, named the eternal cause of things past, present, and future. This observation will inform us what effect will most likely proceed from most causes, even if the cause is not known at all. It would be too much to presume that it is known in all cases.
Cicero, *Divination,* I, 55

27 I would think that it is not even within God's

power to know what events will happen by accident or by chance. If he does know, then obviously the event must happen. But if it must happen, chance does not exist. Yet chance does exist. There is therefore no foreknowledge of things that happen by chance.

Cicero, *Divination,* II, 7

28 If there were no such word, or thing, or force as Fate, and if everything happened by chance, would the course of events be different than they are? Why then keep harping on Fate? If everything can be explained in terms of nature or fortune, why drag Fate in?

Cicero, *Fate,* III

29 What is the use of a philosophy that insists that everything happens by fate? It is a philosophy for old women, and ignorant old women at that.

Cicero, *De Natura Deorum,* I, 20

30 The Fates, when they this happy web have spun,
Shall bless the sacred clue, and bid it smoothly run.

Virgil, *Eclogues,* IV

31 Here stood her [Juno's] chariot; here, if Heav'n were kind,
The seat of awful empire she design'd.
Yet she had heard an ancient rumor fly,
(Long cited by the people of the sky,)
That times to come should see the Trojan race
Her Carthage ruin, and her tow'rs deface;
Nor thus confin'd, the yoke of sov'reign sway
Should on the necks of all the nations lay.
She ponder'd this, and fear'd it was in fate;
Nor could forget the war she wag'd of late
For conqu'ring Greece against the Trojan state.
Besides, long causes working in her mind,
And secret seeds of envy, lay behind;
Deep graven in her heart the doom remain'd
Of partial Paris, and her form disdain'd;
The grace bestow'd on ravish'd Ganymed,
Electra's glories, and her injur'd bed.
Each was a cause alone; and all combin'd
To kindle vengeance in her haughty mind.
For this, far distant from the Latian coast
She drove the remnants of the Trojan host;
And sev'n long years th' unhappy wand'ring train
Were toss'd by storms, and scatter'd thro' the main.
Such time, such toil, requir'd the Roman name,
Such length of labor for so vast a frame.

Virgil, *Aeneid,* I

32 *Jove.* Each to his proper fortune stand or fall;
Equal and unconcern'd I look on all.
Rutulians, Trojans, are the same to me;
And both shall draw the lots their fates decree.
Let these assault, if Fortune be their friend;
And, if she favors those, let those defend:
The Fates will find their way.

Virgil, *Aeneid,* X

33 What next morn's sun may bring, forbear to ask;
But count each day that comes by gift of chance
So much to the good.

Horace, *Odes,* I, 9

34 Fortune, her cruel trade quite to her mind,
Persistent still her wanton game to play,
Transfers her favours day by day,—
To me, to others, kind.

Horace, *Odes,* III, 29

35 We should project our thoughts ahead of us at every turn and have in mind every possible eventuality instead of only the usual course of events. For what is there that fortune does not when she pleases fell at the height of its powers? What is there that is not the more assailed and buffeted by her the more lustrous its attraction? What is there that is troublesome or difficult for her? Her assaults do not always come along a single path, or even a well-recognized path. At one time she will call in the aid of our own hands in attacking us, at another she will be content with her own powers in devising for us dangers for which no one is responsible. No moment is exempt: in the midst of pleasures there are found the springs of suffering. In the middle of peace war rears its head, and the bulwarks of one's security are transformed into sources of alarm, friend turning foe and ally turning enemy. The summer's calm is upset by sudden storms more severe than those of winter. In the absence of any enemy we suffer all that an enemy might wreak on us. Overmuch prosperity if all else fails will hit on the instruments of its own destruction. Sickness assails those leading the most sensible lives, tuberculosis those with the strongest constitutions, retribution the utterly guiltless, violence the most secluded. Misfortune has a way of choosing some unprecedented means or other of impressing its power on those who might be said to have forgotten it. A single day strews in ruins all that was raised by a train of construction extending over a long span of time and involving a great number of separate works and a great deal of favour on the part of heaven. To say a 'day', indeed, is to put too much of a brake on the calamities that hasten down upon us: an hour, an instant of time, suffices for the overthrow of empires. It would be some relief to our condition and our frailty if all things were as slow in their perishing as they were in their coming into being: but as it is, the growth of things is a tardy process and their undoing is a rapid matter.

Seneca, *Letters to Lucilius,* 91

36 Let fate find us ready and eager. Here is your noble spirit—the one which has put itself in the hands of fate; on the other side we have the puny

degenerate spirit which struggles, and which sees nothing right in the way the universe is ordered, and would rather reform the gods than reform itself.

Seneca, *Letters to Lucilius,* 107

37 We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

Romans 8:28–30

38 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.

Ephesians 1:3–4

39 What a poet fortune sometimes shows herself.

Plutarch, *Romulus*

40 Though fortune may often . . . defeat the efforts of virtue to avert misfortunes, it cannot, when we incur them, prevent our bearing them reasonably.

Plutarch, *Caius Gracchus*

41 It is common enough for people, when they fall into great disasters, to discern what is right, and what they ought to do; but there are but few who in such extremities have the strength to obey their judgment, either in doing what it approves or avoiding what it condemns; and a good many are so weak as to give way to their habits all the more, and are incapable of using their minds.

Plutarch, *Antony*

42 Fortune makes kings of slaves and gives the captive a triumph,
Yet the fortunate man is very much harder to come on
Than a white crow.

Juvenal, *Satire VII*

43 So—should men pray for nothing at all? If you're asking my counsel,
You will permit the gods themselves to make the decision
What is convenient to give, and what befits our estate.
We shall not get what we want, but the things most suitable for us.
Man is dearer to gods than he is to himself. We are foolish,
Led by blind desire, the spirit's extravagant impulse,
Asking for marriage and offspring, but the gods know what they'll be like,
Our wives and our sons. But still, just for the sake of the asking,
For the sake of something to give to the chapels, ritual entrails,
The consecrated meat of a little white pig, pray for one thing,
Pray for a healthy mind in a healthy body, a spirit
Unafraid of death, but reconciled to it, and able
To bear up, to endure whatever troubles afflict it,
Free from hate and desire, preferring Hercules' labors
To the cushions and loves and feasts of Sardanapallus.
I show you what you can give to yourself: only through virtue
Lies the certain road to a life that is blessed and tranquil.
If men had any sense, Fortune would not be a goddess.
We are the ones who make her so, and give her a place in the heavens.

Juvenal, *Satire X*

44 The wider the scope of my reflection on the present and the past, the more am I impressed by their mockery of human plans in every transaction.

Tacitus, *Annals,* III, 18

45 Just as we must understand when it is said, That Aesculapius prescribed to this man horse-exercise, or bathing in cold water or going without shoes; so we must understand it when it is said, That the nature of the universe prescribed to this man disease or mutilation or loss or anything else of the kind. For in the first case Prescribed means something like this: he prescribed this for this man as a thing adapted to procure health; and in the second case it means: That which happens to (or, suits) every man is fixed in a manner for him suitably to his destiny. For this is what we mean when we say that things are suitable to us, as the workmen say of squared stones in walls or the pyramids, that they are suitable, when they fit them to one another in some kind of connexion. For there is altogether one fitness, harmony. And as the universe is made up out of all bodies to be such a body as it is, so out of all existing causes necessity (destiny) is made up to be such a cause as it is. And even those who are completely ignorant understand what I mean, for they say, It (necessity, destiny) brought this to such a person.

Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations,* V, 8

46 Whatever of the things which are not within thy power thou shalt suppose to be good for thee or evil, it must of necessity be that, if such a bad

thing befall thee or the loss of such a good thing, thou wilt blame the gods, and hate men too, those who are the cause of the misfortune or the loss, or those who are suspected of being likely to be the cause; and indeed we do much injustice, because we make a difference between these things. But if we judge only those things which are in our power to be good or bad, there remains no reason either for finding fault with God or standing in a hostile attitude to man.

Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations,* VI, 41

47 This universe of ours is a wonder of power and wisdom, everything by a noiseless road coming to pass according to a law which none may elude—which the base man never conceives though it is leading him, all unknowingly, to that place in the All where his lot must be cast—which the just man knows, and, knowing, sets out to the place he must, understanding, even as he begins the journey, where he is to be housed at the end, and having the good hope that he will be with gods.

Plotinus, *Fourth Ennead,* IV, 45

48 God, the author and giver of felicity, because He alone is the true God, Himself gives earthly kingdoms both to good and bad. Neither does He do this rashly, and, as it were, fortuitously—because He is God not fortune—but according to the order of things and times, which is hidden from us, but thoroughly known to Himself; which same order of times, however, He does not serve as subject to it, but Himself rules as lord and appoints as governor.

Augustine, *City of God,* IV, 33

49 Human kingdoms are established by divine providence. And if any one attributes their existence to fate, because he calls the will or the power of God itself by the name of fate, let him keep his opinion, but correct his language.

Augustine, *City of God,* V, 1

50 Those who are of opinion that, apart from the will of God, the stars determine what we shall do, or what good things we shall possess, or what evils we shall suffer, must be refused a hearing by all, not only by those who hold the true religion, but by those who wish to be the worshippers of any gods whatsoever, even false gods. For what does this opinion really amount to but this, that no god whatever is to be worshipped or prayed to? Against these, however, our present disputation is not intended to be directed, but against those who, in defence of those whom they think to be gods, oppose the Christian religion. They, however, who make the position of the stars depend on the divine will, and in a manner decree what character each man shall have, and what good or evil shall happen to him, if they think that these same stars have that power conferred upon them by the supreme power of God, in order that they may determine these things according to their will, do a great injury to the celestial sphere, in whose most brilliant senate, and most splendid senate-house, as it were, they suppose that wicked deeds are decreed to be done—such deeds as that, if any terrestrial state should decree them, it would be condemned to overthrow by the decree of the whole human race. What judgment, then, is left to God concerning the deeds of men, who is Lord both of the stars and of men, when to these deeds a celestial necessity is attributed?

Augustine, *City of God,* V, 1

51 If there is free will, all things do not happen according to fate; if all things do not happen according to fate, there is not a certain order of causes; and if there is not a certain order of causes, neither is there a certain order of things foreknown by God—for things cannot come to pass except they are preceded by efficient causes—but, if there is no fixed and certain order of causes foreknown by God, all things cannot be said to happen according as He foreknew that they would happen. And further, if it is not true that all things happen just as they have been foreknown by Him, there is not, says he, in God any foreknowledge of future events.

Now, against the sacrilegious and impious darings of reason, we assert both that God knows all things before they come to pass and that we do by our free will whatsoever we know and feel to be done by us only because we will it. But that all things come to pass by fate, we do not say; nay we affirm that nothing comes to pass by fate; for we demonstrate that the name of fate, as it is wont to be used by those who speak of fate, meaning thereby the position of the stars at the time of each one's conception or birth, is an unmeaning word, for astrology itself is a delusion. But an order of causes in which the highest efficiency is attributed to the will of God, we neither deny nor do we designate it by the name of fate, unless, perhaps, we may understand fate to mean that which is spoken, deriving it from *fari,* to speak; for we cannot deny that it is written in the sacred Scriptures, "God hath spoken once; these two things have I heard, that power belongeth unto God. Also unto Thee, O God, belongeth mercy: for Thou wilt render unto every man according to his works." Now the expression, "Once hath He spoken," is to be understood as meaning "*immovably,*" that is, unchangeably hath He spoken, inasmuch as He knows unchangeably all things which shall be and all things which He will do. We might, then, use the word fate in the sense it bears when derived from *fari,* to speak, had it not already come to be understood in another sense, into which I am unwilling that the hearts of men should unconsciously slide. But it does not follow that, though there is for God a certain order of all causes, there must therefore be nothing depending

on the free exercise of our own wills, for our wills themselves are included in that order of causes which is certain to God and is embraced by His foreknowledge, for human wills are also causes of human actions; and He Who foreknew all the causes of things would certainly among those causes not have been ignorant of our wills.

Augustine, *City of God,* V, 9

52 [The human] race we have distributed into two parts, the one consisting of those who live according to man, the other of those who live according to God. And these we also mystically call the two cities, or the two communities of men, of which the one is predestined to reign eternally with God, and the other to suffer eternal punishment with the devil.

Augustine, *City of God,* XV, 1

53 Of all suffering from Fortune, the unhappiest misfortune is to have known a happy fortune.

Boethius, *Consolation of Philosophy,* II

54 *Philosophy.* Providence is the very divine reason which arranges all things, and rests with the supreme disposer of all; while Fate is that ordering which is a part of all changeable things, and by means of which Providence binds all things together in their own order. Providence embraces all things equally, however different they may be, even however infinite: when they are assigned to their own places, forms, and times, Fate sets them in an orderly motion; so that this development of the temporal order, unified in the intelligence of the mind of God, is Providence. The working of this unified development in time is called Fate. These are different, but the one hangs upon the other. For this order, which is ruled by Fate, emanates from the directness of Providence.

Boethius, *Consolation of Philosophy,* IV

55 *Philosophy.* A wise man should never complain, whenever he is brought into strife with fortune; just as a brave man cannot properly be disgusted whenever the noise of battle is heard, since for both of them their very difficulty is their opportunity, for the brave man of increasing his glory, for the wise man of confirming and strengthening his wisdom. From this is virtue itself so named, because it is so supported by its strength that it is not overcome by adversity. And you who were set in the advance of virtue have not come to this pass of being dissipated by delights, or enervated by pleasure; but you fight too bitterly against all fortune. Keep the middle path of strength and virtue, lest you be overwhelmed by misfortune or corrupted by pleasant fortune. All that falls short or goes too far ahead, has contempt for happiness, and gains not the reward for labour done. It rests in your own hands what shall be the nature of the fortune which you choose to form for yourself. For all fortune which seems difficult, either exercises virtue, or corrects or punishes vice.

Boethius, *Consolation of Philosophy,* IV

56 It is fitting that God should predestine men. For all things are subject to His providence. . . . Now it belongs to providence to order things towards their end.

Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* I, 23, 1

57 Even if by a special privilege their predestination were revealed to some, it is not fitting that it should be revealed to everyone; because, if so, those who were not predestined would despair, and security would beget negligence in the predestined.

Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* I, 23, 1

58 As predestination is a part of providence, in regard to those divinely ordained to eternal salvation, so reprobation is a part of providence in regard to those who turn aside from that end. Hence reprobation implies not only foreknowledge, but also something more, as does providence. . . . Therefore, as predestination includes the will to confer grace and glory, so also reprobation includes the will to permit a person to fall into sin, and to impose the punishment of damnation on account of that sin.

God loves all men and all creatures, in so far as He wishes them all some good, but He does not wish every good to them all. So far, therefore, as He does not wish this particular good—namely, eternal life—He is said to hate or reprobate them.

Reprobation differs in its causality from predestination. This latter is the cause both of what is expected in the future life by the predestined—namely, glory—and of what is received in this life—namely, grace. Reprobation, however, is not the cause of what is in the present—namely, sin, but it is the cause of abandonment by God. It is the cause, however, of what is assigned in the future—namely, eternal punishment. But guilt proceeds from the free choice of the person who is reprobated and deserted by grace. In this way the word of the prophet is true—namely, *Destruction is thy own, O Israel.*

Reprobation by God does not take anything away from the power of the person reprobated. Hence, when it is said that the reprobated cannot obtain grace, this must not be understood as implying absolute impossibility, but only conditional impossibility . . . that the predestined must necessarily be saved, yet by a conditional necessity, which does not do away with the liberty of choice. Hence, although anyone reprobated by God cannot acquire grace, nevertheless that he falls into this or that particular sin comes from his free choice. And so it is rightly imputed to him as guilt.

Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* I, 23, 3

59 The number of the predestined is said to be certain to God not only by reason of His knowledge, because, that is to say, He knows how many will be saved (for in this way the number of drops of rain and the sands of the sea are certain to God), but by reason of His deliberate choice and determination.

Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* I, 23, 7

60 The majority of men have a sufficient knowledge for the guidance of life, and those who have not this knowledge are said to be half-witted or foolish; but they who attain to a profound knowledge of things intelligible are a very small minority in respect to the rest. Since their eternal happiness, consisting in the vision of God, exceeds the common state of nature, and especially in so far as this is deprived of grace through the corruption of original sin, those who are saved are in the minority. In this especially, however, appears the mercy of God, that He has chosen some for that salvation, from which very many in accordance with the common course and tendency of nature fall short.

Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* I, 23, 7

61 Those who are ordained to possess eternal life through divine predestination are written down in the book of life absolutely, because they are written therein to have eternal life in itself; such are never blotted out from the book of life. Those, however, who are ordained to eternal life not through the divine predestination, but through grace, are said to be written in the book of life not absolutely, but relatively, for they are written therein not to have eternal life in itself, but in its cause only. These latter are blotted out of the book of life, though this blotting out must not be referred to God as if God foreknew a thing, and afterwards knew it not, but to the thing known, namely, because God knows one is first ordained to eternal life, and afterwards not ordained when he falls from grace.

Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* I, 24, 3

62 What happens here by accident, both in natural things and in human affairs, is reduced to a preordaining cause, which is Divine Providence.

Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* I, 116, 1

63 The Divine power or will can be called fate as being the cause of fate. But essentially fate is the very disposition or series, that is, the order, of second causes.

Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* I, 116, 2

64 "Master," I said to him, "now tell me also: this Fortune, of which thou hintest to me; what is she, that has the good things of the world thus within *her* clutches?"
And he [Virgil] to me: "O foolish creatures, how great is this ignorance that falls upon ye! Now I wish thee to receive my judgment of her.
He whose wisdom is transcendent over all, made the heavens and gave them guides, so that every part shines to every part,
equally distributing the light; in like manner, for worldly splendours, he ordained a general minister and guide,
to change betimes the vain possessions, from people to people, and from one kindred to another beyond the hindrance of human wisdom:
hence one people commands, another languishes; obeying her sentence, which is hidden like the serpent in the grass.
Your knowledge cannot understand her: she provides, judges, and maintains her kingdom, as the other Gods do theirs.
Her permutations have no truce; necessity makes her be swift; thus he comes oft who doth a change obtain.
This is she, who is so much reviled, even by those who ought to praise her, when blaming her wrongfully, and with evil words."

Dante, *Inferno,* VII, 67

65 When the game of dice breaks up, he who loses stays sorrowing, repeating the throws, and sadly learns:
with the other all the folk go away: one goes in front, another plucks him from behind, and another at his side recalls him to his mind.
He halts not and attends to this one and to that: those to whom he stretches forth his hand press no more; and so he saves him from the crowd.

Dante, *Purgatorio,* VI, 1

66 *Pandar.* For every person hath his happy chance,
If good faith with his fortune he will hold.
But if he turns aside with scornful glance
When fortune comes, unwelcoming and cold,
Then for ill luck he may not fortune scold,
But his own sloth and feebleness of heart,
And he must take all blame from end to start.

Chaucer, *Troilus and Cressida,* II, 41

67 Too short a fleeting time, alas the while,
Great joy endures, and Fortune wills it so,
Who truest seems when most she will beguile,
And most allures when she will strike a blow,
And from her wheel some hapless victim throw;
For when some wretch slips down and disappears,
She laughs at him and comforts him with jeers.

Chaucer, *Troilus and Cressida,* IV, 1

68 "I am," he [Troilus] said, "but done for, so to say;
For all that comes, comes by necessity,
Thus to be done for is my destiny.

"I must believe and cannot other choose,
That Providence, in its divine foresight,
Hath known that Cressida I once must lose,

Since God sees everything from heaven's height
And plans things as he thinks both best and right,
According to their merits in rotation,
As was arranged for by predestination.

"But still I don't quite know what to believe!
For there have been great scholars, many a one,
Who say that destined fate we must receive,
Yet others prove that this need not be done,
And that free choice hath been denied to none.
Alack, so sly they are, these scholars old,
I can't make out what doctrine I should hold!

"For some declare, what God perceives before,
(And God of course can never be misled)
All that must be, though men may it deplore,
Because foreordination hath so said;
Wherefore the thought still lingers in my head,
If God foreknows the thought and act of each
Of us, we have no choice, as scholars preach.

"For neither thought nor deed might ever be,
Or anything, unless foreordination,
In which there may be no uncertainty,
Perceives it without shade of variation;
For if there were the slightest hesitation
Or any slip in God's foreordering,
Foreknowledge then were not a certain thing,

"But rather one would call it expectation,
Unsteadfast, not foreknowledge absolute;
And that, indeed, were an abomination,
For God's foreknowledge thus to substitute
Imperfect human doubts and mere repute;
In God such human error to imply
Were false and foul and cursed treason high.

"Then there is this opinion held by some,
Whose tonsured foreheads quite imposing shine;
They say whatever happens does not come
Because foreknowledge sees with fixed design
That come it must, but rather they incline
To say that come it will, and reason so,
That such foreknowledge doth but merely know.

"But there resides here a perplexity
That in some proper way must be explained,
That things that happen do not have to be
Merely because they may be foreordained;
Yet still this truth at least must be maintained,
That all the things that ever shall befall,
Must surely be ordained, both one and all.

"You see that I am trying to find out
Just what is cause and what is consequence.
Is God's foreknowledge cause beyond a doubt
As necessary in his plan prepense
Of all the human things we call events,
Or does necessity in them reside
And thus ordaining cause for them provide?

"I must confess I can't pretend to show
Just how the reasons stand, but this I'll say,
That every thing that happens, must do so,
And must have been foreknown in such a way
That made it necessary, though it may
Be that foreknowledge did not so declare
That it must happen, be it foul or fair.

"But if a man is sitting on a chair,
Then this necessity you can't evade,
That true it is that he is sitting there,
And thus a truthful judgment you have made;
And furthermore against this may be laid
A supplement to this and its contrary,
As thus—pray heed, and just a moment tarry.

"I say if that opinion which you hold
That he sits there is true, then furthermore
He must be sitting there, as I have told;
There's thus necessity on either score,
That he must sit, as we agreed before,
And you must think he does, and so say I,
Necessity on both of you doth lie.

"But you may urge, this man, he does not sit
Because your judgment on this may be true,
But rather, since he sat ere you thought it,
Your judgment from his sitting doth ensue;
But I say, though your judgment may be due
To his first sitting there, necessity
To judge and sit distributed must be.

"These arguments I think I may advance,
And make apply, for so it seems to me,
To God's foreknowledge and foreordinance,
In all the happenings that come to be.
And by these arguments you well may see,
That all the things that on the earth befall,
By plain necessity they happen all.

"Though things to come must all be foreordained,
Their cause therein you cannot simply find,
For these two points apart must be maintained,
But yet foreordinance cannot be blind,
And God must foreordain with truthful mind,
Or else whatever foreordained should be,
Would come to pass through blind necessity,

"But no more arguments I need display
To show that free choice is an idle dream.
Yet this, however, 'tis quite false to say,
That temporal things one should esteem
As cause of God's foreknowledge aye supreme;
From such opinion only errors grow,
That things that happen cause him to foreknow.

"I must suppose then, had I such a thought,
That God ordains each thing that is to come
Because it is to come, and for else naught!
Why, then, I might believe things, all and some,
From ages past, whate'er they issued from,
Are cause of God's high power that before
Hath known all things and nothing doth ignore!

"I have just one more point to add hereto,
That when I know that there exists a thing,
I know my knowing of that thing is true,

And so, whatever time to pass shall bring,
Those things I know must come; the happening
Of things foreknown ere their appointed hour,
Can be prevented by no human power."

Chaucer, *Troilus and Cressidà,* IV, 137–154

69 It is not unknown to me how many men have had, and still have, the opinion that the affairs of the world are in such wise governed by fortune and by God that men with their wisdom cannot direct them and that no one can even help them; and because of this they would have us believe that it is not necessary to labour much in affairs, but to let chance govern them. . . . Sometimes pondering over this, I am in some degree inclined to their opinion. Nevertheless, not to extinguish our free will, I hold it to be true that Fortune is the arbiter of one-half of our actions, but that she still leaves us to direct the other half, or perhaps a little less.

I compare her to one of those raging rivers, which when in flood overflows the plains, sweeping away trees and buildings, bearing away the soil from place to place; everything flies before it, all yield to its violence, without being able in any way to withstand it; and yet, though its nature be such, it does not follow therefore that men, when the weather becomes fair, shall not make provision, both with defences and barriers, in such a manner that, rising again, the waters may pass away by canal, and their force be neither so unrestrained nor so dangerous. So it happens with fortune, who shows her power where valour has not prepared to resist her, and thither she turns her forces where she knows that barriers and defences have not been raised to constrain her.

Machiavelli, *Prince,* XXV

70 Fortune being changeful and mankind steadfast in their ways, so long as the two are in agreement men are successful, but unsuccessful when they fall out. For my part I consider that it is better to be adventurous than cautious, because fortune is a woman, and if you wish to keep her under it is necessary to beat and ill-use her; and it is seen that she allows herself to be mastered by the adventurous rather than by those who go to work more coldly. She is, therefore, always, womanlike, a lover of young men, because they are less cautious, more violent, and with more audacity command her.

Machiavelli, *Prince,* XXV

71 Concerning predestination, it is best to begin below, at Christ, as then we both hear and find the Father; for all those that have begun at the top have broken their necks. I have been thoroughly plagued and tormented with such cogitations of predestination; I would needs know how God intended to deal with me, etc. But at last, God be praised! I clean left them; I took hold again on God's revealed word; higher I was not able to bring it, for a human creature can never search out the celestial will of God; this God hides, for the sake of the devil, to the end the crafty spirit may be deceived and put to confusion. The revealed will of God the devil has learned from us, but God reserves his secret will to himself. It is sufficient for us to learn and know Christ in his humanity, in which the Father has revealed himself.

Luther, *Table Talk,* H661

72 Predestination, by which God adopts some to the hope of life, and adjudges others to eternal death, no one, desirous of the credit of piety, dares absolutely to deny. But it is involved in many cavils, especially by those who make foreknowledge the cause of it. We maintain, that both belong to God; but it is preposterous to represent one as dependent on the other. When we attribute foreknowledge to God, we mean that all things have ever been, and perpetually remain, before his eyes, so that to his knowledge nothing is future or past, but all things are present; and present in such a manner, that he does not merely conceive of them from ideas formed in his mind, as things remembered by us appear present to our minds, but really beholds and sees them as if actually placed before him. And this foreknowledge extends to the whole world, and to all the creatures. Predestination we call the eternal decree of God, by which he has determined in himself, what he would have to become of every individual of mankind. For they are not all created with a similar destiny; but eternal life is foreordained for some, and eternal damnation for others. Every man, therefore, being created for one or the other of these ends, we say, he is predestinated either to life or to death. This God has not only testified in particular persons, but has given a specimen of it in the whole posterity of Abraham, which should evidently show the future condition of every nation to depend upon his decision. "When the Most High divided the nations, when he separated the sons of Adam, the Lord's portion was his people; Jacob was the lot of his inheritance." The separation is before the eyes of all: in the person of Abraham, as in the dry trunk of a tree, one people is peculiarly chosen to the rejection of others: no reason for this appears, except that Moses, to deprive their posterity of all occasion of glorying, teaches them that their exaltation is wholly from God's gratuitous love. He assigns this reason for their deliverance, that "he loved their fathers, and chose their seed after them."

Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion,* III, 21

73 Though it is sufficiently clear, that God, in his secret counsel, freely chooses whom he will, and rejects others, his gratuitous election is but half

displayed till we come to particular individuals, to whom God not only offers salvation, but assigns it in such a manner, that the certainty of the effect is liable to no suspense or doubt. . . . In conformity . . . to the clear doctrine of the Scripture, we assert, that by an eternal and immutable counsel, God has once for all determined, both whom he would admit to salvation, and whom he would condemn to destruction. We affirm that this counsel, as far as concerns the elect, is founded on his gratuitous mercy, totally irrespective of human merit; but that to those whom he devotes to condemnation, the gate of life is closed by a just and irreprehensible, but incomprehensible, judgment. In the elect, we consider calling as an evidence of election, and justification as another token of its manifestation, till they arrive in glory, which constitutes its completion. As God seals his elect by vocation and justification, so by excluding the reprobate from the knowledge of his name and the sanctification of his Spirit, he affords an indication of the judgment that awaits them.

Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion,* III, 21

74 Fortune does us neither good nor harm; she only offers us the material and the seed of them, which our soul, more powerful than she, turns and applies as it pleases, sole cause and mistress of its happy or unhappy condition.

Montaigne, *Essays,* I, 14, That the Taste of Good

75 Not only in medicine but in many more certain arts Fortune has a large part. Poetic sallies, which transport their author and ravish him out of himself, why shall we not attribute them to his good luck? He himself confesses that they surpass his ability and strength, and acknowledges that they come from something other than himself and that he does not have them at all in his power, any more than orators say they have in theirs those extraordinary impulses and agitations that push them beyond their plan. It is the same with painting: sometimes there escape from the painter's hand touches so surpassing his conception and his knowledge as to arouse his wonder and astonishment. But Fortune shows still more evidently the part she has in all these works by the graces and beauties that are found in them, not only without the workman's intention, but even without his knowledge. An able reader often discovers in other men's writings perfections beyond those that the author put in or perceived, and lends them richer meanings and aspects.

Montaigne, *Essays,* I, 24, Various Outcomes

76 God, in the roll book of the causes of events which he has in his foreknowledge, has also those which are called fortuitous, and the voluntary ones, which depend on the freedom he has given to our will; and he knows that we shall err, because we shall have willed to err.

Montaigne, *Essays,* II, 29, Of Virtue

77 *King Edward.* What fates impose, that men must needs abide;
It boots not to resist both wind and tide.

Shakespeare, *III Henry VI,* IV, iii, 58

78 *John of Gaunt.* All places that the eye of heaven visits
Are to a wise man ports and happy havens.
Teach thy necessity to reason thus;
There is no virtue like necessity.

Shakespeare, *Richard II,* I, iii, 275

79 *Warwick.* There is a history in all men's lives,
Figuring the nature of the times deceased;
The which observed, a man may prophesy,
With a near aim, of the main chance of things
As yet not come to life, which in their seeds
And weak beginnings lie intreasured.
Such things become the hatch and brood of time.

Shakespeare, *II Henry IV,* III, i, 80

80 *Fluellen.* Here is the man.

Pistol. Captain, I thee beseech to do me favours:
The Duke of Exeter doth love thee well.

Flu. Ay, I praise God; and I have merited some love at his hands.

Pist. Bardolph, a soldier, firm and sound of heart,
And of buxom valour, hath, by cruel fate,
And giddy Fortune's furious fickle wheel,
That goddess blind,
That stands upon the rolling restless stone—

Flu. By your patience, Aunchient Pistol. Fortune is painted blind, with a muffler afore her eyes, to signify to you that Fortune is blind; and she is painted also with a wheel, to signify to you, which is the moral of it, that she is turning, and inconstant, and mutability, and variation: and her foot, look you, is fixed upon a Spherical stone, which rolls, and rolls, and rolls: in good truth, the poet makes a most excellent description of it: Fortune is an excellent moral.

Shakespeare, *Henry V,* III, vi, 21

81 *Cassius.* Men at some time are masters of their fates:
The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
But in ourselves, that we are underlings.

Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar,* I, ii, 139

82 *Hamlet.* My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do ye both?

Rosencrantz. As the indifferent children of the earth.

Guildenstern. Happy, in that we are not over-happy;
On fortune's cap we are not the very button.
Ham. Nor the soles of her shoe?
Ros. Neither, my lord.
Ham. Then you live about her waist, or in the middle of her favours?
Guil. 'Faith, her privates we.
Ham. In the secret parts of fortune? O, most true; she is a strumpet.

Shakespeare, *Hamlet,* II, ii, 228

83 *Hamlet.* Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,
When our deep plots do pall; and that should teach us
There's a divinity that shapes our ends.
Rough-hew them how we will—
Horatio. That is most certain.

Shakespeare, *Hamlet,* V, ii, 8

84 *Hamlet.* We defy augury. There's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come; the readiness is all.

Shakespeare, *Hamlet,* V, ii, 230

85 *Edmund.* This is the excellent foppery of the world, that, when we are sick in fortune—often the surfeit of our own behaviour—we make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars, as if we were villains by necessity, fools by heavenly compulsion, knaves, thieves, and treachers, by spherical predominance, drunkards, liars, and adulterers, by an enforced obedience of planetary influence, and all that we are evil in, by a divine thrusting on. An admirable evasion of whoremaster man, to lay his goatish disposition to the charge of a star!

Shakespeare, *Lear,* I, ii, 128

86 When, in disgrace with Fortune and men's eyes,
I all alone beweep my outcast state
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries
And look upon myself and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possess'd,
Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least;
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
Haply I think on thee, and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate.

Shakespeare, *Sonnet XXIX*

87 Your Grace must know, answer'd Don *Quixote,* that almost every thing that relates to Me, is manag'd quite contrary to what the Affairs of other Knights-Errant us'd to be. Whether it be the unfathomable Will of Destiny, or the Implacable Malice of some envious Inchanter orders it so, or no, I can't well tell. For 'tis beyond all doubt, that most of us Knights-Errant still have had something peculiar in our Fates. One has had the Privilege to be above the Power of Inchantments, another Invulnerable, as the famous *Orlando,* one of the twelve Peers of *France,* whose Flesh, they tell us, was impenetrable every where but in the Sole of his left Foot, and even there too he cou'd be Wounded with no other Weapon than the Point of a great Pin; so that when *Bernardo del Carpio* deprived him of Life at *Roncesvalles,* finding he cou'd not Wound him with his Sword, he lifted him from the Ground, and squeez'd him to Death in his Arms; remembring how *Hercules* kill'd *Antoeus,* that cruel Giant, who was said to be the Son of the Earth. Hence I infer, that probably I may be secur'd in the same manner, under the Protection of some particular Advantage, tho' 'tis not that of being Invulnerable; for I have often found by Experience, that my Flesh is tender, and not impenetrable. Nor does any private Prerogative free me from the Power of the Inchantment; for I have found myself clapp'd into a Cage, where all the World cou'd not have Lock'd me up, but the Force of Necromantick Incantations. But since I got free again, I believe that even the Force of Magick will never be able to confine me thus another time. So that these Magicians finding they cannot work their wicked Ends directly on me, revenge themselves on what I most esteem, and endeavour to take away my Life by persecuting that of *Dulcinea,* in whom, and for whom I live. And therefore I believe, when my Squire deliver'd my Embassy to her, they Transform'd her into a Country-Dowdy, poorly busied in the low and base Employment of Winnowing Wheat. But I do aver, that it was neither Rye, nor Wheat, but Oriental Pearl: and to prove this, I must acquaint your Graces, that passing t'other Day by *Toboso,* I could not so much as find *Dulcinea's* Palace; whereas my Squire went the next Day, and saw her in all her native Charms, the most beautiful Creature in the World! yet when I met her presently after, she appear'd to me in the Shape of an Ugly, Coarse, Country-Mawkin, Boorish, and Ill-bred, though she really is Discretion itself. And therefore, because I myself cannot be Inchanted, the unfortunate Lady must be thus Inchanted, Misus'd, Disfigur'd, Chopp'd and Chang'd. Thus my Enemies wreaking their Malice on Her, have reveng'd themselves on Me, which makes me abandon my self to Sorrow, till she be restor'd to her former Perfections.

Cervantes, *Don Quixote,* II, 32

88 Don *Quixote,* as he went out of *Barcelona,* cast his Eyes on the Spot of Ground where he was overthrown. Here once *Troy* stood, said he; here my unhappy Fate, and not my Cowardice, depriv'd me of all the Glories I had purchas'd. Here Fortune, by an unexpected Reverse, made me sensi-

ble of her Unconstancy and Fickleness. Here my Exploits suffer'd a total Eclipse; and, in short, here fell my Happiness, never to rise again. *Sancho* hearing his Master thus dolefully paraphrasing on his Misfortune, Good Sir, quoth he, 'tis as much the Part of great Spirits to have Patience when the World frowns upon 'em, as to be joyful when all goes well: And I judge of it by my self; for if when I was a Governor I was merry, now I am but a poor Squire afoot I am not sad. And indeed I have heard say, that this same She Thing they call Fortune, is a whimsical freakish drunken Quean, and blind into the Bargain; so that she neither sees what she does, nor knows whom she raises, nor whom she casts down. Thou art very much a Philosopher, *Sancho,* said Don *Quixote,* thou talk'st very sensibly. I wonder how thou cam'st by all this; but I must tell thee there is no such Thing as Fortune in the World; nor does any Thing that happens here below of Good or Ill come by Chance, but by the particular Providence of Heaven; and this makes good the Proverb, That every Man may thank himself for his own Fortune. For my Part, I have been the Maker of mine, but for want of using the Discretion I ought to have us'd, all my presumptuous Edifice sunk, and tumbl'd down at once. I might well have consider'd, that *Rosinante* was too weak and feeble to withstand the Knight of the *White Moon's* huge and strong-built Horse. However, I would needs adventure; I did the best I could, and was overcome. Yet though it has cost me my Honour, I have not lost, nor can I lose, my Integrity to perform my Promise. When I was a Knight-Errant, valiant and bold, the Strength of my Hands and my Actions gave a Reputation to my Deeds; and now I am no more than a dismounted Squire, the Performance of my Promise shall give a Reputation to my Words. Trudge on then, Friend *Sancho,* and let us get home, to pass the Year of our Probation. In that Retirement we shall recover new Vigour to return to that, which is never to be forgotten by me, I mean the Profession of Arms.

Cervantes, *Don Quixote,* II, 66

89 Chiefly the mould of a man's fortune is in his own hands.

Bacon, *Of Fortune*

90 When all looks fair about, and thou seest not a cloud so big as a Hand to threaten thee, forget not the Wheel of things: Think of sullen vicissitudes, but beat not thy brains to fore-know them. Be armed against such obscurities, rather by submission than fore-knowledge.

Sir Thomas Browne, *Christian Morals,* III, 16

91 Others apart sat on a Hill retir'd,
In thoughts more elevate, and reason'd high
Of Providence, Foreknowledge, Will, and Fate,
Fixt Fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute,
And found no end, in wandring mazes lost.

Milton, *Paradise Lost,* II, 557

92 *Raphael.* God made thee perfet, not immutable;
And good he made thee, but to persevere
He left it in thy power, ordaind thy will
By nature free, not over-rul'd by Fate
Inextricable, or strict necessity;
Our voluntarie service he requires,
Not our necessitated, such with him
Findes no acceptance, nor can find, for how
Can hearts, not free, be tri'd whether they serve
Willing or no, who will but what they must
By Destinie, and can no other choose?

Milton, *Paradise Lost,* V, 524

93 When God shakes a Kingdom with strong and healthful commotions to a general reforming, 'tis not untrue that many sectaries and false teachers are then busiest in seducing; but yet more true it is, that God then raises to His own work men of rare abilities, and more than common industry, not only to look back and revise what hath been taught heretofore, but to gain further and go on some new enlightened steps in the discovery of truth.

Milton, *Areopagitica*

94 We know that all things follow from the eternal decree of God, according to that same necessity by which it follows from the essence of a triangle that its three angles are equal to two right angles.

Spinoza, *Ethics,* II, Prop. 49

95 Since no one can do anything save by the predetermined order of nature, that is by God's eternal ordinance and decree, it follows that no one can choose a plan of life for himself, or accomplish any work save by God's vocation choosing him for the work or the plan of life in question, rather than any other.

Spinoza, *Theologico-Political Treatise,* III

96 The Power of Fortune is confest only by the Miserable; for the Happy impute all their Success to Prudence or Merit.

Swift, *Thoughts on Various Subjects*

97 Nothing more aggravates ill success than the near approach to good. The gamester, who loses his party at piquet by a single point, laments his bad luck ten times as much as he who never came within a prospect of the game. So in a lottery, the proprietors of the next numbers to that which wins the great prize, are apt to account themselves much more unfortunate than their fellow-suffers. In short, these kind of hairbreadth missings of happiness look like the insults of Fortune, who

may be considered as thus playing tricks with us, and wantonly diverting herself at our expense.

Fielding, *Tom Jones,* XIII, 2

98 To reconcile the indifference and contingency of human actions with prescience; or to defend absolute decrees, and yet free the Deity from being the author of sin, has been found hitherto to exceed all the power of philosophy. Happy, if she be thence sensible of her temerity, when she pries into these sublime mysteries; and leaving a scene so full of obscurities and perplexities, return, with suitable modesty, to her true and proper province, the examination of common life; where she will find difficulties enough to employ her enquiries, without launching into so boundless an ocean of doubt, uncertainty, and contradiction!

Hume, *Concerning Human Understanding,* VIII, 81

99 *Boswell.* "It appears to me, Sir, that predestination, or what is equivalent to it, cannot be avoided, if we hold an universal prescience in the Deity." *Johnson.* "Why, Sir, does not GOD every day see things going on without preventing them?" *Boswell.* "True, Sir; but if a thing be *certainly* foreseen, it must be fixed, and cannot happen otherwise; and if we apply this consideration to the human mind, there is no free will, nor do I see how prayer can be of any avail." He mentioned Dr. Clarke, and Bishop Bramhall on *Liberty and Necessity,* and bid me read South's *Sermons on Prayer;* but avoided the question which has excruciated philosophers and divines, beyond any other. I did not press it further.

Boswell, *Life of Johnson (Oct. 26, 1769)*

100 I expressed a horrour at the thought of death. *Mrs. Knowles.* "Nay, thou should'st not have a horrour for what is the gate of life." *Johnson.* (standing upon the hearth rolling about, with a serious, solemn, and somewhat gloomy air,) "No rational man can die without uneasy apprehension." *Mrs. Knowles.* "The Scriptures tell us, 'The righteous shall have *hope* in his death.' " *Johnson.* "Yes, Madam; that is, he shall not have despair. But, consider, his hope of salvation must be founded on the terms on which it is promised that the mediation of our SAVIOUR shall be applied to us,—namely, obedience; and where obedience has failed, then, as suppletory to it, repentance. But what man can say that his obedience has been such, as he would approve of in another, or even in himself upon close examination, or that his repentance has not been such as to require being repented of? No man can be sure that his obedience and repentance will obtain salvation." *Mrs. Knowles.* "But divine intimation of acceptance may be made to the soul." *Johnson.* "Madam, it may; but I should not think the better of a man who should tell me on his death-bed he was sure of salvation. A man cannot be sure himself that he has divine intimation of acceptance; much less can he make others sure that he has it." *Boswell.* "Then, Sir, we must be contented to acknowledge that death is a terrible thing." *Johnson.* "Yes, Sir. I have made no approaches to a state which can look on it as not terrible."

Boswell, *Life of Johnson (Apr. 15, 1778)*

101 Men of merit, who have no success in life, may be forgiven for *lamenting,* if they are not allowed to *complain.* They may consider it as *hard* that their merit should not have its suitable distinction. Though there is no intentional injustice towards them on the part of the world, their merit not having been perceived, they may yet repine against *fortune,* or *fate,* or by whatever name they choose to call the supposed mythological power of *Destiny.*

Boswell, *Life of Johnson (Mar. 23, 1783)*

102 The overweening conceit which the greater part of men have of their own abilities is an ancient evil remarked by the philosophers and moralists of all ages. Their absurd presumption in their own good fortune has been less taken notice of. It is, however, if possible, still more universal. There is no man living who, when in tolerable health and spirits, has not some share of it. The chance of gain is by every man more or less overvalued, and the chance of loss is by most men undervalued, and by scarce any man, who is in tolerable health and spirits, valued more than it is worth.

Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations,* I, 10

103 The doctrine of eternal decrees and absolute predestination is strictly embraced by the Mohammedans; and they struggle with the common difficulties, *how* to reconcile the prescience of God with the freedom and responsibility of man; *how* to explain the permission of evil under the reign of infinite power and infinite goodness.

Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,* L

104 The Koran inculcates, in the most absolute sense, the tenets of fate and predestination, which would extinguish both industry and virtue, if the actions of man were governed by his speculative belief. Yet their influence in every age has exalted the courage of the Saracens and Turks. The first companions of Mohammed advanced to battle with a fearless confidence: there is no danger where there is no chance: they were ordained to perish in their beds; or they were safe and invulnerable amidst the darts of the enemy.

Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,* L

105 *Mephistopheles.* How closely linked are Luck and Merit,
Is something fools have never known.
Goethe, *Faust,* II, 1, 5061

106 From every point of view the concept predestination may be considered as an abortion, for having unquestionably arisen in order to relate freedom and God's omnipotence it solves the riddle by denying one of the concepts and consequently explains nothing.
Kierkegaard, *Journals (Aug. 19, 1834)*

107 We may be partial, but Fate is not.
Emerson, *The Conservative*

108 So strange a dreaminess did there then reign all over the ship and all over the sea, only broken by the intermitting dull sound of the sword, that it seemed as if this were the Loom of Time, and I myself were a shuttle mechanically weaving and weaving away at the Fates. There lay the fixed threads of the warp subject to but one single, ever returning, unchanging vibration, and that vibration merely enough to admit of the crosswise interblending of other threads with its own. This warp seemed necessity; and here, thought I, with my own hand, I ply my own shuttle and weave my own destiny into these unalterable threads.
Melville, *Moby Dick,* XLVII

109 *Ahab.* What is it, what nameless, inscrutable, unearthly thing is it; what cozening, hidden lord and master, and cruel, remorseless emperor commands me; that against all natural lovings and longings, I so keep pushing, and crowding, and jamming myself on all the time; recklessly making me ready to do what in my own proper, natural heart, I durst not so much as dare? Is Ahab, Ahab? Is it I, God, or who, that lifts this arm? But if the great sun move not of himself; but is as an errand-boy in heaven; nor one single star can revolve, but by some invisible power; how then can this one small heart beat; this one small brain think thoughts; unless God does that beating, does that thinking, does that living, and not I.
Melville, *Moby Dick,* CXXXII

110 There are two sides to the life of every man, his individual life, which is the more free the more abstract its interests, and his elemental hive life in which he inevitably obeys laws laid down for him.

Man lives consciously for himself, but is an unconscious instrument in the attainment of the historic, universal, aims of humanity. A deed done is irrevocable, and its result coinciding in time with the actions of millions of other men assumes an historic significance. The higher a man stands on the social ladder, the more people he is connected with and the more power he has over others, the more evident is the predestination and inevitability of his every action.

"The king's heart is in the hands of the Lord." A king is history's slave.
Tolstoy, *War and Peace,* IX, 1

111 The innumerable people who took part in the war acted in accord with their personal characteristics, habits, circumstances, and aims. They were moved by fear or vanity, rejoiced or were indignant, reasoned, imagining that they knew what they were doing and did it of their own free will, but they all were involuntary tools of history, carrying on a work concealed from them but comprehensible to us. Such is the inevitable fate of men of action, and the higher they stand in the social hierarchy the less are they free.
Tolstoy, *War and Peace,* X, 1

112 For history, the insoluble mystery presented by the incompatibility of free will and inevitability does not exist as it does for theology, ethics, and philosophy. History surveys a presentation of man's life in which the union of these two contradictions has already taken place.

In actual life each historic event, each human action, is very clearly and definitely understood without any sense of contradiction, although each event presents itself as partly free and partly compulsory.
Tolstoy, *War and Peace,* II Epilogue, IX

113 When a man has let himself go time after time, he easily becomes impressed with the enormously preponderating influence of circumstances, hereditary habits, and temporary bodily dispositions over what might seem a spontaneity born for the occasion. "All is fate," he then says; "all is resultant of what pre-exists. Even if the moment seems original, it is but the instable molecules passively tumbling in their preappointed way. It is hopeless to resist the drift, vain to look for any new force coming in; and less, perhaps, than anywhere else under the sun is there anything really mine in the decisions which I make." This is really no argument for simple determinism. There runs throughout it the sense of a force which might make things otherwise from one moment to another, if it were only strong enough to breast the tide. A person who feels the *impotence* of free effort in this way has the acutest notion of what is meant by it, and of its possible independent power. How else could he be so conscious of its absence and of that of its effects? But genuine determinism occupies a totally different ground; not the *impotence* but the *unthinkability* of free-will is what it affirms. It admits something phenomenal *called* free effort, which seems to breast the tide,

but it claims this as a *portion of the tide.* The variations of the effort cannot be independent, it says; they cannot originate *ex nihilo,* or come from a fourth dimension; they are mathematically fixed functions of the ideas themselves, which are the tide. Fatalism, which conceives of effort clearly enough as an independent variable that might come from a fourth dimension if it *would* come, but that does *not* come, is a very dubious ally for determinism. It strongly imagines that very possibility which determinism denies.

William James, *Psychology,* XXVI