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GABRIEL TARDE

An Essay in Sociological Theory

By

MICHAEL M. DAVIS, Jr., A. B.

Sometime University Fellow in Sociology

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Political Science

Columbia University

New York

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CHAPTER I

GABRIEL TARDE'S THEORY OF SOCIETY

I

Gabriel Tarde was one of those men who attain intellectual eminence without leading wholly the scholar's life. Born in 1843, in Sarlat, a town now of some 6500 inhabitants in the département of the Dordogne, he served his native place as judge for nearly eighteen years. There must have lain within this apparently restricted sphere a fund of human experience which Tarde's active mind could put to rich mental investment. He became a criminologist of international reputation; in France, of the first reputation, and thus, in 1894, was called to Paris to head the Bureau of Statistics of the Ministry of Justice. He took part in sociological and other scientific societies, and lectured to students, as in the Collège libre des Sciences Sociales, but it was only during the last four years of his life (1900—1904) that, as Professor of Modern Philosophy in the Collège de France, he held a permanent academic position.

So far as his writings indicate, there was no conflict in the mind of Tarde between his technical and his scientific activities. The interest of Social Science, it is true, is both practical and theoretical. It seeks to solve human problems, and, on the other hand, to illuminate these problems in their intellectual relations. Sometimes these two aspects are antagonistic. In Tarde's writings they show no opposition because, whether he was treating of some noted crime or of a question of metaphysics, his aim was always an intellectual illumination. His interests were unified because they lay primarily in men, that is, in social life, and because they were fundamentally scientifc in their nature. The
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purpose of this book is to ask what intellectual illumination Tarde threw upon those general problems, of human life in society, which fall within the province of sociology? We do not deal with him as criminologist, philosopher, or littérature, though on all these sides he is worthy of attention. His writings have the quality not only of being mental stimulants, but of establishing a personal bond between the author and his readers. A personal appreciation, however, would be out of place in a sociological study.

By some critics, the "province of Sociology" is called indefinite; by others, non-existent. If Tarde's work is typical of the endeavors of theoretical sociology, a definition of its province and purpose will be of some general value. Tarde's aim is to do for society what "natural selection" did for Biology, the law of gravitation for Astronomy, the law of the conservation of energy for Physics: to attain a conception which enables us to grasp in coordination, and place in rational relations, a mass of facts which are otherwise meaningless, and which swamp our minds with their multiplicity. No two men are alike, yet unlike men live together, agree upon common rules of life, are fired at times with a common spirit and cooperate in common action. A mind like Tarde's looks upon the complex life of a great nation and cries out for general principles which underlie this manifold activity. As a social scientist, such a man does not seek to explain the development of personal life, thus separating himself from the psychologist and the student of ethics. Although he is bound to explain, where needful, the relation of the social life to the individual, his interest is primarily in social phenomena, the phenomena of the common thought and common action of individuals living together. Realizing as every modern man must, how insignificant is the individual except through his relations with his fellows, the student feels keenly that the rational interpretation of social life is a prime requisite for the solution of personal problems. Our civilization is possible because of coordination in thought and cooperation in action on the part of
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individuals. To grasp under a few general and illuminating principles of human action, the multitudinous individual acts which make up cooperative life, is the aim of theoretical Sociology. Men of the prophet's or reformer's temper, like Mazzini, formulate principles of action that are ethical commands. Men of primarily scientific temper, like Tarde, evolve principles which summarize, intellectually, those procedures of men that create their common life as it is actually lived. A sociological theory is simply an intellectual summary of this character.

II

This chapter outlines the sociological theory of Gabriel Tarde, in which all the many and complex phenomena of social life are reduced to forms of one of two fundamental phenomena: Invention and Imitation. Terms like these, the bases of a system whose development required many books and a man's lifetime to write them, are not self-explanatory. They are technical terms, and the explanation of the system founded upon them must be technical, except in so far as, during the exposition, the real significance of Tarde's concepts can be shown in ordinary language. Such an interpretative summary is the best basis for criticism.

The sociological theory of Tarde is essentially a psychological one. To understand human life and interpret society, the primary requisite is to see how the minds of men act and how they influence one another. The psychologist, as such, can render a certain explanation of the mind's states of consciousness in sensation, feeling, thought and action, but the essential quality of society consists in an inter-influence, a co-relation, a co-adaptation of similar minds, and unless he broadens his field to include these also, the psychologist's work stops at the door of social science (O. 165. 336. L. 87.). Postulating, then, neither a "social organism" under the play of external forces, nor a

*) For explanation of these abbreviations see the Bibliography.
"collective self"—fictitious in Tarde's opinion—but simply a number of similar minds that interact, Tarde develops a social psychology, which in his view is the necessary starting point for explanations of society. Such a psychology does not deal with individual minds, but with modes of relations between minds. It is inter-cerebral instead of intra-cerebral. (Revue Int. de Sociol. IX: 1—13.)

"I have endeavored," says Tarde in the preface to the "Laws of Imitation," (3d Ed. p. XXI.) "to analyze and describe the purely social side of human facts," and to put away all that is merely organic or physical. While Tarde admits, that besides inter-cerebral actions, a complete sociology must include "all the incorporeal actions thence derived," (Revue Int. de Sociol. IX: 5.) and all interactions of man and nature, he deals almost exclusively with the "purely social" aspect, with that relation between mind and mind which creates a society. If we can imagine a group of savages who communicate neither by speech nor by gesture; who dwell in the same forest, hunt the same prey, and are alike by virtue of a common descent—we have a group of beings who, though inhabiting the same ground, really associate no more than the trees under which they live. There is hereditary likeness, but no society. Matters would change rapidly, however, if some power should endow these creatures with language and intelligence. The scheme of one man, a trap for instance, could then be at once communicated to a score and copied by them. The chance club, wielded by another inventor, would be imitated by a hundred; the plan for mutual protection, hatched in some bright mind, could be told to all and agreed in by all. Mutual help, family life, division of tasks, religion, art, government, would at length be possible. Society would be born. And the condition of its creation would be that ideas of any man might be told to his fellows, and be adopted by them; that similarity in character and tastes should increase by reason of such imitation: that the best man should be the most imitated, should gain leadership and be obeyed.
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The characteristic of society, then, is imitation, transmitting and spreading individual initiatives. As waves spread upon a pool, or ether-undulations through space, or an animal propagates its kind, in geometrical progression, so individual acts tend to do, in society. A child imitates his mother and father, his sisters and brothers, his playmates, his teachers; and through this imitation, through this reproduction, in idea or act, of books and men, he becomes like the adults of his day, and able to take his place in their society. A nation copies its ancestors, preserves its traditions, and keeps itself in touch with its past. Every “invention”, as Tarde calls it—every new word, religious rite, scientific theory, process of manufacture, or what not—tends to make itself the center of a circle of imitations, as the stone is the center of the ripples on the pond. An idea that begins and ends in the mind of one man is socially nil. It will be socially effective only when communicated to other men, each of whom, in copying and adopting it, becomes in turn a new center for its propagation. If we ponder a moment on our ordinary experience and on the course of history, we shall find it difficult to think of any circumstance, any institution, custom, or event, which does not appear to have originated in acts of individual men, which were copied, modified and preserved, by their contemporaries and successors. “From the point of view of society, everything is either invention or imitation. The latter is like a river, the former like the mountain whence it flows.” (Im. 3.)

III

Such, in barest outline, is Tarde’s conception of social life. Everything that happens in society is traceable ultimately to the ideas thought, or the acts performed, by individual men. In so far as these ideas or actions have a new and individual quality, they are to be called “inventions”; in so far as they are replicas of the minds or the doings of others, they are imitations. A contrast in nature and in effect evidently lies between the origination and the copy. The source of all variety and progress is obviously
invention, the originations of individuals; the source of mutual likeness, conformity, co-operation, of all, in fact, that is distinctively "social", is believed to be in imitation. The social process is conceived as a form of relation between minds, such that these minds come to be more alike than before, by virtue of one moulding itself after the shape of another.

But this takes us only a little way. What is the specific nature of "inventions"? What influences stimulate or retard their appearance? What is understood by imitation, and what are its laws and its consequences?

In ordinary terms, an invention in Tarde's sense is simply any new idea expressed by an individual, in utterance or otherwise, or any new plan or procedure expressed in individual action. In terms of Tarde's own philosophy, an invention is the social form of "adaptation." (O. 428, and cf. L. 166, Im. 413.) A bird's structure, with relation to the atmosphere, is adapted to flight. So, out of the wheeled carriage and the steam-engine, is evolved their co-adaptation, the locomotive; and, by combining the ideas of variation and struggle for existence, arises their fruitful adaptation—the Darwinian theory. Socially, Tarde says, "an invention is the reciprocal utilization of means of action which previously appeared foreign or opposed"; it is "an association of forces substituted for their opposition or their sterile juxtaposition." (O. 428.) The inventor has to think and to choose, "he has to feel his way, to search about lamp in hand, amid a great number of hypotheses or plans which are tried and eliminated in succession, until he meets at length a verifiable hypothesis, a useful plan." (L. 175.)

This suggests that the psychological process underlying invention is a process of mental selection, but Tarde himself lays little emphasis on this idea. From his own psychological point of

*) It is not easy to translate the French invention, as Tarde uses it. "Origination" indicates the connotation of individuality and novelty, but it fails to fit well into all the desirable contexts. On the whole our English "invention" has seemed the best word.
view, an invention is defined by Tarde as simply a new association. There is continuity between invention and ordinary thought, or, as Tarde puts it, using his favorite method of analogy in comparing volition and invention: "A volition is only a very easy appreciation, while an invention is an appreciation, generally not very easy, of a means fitted to attain a certain end. In the first case, this end itself is easy to imagine; in the second case, to imagine it is more or less difficult." (L. 119) This conception of invention, though independently worked out by Tarde, is essentially the same as that of Joyau and of Paulhan* in their suggestive studies of the psychology of invention. Another way of regarding the same psychological process, is to imagine the mind impinged upon by many ideas, all of which are of social origin, either from books or men, and are thus in Tarde's terminology parts of a current of imitation; so that we may conceive of the invention as due to the interference of these currents. "An invention", from this point of view, says Tarde, "is a fruitful interference of repetitions." (Im. 413.)

Invention being the source of social change, it is of peculiar interest to know the causes which determine the relative difficulty of inventions, and the social conditions which favor or hinder their origination. Obviously the difficulty of making a new association depends in general upon the abstruseness of the relation between the ideas in question. Only genius is able to perceive the more abstruse relations, and, roughly, the measure of inventive ability, or of genius, is this power. Of course there exists every conceivable grade of difficulty. Practically, the interesting point is, that the mental quality capable of perceiving the more recondite relations is rare, and increasingly rare in the higher grades. On this point, Tarde refers to Galton's work in estimating the relative frequency of different orders of ability; but he would have done well to emphasize the fact, so clearly

indicated by Galton*, that these grades of ability are innate. Tarde at least uses the conceptions of variation in ability, and of the "wave curve" which expresses the relative frequency of each grade. Each race or nation, he tells us, has its own range of abilities within its population. If an invention requires higher capacity than the people can produce, according to their own scale of variation, that people will never make such an invention (L. 169 seq.). Here is a thought of prime importance for the "great man" theory of history.

The origin of invention, especially in its higher orders, and thus by implication of the exceptional grades of ability and of "great men", is in part a question of chance. Tarde makes much, in divers passages, of the fortuitous element in history: we shall have to return to it later. Amid the practically infinite number of possible combinations of the ideas already existent, the number of useful combinations, that is to say of valuable inventions, is only a fraction of the whole. John Stuart Mill, at a certain period of his development, was worried lest all the possible combinations of musical notes should be exhausted, and humanity be compelled ever after to endure increasingly wearisome combinations of harmonies already heard. Tarde suggests that all the more easy conjunctures of ideas may ultimately become familiar. In some departments of science this would suggest itself as no unreal contingency, were it not for the fact that every epoch-making invention creates a host of possible new combinations of the new idea with all those previously in existence. The number of possible inventions is indefinite; humanly speaking, infinite. The area of the realized is only a dot, a tiny boat, upon the great sea of the possible. If we knew all possible inventions, says Tarde, they might probably co-ordinate themselves in regular series: "it is the lacunae of the unrealized which...give to actual inventions a picturesque air" (L. 177). "Every invention that actually appears is one possibility realized

*) On this point see Chapter V.
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amid a thousand possibilities (we might call them the necessities, since under certain conditions they would be necessary) which the parent invention carried within itself. And when the invention appears, it prevents the greater part of all these possibilities from ever happening, while on the other hand it makes possible a host of other inventions which until it appeared were themselves impossible." (Im. 49)

The social conditions which favor invention, evidently include the number of the population, because the greater this number is, the larger is the chance of high types of ability appearing. Large homogeneous societies favor both invention and its spread by imitation. * Other things being equal, the closeness of social intercourse, or what has been called by analogy the social distance between men, stimulates invention, the likelihood of inventions increasing as social distance diminishes. Tarde's semi-mathematical statements on this point must be taken as playful. (L. 169)

Of these principles Tarde gives few concrete illustrations. It would be fascinating to trace them in the history of thought and of technology. What a host of conceivable engines does a modern steam-engine supplant! How many mechanisms have sprung from the parent "invention," viz., the discovery of the expansive power of steam! And how many more, practicable and impracticable, might have thus sprung! The history of scientific conceptions like those of wave-motion, and of natural selection, illustrates Tarde's view equally well. So in other spheres does the history of institutions like the monastic orders, the creeds of Protestantism, or the mediaeval and modern universities.

Tarde gives too little notice to one important element affect-

*) To give much weight to this point, we must cling to that lifesaver of the generalizing mind—"other things being equal." The differences in range of ability between different populations are very wide. A small selected group such as the Athens of Pericles, may offer much greater chances for the appearance of high ability than the whole of China.
ing the order and frequency of inventions, namely, the direction of social attention to those which are most striking or most profitable. The amount of inventive ability, using the terms in their Tardean sense, is always limited relatively to the opportunities open for it. Among its many possible avenues of application, it tends, other things being equal, to pursue the avenues which have the greatest social prestige. This prestige may have other foundations than economic success, though economic success is frequently the most important element. Theories of "evolution" now have prestige over theories of physics. The "X" rays had, and still have, a peculiar prestige. One invention sometimes makes certain other inventions impossible, as Tarde says, because of a logical impossibility of their co-existence. Any new invention, however, always makes less likely new inventions in all other fields, because just in proportion as the new invention is successful it attracts to its sphere an increasing amount of the inventive ability of society. Other fields of invention are thus impoverished, at least for the time. The likelihood of an invention in any particular sphere of activity is chiefly determined by the number of able minds whose interests are directed thereto, and the direction of interest, in turn, is largely controlled by the prestige of this sphere, or the amount of social attention attracted to it. We must conceive of the total of inventive ability, within any one generation, as relatively fixed, and that the direction of this ability to one field of action rather than to another is a question of selection rather than of creation.*

*) The application, especially to social movements for civic and economic reform, is obvious. Give a vocation prestige so that men deem it respectable, and may win social recognition, even if not wealth, through its pursuit, and brains will be attracted to it. One value of recent disclosures of financial and political corruption is the notoriety accompanying them. It has its undesirable features, but it means the attraction to such investigations at once of ability and of social attention. When this new supply of ability, now manifesting itself chiefly in official investigations and in periodical literature, turns itself to constructive reform with an enhanced social prestige to back it, a new order of results should be accomplished.
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IV

So much for “invention”, for the present. Once an invention has appeared, its future is a question of imitation. Every invention tends to spread itself by imitation, and all its social significance depends upon its success. The rate of progress of its imitation will, if unhindered, be in geometrical progression like that of sound or light. If hindered, as by differences among men in race, language, prejudice, etc., its course may be checked or deflected—refracted, we may say, to carry out the analogy. If hindered in another way, by other lines of imitation spreading from other inventions, it may “interfere” with these, conflict with them or accord with them. (Im. 18—34) We must then take up a two-fold problem: first, the causes which determine the social success (imitation) of an invention; and second, the organization and utilization of inventions while in course of imitation. For both of these problems Tarde has definite answers.

“Why is it, that out of a hundred different innovations simultaneously conceived—whether verbal forms, mythological ideas, or industrial processes—some ten should spread over society and ninety be forgotten?” (Im. 152) The causes are both physical and social. Physical influences, of climate, of racial constitution, etc., have an undeniable effect, supplying the conditions under which social laws must act. But, says Tarde, because we can state the relations of an organism or a society to external phenomena, we do not therefore explain these relations. A knowledge of the inmost laws of living matter would be necessary to do that. Tarde thus finds it proper to put one side the study of physical influences, and to limit himself to a sociology “pure and abstract, not concrete and applied”. (Im. 153)

The social causes are of two sorts. In the first place, an invention may or may not be in accord with existing inventions or series of imitations. This is a question of mental agreement, or in Tarde’s words, a question of logic. Non-agreement may entirely prevent the spread of an invention, and partial agreement must more or less hinder it. A perpetual-motion engine will
not receive much countenance while modern doctrines of energy find acceptance. Our civilization does not accord with contrivances for making fire by friction of wood against wood, nor with a religious organization based on supposed contemporary miracles. Such an inherent contradiction, mentally realized, between a new invention and existing inventions, is what Tarde means by his favorite phrase, "logical discord".

The spread of an invention is also conditioned by another set of causes which differ in nature from the "logical" causes. Tarde calls them "extra-logical", and distinguishes among them three kinds. First, he holds it to be generally true, that ideas are transmitted (imitated) before the words that express them; that ends are imitated before means, doctrines before rites, etc. In general, imitation proceeds ab interioribus ad exteriora, from the internal to the external (du dedans au dehors.) (Im. 216—232). Second, the prestige of an innovator has an influence upon other men which is quite apart from the intrinsic value of his invention. Other things being equal, imitation proceeds from the socially superior to the socially inferior: in any field of activity, "the best is the most imitated." Aristocracies, great cities, successful business men, famous literary men, "set the tone" in fashion, industry, or art (Im. 232—264). In the third place, there are some states of society when the past seems to exercise an influence as a great man does, when a tradition is respected, preserved, imitated, simply because it is a tradition. At another time it is the novel, the foreign, which possesses this prestige. When the new has lost its novelty, however, it becomes itself a custom, or incorporated with older customs. Over the whole social field, in language, religion, politics, jurisprudence, economics, ethics and art, Tarde has sought to demonstrate the law that ages of custom alternate with those of fashion or mode (Im. 265—394). To the era of custom succeeds one of fashion, and fashion in turn becomes custom, though a custom altered and enlarged from that which preceded it.

Tarde's analysis may be summed up in the following scheme:
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I. The source of social action is in individual initiatives expressed in new ideas or procedures called Inventions.

II. The essential social and socializing act is Imitation, by which Inventions become more or less socially accepted and socially influential.

III. The origin of an Invention is influenced by:
   (a) The inherent difficulty of combining mentally the ideas whose combination is the invention;
   (b) The grades of innate mental ability in the society;
   (c) The social conditions favoring mental alertness and the expression of ability*.

IV. The imitation of an invention is affected by:
   (a) the general law that imitations spread from their initial center in geometrical progression, with regard to the number of persons affected;
   (b) Physical and biological influences, including race characteristics; the general law being that "Imitations are refracted by their media";
   (c) Social influences:
      (1) Logical: the agreement or disagreement of the new invention with the inventions already more or less socially accepted (imitated);
      (2) Extra-logical:
         (x) Ideas are transmitted before means; imitation goes ab interioribus ad exteriora;
         (y) Imitation proceeds from the socially superior to the socially inferior;

*) Tarde should have added the point already made, that the social needs of a time and the amount of social prestige attaching to the various spheres of activity, affect powerfully the sort of inventions which will be made, because they direct ability to certain problems rather than to others.
(z) Ages of custom, in which the past has peculiar prestige, alternate with ages of fashion, in which prestige is possessed by the novel and the foreign.

V

We may now assume that, through one cause and another, the imitation of an invention is under way. The whole social structure is built up of inventions. Every custom, procedure, institution and idea, is or was an invention in Tarde's sense. The whole capital of society, by which Tarde means all that its members work with, in their intellectual lives as well as in their economic, is, to Tarde's mind, to be described as invention or as a mass of inventions. When we conceive of an invention being imitated, we imagine several streams of imitation flowing from the invention as a center. The problem is—the second problem mentioned on page 15, to show how different currents of imitation, proceeding from different inventions, are built up together, fused and harmonized into permanent institutions and social systems. In other words, we need to express the process of social organization in the terminology of Tarde's theory of imitation. When we have done so, we shall see whether any light is cast upon significant problems, or whether the theory is simply a wording of familiar thoughts in technical phraseology.

To follow Tarde in this matter, it is necessary to deal somewhat with his psychological theories. (Im. 157 note; E. S. 235—368). He maintained, though in later years he was forced to abandon the ground, that sensations are essentially unquantitative, unmeasurable, and he always held that, being purely individual and incommunicable states, sensations have, in themselves, no direct social significance. The visual and auditory impression received by a person at the theatre, for instance, is no wise modified, "in itself", by the fact that other people are receiving similar impressions at the same time. Furthermore,
the life-experience of different men are so various, that no
two men have had, or ever do have, the same content of feelings
and images. The category of sensation is a distinctly individual
category, offering, as such, no basis for the association of indi-
viduals.

But however variously men have touched, heard, or seen,
they all agree in one point, that they can desire a common end,
believe a common thought; and on that basis they can associate,
however different, from man to man, be the sensations connected
with a belief or desire. These two quantities, each with its
negative side, disbelief and repulsion, are held by Tarde to be
elements inherent in all animal life, from the lowest Protozoan
up to Man (O. 163 seq. L.1 seq. E. S. loc. cit.). They are
quantitative conceptions, affording a psychological foot-rule of
comparison. How, for example, on the basis of sensation, can
we compare the sensuous pleasure of tasting a peach with that
of hearing a song? (O. 181—182) But on the basis of desire,
we may say that a man may wish for these two satisfactions with
equal intensity, and will put forth equal effort to gain each. In
the same way, Tarde holds, we may compare and measure the
pleasures and pains of different individuals. As the primordial
substance, imagined by certain philosophers, is measurable by
us only through its manifestations in matter and energy, so
sensations are measurable only through the beliefs or desires
connected with them.* Belief and desire are, after all, relations
between sensations, but "a relation which does not change when
the terms change." (L. 12.) All our sentiments and emotions,
—pleasure, pain, hope, fear, pride, joy, sadness, contempt, what
not, are complexes of belief and desire with material furnished
by the senses. (O. 210—268. E. S. loc. cit.) Sensations are
pleasurable when we desire to prolong them, and painful when
we desire the reverse. (E. S. 242 seq.) Passion is desire "com-
bined with" belief and with an image, i. e., we judge an image

*) The analogy is not Tarde's, but cf. E. S. 249 and Im. 76.
to be merely an image, and desire it to be an actual sensation. Will is "passion" motivated by judgment, i.e. a passion in which the means to attain the end are known and are believed to be practicable. So Tarde runs through the psychological gamut.

As a scientific psychology, there is not much to be said for these analyses. It is obviously true that the sensations of an individual have no significance beyond himself unless they are followed by some active expressive state. In other words, sensations are data for psychology, not for sociology. To emphasize this thought clears the ground, whenever desirable, for the sociological utilization of those two contrasted but commonplace classes of active mental states, beliefs and desires. Tarde's social theory does not require him to do more than utilize these conceptions in a general way. To expand page after page of psychological analyses and analogies, as he does, becomes hardly more than a gratuitous elaboration of metaphysic.

Belief and desire, as categories of mental states, are capable of a singularly direct application to Tarde's problem of the organization of inventions. Inventions, while in course of imitation, may assist or harm each other only in so far as related to some belief or desire (Im. 174). Thus the use of rails was stimulated by the invention of the locomotive, and at the same time the spread of canals was hindered. All these are related to a common human desire. In the individual mind, beliefs or desires attached to old and to new inventions come into opposition, and only when the individual conflict is solved, the mind made up, does opposition between individuals begin. (Im. 162; L. 174—175; S. L. 99). The study of mental conflicts is a study of the relation between beliefs and desires. It is a form of logic. Thus in order to explain how inventions are organized into social systems, Tarde develops a new theory of logic, individual and social. By logic, Tarde means simply the rules or laws according to which ideas or sentiments must necessarily fall into certain relations with one another. These ideas or sentiments may be within one mind, and a theory based on this is
Individual Logic; or they may be in the minds of different persons, leading to Social Logic. If two streams of imitation come at once to the mind of an individual, what determines whether one shall suppress the other, or whether the two shall combine? Here is applied the theory of belief and desire. Belief is assumed to be a definite quantity attaching to propositions. Hence if two judgments are in contest, the one having attached to it a belief of ten units, the other of fifteen units, then the second judgment will prevail, though its resulting intensity will only be equal to five. Tarde gives several numerical illustrations of this sort. (L. 32—53.) He is quite aware that belief is not directly measurable by experiment (E. S. pp. 235, 259), but he maintains it to be essentially quantitative in its "nature", and defends his use of the conception on that ground. Similarly with desire.

The more one reads of this pseudo-quantitative psychology, the more one feels its unscientific character. It is unscientific to advance numerical examples of quantities which are admittedly not measurable in practice. It is useless, too, because, no proof is needed that a strong desire or belief will prevail over a weak one. This commonsense statement is all that Tarde's theory requires. On the other hand it is by no means clear that the strongest belief "wins out" with a diminished intensity, equal only to the difference between its original intensity and that of the next strongest belief. In the actual operation of the mind, there is a "contrast effect" which sometimes enhances a conviction or desire, much above the intensity it had before it was opposed by other convictions or desires*. At least, this enhancing of the successful belief seems often to be the practical result of conflict. At any rate, Tarde is not justified in making a different assumption without attempt at proof.

Tarde develops an extensive theory of the syllogism, the types of which mean, to him, the different ways in which inven-

* Tarde's principle of "counter-imitation" (Im. 2d Edition, preface) may be regarded as implying a partial recognition of this point.
tions may agree, disagree, or fuse. While his logical, teleological and social syllogisms, and all their various sub-types, are often ingenious, on the whole they add little to what can be said to greater advantage in everyday language. Of more interest is Tarde's survey of the forms of conflict between inventions while in course of imitation by society. Discussion, competition and war, are some of these forms. It is curious to see the emphasis with which Tarde argues that logical and syllogistic conflicts are always duels. It seems to him a grave heresy to hold that there are ever more than two combatants at a time; and he insists, further, that each combatant has always a two-fold aspect, in that it both affirms its own existence and opposes that of its antagonist. Every reader must regret Tarde's waste of pages upon a point which at best is half obvious and half untrue.

The really valuable part of Tarde's logical theory is that it helps us to conceive how beliefs and desires ("inventions") agree, disagree, or combine, and thus how systems of ideas are built up. We see that the social life of a people must be an organic whole because of the inherent necessity for logical harmony between those different ideas and sentiments, existing in individual minds, which are represented objectively in social institutions. We see that social change must come about through the appearance and adoption ("imitation") of new ideas, (inventions) which are either in harmony with the existing system, or are connected with such strong beliefs and desires that they substitute themselves for parts of this system and occasion a re-synthesis. The relative strength of such beliefs and desires determines whether or not an invention will be established socially, that is, be imitated.

Summing up now this sociological mechanics which describes the process of social organization as a whole, we find, according to Tarde, three main stages. The first stage is the pre-logical or chaotic, when inventions have not been mentally connected at all. In the simile used, their circles of imitation
have not yet intersected. The second stage is that of logical organization, when contradictions between inventions are noticed, and also their mutual confirmations; when thus syllogistic conflicts and accords, "duels" and logical unions, arise; when, as outcome, discordances are suppressed, beliefs are harmonized with beliefs, desires with desires, and systems are built up—a grammar, a complex creed, a body of law, an organization of labor. The formation of these systems is a logical process, and it is logical concord or discord that conditions the growth at every step. These systems of harmonized inventions will be relatively stable, and in the third stage, that of "development," they will be added to, but little altered in nature. Thus the vocabulary of a language is enlarged, while its grammar is little altered; statutes are multiplied, but hardly modify the legal system; and population and factories increase without much change in economic organization. The three stages are not sharply separated, but, in any one line of progress, their order is irreversible. Logical systems are built up in narrow fields, in special industries, dialects, or creeds; out of these grow systems of the second degree—nations; and from these, after a process in which wars are the logical conflicts, and treaties or alliances the logical accords, arise at length great empires and international federations. The function and goal of Social Logic is the resolution of contradictions, the bringing of inventions, out of chaos and conflict, to concord and mutual assistance. Society is pushed (L. 73) to "great agglomerations, great centralizations, to the formation of majestic and perpetually growing systems where Social Logic marvels at itself, in pyramids of syllogisms higher and stronger than any tomb of the Pharaohs."

VI

Such an outcome means an increasingly complex, but also an increasingly harmonious and stable social system. Tarde looks forward to the working out of this process between nations
as well as within nations, though he expects the creation of international federations rather than of a single world-state. For the individual as well as for the society, the result of intermingling, interference, and combination of streams of imitation, proceeding from inventions as their source, is ultimately an accord superseding conflict. Desires are satisfied and conflict of beliefs is changed to harmony, either by the suppression of one contestant or by the fruitful combination of the two. Considering Tarde's two psychological quantities, we may thus say that while desire becomes less intense as the more urgent wants are satisfied, belief grows perpetually. This is true of scientific knowledge. The mass of institutions, moreover, the content of life, is perpetually increasing. This is the actual outcome of the social process, and also its true goal. The largest sum of belief is the highest goal of desire.

Tarde's presentation of his own thought is not formal and systematic. He compels the student to seek through many volumes without finding in any one a succinct statement of his purely sociological theory. A summary may therefore be of use for its own sake, as well as for the critic's. In following this cycle from invention through imitation and back again, with all the logical and psychological appurtenances, we can see, also, how and why Tarde has so insistently and consistently clung to imitation as the distinctive sociological stage, the distinctively social factor. Like many other sociologists, Tarde has sought for the quintessence of society, for that single aspect or process of our complex common life which makes it what it is, by distinguishing it from everything else under the sun. He finds this is to be Imitation. Invention is an individual product, belief and desire are individual, and logical conflicts are at bottom conflicts in individual minds. In the cyclic process we have traced, the social stage appears in the passage of an invention from one individual to another, in a relation between two individuals; and so far as this relation is social, says Tarde, it is an imitative relation. Whether it be a one-sided copying, as that of parent
and child, or a mutual one, as in a democratic society, the
essential social act, the sociological starting-point, the social
datum, is thus an act of imitation. Such is the core and the
key of Tarde’s sociology. The process of socialization is a
growth of similarity through a process of imitation. “Every
social similarity has imitation for its cause” (Im. 40). A
group of beings is a social group, a society, (Im. 73) “in so
far as its members are in course of imitating each other, or in
so far as, without actual imitation, they resemble one another,
and possess common characteristics which are the ultimate copies
of one original model”.
CHAPTER II

THE DEVELOPMENT OF TARDE'S THEORIES

Biologists illustrate organic evolution not only by showing how species have been transformed during geologic time, but by describing the development of particular organisms from birth to maturity. The preceding chapter summarized Tarde's sociological theory. This chapter will examine how, to judge from Tarde's writings, this theory evolved within his mind. Such a method will supply a sound basis for subsequent criticism of Tarde's fundamental principle of imitation as the essence of society.

I

Tarde's first scientific publication was an article in the Revue philosophique (Volume X, 1880) upon La croyance et le désir; possibilité de leur mesure. As his disciple, Tosti, says, few of his papers have better illustrated Tarde's philosophical methods. The aim he sets for himself is to distinguish, out of the innumerable manifestations of mind, "one or two real quantities which......will lend themselves, in theory or in fact, to the application of measurement". He puts forward desire and belief as the quantities sought, and discards sensations as not measurable, criticising vigorously those experimental psychologists whom he dubs the "psychophysicists". Belief and desire are considered to be "primively inherent" in all animals, and the explanation of all mental phenomena through their combinations with each other and with sensations. Some of the analyses of emotions, etc., have been given in Chapter I. For sociological theory, perhaps the most important point in the paper is
the argument for the existence of a collective or social measure of belief and desire, and the consequent advancement of these two quantities as fundamental to the social process.

The next year (1881) Tarde published in the same journal (then edited by his friend Théodore Ribot) two suggestive articles on Psychology in Political economy. Much of these papers were reprinted in La logique sociale (1895). Value is taken from the marketplace to the mind, and based upon weighings and balancings of beliefs and desires connected with the services or commodities valued. This paper suggests the idea of imitation in the forms of custom and mode, the idea of a maximum of belief as the goal of desire, and also the general view that social change is due to inventions followed by imitation. In 1882 was published Traits communs de la nature et de l'histoire, containing a study of Universal Repetition (printed under the latter title as Chapter I of Les lois de l'imitation). In its three sections, the theories of invention, of logic, and some of the laws of imitation are suggested. The next year appeared Archaeology and Statistics, defining history as the description or destiny of imitations (this was also published in the Laws of Imitation, as Chapter IV). Again, in 1884, in the course of a critique of Darwinism applied to society, the theory of invention and imitation is brought forth; and in the same year was published the most notable of his early papers—Qu'est-ce qu'une Société? (Laws of Imitation, Chapter III). His answer to his own question has been already quoted towards the conclusion of Chapter I. The theory of social logic, as treated in the Laws of Imitation (Chapter V) appeared first in 1888 and 1889 (the latter paper was not reprinted until 1895, in the Logique Sociale).

Tarde had already risen to note as a criminologist. His first scientific book—La Criminalité Comparée,—published in 1886, was a forcible expression of his view that social factors were to be emphasized in studying the criminal, instead of the physical and individual characteristics of criminals advanced by the anthropological school of Lombroso. In various passages,
the book also contains much bearing upon pure sociological theory. His *Philosophie pénale* (1890), a volume of over 500 pages, developed his criminological views much further.

In this same year, 1890, was printed the book with which Tarde's name is most closely associated—"*Les lois de l'imitation*". As has been seen, many of the articles which it contains had been already published. Tarde gathered these into a volume, added chapters illustrating the workings of imitation, particularly in its aspects of custom and fashion, and thus formally presented a new and suggestive theory of society, which at once attracted marked attention. This point may serve as a natural crossroad for a digression upon the question of Tarde's relations to predecessors and contemporaries.

II

Tarde dedicated the *Laws of Imitation* "to the memory of Augustin Cournot." "I am not," he says in his preface, "the pupil, or even the disciple of Cournot......but I take it as a happy chance of my life that I read a great deal of him after leaving college. I have often thought, that if he had only been born in England or Germany, and had his work translated into bad French, he would have been famous among us all. I shall never forget, that in an unhappy period of my youth, when suffering from eye trouble, I was perforce a man of one book. It is to Cournot that I owe my salvation from death by mental starvation" (Preface, p. xxiv).

How far can we trace a direct relation between the thought of Tarde and that of the writer to whom he pays so high a personal tribute? Cournot did not win recognition from his own time, and it is only the present generation that has begun to put him in his rightful place as an economist and a philosopher. The opening chapter of the second volume of *L'Enchaînement des Idées fondamentales dans les Sciences et dans l'Histoire* (2 Vols. Paris 1861), makes a sociological student feel that his science must give Cournot a niche of no mean rank in its cor-
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rider of worthies. Conceiving in a large way of development in general (though the way in which biological evolution had come about was a wilderness upon which Cournot wandered without a path), he placed man in a different sphere from the animal world, in that the social factor played a great part in human development. "Man, as the naturalist sees him, is a social animal." It is "this instinct of sociability which determines the evolution of that great phenomenon which we call humanity. Between the individual organism and the faculties of the individual there has been interpolated a mean term, a mediator, which is nothing else than the social environment (milieu) wherein there circulates that common life animating races and nations" (p. 2). It is not only true that man is made for social life, it is also true, that "the individual human being, with his perfected faculties as we know them, is the product of social life. The social organization is the true organic condition of the appearance of these developed faculties" (p. 3). Cournot's thought here possesses high value for its own sake; it goes beyond Comte's thought on this point, and is closely related to modern genetic treatments of the individual in society.

Cournot's problem is the study of man as a social being; and when he comes to trace the ways in which the social instinct works itself out, he finds two aspects of human nature which condition it, the side of "Sensibility, Memory, Imagination," and the side of Reason or Intellect. Through the working of these divers psychical tendencies, civilization is built up to be "a triumph of the rational and general principles of things over the energy and native qualities of the living organism" (p. 17); the rationality of things implying that, in the process of social development, ideas and tendencies conflict, but organize themselves ultimately according to the laws of reason, so that there may be traced "a sort of mechanics or physics of human society, governed by method, logic, and calculation." There is a relation between this thought and Tarde's "social logic" which is ex-
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emphasized more closely by Cournot's three stages of the development of phenomena. First, the chaotic; second the genetic, in which stable organizations of phenomena (ideas or what not) appear and make themselves more stable; and third, the final stage, in which all the elements are fully organized and stable. Tarde's three stages cited in Chapter I, are simply these in another form.

The idea of imitation also plays a part in Cournot's philosophy. "In all the phenomena of life there is a manifest tendency to imitation, to the repetition of similar acts. To this tendency is apparently related the production of particular varieties (of plants or animals) in the course of successive generations. Within the individual, the repetition of similar acts engenders habit, and becomes the principle of education of the senses, of the regular play of all functions, of the perfection or perversion of the faculties and the instincts. Imitation creates all in a piece, so to speak, the specific qualities of individuals, or it develops them from the germ which was innate in the individual. Considered among the higher animals, even of the highest order, the tendency to imitation, to repetition, in a word, Habit, becomes again the principle of the association of sensations, of ideas, in so far as the species may have them, and of all the phenomena of imagination and of memory in that degree which the nature of animals permits." (Vol. 1, pp. 384, 385).

In this passage, imitation is presented from that very general point of view familiar to the readers of Tarde. Here are suggested Tarde's ideas of imitation as a form of repetition, of imitation as the social analogy of habit, and of the analogy between imitation and reproduction or generation.

In Cournot's treatment of action and reaction, one is led again to see suggestions for Tarde's idea of universal opposition (p. 379). "This principle, says Cournot of reaction, "is certainly one of those which belongs to that higher dynamics of which Leibnitz conceived" (Vol. 1, Chap. XII). In coming from Tarde's book to Cournot's, one feels a certain spiritual
brotherhood in their general philosophic tone, their common breadth of view, their common pleasure in pursuing a thought, for its own sake, through its ramifications into strange places. Tarde and Cournot both stand in philosophical debt to Leibnitz, Tarde's essay on *Monadology and Sociology* (printed in *E. S.*) being frankly a neo-Leibnitzian dream.

It is perhaps due to that period of his early life in which Tarde, in his own words, was perforce a man of one book, that his works offer a remarkable independence of the tradition of the sciences and subjects with which he deals. This has both advantages and disadvantages. One of its disadvantages was, that Tarde frequently brought forth ideas previously pronounced, or uttered almost simultaneously by contemporary writers. Tarde's theory of imitation seems to be entirely independent of Bagehot's *Physics and Politics*, in which the method of "nation-making" includes imitation as one of its most important factors. Pointing out the place of conscious or unconscious imitation in building up local and national characteristics, the literary style of a period, or the fashion of a year or a decade, Bagehot goes on to show that "the propensity of man to imitate what is before him is one of the strongest parts of his nature" (p. 92); and therefore, that "this unconscious imitation and encouragement of appreciated character, and this equally unconscious shrinking from and persecution of disliked character, is the main force which moulds and fashions men in society as we now see it" (p. 97). Bagehot says little of imitation as a psychological process. He believes that savages tend to imitate more strongly than civilized men, and children more than adults; the reason being, that with savages or children "there is nothing in their minds to resist the propensity to copy. Every educated man has a large inward supply of ideas......". So

*) The first edition of Bagehot's work was published in London, 1872; the first French translation in Paris, 1877; the second English edition in New York, 1884.
with educated people in society (p. 101). We shall utilize this thought in a later chapter.

Bagehot combined a delightful manner of presentation with intrinsic breadth and sanity of view. His book might have been of great value to Tarde. Imitation is given not the place but a place; Bagehot holding that . . . . . "the more acknowledged causes (of social phenomena), such as changes of climate, alterations in political institutions, or the progress of science, act principally through this cause (imitation); that they change the object of imitation and the object of avoidance, and so work their effect" (p. 97). The outcome of this thought is simply to cast us back to mental changes, as the field in which social changes are primarily wrought. And no single advocacy of a single influence mars Bagehot's "complete sense of the way in which concrete things grow and change," which as William James says, "is as livingly present" in Bagehot's "golden little work, as the straining after a pseudo-philosophy of evolution is livingly absent" (James' Will to Believe, N. Y. 1897; p. 232).

In the essay of William James from which this is quoted, first published under the title of Great Men and their Environment in the Atlantic Monthly of August, 1880, James' own view presents an interesting similarity to that of Bagehot and Tarde. Prof. Josiah Royce's writings* upon imitation should also be mentioned, though they are of later date than Tarde's major book. In the work of Espinas, (Des Sociétés Animales, Paris 1877), to which reference will be made again, imitation is viewed as an important factor in animal society; this being one of the few books which Tarde himself cited in the Laws of Imitation. We may compare, with Espinas, the attention given to imitation, as developing the animal mind, in Romanes' Mental

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Evolution in Animals (London 1885, Chapter XIV)*, and by Alfred Russell Wallace (Studies Scientific and Social, 2 Vols. 1900), although more recent scientific work has not fully justified the place assigned by Espinas and Romanes to animal imitation**.

A curious work (1847)*** by Dr. Prosper Lucas, presents in one section an interesting parallel with Tarde. The first part of the book, beginning the study of heredity from a philosophic standpoint, treats of the "deux lois de la vie dans l'institution primordiale des êtres" (p. 21); and these two laws are Invention and Imitation. Surveying the universe objectively, says Dr. Lucas, we see "two inverse orders of characteristics," difference and similarity. The principle which engenders difference is Invention; that which engenders similarity is Imitation. Upon these principles a philosophy might be based, though the application actually made by M. Lucas was only to his special problems of sex-heredity, sex-determination, and the inheritance of morbid states.

Another work to be noted is Dr. Paul Jolly's Hygiène morale (Paris 1877). "The political history of a nation is very often nothing but the philosophic history of Imitation" (p. 105). Tarde himself might have written this sentence, yet he seemed to have been entirely unacquainted with Jolly's book. The passage cited occurs in a section (pp. 100—118) on Imitation, one of a series of chapters upon different mental functions, such as instinct, curiosity, memory, and will. Jolly's application is primarily

*) Romanes' book is also mentioned by Tarde, Irm. p. 72.

**) Sir Henry Sumner Maine makes reference to the influence of imitation on social development in Dissertations on Early Law and Custom (London, 1883), pp. 284—285, but his mention seems to have no historical relation to the works of Bagehot or of French writers.

*** The title is worth quoting in full: Traité philosophique et physiologique de l'hérédité naturelle, dans les états de santé et de maladie du système nerveux avec l'application méthodique des lois de la procréation au traitement général des affections dont elle est le principe. Ouvrage où la question est considérée dans ses rapports avec les lois primordiales, les théories de la génération, les causes déterminées de la sexualité, les modifications acquises de la nature originelle des êtres et les diverses formes de névropathie et d'aliénation mentale. 2 Vols. Paris 1847—1850.
therapeutic, not social, and his studies of the various faculties are not well correlated, but his analysis of the two main forms of imitation, the “instinctive” and the intellective”, might have been useful to Tarde.

It is strange that, before publishing *Les lois de l'imitation* in 1890, Tarde (apparently) made no reference to the work of Dr. A. Bordier, *La vie des sociétés* (Paris 1887). To Bordier, imitation is one of the important phases of social functioning. “As diffusion in a gaseous mixture tends to equilibrate the tension of gases”, so imitation “tends to equilibrate the social environment in all its parts, to destroy originality, to make uniform the characteristics of an age, a country, a city, or of a little circle of friends” (p. 76). Although a chief factor of progress, as illustrated by the “contagious” spread of opinions in crowds and by the rapid extension of some social changes, imitation is also the agent of “social heredity”, the preserver of social atavisms and superstitions. Here is something not unlike Tarde’s contrast between imitation-custom and imitation-fashion. Again, Bordier finds the psychological basis of imitation to be *suggestion*. “Suggestion is, in fact, the key of imitation, which itself explains how the social environment is reducible to a series of cerebral reflexes” (p. 96). Bordier has still other points of contact with Tarde, although the emphasis of his book is rather laid upon the biological and demographic aspects of social development*.

It is interesting to observe, that the study of imitation as a psychological function did not come to the attention of the scientific world either through Sociology or through General Psychology itself. It was in the field of abnormal life that imitation was first studied. Suggestion, as we shall see, was not viewed as a factor in life or society until after it had been studied.

*) Bordier makes no reference to Tarde's papers, a number of which he might have read in the *Revue philosophique*. An anthropologist by academic connection, but imbued with the psychological as well as with the biological point of view, Bordier is worthy of attention for his own sake, especially by those interested in studies of social selection.
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in abnormal states, especially in hypnotism. Imitation similarly came to scientific notice as a form of "mental contagion", and in this form was early noted by penologists, because phenomena of "moral contagion" are forced upon the attention of those who have to deal with criminals. Aubry's *La Contagion du Meurtre* (1864, first published as a thesis, 1887) is an authoritative work written from this point of view. Broad social connections, from the same view point, are easy to make*. They are suggested, for instance, in Moreau de Tours's pamphlet *De la Contagion du Crime* (Paris 1889), which makes much of the influence of the press. In Alexander Bain's work *The Senses and the Intellect* (First Edition, London 1855) several pages are devoted to imitation (Pp. 416—420 of the second edition, 1864). Bain's interest, however, was purely psychological in the individualistic sense, his aim in this passage being merely to show that Imitation is not an instinct, but one of those voluntary actions whose acquired character he was desiring of proving.

The works of Scipio Sighele, especially his studies of the psychology of sects and of the criminal crowd, are of importance for the student of Tarde, with whom Sighele must share the honor of working out the psychology of the public as dis-

*) Sighele (*La Foule criminelle*, 2d French edition (1901), pp. 39, 40, foot-note) mentions the following writers as having touched on imitation from this special point of view. I have not been able to examine any of these: Prosper Lucas, *De l'imitation contagieuse ou de la propagation sympathique des névroses et des monomanies*, Paris 1833; Calmeil, *De la folie considérée sous la point de vue pathologique, philosophique, etc.*, Paris 1845; Brière de Boismont, *Du suicide et de la folie suicide*, Paris 1865; Jolly, *De l'imitation, in l'Union médicale*, (1869) t. VII, p. 369; Prosper Despine, *De la contagion morale*, 1870, and *De l'imitation considérée au point de vue des différents principes qui la déterminent*, 1871; Moraeu de Tours, *De la contagion du suicide à propos de l'épidémie actuelle*, 1875, and in *l'Union médicale*, t. XXII, n. 88; Ebrard, *Le suicide considérée au point de vue médicale, philosophique, etc.* The books of Lucas, and of Jolly, touched upon in the text, contain, at least in the case of Jolly, the writers' later treatment of the topics indicated.
tinguished from that of the crowd*. So far as mention of "imitation" is concerned, the question of priority, for which Sighele supplies some material, is of merely antiquarian interest. Sighele's own work is of original importance for psychological sociology, although it does not bear specifically on the theory of imitation as the social basis**.

III

We may now return from this digression into the history of the theory of imitation, of which no complete survey is attempted***, to the history of the elaboration of Tarde's sociological views into a system. In the Laws of Imitation, the theory of invention was but slightly developed, and the logical theory was only sketched. In 1895, the same year in which the second edition of the Laws of Imitation appeared, Tarde published his Logique Sociale, expanding his theory in this direction with much detail, both in the abstract, and with illustrations drawn from the fields of language, religion, emotional life, art, and economics. A coordination of his principles of imitation and invention (or "Repetition" and "Adaptation") had already been expressed, but the third term of his trio (Tarde's classifications habitually take the trinitarian form) was not developed until the publication of L'Opposition Universelle (1897). From the concrete sphere of Criminology and the abstract sphere of the

* As regards the treatment of crowd psychology is concerned, Sighele attributes the priority to himself, mentioning Tarde briefly, and calling LeBon's work (Psychologie des foules, 1895) a "clever restoration" of his own volume. (Psychologie des sectes, p. 39 of French trans., Paris 1898. The two French editions of La foule criminelle date 1892 and 1901, the first Italian edition (not seen) dating not earlier than '97.

**) Reference must also be made to an article by the criminologist Ferri, La Théorie sociologique de M. Tarde, (Le Devenir Social I (1895): 253).

*** Of recent work on imitation along the lines suggested by this paragraph may be mentioned the paper of Dr. Guibert De l'aptitude à l'imitation (Bulletin de la Soc. de l'Anthropologie de Paris, IV (1893): 315), and that of Le Dantec, Le Mimétisme et l'imitation, (Revue philosophique 46 (1898): 356), and Le Mécanisme de l'imitation (ibid. 48 (1899): 337).
Laws of Imitation, Tarde passed here, by rise or descent as we please to call it, to the supernal sphere of Metaphysics. Opposition, one of the three fundamental aspects or principles of the universe, is defined, and its forms are classified. Thereafter are traced oppositions mathematical, physical, organic, psychological, and social. It is a book in which the imagination has given itself full liberty to wander in a world where science comes not nor facts enter in to hamper or constrain. The book offers attractions to the student of Psychology and to the student of Tarde for his own sake, and it has Tarde's intrinsic qualities of originality and fertility, though the field in which he exercises them here is not one in which originality can bear very definite fruit. One may well feel that opposition or conflict, as an important aspect of natural phenomena, is worthy of presentation; but Tarde's treatment in Universal Opposition does not exploit the field in the direction of its richest resources.

Tarde thus attains a universal philosophy, of which imitation is only one phase. There are three fundamental aspects of the universe, each of which we observe in a series of processes. Phenomena are seen (1) to repeat themselves; (2) to oppose one another; (3) to adapt themselves to one another. "Repetition, opposition, and adaptation are the three keys which Science employs to open up the arcana of the Universe". Now repetition has three forms; undulation, its physical form, exemplified in the passage of sound waves through an elastic medium like air; heredity, its biological form, through which organisms repeat their life from generation to generation; and last, imitation, its social form, on which society is based. Similarly, opposition has physical, biological, and social forms, the latter including war, competition, and discussion. Competition in turn has three forms; first among producers of the same article, second among consumers of the same article, and third between producer and consumer or seller and buyer of the same article (S. L. 115). Of the three fundamental forms, repetition and adaptation are the more important; and of all three, adaptation
is the most important. It is universally the outcome of opposition, and has, as we would expect, three forms and a series of sub-forms. Into this larger synthesis there fits excellently the sociological theory proper, like a fragment of a dissected map into the place prepared for it.

We have already noted that Tardé's order of presenting his principles, gathered from the order of publication of his volumes, was not their logical order. Nor did he gather these principles into a systematic presentation until a course of lectures delivered in 1897, published as his *Lois Sociales*. "I aim to give," he says in the preface to this book, "not a mere outline or resumé of my three principal works on Sociology, but rather the internal point that unites them......I may possibly be told that it would have been quite as well, had I first presented as a systematic whole that which I have actually cut up into three separate publications". He justifies himself, because "a work in several volumes is apt......to alarm the modern reader," and furnishes a dangerous amount of material for the critics; thus publishing his sketch "for the sake of those few who take the same pleasure, in putting together what is offered to them in fragments, that others do in tearing down what is presented to them in completed form" (S. L. p. X).

IV

Tarde does more than expound a theory; he illustrates it extensively. Over a quarter of *Les lois de l'imitation* and a still larger proportion of *La logique sociale* are taken up with illustrations of the "laws" drawn from all spheres and institutions of life. Of Tardé's methods of "proof", particularly of his use of analogy, something will be said later. Besides devoting portions of his major theoretical works to illustrations of theory, Tarde wrote a series of special volumes. His *Transformations du droit* (1893), displayed his general views as applied to jurisprudence. A later book, *Les transformations du pouvoir* (1899) did the same within the field of government, while two large
volumes (*Psychologie économique*, 1902), his last important publication, give the Tardean rendering of Economics.

Parts of his works in criminology, already cited, have also some general sociological reference. *L’Opinion et la Foule* (1901) a readable and valuable study in social psychology, will be touched upon later.

Tarde wrote frequently in French periodicals, and many of his fugitive pieces cast suggestive sidelights upon his thought. So too do his contributions to the séances of the *Institut Internationale de Sociologie* and other learned societies. A number of his essays, some of which had already been printed in periodicals, appear in the three volumes, *Etudes Pénales et Sociales* (1892), *Essais et Mélanges Sociologiques* (1895), and *Etudes de Psychologie Sociale* (1898). The last of these contains perhaps most of interest from the sociological point of view, but from the broader aspect the three volumes are best taken together, as displaying within brief compass Tarde’s facility in handling every problem he undertook, whether sociological, criminological or philosophical.

It would be interesting to have a series of specialists take up Tarde’s treatment of the several fields whence the illustrations for his Sociology have been drawn. The impression produced upon a single person who reads all Tarde’s chapters and books upon law, government, language, religion, economics, etc., is that these are less treatises upon the titular subjects than illustrations of various general views by means of the material furnished by these subjects. In other words, they are treatises according to a deductive method, in which either the whole subject-matter is classified and presented in terms of Tarde’s own theory (e.g. his *Psychologie économique*); or in which only such aspects of the subject-matter are touched at all as accord with, or are suggested by, the same theory. It is well to illustrate the “law” of alternation of custom and fashion by illustrations from language and from religion, but it is wrong to do this without inquiring if there are not other aspects of religious
and linguistic development which do not illustrate or which contradict this law.

Probably the least satisfactory of all Tarde's special works is his Economics. The field is one in which the application of the inventive faculty to facts yields grudging results, and within such a field, Tarde's ready imagination makes him rather a wanderer than a discoverer. The elements with which he starts, in economics, are beliefs and desires. In harmony with his philosophic system, he then classifies his subject according as beliefs and desires, in one or among many individuals. recur, oppose, or co-adapt, offering thus the triad: Economic Repetition, Economic Opposition, Economic Adaptation, as his fundamental division of the subject. The actual treatment shows these divisions to be inconvenient and artificial even for an "economic psychology", and to be glaringly so for economics as a useful pursuit. In the first place, the classification apparently compels the splitting up of concrete matters such as money, protection, socialism, the effects of machinery, etc., among the three divisions of the book, thus rendering the treatment of these themes pointless. In the second place, some of the most vital questions of theoretical and practical economics are either touched lightly or entirely omitted. Despite a long discussion of landed property, nothing is said of rent save scattered criticism of Ricardo, Marx, and Henry George. Capital is treated, but solely from the psychological point of view, from which it is defined as the sum of existing inventions, in other words, as the knowledge of procedures and instruments of production. This conception is put to some use in treating social progress, but in dealing with properly economic questions it fails to justify itself. There is no treatment at all of the problem of interest. Similarly profits, wages, the standard of living, and thus the whole problem of distribution, on which even from the purely psychological standpoint much is to be said, are left essentially untouched.

On the other hand, a mind like Tarde's does not pass over the field of economics without finding some fruit. Tarde's theory
of value in particular, has considerable historic as well as intrinsic interest. He generalizes the term to the extent of making "value" a central notion in every form of social science. As would be expected, there appears a triad of forms: truth-value, beauty-value and utility-value*. Economic value, a special form of utility-value, is determined by weighings and balancings of different desires in the mind of individuals. Tarde clearly conceives value as determined by subjective causes, by mental estimates, instead of by objective facts of cost of production. He adumbrates a final-utility theory of value, having the conception of a margin, both in individual minds and within groups of individuals. He does not, however, put his theory in a sufficiently systematic and definite form to enable it to be compared readily with those of modern economics. The treatment is throughout discursive. Historically it is of interest in that it was developed in entire independence of the English and German, and even of the French writers commonly regarded as founders of the utility theory of value. Tarde sketched the essentials of his theory in a paper in the Revue philosophique of 1881, which shows an almost complete independence of economic tradition. Of his expanded statement in the Logique Sociale (1895) the same is true, and even in 1902, his Psychologie économique indicates that he knew the "final-utility theory" very imperfectly, and not at all except through the French summarization of Gide. Tarde was not only led into errors through ignorance of the economics which he criticised, but he is scientifically culpable for the waste of mentality involved. In a book dated 1902, intended for scholars, it is time lost to inveigh against the "economic man" or argue at length that money is not an ordinary commodity. These are only two instances. Had Tarde known the

*) Simmel in his Philosophie des Geldes has also shown that economic value is only one member of a general category. So too have Fatten and others. But Tarde’s conclusions were reached quite independently.
literature of his subject before he undertook it, he would have said fewer obvious things and said more briefly the things that are useful*.

V

Tarde's *Psychologie économique* is the best exemplification of how his system of thought influenced, to the point of distortion, the subjects whence his mind turned for presentation of social theories. The field of sociology is very broad, also somewhat ill-defined; its traditions of classification and method are not yet fully established, and most of its problems are at once so complex and so controverted that it is difficult to say anything about them which is not half true. The history of philosophy abounds in illustrations of how a man hits upon and expounds one or two fruitful ideas, and thereafter, thinking over the universe in their light, organizes a network of thought through which things in general may be strained. If abstract philosophy is the home of the systematic error, Sociology is its lodging-place. It has given a ready reception to the "systematic error", a term which seems to fit the case because of the unfortunate results evidenced by more sociologists than Tarde. It is surely a misfortune to become so imbued with one's personally

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*) Tarde's reproaches against "the economists" for their neglect of psychology, and for the objective, "falsely exact" character given to the science, lose most of the weight they might have when we see against what economists they are directed. From a tabulation of all the names noted in the *Psychologie économique*, it appears that a number of French authors are mentioned, although even here the substance of the references is often unsatisfactory. Of English-writing economists, however, the only names that appear are: Adam Smith, Malthus Ricardo, J. S. Mill, Macleod, Carey, Henry George, Ruskin and Ashley. When, in his "historical survey", Tarde has presented his indictment of economics as "unpsychological", he opens the concluding paragraph (Vol. I, p. 142), as follows:—

"During the last fifteen years there have arisen, in Germany and Austria, certain schools which set up the title of economic psychology: Schmoller, Wagner and Menger being their chiefs. I regret (he continues) that my ignorance of German has not permitted me to follow their learned works".

The only other Germans mentioned (Tarde utilized French translations) are: Von Thünen, Marx, Roscher, Lexis, Bernstein, Kautsky, Bücher, and—a passing reference—Böhm-Bawerk.
The Development of Tarde's Theories

labeled pigeon-holes for facts that one cannot fit facts into any others, cannot, indeed, see facts at all unless they suit these private classifications. It is particularly unfortunate when, as Tarde's Economics witnesses, one can see phenomena connected with wages or with competition, for instance, only in certain very abstract relations, which have no bearing upon the categories into which these phenomena fall, with their weighty significance, for the vast majority of mankind. To study an ingeniously elaborated system is a pleasant mental gymnastic, but it also fills one with regret at the waste of intellectual energy that this elaboration implies*. Of Tarde's three chief books upon social theory, the proportion of waste matter is in the same order as their dates of composition (Les lois de l'imitation, 1890; La logique sociale, 1895; L'opposition universelle, 1897.) The same is true, though less strictly true, of his works in special fields. Pages of treatment in the Social Logic, in the work on Opposition, in the Economics, etc., are simply illustrations of what is too frequent in sociological literature, the render-

*) From the psychological point of view, we are free to recognize that the philosopher who has developed his system is probably misfitting or neglecting facts because of non-attention, not mal-intention. The psychological basis of the "systematic error" is simply in the laws of mental habit. One who possesses an idea is always in danger of being possessed by it. He associates other ideas about this major conception, and increasingly as he does so, does it become difficult for him to think in other than the habitual associations, or in terms other than those habitually employed. Our consciousness is always a selective consciousness, including only a fraction of all the stimuli presented us. As time goes on, our personal habits of association become more and more the criterion of what we shall apperceive and how we shall apperceive it; and the larger and the more organized the network of our associations the greater the likelihood that we shall either force new phenomena into this network or fail to attend to them at all. Psychological analysis suggests that the only way to avoid the systematic error, so far as it is humanly avoidable, is by determined and persistent conscious effort against it. Self-consciousness, in such a matter, must go a long way towards betterment. The need for such effort is well manifested by the ingenuity and satisfaction with which one whose habits of thought are moulded and cast will instantly translate a new suggestion into terms of his system, remaining innocent, withal, of how incongruous, to other minds, the new fact looks in such relations.
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...ing of familiar things into unfamiliar words; sometimes, even, the translation of the obvious by the incomprehensible. No one fond of intellectual work can fail to appreciate Tarde's system as a product of what Cournot calls that "taste for symmetry so eminently favorable to oratorical effect (I: 298)." Yet on the whole, except for some special essays and studies, like L'Opinion et la Foule, Tarde's systematization and elaboration of his ideas has brought more bulk than substance.

From the standpoint of scientific method, Tarde's evidence for his theory is essentially a deductive verification. Tarde proceeds somewhat as Comte did. He thinks out certain basal principles, analyzes their interrelations, and goes ahead. The sort of verification he offers is only in part evidence for his principles directly. In greater degree it is an attempted verification of the system founded on these principles, and that is a different matter. Human development is so manifold and complex that it will furnish a large body of "illustrations" for any system, and a fortiori for any one principle, which possesses a certain small minimum of rationality. If a number of instances of the apparent operation of a principle can be pointed out in one group of phenomena and another, it is the ordinary fallacy of the deductive thinker to assume that the principle is therefore demonstrated to be the cause of these occurrences. This fallacy is at once most specious and most dangerous in dealing with social phenomena. The error is twofold: first, proof of cause, where many causes may exist, must be exclusive as well as inclusive. We must cast out other principles, or at least show their true places, as well as cast in our principles. Second, there is the fundamental fallacy of presuming that an organic process of development can be explained or built up from any single principle or element whatever.

Tarde's favorite method of illustrating a principle, whether "universal opposition" or "imitation" in society, is by drawing a likeness between the action of the principle and some supposedly similar process in another class of phenomena. As the history
of Sociology abundantly illustrates, analogy is at once a finger-post and a snare. Tarde's analogies suggest now the one phase, now the other. The mere list of his analogies would fill a small volume; their elaboration does in fact fill a large part of the many volumes he has written. At times one is irritated by Tarde's apparent satisfaction when he has succeeded in bringing some large analogy to exemplify a principle like imitation. What weight is borne upon the scales which must appraise scientifically the influence of imitation as a factor in society, when analogy is drawn between imitation, undulation and heredity? And if the sociological and philosophical theories are to be kept "separate", as Tarde tells us, may not a reader be pardoned for irritation, when perhaps a third of his time is taken in reading just such philosophical analogies in a sociological work? Tarde draws analogies between imitation, nutrition, generation, and memory. Nutrition is internal generation. Memory is a cerebral form of nutrition. Imitation is social memory. Hence imitation and generation "have not only analogy", but "a fundamental identity" (Im. 37). Two pages later, the waves of sound which warm the medium through which they pass and therefore accelerate their passage by a fixed amount, are made thus analogous to the phenomena of the abbreviation of embryonic phases in individual development (Im. 39). From the brain and the ear we may proceed to the moon, for in discussing the law of action and reaction Tarde gives the illustration of the mutual attraction of the earth and its satellite, contrasting them with the powder, which, in a cannon, pushes the ball forward and the gun backwards. These are both illustrations of the law of reaction, but they are "precisely inverse", since in the first case two contrary movements tend toward the same point, while in the other case two contrary movements tend away from the same point. Yet at bottom there is a synthesizing principle, because the powder tends to expand in all directions, and the attraction of the planets is exerted in all directions. Here also, social analogies are not lacking.
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"It is difficult", Tarde continues, "not to see at bottom of all these analogous actions a sort of universal ambition inherent in every reality, which impels it not only to continue itself, but to expand itself externally, to diversify itself by repetition and multiplication, to make use of itself by unfolding itself" (O. 77, 78). Almost every page of L'Opposition Universelle would furnish additional illustrations. Among the more curious are Tarde's analogies of the forms of death: astronomical death, a planet like the moon: chemical death, crystallization; linguistic death, a dead language, etc. (O. 144). His Psychologie économique similarly bristles with analogies and digressions, which impress one the more strangely because of the concrete and practical field to which they relate. He makes curious biological analogies for tools, insists strenuously that tools are always solid, never liquid or gaseous, and devotes ten pages to showing how human progress would have been different, if the earth had been flat instead of round!

VI

When we survey the first written expressions of a deceased thinker and then follow his writings in their chronological order, we are able to see, at least to infer, the mental evolution of his system. Our sympathy with the man is enlarged, and doubtless we are made better critics. When we come to view the system as a whole, as the man left it when his work was done, we cannot but feel despite all discipleship, the pathos of that labor of elaboration, of the futile edifice whence only a few fragments will be taken for the permanent structure of science. It is by the weight and position of these fragments that the man's place in science is ultimately to be judged. His system of thought is his personal product and property, and the historian of thought will treat it in proportion to its significance as such. For the objective development of science, however, the man's work will stand in proportion as its root ideas become the property of other men, and are incorporated into their thought to help
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in solving problems which the man's own age did not know. In the present state of Sociology the most useful critical work must be that which takes up a writer's main ideas in this frankly objective way, and it is from this point of view that the succeeding chapters will proceed. In fact, Tarde specifically asks us to note the "absolute barrier" which he puts between his hypotheses in general philosophy, such as his theory of monads, and his "social theories founded on facts of observation" (Rev. phil., 1900, Vol. 51, p. 661.). This separation cannot be made in treating Tarde's lifework as a whole, because his works themselves do not really make it. We can, however, in a special critique, take up for chief attention the few prime thoughts of his social theories, and this is not only good Sociology, but is in harmony with the spirit of his request.
CHAPTER III

THE SCOPE AND LIMITS OF IMITATION

I

A builder's maxim says that it is well to look to the foundations of one's house even if one knows the architect, and in setting out upon a critique of imitation it will be well to examine Tarde's theory simply from the logical standpoint, to analyze a priori the sort of proof such a theory requires, and also the sort of proof actually offered for it.

Tarde's theory consists logically of three parts, the establishment of certain general principles, the analysis of their interrelations, and the deduction of their results. Under his principles may be included invention, imitation, and the psychological "quantities" of the mind. His analysis of their relations has been already treated in describing the logical and the "extralogical" "laws". For results, he brings us to a conception of the nature and the processes of society, filling the larger part of his works with illustrations of this conception. He draws these illustrations from every social field,—language, art, religion, morality, law, economics and politics. As with most deductive systems, evidence for theory is brought forth after the theory qua theory is well worked out. To substantiate certain ideas by immediate evidence and to substantiate a certain system based upon these ideas, are different things. What direct evidence does Tarde offer for his fundamental principle of Imitation as the social datum?
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To say imitation is the essential social fact, implies that the conception of imitation subsumes all other aspects of the social process, viewed psychologically. The last qualification is important, because Tarde himself does not exclude physical or physiological influences. He would, however, deny to these influences the quality of being "social"; they are biological, or, as he calls them, "vital". It is only the social that is to be explained through imitation. "All that is social and not vital or physical in the phenomena of societies, in their similarities as well as in their differences, has imitation for its cause" (Im. 54). Imitation is thus a criterion of the social, and we are sometimes tempted to believe that the thought runs in a circle, in that something conceived as "social" helps us to deduce what is to be called imitative.

This separation between the vital and the social needs examination. Tarde does not maintain that every similarity between animals or men is due to imitation even in the broadest application which he gives to the term. There are, he admits, structural or functional likenesses, as between a whale and a fish, a bird's wing and a beetle's wing, which are not due to copying, nor even to heredity, but to adaptation to a similar physical environment (Im. 40). Animals may also be alike in structure and habits by virtue of common descent, and even societies which have grown up independently may show resemblances in remarkable detail. But all such resemblances, which are to be explained by similar environments and the pressure of similar organic needs, are of the vital or physical, not of the social order. An objective criterion for distinguishing these two orders, however, is lacking; and as we shall see, it is not supplied by the direct evidence advanced by Tarde as basis for his conception of imitation.

*) Tarde's own analysis of the cause is in terms of his philosophy of universal Repetition.
This evidence is of four sorts: first, from a philosophical analogy; second, from a neurological theory of mental action; third, from the suggestion theory of imitation; and fourth, from the observed facts of social life, both in animal societies and in human.

The first sort of evidence for Tarde's conception of imitation is in his philosophical theory of "Repetition". The universe has three fundamental aspects, Repetition, Opposition and Adaptation. All resemblances are due to Repetition, in one or other of its three forms, the physical or undulatory, the vital or hereditary, and the social or imitative. The theory, if granted, furnishes a certain criterion for distinguishing the vital from the social. All similarities due directly to heredity being of the one class, all other similarities must be of the other. Admitting the analogy, the mere name of the third form of "repetition" is a small matter. But whether this analogy has any weight as scientific evidence is another question. The theory also assumes that the fundamental social phenomenon is the production of similarity, an assumption which must be tested in the final chapter.

The neurological theory referred to is one by which Tarde endeavors to unite imitation with memory as one fundamental psychological process. The brain, says Tarde, is essentially an organ for repeating and multiplying the nervous disturbances transmitted to it at any point of its substance, and thence radiating in all directions.* Any new impression is thus spread through the brain as an invention spreads through society. This is like imitation-fashion. But unless the new impression, "after being propagated from cell to cell" in this manner, is repeated within each cell, it does not endure, i.e., it is analogous to an

*) This is avowedly based on Taine, (On Intelligence, 1869,—English trans. I: 175) who says the brain "is a repeating and multiplying organ, in which all the different departments of the gray cortical matter fulfil the same function."
invention which fails to be imitated. If it is repeated in each cell, and thus preserved, the phenomenon is analogous to a successful invention, i.e., to invention which becomes custom. Tarde then proceeds to enumerate some of the diseases of memory described by Ribot (Diseases of Memory, 1882), and to show a social analogy for each. Many other analogies are elaborated (L. 123–139).

To criticize this theory, as it stands, is perhaps superfluous. Its presentation fills but two pages (80–82) in the Laws of Imitation, and nine (122–131) in the Social Logic. There is no attempt at more than illustration and analogy, and no references except to Ribot and to Taine. If by “memory” is meant simply the power, inherent in organic matter, of receiving and retaining impressions, not only imitation but any psychological process involves and derives from “memory”. This does not take us far. As a physiological theory, the conception of the brain adopted from Taine is clearly erroneous. Since Taine’s book it has become a commonplace that the brain-cortex has areas of localized function, and the general mode of brain-action is known to be very different from a simple spreading, “partout”, of nervous disturbances. This implies no criticism of Taine, who wrote in 1869, but it is difficult to see how Taine’s statements can properly be employed by Tarde more than twenty years subsequently.

The recent theory of Baldwin, of imitation as a “circular process”, with far-reaching biological roots, can hardly be said to substantiate Tarde’s or any other social theory (cf. S. L. p. 42). After all, Tarde used his neurological hypothesis only as an analogy. Were the analogy sound, it would vivify the idea of social imitation, but it would not be evidence for it.

*) Cf. Ribot, Revue philosophique, IX (1880): 516; and Diseases of Memory, Chap. I.

The third line of Tarde's evidence is a psychological theory of imitation. In relation to his fellows, the "social man" is held to be in a state analogous to that of a hypnotic subject; that is, to be passively open to suggestion, to be passively imitative. Apologizing for a certain exaggeration of statement, Tarde thinks himself justified in saying that "Society is imitation, and imitation is a species of somnambulism" (Im. 95). "The social state, like the hypnotic state, is only a form of dream, a dream of command and a dream of action. To have only ideas which have been suggested to him and to believe them spontaneous: such is the illusion of the somnambulist and such also of the social man" (Im. 83). This is illustrated by the influence exerted by great men, by orators, by crowds; by the phenomena of "mass intimidation", and in other ways. Tarde again draws a sharp line between man "in so far as social", and in so far as acting individually. Invention, it will be remembered, is a purely individual phenomenon. "To innovate, to discover, the individual must momentarily escape from society. He is suprasocial rather than social, when he has this most rare audacity" (Im. 95), Such a statement can only be accepted as a literary exaggeration. The emphasis laid upon suggestion by many psychologists, however, and especially the important place accorded it in the control of children, mobs, and assemblies in general, makes it seriously worth while to examine in detail, as will be done in the next chapter, the place of suggestion in mental life.

III

Of Tarde's evidence for imitation drawn from objective facts of history and experience, something has already been said. The present analysis leads us back to our first question: what is implied in the conception of imitation as the fundamental social factor? Using imitation to describe both a process of mental action and also the result of the process, Tarde, by failing to discriminate these two aspects, falls into a serious error. The psychological
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Theories just mentioned describe imitation as a process. Its result is always one thing: similarity or an increase therein, between two or more individuals. In some of his later papers, Tarde came to regard imitation simply as any inter-relation of minds which resulted in increased similarity. Increase of similarity, we infer, is a social goal; the process which attains it is the social process, called imitation. The way in which it happens, as a mental process, is quite another thing; it may conceivably happen in several ways. The suggestion theory, from his conveniently large point of view, becomes only an incident the scheme.

The views which these chapters will maintain in criticism, first, similarity or mental likeness is not the essential social quality, nor is increase of likeness the essential result of a social process.

Second, the process by which similarities are produced in society is not one but is manifold. It includes:

(a) Similarities that are pre-formed, i.e. hereditary;
(b) Processes of selection among instincts and native tendencies: a group of processes primarily physiological, but manifesting many degrees of complexity and consciousness;
(c) Influences of suggestion between individuals, or between individuals and groups;
(d) Processes of thought which are more or less voluntary and more or less self-conscious.

Between certain of these processes are all grades of transition. We shall have to examine these, devoting this chapter especially to the groups (a) and (b), the next chapter chiefly to the remaining two. The attempt will made to show that it is unscientific to divide these processes by any sharp lines of separation, because there is between them both a genetic continuity and a mutual inter-influence in the production of mental reactions which are their joint product.
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IV

Tarde's conception of imitation, as stated, is thought to be substantiated by the phenomena of all societies, both of animals and of men. Whether imitation is the cause of association among animals, such as ants, bees, or gregarious birds and mammals, is a question of fact over which he hesitates very little. Quoting from Espinas (Des Sociétés Animales, 1877) he declares (Im. 4, from Espinas, pp. 223 seq.) that the "works of ants are excellently explained by the principle of 'individual initiative succeeded by imitation."' He mentions how in the labors of ants, one individual begins, "touching its companions with its antennae to warn them they must lend a hand," and that "an imitative contagion does the rest." The same considerations are extended to groups of mammals and birds.

The study of mental action, and especially of the mental life of animals and children, has made great progress since Espinas wrote, and it is possible to affirm with little doubt that his theory of animal society is not only unwarranted by experiment, but is negatived by it. A brief review of some work upon these points is desirable in order to make the underlying theory clear. It is still a popular notion that a young ant or wolf learns its life-business by imitating parents and companions, and one is met by the question: "how could it learn in any other way?" The query involves an idea that the young organism is naturally passive, like impressionable clay, or a sponge soaking up knowledge. But any young animal, infant, puppy, ant, what we please, is essentially a reacting organism, dowered innately with certain tendencies to action when affected by certain stimuli or situations*. Everyone is familiar with some of the child's instincts—in crying, in sucking, in following people that are leaving him; everyone has seen new-born chicks peck

* The vexed question of the origin of instincts is quite apart from the present argument, just as the origin of variation is apart from the theory of natural selection in the form Darwin stated it.
at small objects, or heard of beavers building useless dams within their cages. The instincts or unlearned reactions of an animal are its primary stock-in-trade, its little capital on which it has to get along in life. They are not, however, the definite and rigid things they are sometimes considered. The instinct of a chick is not to peck at food, but at any small object—corn, a pebble, a drop of dew, or its own excrement. But from none of its many peckings does it get pleasure, and it may get unpleasant sensations, except when it pecks at the corn. By a physiological law, which, though its ultimate cause is dubious, is established as a fact, the reaction which ends pleasurably will tend to be more readily repeated, the reactions ending unpleasantly will tend thereafter to be inhibited. Through a process of selection among instinctive reactions—a purely “physiological,” that is to say a sub-conscious process—the vague instinctive tendencies are constantly made more accurate and more definite.

The manner in which an animal learns a new reaction has been carefully studied. In the experiments of Professor Thorndike, for instance, a cat (to give one example) was placed in a grated box, within which a small lever projected, pressing on which would at once open the door. The animal was hungry, and food was placed outside. The sense of confinement, of hunger, the sight and smell of food near by, create a situation to which one might expect a healthy kitten to react vigorously. Suppose, in the course of its random scratching, pawing, etc., it chances to strike the lever and get out. This, perhaps, has occupied two minutes. Replaced at once in the box, it renews its random clawing, till the lever is pressed once more. Again and again, a similar procedure is repeated, but the random movements grow fewer, the time required to escape is shorter, till at length the cat has “learned the trick,” and presses down the lever as soon as put into the box. The process is the same as the chicken’s pecking, it is a selection among instinctive and comparatively “random” movements, a constant inhibition of the useless or painful, a steady stimulation of the useful. So far
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as relates to such simple actions, this interpretation of the results is practically unquestioned*.

But this is only one side of the story, for nothing shows that, over and above the merely instinctive process, one beast may not directly copy another. Professor Thorndike’s dogs, cats, and monkeys, however, proved quite incapable of getting out of their boxes however often they were merely permitted to watch another animal that had learned the trick as described. Nor could they be taught by being put through the necessary actions—the paw being held by the experimenter. Animal trainers, it has been shown,** do not teach animals by “showing” them, or letting them imitate, but (empirically, of course) base their methods upon the instinctive process. In relation to Espinas’ statement of intercourse and imitation among the ants, recent German work (1898) has shown the “reactions of ants to so-called ‘friends’ and ‘enemies’ to be merely reactions to ants having a different smell from that of those in the nests, ‘enemies’ washed and anointed with the excretion of the nest’s inhabitants” being “no longer treated as enemies, though of widely different color and size” (Am. Jour. Psy. VII: 503).

Strong evidence against imitation in animals is also afforded by the nature of the imitative process itself. For the cat to learn the trick of the box by watching another cat, it would

*) For this and the following animal psychology, the writer’s greatest debt for facts is obviously due to Prof. E. L. Thorndike and to Lloyd Morgan, but material and opinions have been gained from other sources. A partial list of works employed: Thorndike, Animal Intelligence (1898), Mental Life of the Monkeys (1901), researches on chicks, fishes, and other papers in various periodicals; Morgan, Animal Life and Intelligence (1891), Comparative Psychology (1894), Habit and Instinct (1896), Animal Behavior (1900); Whitman, Animal Behavior (Wood’s Holl Biol. Lectures, 1890); Romanes, Animal Intelligence (1882), Mental Evolution in Animals (1884); H. S. Jennings, Psychology of the Protozoa, Amer. J. Psychol. X (1899): 503; Wesley Mills, Animal Intelligence, (1898); Binet, Psychic Life of Micro-Organisms, tr. 1899; G. N. Calkins, The Protozoa, 1901; and various articles in the Psychol. Review and Amer. J. of Psychol.

**) The accounts of methods collected by Prof. Thorndike are almost unanimous. Lloyd Morgan (Animal Behavior) agrees in this.
have to analyze the situation, to associate: other cat—push lever—get out; I—push lever—get out. It would have to have ideas and to think rationally. When a boy in a manual training class, for instance, learns to make a mortise and tenon joint, he has to observe the model, and his teacher's work, till, as one says, he "gets the idea of the thing." Then, provided with wood and tools, he endeavors to reproduce the model from this mental copy. This sort of "imitation," the common usage of the word, may conveniently be called ideational imitation. There seems every ground for maintaining that no such process appears to any extent except in man*.

The position thus reached is one which denies to the animal mind every mode of learning except through the selection of instinctive reactions, and this ground is actually taken by a certain school. But the position may be somewhat extreme. Though probably tenable for nearly all invertebrates, for the higher birds and mammals conservative opinion appears to maintain, and justly, that there is a more or less conscious profiting by past experience, a certain action of "intelligence," in the sense in which Lloyd Morgan uses the word**. A parrot, for instance, learns many sounds by the physiological selection of chance utterances that are rewarded. This is the instinctive process. But also, if the response to the stimulus of a spoken word happens to resemble the word in sound, the bird gets more pleasure than otherwise, (from physiological and from external causes) and in a more or less conscious way, may be

*) Present opinion would not seem to sanction a more positive statement. There appear to be some probable cases of the presence of "ideas" among the monkeys, and, according to some writers, (Romanes, etc.) among other mammals. The transition from the lower mental processes to the higher is not a sharp one in any case. As will soon appear, whether ideas and imitation are present in many mammals, or in none below the primates, does not make any difference to the argument.

**) In "Animal Behavior" (1900) and in his earlier works, he has employed "intelligence" to mean "the power of profiting by past experience." It is to be distinguished from reasoning, the power to adapt means to ends, with "foresight and intention." It is only the latter process which involves "ideas," as the word is used here.
likely to repeat the action. That the higher mammals profit by experience in this manner it is difficult to deny. Among children, a boy knows nothing of gravitation, and never thinks about the curved path of a stone and its relation to the speed with which he throws it, but he probably gets to allow pretty accurately for the various forces at work, and becomes a good shot at distant objects, without ever considering it rationally*
Between the merely physiological selection of instinctive reactions and the human process of learning by ideas, there is, genetically, every stage of transition, and it is simply a matter of convenience to find a term such as intelligence which will denote the general nature of the intermediate stages.

V

The social application, somewhat long deferred, can now be made evident. Among animals (including man by courtesy) which, through heredity, are similar in general physical structure, there are three general modes by which arise similarities and co-adaptations of functions. The development and specialization of instincts through the selective action of the environment, in the first place, can readily originate animal co-operation. Those individuals whose instincts (which are variable, like physical structure) tend toward co-operation, will be benefited, and will be likely to survive and to transmit such instincts**. Association among such animals follows the same process of development as does physical structure. In one as in the other,

*) Illustration is from Lloyd Morgan, Animal Life and Intelligence, p. 365.

**) Where the life of an animal, as among the carnivora, makes co-operation of little utility, there will not, of course, be selective action in this direction. There is no necessity as might appear, to assume "instincts of co-operation" arising de novo. It is a general mammalian instinct, for example, for the young to follow the mother for a time. The individuals in whom this instinct was strongest would remain with the parent for a longer period, and indirectly would get the benefits usually arising from such "co-operation." These individuals would be most likely to survive.—Darwin stated this view, and Prof. Whitman has done much towards showing its general applicability.
progress is due to the selective action of external influences on hereditary variations. In one as in the other, progress can be traced, changing in form but not in process, to the lowest branches of the animal phylum, to the "Zoophytes" and Protozoa*.

Where, in the second place, "intelligence" can be demonstrated, the animal is able to profit by its own experience, and to make adaptations, either to physical conditions or to other animals of its species, which would require several generations under the action of natural selection alone. But in neither case can an animal profit directly by the experience of another**. The wolf that can scent game farthest, it is true, benefits the whole pack, but the rest follow him, not by "imitation," but by a habit which has developed out of instinct in the manner suggested. If one ant or one beaver should happen to be cleverer at building than the rest, the others will not directly copy it, though its progeny, and the group as a whole, will have more chance of survival, and so, after some generations, a general improvement will appear. But where ideas can be acquired, and ideational imitation exists, the skill and experience of one individual is at once at the service of others to copy. Progress can take place within a generation, without waiting for the slow process of selection through many generations. Speaking metaphorically, it can be said of all stages below such imitation,

*) For Protozoan and Coelenterate "colonies," which it is difficult to call "societies," but impossible to call single individuals, see Parker & Haswell's Zoology (1897), I: 68, 93, 147 seq.

**) This is not due to the absence of language, for observation would supply the deficit (in this case), if the animal mind could get ideas. The absence of a symbolic language (animal utterances being merely indicative) is simply an outcome of the same stage of mental development which implies also the absence of ideational imitation. The accounts of young animals being taught by their parents are generally exaggerated. In so far as true, the facts do not imply that the young animal learns (imitates) by observation, but that it learns through selection among its own movements, the mother's acts in checking or furthering being only a quicker and surer way of securing what the selective action of the material environment might, during several generations, accomplish alone. The mother's instinct to "teach" is itself a product of selection.
that the individual has merely a definite capital to work with, and cannot increase it, though he can develop it and make it more productive. In the distinctively human process, on the other hand, the individual has his original capital as before, but there is also a fund on which he can draw according to his ability; he can increase the fund by his own activity, and can lend out his own stock at will, getting usury upon it, yet not losing for a moment the use of the principal.

It is perfectly true that the higher stages have arisen from the lower, that, genetically speaking, the process is a continuous one. So the civilized European has developed from savages, and these again from certain prognathous tree-dwellers. But if ape, savage, and Englishman were to stand before us, it would be difficult to call them all by the same name. It is probably true that ideational imitation hardly exists in any species except the human. Certain psychologists would extend the line somewhat to include the higher mammals, but this makes no difference to the argument. It is certain that there are animal associations, vertebrate and invertebrate, which are based on nothing more than the physiological selection of instincts; it is certain that such societies, together with those in which “intelligence” plays some part, are as different from the human, in functioning and progressiveness, as an ape is from an American; and it is fairly clear that to unite, under one name, processes so different in nature and effect, is to make a hybrid conception, which explains nothing, which confuses thought. It is yoking a race-horse and an ox together to the plough.

*) All the “processes” described, instinctive, “intelligent,” or imitative, have this in common, that they are processes of learning, of acquirement, or in a wider view, of adaptation. They can thus be united, but no one will claim that the conception which unites them is equivalent, in extension, to “imitation” even in the broad meaning Tarde gives the term, or that it can be directly applied to human phenomena in the specific way that Tarde applies imitation. That these three “processes” do not conflict with the analysis made on page 83 hardly needs more than mention. The analyses are of a common set of phenomena, but are made from different points of view.
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Tarde has not endeavored, it is true, to make his laws of imitation and his system of logical interference, apply to the instinctive or to the other animal processes. He has simply neglected to analyze these processes, and assumed that his "laws of imitation" apply to animal societies as well as to human. His assumptions once made, Tarde has been quite consistent thereafter.

VI

If the preceding merely showed that animal societies must be cut out of Tarde's treatment, leaving his laws for human society unaffected, the matter would have been worth small trouble to prove. But Tarde has consistently denoted all similarities directly due to heredity as "vital," and has sharply distinguished them from the "social." He would doubtless call the learning (to work a lever) of one of Professor Thorndike's cats, a purely "vital" phenomenon. We may call it \( x \) if we choose, but if such phenomena, processes merely of the selection of instincts, are capable of developing societies among animals, as they unquestionably are, then it is impossible to discriminate the "vital" from the "social" as Tarde has done, it is impossible to say that society is essentially based on imitation, that an imitative relation between two beings is the essence of society. The clinch of the argument is that the instinctive processes do not cease, but operate in human life as well as in animal. The forces which created animal society work today in human. There is superposition of new processes, but no displacement of the old.

As a general statement, this proposition requires no argument, but its importance can readily be illustrated. Concerning a social group as a whole, it is a familiar thought that there is a certain elimination of the physically unfit, that "natural selection," though greatly affected by humanitarian spirit, does work to some extent even in advanced societies. It is obvious, more-
over, that there is also selection for social characteristics as well as for physical. Social organization is so potent a factor in the struggle with physical environment, that natural capacity for co-operation must have high selective value. There will be selection on this basis, both within societies and between societies, in human as there is in animal, and though the process is slow, measuring its steps by generations, it is cumulative in results. But without taking a century-long view, we can see the instinctive processes working under our eyes. In childhood, so fundamental a social action as the differentiation in habits and tastes between boys and girls, in the first half-dozen years of life, is due in considerable part to a different selection of instinctive tendencies. President Stanley Hall’s recent work on “Adolescence” gives a mass of information which can be applied in illustration of this view. The process by which a child adapts himself to his environment—in coming to be at ease with strangers, to get along with playmates, to comport himself properly at school—is in great part a process of selection among instincts*, though in every case intelligence and imitation enter also.

The criterion by which we can usually determine, with child or adult, whether ideational factors play much part, is the rapidity of the person’s improvement. An intelligent man can learn the idea of the game of tennis, for instance—the rules of serving, receiving, scoring, etc., in five minutes or so, but his muscles and nervous system can only learn to play the game through a process of practice and selection, in which improvement is gradual. If Prof. Thorndike’s animals had gotten an idea of how to open the door after a few trials, as a human being might, they would have wasted, not less time, but no time in random movements thereafter. The gradual character of the improvement is conclusive evidence against an ideational factor. If a child learns to become less bashful by imitating other

*) Cf. Baldwin, _Social and Ethical Interpretations_, 245 seq.; and _Mental Development_, Chap. VI, § 6, (on bashfulness).
children, it will cease to be bashful rather quickly, and this one observes in some cases. But in others the improvement is gradual, perhaps taking years to work out, despite excellent opportunity and models for imitation. When an adult enters a new society, as an Italian enters New York, he might conceivably imitate us and “become an American” all at once. An educated man may very possibly go to Rome, and “do as the Romans do,” or at least quickly and rationally adapt himself to the important phases of life about him. But a man of lower type has to progress by slower roads—by the more or less intelligent picking out of such acts as get him along better in the new surroundings. And his children have to follow much the same way also, though they will be more plastic and can probably do better.\(^*\)

It is not in this paper to deny the presence of imitation in society, but to emphasize the presence, and the relative importance in some cases, of other processes which are also processes of socialization. To sum up, if animal societies can be created and maintained by the natural selection of instincts and the profiting by chance experience, without any copying of one individual by another—and the evidence is unquestionable on this point—then it is not possible to hold that the lower processes are simply organic and non-social. Nor can we unite all pro-

\(^*\) It is an interesting experiment to teach an ignorant person to operate some simple mechanism. To get into the head of a recently imported Irish girl the method of working and cleaning a Bissell carpet-sweeper, for instance, has been an occasionally trying task in the writer’s experience, and poor Bridget has often profited little by the instruction, although through a slow process of trial, error, and dustiness, she worked out a hit-or-miss procedure of her own. The process is very similar to that of Dr. Thorndike’s cats, though since we are working with human beings, we may observe ideas occasionally assisting, and giving each time, as it were, a sudden boost to progress. The same considerations would apply to the “imitative” learning of many economic processes, trades, etc. The writer has observed this in a rough way, in teaching simple manual handicrafts to boys in social settlements. Interesting comparisons have suggested themselves between the way such “street boys” give attention, and “learn,” with the larger appearance of ideational factors, (apparently not fully explained by better attention), noted in a few similar observations upon carefully nurtured children.
cesses under one term, and use this as starting point, for the higher and lower processes, though genetically related, are different in nature and in social result. Though the higher supervene, the lower continue to exist, still to be called "social" processes, because they also condition the concrete reactions of society.

On a preceding page (53) there were named four ways in which similarity is produced, (a) by heredity, (b) as the outcome of the physiological selection of native tendencies, (c) through suggestion, and (d) through rational thought ("ideational imitation"). To sum up the results of this chapter, we may say first that, as a foundation for society, a certain amount of hereditary similarity must be presupposed. Second, permanent organizations for mutual co-operation between similar organisms may be built solely upon physiological processes (class (b)). Third, these processes persist and function actively in more developed associations, where higher processes are also present.

It remains to demonstrate the nature of the "higher" processes, and to show the relations of all processes taken together to those other manifestations of co-operative life whose outcome is not similarity. Few people, least of all the readers of Tarde, will deny the importance of imitation, but imitation cannot be the creator of society, the basis of co-operative life, the principle sufficient to found Sociology upon. The social web is a vast fabric, and there are many weavers at the loom.
CHAPTER IV

IMITATION AND SUGGESTION IN SOCIETY

I

What is suggestion? What shall be said of its place in society, and of Tarde's suggestion theory of imitation? The peculiar influence of one individual over another is most easily remarked in abnormal subjects, and especially in the hypnotic state. These phenomena readily attract attention because of their unusual character; later, attention is broadened, until psychologists now discuss suggestion as a generic influence in mental life, even in minor phenomena of normal experience. The course of thought here illustrates well Spencer's "law" of the order of scientific advance, according to which discoveries are first made among striking or practically important phenomena, and proceed later to the less obvious and the more abstruse. In the work of Binet and Fégré (Animal Magnetism, 1888), in the books of Moll (Hypnotism, 1890), Loewenfeld (Der Hypnotismus, 1901) and other specialists, and in various general treatises on Psychology, historical evidence can be found to substantiate this point.

In recent times, suggestion came to psychological note as an explanation for hypnotic phenomena, advanced by the school of Nancy in opposition to Charcot's following at the Salpetrière. During the last fifteen years suggestion has been elaborately studied, in the waking as well as in the hypnotic state, among normal men and women as well as among obviously abnormal characters, and among children as well as adults. It is curious to observe how students differ when they come to define the phenomenon they are studying. Several pages could be filled with different definitions of suggestion, in some cases markedly...
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opposed. Loewenfeld cites nineteen definitions, and his list is by no means complete. Opinions differ as to whether the suggestive stimulus must be of external origin or not. They differ as to whether the reaction to the stimulus involves an abnormal process or not. They differ as to whether it involves a separation of consciousness into an upper and lower self or not. When we consider the work of each author which lies behind his definition, we can often account for these differences on the basis of the particular phenomena which he was studying. Suggestion takes place in many forms, and if its manifestations in hypnotic or abnormal subjects have been studied, the observer is more likely to emphasize in his definition the separation of consciousness which has appeared prominently in the course of the own study; while on the other hand, students of suggestion in everyday life and in social action are likely to take an opposite view. On the whole, it may be said (Baldwin comes to about this opinion), that there is fair agreement upon two main points concerning suggestion. "From the side of consciousness", suggestion may be called "the tendency of a sensory or an ideal state, to be followed by a motor state" (Baldwin, Mental Development, p. 107). This very general definition of Baldwin's can be specified further. It can properly be held that*

1st, the stimulus comes to consciousness as a presentation. It does not come by logical means, as the outcome of a course of sustained thought; it ordinarily comes as an external stimulus. But as Loewenfeld shows (p. 37), "it is not the manner of presenting the idea, but the way in which reaction takes place. I may say to my companion: 'You cannot move your arm', and he may laugh in my face and wave it ironically; while precisely the same words uttered in the same tone to a suggestible (hypnotic) subject, would mean that he would actually be unable to move the limb." The essential quality of the action of suggestion, on the internal side, is:

2nd, a mental disaggregation, or, in Wundt's phrase, a "narrowing of consciousness" to the immediate associations of the stimulus presented. The presentation is not associated freely with the mental content in general. It is thus not criticized by related ideas already present in the mind, and action is thus not inhibited by chains of reflection or any rational process; and the tendency, much emphasized in recent Psychology, for every stimulus to have a motor outcome, takes place almost directly.

The causes of this narrowing of consciousness, mental disaggregation, or lack of criticism and inhibition, as we may choose to call it, are many. They may spring from a purely psychological condition of the individual, from some particular relation of the subject to the person who gives the suggestion (e.g., cases of mother and child, a famous man and a Boswellian follower); or they may frequently be aroused through social causes, as has been brought out already. A man present in a crowd is put into a peculiarly suggestible condition; and a man reading a newspaper, with all the social mass implied behind its statements, is likewise placed, though less markedly, in a state of relative suggestibility.

For sociological purposes, the point which needs emphasis in the concept of suggestion is the contrast between the nature of suggestive action and action which is the result of ordered,
deliberate, and purposed thought. We may define suggestive action, from the sociological point of view, as the reflection of a stimulus. It is also the socialization of a stimulus, either through its mere repetition, or by the obedient carrying out of the action which it implies. The problem is to determine the place of suggestion in social life, and to fix the relative parts of rational as compared with lower influences.

Suggestion has been studied by experimental methods. It has been shown in experiments such as those of Sidis and of Binet, that individuals vary in suggestibility. Children, generally speaking, are more suggestible than adults; but children, like adults, vary among themselves. Variation may be observed both when we compare different individuals, and when the same individual is studied in different environments. Binet found, as we would expect, that children upon whom simple tests were made were more suggestible when tested in groups (of three to six each) than when tested singly. A summary of some independent experiments upon group suggestion is given in what follows.

II

To investigate the matter experimentally, the problem is to put before a number of individuals some stimulus which may occasion imitation, to obtain in a definite and manageable form, the responses made simultaneously to this stimulus, and to study these responses comparatively. In the method adopted, a word is chosen, of whose meaning everyone will know something from ordinary experience; and the subjects of the experiment are requested to write definitions of this word, after some suggestion of a definition has been given. In one experiment which will be described in detail, the subjects were students in Teachers' College, New York. The word "education" was chosen, and the following scheme placed upon the blackboard:
EDUCATION:

Aims
\{ to develop the individual,
  to create useful members of society,
  to train special faculties.

Means
\{ in the home,
  in ordinary life,
  in institutions.

Methods
\{ study of facts at first hand,
  oral instruction,
  study of books.

The students were told that these were "some of the aspects from which education might be regarded," and were then requested to "write a definition of education." There was thus no explicit suggestion that the form or ideas of the scheme should be copied*. In part as a control experiment, and in part for another purpose, the students were requested to write, after finishing their definitions of "education," a definition of the word knowledge. In this case no meaning whatever was suggested.

The general impression received from the "education" papers, which were **III** in number, may be summed up in saying, that while a certain number reproduce the blackboard scheme with fidelity, both as to word and substance, there is exhibited a progressive variation from the copy—in words, in

*) In this experiment, the material was put before the class by its regular instructor, Professor Thorndike, and in some cases by his assistant, Miss. Norsworthy, papers giving the scheme, and telling what should be said to the class, being furnished by the writer.

The writer owes a large debt to Professor Thorndike for assistance and advice concerning these experiments.

**) The total time allowed was 15 minutes. Two students left their definitions of "education" apparently unfinished and are not included, and eight did not write, or did not finish, the definition of "knowledge." The students were in several sections, but the papers were all written in one day, Feb. 14, 1902. The sections were examined separately before throwing all the papers together.
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improvement of the scheme by subordinating its parts, in the introduction of new ideas and the omission of the suggested ones, till a number of instances are reached in which no influence of the copy is discernible. If, as has been done, the ideas of each paper are tabulated one by one, and put together in a scheme, this qualitative analysis is confirmed*. It is impossible to present these results in any statistical curve or formula, because the variations are in all directions, in three dimensions as it were, away from the model. The chief types of response, however, can be fairly well presented by using parallel columns:

I. "Education is the developing of the individual, the creating of useful members of society, and the training of special faculties, by means of the home, ordinary life, and institutions, gained through study of facts at first hand, oral instruction, and study of books."

II. "Education develops the individual into a useful member of society, and trains his special faculties, in the home, in ordinary life or in institutions, by the study of facts at first hand, oral instruction and study of books."

III. "Education, by means of making an individual learn facts at first hand in his ordinary life, and by means of giving him oral instruction, and inducing him to read books, at home and in institutions, develops the individual generally and trains his special faculties, so that he may become a useful member of society."

Definition I is a pure copy of what the student saw on the blackboard, merely the schematic form being omitted. No. III may be called a rationalized copy, since though the verbiage of the model is reproduced, the ideas are coordinated and made logically dependent upon one aim—to make useful members of society. It cannot be overemphasized that between the types represented in I and III there is every stage of transition—one case instanced in No. II—and that division into groups draws sharp lines where none exist. Speaking roughly, however, some

* The tabulation is important chiefly in studying successive response.
22 papers may be called pure copies, and some 34, more or less "rationalized copies*. Continuing with examples:

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<th>IV.</th>
<th>V.</th>
<th>VI.</th>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Education is the development of those faculties of man which are necessary for the happiness of the individual and his usefulness as a member of the state; and is obtained by home and school training, and by contact with actual life, as well as by means of the study of books, and facts at first hand, and by oral instruction.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Education is the growth of the individual by the influence of environment. The tools to be used are objects, descriptive language, which may be given orally or found in books.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Education is the training of the individual so as to effect certain reactions in certain situations. Its aim is both individual and for society at large.&quot;</td>
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No IV may be called an inventive copy, for though the influence of the model is evident, new ideas as well as new wordings are introduced. In V the influence of the model is still noticeable, in VI it is barely so, if at all. None is directly apparent in the following:

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<th>VII. (a)</th>
<th>VII. (b)</th>
<th>VII. (c)</th>
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<td>&quot;Education is the leading forth from a low condition of mind to a higher plane. It indicates development by direct and indirect means and through the use of definite methods.&quot;</td>
<td>(Education is) &quot;preparation of the individual for useful citizenship by utilizing the various methods of development in his natural environment and under specially prepared advantages.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Education may be considered the direction of the mental and physical activity of the individual in his experience, with the purpose to enable him to live in the best way that his capacity makes possible.&quot;</td>
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It of course should be understood that the so-called inventive copies (IV), including some 13 cases, do not all alter the

*) Varying off from the "pure copies" in another direction are four cases in which the subjects simply omitted to write some ideas of the model, but made no additions or other change. This was not due to lack of time, for all these writers finished the second definition.
model in the same way or add the same idea. Of the 16 papers typified in V, which may be grouped as showing but slight influence of the model, the same is true. Where no influence of the model is traceable (twenty-two cases) the ideas expressed vary still more widely among themselves, though there are certain ideas, such as "preparation for citizenship" or "adjustment to environment," which are expressed in several papers. The result of the whole analysis can be summed up in a mental figure by picturing the more or less "pure copies" piled up as though they were children's blocks, to make a heap of a certain height, and the different variants placed on all sides around them, near or far, in this direction or that, according to their reciprocal similarities and differences, the height of each pile corresponding to the number of cases included in it. Then, instead of a few artificial groups, we should have, though more or less imperfect and broken, a surface of frequency, a sort of irregular cone of variation, which would tell the whole story at a glance. This imaginary picture may perhaps be of some use.

Before discussing interpretations of these facts, some criticisms may be forestalled. Is not the judgment and grouping of these papers too much a matter of the observer's "personal equation" to be trustworthy, especially when the observer may be suspected of having a theory to prove? But in the first place, we are not interested at all in judging the definitions by some one standard—in deciding which are good and which are bad, judged by that standard, as a teacher does when he corrects examination papers*. What we have to do is to compare one paper with another, like with like, and note the differences. It may be very difficult, as a general thing, to say whether a certain oarsman is better developed, physically, than a certain football player, but it is comparatively easy to test the legs, arms, hands,

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*) Considered in that way the papers in group VII. above, over 20 in number, present some of the best, and also some of the poorest definitions of education among the whole number obtained. Reasons for this would not be hard to find. It should be added that the better papers are usually too long to quote, so that the examples given are perhaps more fatuous than is just.
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back and other muscles of each man, and compare the results point by point. Though it is difficult to present the results except by making artificial groups or types, as in the preceding, a reasonable view of the presentation will not give false views of the phenomenon.

But again, what is meant by an "idea" as used in this connection, and how can one tell if similar verbal expressions in two papers may not really mean different conceptions by the writers, or if rather different expressions, suggesting to one's mind the same thought, ought not to be tabulated as one? There is a real difficulty here. The observer can only use caution and common-sense, and although one may be quite sure that a different observer would make detail changes here and there, the writer is confident that even the most critical would not make any change in stating the sort of variation which the papers present.

A word should be said of the definitions of "knowledge." This was not a study of imitation in any sense, since no model was given (vide supra), but the results are valuable for comparing with the preceding. The range of variation, if the term may be used, is far wider. Roughly stated, a little less than half of the cases (the total number being 105), have a common conception of knowledge as a mental "possession of facts;" a smaller group (about twenty per cent) have power to use facts as a common thought; some seven cases state both these aspects; a few merely define knowledge as the outcome of some training process, and a very few others define it in terms of "race-experience." Instead of having one chief type from which most cases could be considered as variants, as in the "education" papers, we have here several types, different, and in some respects theoretically opposed, and there are all sorts of variations under each type, and all sorts of so-called "transitions" between the types. The "knowledge" definitions will be very important in studying successive response. They are mentioned here because they show the same sort of variation, the same graded steps and absence of sharp distinctions as the "education" papers.
III

What must be the interpretation of these facts? What would be Tarde's interpretation? Leaving aside his principle of "invention," which would apply to some individuals in the group, imitation of a model need only be perfect when there are no conflicting lines of imitation (spreading from other suggestions or models) to interfere with and alter the new suggestion. In the "education" papers it is easy to see that there are disturbing "lines of imitation," and one may often suspect the source in one or another cant phrase, or pedagogical text-book. If the interfering imitations differ from one individual to another, as is natural, and if they are present in different degrees of strength, may not all the observed variations be thus explained? But in Tarde's social theory, imitation, as we know, is held to be the distinctly social relation, and Tarde believes himself to be "enlightening the complex by the simple," to be "explaining the social relation, multifarious and complex as we know it, by that social relation which, purified and reduced to its simplest expression......is realized so happily in the hypnotic state." (Im. 83.) What he evidently means is that in such a case we have the social relation "in its purity," for by hypothesis, the subject does not modify the suggestion by any individual factor. Interferences of imitation take place in the individual mind; their outcomes, in modification, adaptation, invention—are individual products, and the subject is "supra-social rather than social" (Im. 95) when he produces them.

Now what ground does the experiment give for drawing these distinctions? Among the "education" papers, about ten per cent are practically perfect copies of the model*, but some fifty per cent show dominating influence of the model, and might in loose language be called "imitations**." But the passage from

*) Including about half of group I. described above.

**) Including groups I. and III., the so-called "pure" and "rationalized" copies.
one type of variation to another is continuous, just as there is every stage of height between six-footers and dwarfs. We may say on the one hand that an influence of the model extends in decreasing degrees as we proceed from the center to the circumference of our imaginary cone of variation, and we may say on the other hand that the individual influence extends in increasing degrees in the same direction. It seems equally one-sided and inadequate to explain the whole phenomenon either by an "imitative tendency" affected by "disturbing causes", or, according to another familiar theory, by an "individual tendency" which is progressively modified by some constraint. We speak of tall men and short as a matter of practical convenience, and for purposes of abstract analysis we follow the working of one cause out of a complex. But to interpret the actual phenomenon, we have to say that the concrete thing observed is the outcome of a number of interacting influences which vary from one case to another; that the model given, the suggestion, is only one of these causes, demonstrably not the only one in most cases and not the most important one in many cases; that, considering the whole mental content of the subject, the observed response is the net result of the interaction of all the associated ideas and tendencies which relate to the given topic, among which ideas the suggestion is but one. The associated ideas and tendencies need not all be "lines of imitation", originated in acts of other men, for as the preceding chapter has shown, instinctive tendencies* also condition response and interact inextricably with conscious endeavors.

In another series of experiments pursued according to the same method, the members of a class of college Juniors were requested, at the close of a lecture on the protective system and its theory, to write a definition of "protection".** A chart

*) Including life-habits built up on the basis of instincts. These, like the instincts underlying them, vary from one individual to another.

**) This experiment was made possible by the courtesy of Professor Edwin R. A. Seligman.
displayed the following suggestions (including only thoughts presented in the lecture, though the lecture included much more than mere definitions and more in the definitions given than there is in these thoughts):

**PROTECTION**
Develops Infant Industries
Supplies Revenue
Offers a Home Market
Protects Home Labor.

Reading the papers handed in by these students, much less influence of the suggestion is seen than in the "education" experiment. One would naturally expect the mind of a student, after a lecture in which many ideas were presented, to be replete with material which would associate with, and "criticize" any new suggestion: thought will thus be more weighed, more conscious, than we should expect it to be when the suggestion is given without such preparation. This is in fact manifested by the papers, although the complexity of the ideas makes it impossible to express the results in any quantitative form. The papers give a most interesting conspectus of the students' thought-processes, and also indicate a good deal as to the psychical fruit of the lecture.

Still another set of experiments were performed upon school-boys, mostly between the ages of twelve and thirteen, and here we have the other end of the scale more emphasized, suggestion playing a more dominant part even than in the "education" papers. The comparatively uncritical nature of children's associations is well brought out. A detailed analysis would be out of place here.

**IV**

The study of simultaneous responses is, after all, only preliminary to the study of responses that are successive; and although in this chapter it is not possible to do more than mention
the experiments performed, even a brief recapitulation will show
the general view of mental action which they illustrate.

Imagine an "invention," in the Tardean sense, to arise in
the brain of some man, and be communicated by him to a number
of other individuals simultaneously. Assume that the responses
will follow a law of variation similar to that outlined above. That
is, assume some people to accept, or imitate closely the idea or
act; some to dispute or alter it slightly, and so on. Now if we
imagine there are one hundred persons in the group, and if our
imaginary barriers to communication* are suddenly removed, it
is evident that each individual is presented with ninety-nine
ideas (or actions) any one of which he may copy, or any number
of which he may co-adapt and utilize, consciously or unconsciously,
in determining his future reaction. In ordinary language, there
is discussion or interchange of ideas among the individuals of
this group. Artificial and unnaturally regular as the preceding
conditions appear, the nature of the implied process is not at
variance with facts, only in real life discussion will not wait till
every individual has independently received the original stimulus
and has responded.

It is possible to reproduce these conditions in experiment.
If the i i i definitions of education obtained as "simultaneous
responses" were all read aloud before the students who had
written them, every student would get the opinion of everyone
else, there would be silent discussions, conflicts, adaptations, etc.,
in the mind of each, and by then taking a second set of defini-
tions we could observe the changes and their cause. In practise,

* A somewhat violent assumption is implied here. First, it is
assumed that the inventor A tells his idea to B, C, D, etc., all at the same
time, or that between the intervals of telling, B, C, and D, do not discuss
the idea. Cases where an idea or act is simultaneously presented to many
individuals are not unknown in actual life, though the spread of inven-
tions in the narrow sense is very different. What is sought here is to
distinguish between simultaneous and successive response, so that the
matter can be treated experimentally. This artificial simplification is only
a temporary expedient. The tests once made, we can see how their
results apply directly to concrete phenomena.
four definitions were chosen from the first set and placed upon the blackboard. The class were told that these were "some typical definitions selected from among those given last time." They were asked to "think the matter over a moment," and write their own definition. With the "knowledge" papers, it will be recalled, no model was given for the first set. For the second set one definition was selected, was placed on the blackboard, and the class told that this was the "best definition" among those previously given. They were requested to "think the matter over" and to "sum up" their "conception of 'knowledge' in a brief definition." These details of announcements to the class are important because they indicate the strength of the suggestion.

It will be remembered that the first set of the "knowledge" papers showed four or five types of definition, varying one into the other in intricate fashion. At the second experiment, the suggested definition was "Knowledge is the sum of experience, of the individual and of the human race." The papers of the second set show that this definition had considerable effect, for something like a quarter of all responses copy it more or less closely, and only about one-third show no apparent influence. It is noticeable, as might be expected, that the first definition given by an individual affects his second response, for many of those who show some influence of the suggestion give answers that are more or less fusions of the new and old, while a number who were apparently unaffected by the second suggestion simply reproduced the ideas of their first definition. This might all be roughly illustrated, in a graphical way, by representing the first set of responses as a wavy curve, each elevation corresponding to one of the chief types of response; while to picture the second set, a large part of the responses must all be brought under one elevation. It is as though a selective influence had acted.

The same results are apparent in the "education" papers. Each of the four definitions suggested at the opening of the

*) This idea had been expressed in only three papers of the first set.
second experiment may be said to have acted like a magnet, drawing to itself some of the previous responses; so that the second set of papers, from the same individuals, presents (to apply the simile again) a wavy curve with four humps instead of one. The differences in suggestibility between individuals, illustrated by the case of some who did not accept much of the suggestion in either instance, are very interesting: in so far as they go they confirm the general principle, found by Binet and Sidis in their experiments, that suggestibility varies from one individual to another, and also varies in the same individual depending upon his mood, his environment, and the conditions of the experiment.

Tests of successive response were also carried out among the school children, without gaining any essentially new contribution. All these studies suggest one helpful view, namely, that mental responses are in a sense mental selections. Any reaction may be considered as the mental selection of one out of a number of possible responses. Every stage of a train of associations may be so considered. The experiments upon successive response enable us to conceive vividly how a new idea, entering the mind, acts as a new condition upon reaction which limits more or less the range of subsequent responses. It becomes, in technical terms, one of the selective criteria of response. This conception of selection helps toward that organic view of mental life which sees every bit of mental content and tendency as a condition of every other bit. It leads also to a similar view of society, assisting us to conceive of many social forces in operation together, and preventing us from stringing social phenomena on wires, in order to build up institutions and social systems on the basis of single influences or motives.
The preceding experiments upon suggestion, taken all together, should be of especial sociological interest because of the fact that the circumstances under which the experiments were performed, approximate nearly to the conditions under which we are daily responding to suggestions from our surroundings. The consciousness of the subject is not antecedently constrained by artificial or unexpected conditions. Such experiments cannot give quantitative results, and therefore mean most to one who actually reads over the papers. On the whole, they give certain insights into mental action. It is made clear, in general, that the "tendency to imitate", that is, to obey an explicit or a tacit suggestion, works itself out more or less completely according as the suggestion is hindered, or simply unaffected, or assisted by other instincts or ideas that were present in the mind of the subject before the suggestion was made. When inhibiting ideas are as absent as they may be in a hypnotic trance, the subject is a passive instrument. With normal adults, suggestibility varies from individual to individual*, with sex, age, and other causes; it may vary in the same individual from one time to another, according to his state of mind or mood; and it is pretty certain to vary with the sort of suggestion. The same man will be much more likely to obey at once a suggestion regarding his costume, or use of language, than one regarding the conduct of the business he is engaged in. A man is not likely to risk his livelihood by changing his economic methods, unless he first "thinks over" the suggested change and decides whether it is beneficial.

The process of "thinking over" is important. Any idea received by the mind associates (consciously or unconsciously)

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* For tests of the suggestibility of school children, see a paper in *Am. J. of Psy.: II. 493.* The experimenter stated he was going to throw a ball, or spray a perfume, when only a pretense of throwing was made, and only water was sprayed. Pillsbury's tests of Apperception (same Journal, Vol. 5.) are also important in this connection.
with similar or related ideas already in the mental content—is apperceived, if we choose to employ the term—and the resultant mental state, from which motor response takes off, is not merely a reproduction of the original idea but a modified copy, if a copy at all. "Thought", involving a series of associations, is opposed in itself to the operation of suggestion per se. To state the case in one way, in technical terms, response does not take off from the idea as received, but from the idea as apperceived*. To state it in another way, a suggestion is only one factor influencing response, and in order to predict theoretically the nature of the response, we have to take into account the ideas** which will associate with the suggested idea, will assist, modify, or inhibit it. These associating ideas, the "apperception-mass" of some psychologists, may have any weight or effect, or conceivably have no effect. They may modify the suggestion, they may inhibit it, causing no response, or perhaps an antithetic response, and, at the other extreme, in some abnormal states, the suggested idea may have pre-potency, really a freedom from inhibiting ideas, which occasions its automatic reproduction by the subject. The point is that in predicting or explaining response we have to take account of the mental state, of the whole mental content*** at the time the suggestion is made, and it is possible to speak of a "tendency to imitate", that is, to obey suggestion, only as a tendency due to one cause, which acts as one among several causes, which is often an important cause, sometimes a pre-potent cause, but rarely the sole cause conditioning response.

*) The use of apperception in this sense is somewhat broad, but seems to be quite legitimate. See the article by Pillsbury above referred to; Lange, *Apperception* (trans. De Garmo, Boston, 1896); James, *Prin. Psychol.* II: 105 seq.

**) "Idea", in this place, is used merely as a non-technical term to include any sort of mental representation.

***) In pure theory, the whole mental content. In practical analysis, only such part as is effectively part of the apperception-mass. Cf. Stout's *Analytic Psychol.* II: chap. on Apperception.
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Expressed more abstractly, our experiments show the place of suggestion by substantiating two general conceptions of mental functioning which we may call continuity and cooperation. The first of these, partly developed in the preceding chapter, expresses the continuity of mental processes from merely instinctive response to rational self-conscious thought, with all intermediate stages, among which various processes of suggestion are included. This genetic continuity is of two sorts. In the first place, the "higher" processes have developed "out of" the "lower" during the evolution of species and of mental types. In the second place, during the life of every individual the race-history partially repeats itself, the same general order of development being manifest. For the individual, this principle of continuity means that that series of adaptive reactions by which an individual harmonizes himself with his physical and his human environment is the outcome of all grades of mental processes, and that the final result, the individual as he functions in society, is their joint product. From the social point of view, the individuals of a large society may be classified into groups, each of which would display predominantly some grade of response and would generally be incapable of exhibiting a higher grade. The acts and the organization of such a society are, similarly, the joint product of all grades of processes*.

The second principle, "cooperation", carries the thought farther. Mental processes are dynamically as well as genetically related. Many mental processes, together with many parts of the mental content, cooperate in producing any mental or motor reaction. We cannot then draw a line between the "vital" and the "social", utilizing the "vital" principle to explain a supposed biological sub-stratum of society, and the "social" principle to explain ordinary social phenomena. We cannot

*) Individual progress implies an enhanced power of manifesting the higher types of response in meeting the exigencies of life. Social progress is largely to be regarded as an increase in the proportionate number of the more advanced individuals.
seize upon a single phase of mental life, like suggestion, to interpret social functioning. We cannot even say that the "essence of the social process" is a general principle like increase of similarity, until we have examined whether there are not other phases of our lives which we cannot put aside without committing the fallacy of explaining an organic whole in terms of a single one of its aspects. An analysis of mental and social "forces" is legitimate and often necessary for making thought definite, but to interpret psychical or social phenomena we must view the forces together, in their dynamic relations, remembering always that mental forces, like men themselves, do not work the same alone as they do in concert. In mental life and in society many forces are always in cooperation. The composition of such factors is not mechanical but organic*. 

VI

This analysis will be carried out in the final chapter. The theoretical argument concerning suggestion needs to be supplemented here by an estimate of the relative importance of suggestion as an influence upon the individual and upon society. Suggestion is obviously important in normal everyday life, as well as in pathological states. It plays a material part in mental development. The emphasis which in recent years has been laid

*) In general, no organic phenomenon is the result of any single force nor yet the sum of the results of several forces taken singly, but is always the result of a set of forces acting together. The sum of effects is not equal to the effect of the sum, and this because the factors ("causes") of an organic phenomenon act in cooperation, forming a system of mutually conditioning forces, none of which acts as it would act if any one of the members of the system were removed or altered. When we have some particular aim in view, we may make a special analysis of one factor which relates closely to this aim. Such is the method of all specialist work, and of those practical interpretations of events which the jurist, politician, business-man, etc., require. But to make a general philosophic interpretation, or to make a specialist interpretation applicable to broad human problems, many factors, the results of many analyses, must be viewed together. This is simply the application of the principle of "creative synthesis" developed in Wundt's Logic.
upon suggestion by educators, in the works of Thomas, Guyau and others, is witness of the recognition accorded it. When however, we come to estimate the relative importance of suggestion in mental and social life, as compared with other factors, the error of overemphasizing its importance is manifest. We must keep in mind, that by emphasizing the suggestive factor we imply, sociologically, a contrast between the non-rational or emotional elements of psycho-social life and the rational elements.

In the work of Le Bon*, suggestion is indicated as the dominant characteristic of the mental action of crowds; and crowds are indicated in turn as the potent bodies shaping our social life. In Sidis' Psychology of Suggestion, the sociological place of suggestion is brought out less elaborately but with even more emphasis. Suggestion is viewed again as a dominant motor force in our civilization. The same might be said of the chapters of Loewenfeld. Dr. Otto Stoll, in a work of over seven hundred pages on Suggestion and Hypnotism in Collective Psychology, has traced in detail the manifestations of suggestion, as well as of abnormal or semi-hypnotic states, through many periods of history, from the Shamanism of primitive peoples, to the storming of the Bastille in 1789. Yet though Stoll believes that the study of suggestion is a sine qua non for ethnologists, he does not attempt to make it the sole or even the chief explanation of all social phenomena.

From our point of view, suggestion is only one factor of social as of individual life; and further, in social life its influence is not increasing but is decreasing. There may be cause to join in Loewenfeld's lament, that "a mental factor inde-

*) To the references upon suggestion should be added, in this connection, the well-known book of LeBon, The Crowd: a Study of the Popular Mind (Engl. trans.) London 1900. The works of Ross, Social Control, N. Y. 1901, Cooley, Human Nature and the Social Order, N. Y. 1902, Baldwin, and those of Tarde himself, are mentioned elsewhere.
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dependent of our intelligence and of our will" plays so large a part in individual and social life (p. 489), but there is not cause to fear that this factor is of increasing importance. The contrary is the case, at least so far as American life seems to show, and for many reasons.

In the first place, crowds as such are coming to wield not an increased but a much diminished social influence; the *public* is taking the place, in fact has largely taken the place, of the crowd. Now, as has been pointed out by Sighele, and especially in the keen analysis of Tarde, the public differs essentially from the crowd in psychological nature. The crowd is a group of individuals physically massed together, the public is a "purely mental collectivity, a dissemination of individuals, physically separated, whose cohesion is purely psychical". Each is seated "in his own home, reading the same newspaper, and scattered over a vast territory" (*L'opinion et la foule*, p. 3). There is perhaps no study of Social Psychology more interesting or more pregnant with significance for contemporary life, than the delightful book of Tarde's from which this is quoted. The suggestive influences which may dominate people gathered in a hall under the magnetism of an effective leader, fail when these people are physically separated, and united only, as Tarde says, by "the consciousness which each possesses", that this idea or this determination (of which they may be reading) is shared at the same moment by a great number of other men.

On the other hand, modern facilities of communication make prominent one great suggestive influence: the influence of public opinion, or what people conceive "public" opinion to be. A large part of the suggestive force of the modern newspaper is due to its power to present concretely, vividly, and also impersonally, what other men (N. B. usually an assumed majority) are thinking or desiring. The newspaper gives weight and an ever-renewed practical point to the suggestive power of the social mass, that factor of social life upon which Durkheim has laid such stress. Yet in real result, the effect of a newspaper can in
no wise be compared to the suggestive influences possible over
a small community, such as a Greek city-state or a mediaeval
town, where a majority of the population could gather in one
spot. As an institution, the newspaper loses much of its sug-
gestive influence through ubiquity and manifoldness: so many
men, so many minds; so many papers, so many diverse currents
of suggestion. Every additional current means additional like-
lihood of inter-criticism; and criticism, in this sense, is the
antithesis of mere suggestion.

All the influences which make public opinion self-con-
scious, and corporate groups, such as cities, conscious of their
unity and of their needs, work directly against suggestion.
There are an increasing number of what may be called organs
of public thought, in the form of special associations, organized
for every sort of purpose, from the suppression of the liquor
traffic to the encouragement of Filipino independence or the pro-
vision of discarded magazines to hospitals. Many such asso-
ciations have their own literary organs; but aside from that,
every such association may be considered as a fraction of society
which has for its special business to make conscious the social
thought upon its own special field of interest. Any suggestion
relating to this field is at once seized upon, and drawn into re-
lation with other facts; and being immediately re-presented to
society through newspapers, magazines, or special papers or
meetings, is taken, in so far as these procedures reach society at
all, out of the sphere of suggestion to the sphere of conscious
thought in which opinions exist, and in which a conscious public
opinion is formed. The influence of such societies is increasing.

A fourth consideration has place here. The great area which
a nation may now cover, and the vastly increased number of
individuals who may now be kept in daily, almost hourly touch,
by modern methods of communication, mean that the range of
difference, among the members of a social group, is ordinarily
too great to admit of any important thought passing from the
sphere of suggestion into action without being subjected to cri-
ticism. The multiplicity of private associations for special purposes, the presence of energetic individuals who hold all shades of opinion and are eager to express them, the constant criticism to which representative bodies, legislative and other, are subjected through such means; all imply a diminution of the importance of suggestion.

Certain facts work against this view. The political party organized as a machine, in the technical American sense, wields an influence over its members, in so far as nominations are concerned, and to a rather less extent as regards the "policies" of a campaign, which can hardly be regarded as rational. Yet the increased criticism of the machine, the movements for reform by individuals and by special civic associations that are beginning to make a regular business of keeping the public informed of all important happenings in political life, suggest that the dominance of the machine may have reached its maximum, and may be expected to decrease. A knowledge of the caucus and the committee system in legislative bodies, and of committee control by partisan and special economic interests, enables the sophisticated Americans to smile at the opinion that suggestion dominates in political life because it might dominate a large legislative body meeting in one group.

In such matters as fashion, there are few motives to arouse criticism, and here the increased area and interlocking of the parts of the social group means an increased opportunity for suggestion. In religion, literature, and art, the place of suggestion needs special investigation, but it is clear that some of the forces mentioned above, together with causes like the rationalist movement in theology and the advance of high-school and college education, are at work also in these fields.

While it is thus true, in general, that the growth of great aggregations of men unified by modern means of communication has created conditions in some respects favorable to suggestion; on the other hand, the mental and institutional movement of our time, and the endeavor of our best men, are against
It. Tarde's suggestion theory of society is artificial and wholly inadequate. We may feel, decidedly, that suggestion is only a partial and rarely mastering influence in social life, and that at least in society's most important spheres, the political and the economic, the influence of suggestion is a diminishing one.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

1

The outcome of the analysis of the last two chapters, leads to the conclusion that Tarde's theory of imitation, as the basis of society, is only an illuminating half-truth. Failing to be offered by Tarde a categorical definition of imitation, we must gather a definition from the many places in his works in which he describes the phenomenon. The definitions that might be given are many, varying widely in scope. In Baldwin's terms, imitation is any reaction which reproduces its own stimulus. From the everyday point of view, a child's reproduction of an articulate sound is imitation; and Tarde's conception of universal repetition is a form of imitation too. In every definition is the idea of similarity, between something conceived as model and something conceived as copy.

However defined, imitation can be taken in two senses which Tarde does not clearly discriminate: process and result. As a mental process leading to an increase of similarity, Tarde makes no careful analysis of it. The only factor he has clearly brought out is suggestion. Our analysis shows, that the processes through which similarity is produced are manifold. There are innate, hereditary similarities, which change only through germinal variations or through selection, and which do not change therefore within the lifetime of an individual. There are in the second place, similarities built up through the selection and development of innate qualities and tendencies. There are similarities of thought and action, produced through suggestion. And there are finally, similarities which are the outcome of conscious, rational thought.

In animal societies, the first two types of processes are
those which are efficient in producing the observed results of mutual likeness and of cooperation. In human society, all types of processes are co-existent and co-efficient. Among all these four types of processes there is genetic continuity, and there is furthermore, co-existence and mutual conditioning.

As a result, that is, as similarity or an increase therein, "Imitation" is faulty, because it describes imperfectly a result which less misleading terms may describe better. (Tarde says, in one of the places where he seems about to give a categorical definition but does not quite do so, that imitation may be, among a number of other things, either vague or precise. He means to say, that the copy may be more or less like the model. So general a use of the term deprives it of clear significance; it makes it describe a result which is indefinite.) The lines between an invention, an inventive imitation, an imitative invention, and an imitation which is precise, are entirely broken down when we give ourselves such free range in defining our terms. The experiments with the definition of "education", etc., illustrate this point concretely. We must either use imitation to describe a definite result, namely similarity, or a clearly defined mental process which tends to produce similarity; or we must not use the term as a foundation of any social theory.

(A later utterance of Tarde's (1894) presents imitation as a still more general conception. "The elementary social fact is the communication or the modification of a state of consciousness, by the action of one conscious being upon another."
(E. Psy. S. 64.) In other words, the essence of society is an interrelation of minds. This is simply a truism, the only real point to the statement being the emphasis upon the mental or psychological aspect of social relations. On the next page of the same essay, Tarde goes on to inquire what the nature of this action is. Certain acts of the members of a society are not social acts, such as breathing. But "to speak to any one, pray to an idol, weave a garment, cut down a tree, stab an enemy, carve a stone; these are social acts, for it is only man
living in society who acts in such fashion, and he would not act thus without the example of other men, which, voluntarily or involuntarily, he has copied from the cradle. The common characteristic of social acts, is to be imitative." (E. Psy. S. 65.) Immediately afterwards, Tarde adds, that he does not care about the motive or mechanism of this imitation, the important thing being the objective fact.

Tarde thus put aside his interest in the psychological processes of imitation. He adds to his previous truism a third term, and gives us the equation: society = mental interrelation = imitation. He believes, that unless the mental interrelation is an imitative relation, it is not social. We have found that, in fact, the separation between the social and the vital is not justified. Furthermore, the reasoning seems circular, returning upon itself after three steps. (1) The essential social fact is communication or mutual modification of minds. (2) The essential nature of this communication or modification, is to be imitative; and (3) to be imitative is simply to have derived the substance of one's acts from communication with other minds. Thus, in his later writings, Tarde generalizes the term "imitation" so far that it loses definite meaning. In those cases where he really makes it useful, he understands it in the definite sense of the production of similarity either through suggestion or through rational copying. The valuable part of the "Laws of Imitation" rests upon such definite conceptions. Criticism is to be made against it, only because Tarde conceived this production of similarity, this imitation, to be the essence of society. We shall take up this point later.*

Conclusion

II

The sociological theory of Tarde includes much more than imitation. With a littérateur's and a Frenchman's sense for the piquant, Tarde enjoys making statements which have a keen point, and sometimes, therefore, too small a base. It is immensely more forcible to say: "Society is imitation", than that: "Society is a continuing process of interaction between individuals, in which their initiatives become mutually influential and are harmonized and correlated into useful cooperative action." Yet the second statement is not only more true than the former, but it represents more closely what Tarde's sociological theory really is, as we gather it from his works as a whole.

We cannot understand Tarde's true contribution to the interpretation of life, unless we look at his utterances from a much broader point of view than that of the mere theory: "Society is imitation." Tarde pins us always to the commonsense fact that society is made up of individuals, and that the source alike of social order and social change is in individual action. We are not tantalized by collective selves, nor by world-principles whose gradual unfolding makes the cosmos. He gives us a view of progress, which, as Tosti says, is "the most apt to restore our faith in the efficiency of action and in the value of life." (Psychological Review 5: 361.) We see that progress results from the action, short-sighted or far-sighted, of men living their individual lives, under their individual conditions. We see that certain general principles of the interaction of the multitudinous initiatives of men can be formulated. Tarde does not formulate them completely, nor always correctly; but he casts upon them a light which enables us to see at least glimpses of order amid the multiplicity. The conception of imitation, and those principles of correlation between ideas and institutions, which Tarde develops as his logical theory, enable us to classify and coordinate a host of social phenomena, whose relation we should otherwise fail to see. Not a day passes, not a book is read, which does not give us new facts which, by the use of these conceptions, may be fitted into
already labelled pigeon-holes of the mind. William James rightly called the "Laws of Imitation" a work of genius. Probably no social thinker of Tarde's generation, except Marx or Spencer, has put forth a thought which has a greater clarifying power for so large a mass of human facts.

III

The problem of historical interpretation is helped at many points by some of Tarde's principles. We see that social progress is not a linear series of uniform steps, nor of successive steps in any one stair. A new turn may be given it in any part of its whole field, by an origination springing from any other part of the field, perhaps a widely separated part. The biologists have made us familiar with the thought that society is an organic unity, in which every part is connected with every other, and in a measure determined by it. In Tarde's theory of the essential logical interrelations of the different inventions which make up the social system, we have the same thought presented from an independent point of view.

We see too, that while social progress is in part an accumulation of individual originations, it is in many cases a process of substitution. Tarde does not develop this thought fully. It is easy to say, that advance in knowledge of natural phenomena is chiefly an accumulation of data; that the growth of the capital of society, in the economic as well as the intellectual sense, is also largely a matter of addition. But even in these cases, change is qualitative as well as quantitative.

Some thinkers have figured human progress as cyclic, or at least as a spiral which partly returns upon itself. Tarde clearly shows, that progress cannot be turned back over its own road, even if we would so turn it; for by its very nature, much of it is irreversible. In so far as the connection of parts of the social system is logical, in Tarde's sense, and in so far as new parts must relate themselves logically to what already exists, the manner of connection and the order of appearance
Conclusion

is essentially irreversible. The order of scientific progress is not reversible; although not logical in all of its details, it is logical as a whole, and in so far as logical, the order of antecedent and consequent cannot be reversed. The same is true of the progress of language and of economic life. "The irreversible character of social facts......follows from their nature being logical." (O. 302.)*

The order in which inventions appear is an important question, on which Tarde's principles throw some light. Evidently the order of inventions is in part determined by their own nature. Thus the discovery of America came naturally after the discovery of the compass. As one thought leads to another, successive inventions have often an inherent logical relation. Yet it is untrue that inventions form any straight line of progress, or that any necessary order can be traced. The possibilities of the future are always many; the transition from one period of history to another could always be conceivably made in more ways than one, just as two points can be joined by one straight line, but also by many and devious curves. In fact, this is the analogy that Tarde suggests (L. 177 seq.): the picture of movement from one stage to another, by a series of steps having many directions but one general tendency, like the steps of a man towards a doorway across a darkened chamber. This characteristic uncertainty as to the occurrence of inventions and as to the order of their occurrence, is owing largely to what we have already called the element of chance. The appearance of high abilities at a certain period, or the coincident appearance of two interinfluencing inventions, are determined by so many, such obscure, and such uncontrollable causes, that we may properly speak of chance as a factor. To speak of chance in this sense, does not imply action without law, but action according to laws not to be practically analyzed and controlled.

*) Tarde takes the word reversible in the physicists' sense, in which a machine is called reversible that can be operated in either of two reverse directions. (Im. 410.)
Conclusion

IV

It is a pity that Tarde does not carry further some of the suggestive ideas whose application he barely sketches. He does not combine them into a single unified conception. The picture of progress which we draw from Tarde's works, is that of a movement which gathers together a little mass of realization out of an infinity of possibilities; a movement whose springs are in individual acts, and which, though some acts prove immeasurably more important than others, has yet as many sources as individuals; a movement, finally, which cannot turn back upon itself and yet cannot be seen to have any single ultimate goal. But we are not given this picture; we must infer it. Nor does Tarde give us any definite suggestion as to the concrete outcome of the contemporary social movement. He presents certain opinions of the probable tendency of social organizations, looking forward, as has been said, to international federations rather than to a world-state. He believes that conflict (in theoretical terms "Opposition") has not been the most significant feature of progress, although he recognizes it as a step ordinarily intercalated in the process of adaptation. From the practical point of view, he is thus led to a polemic against war. (O. 391, seq.) Yet he gives neither a picture of a Utopia, nor does he make his thought positive as Ward does, by advancing directive principles for the attainment of a social ideal. He does state a profound belief in the worth of individuality, which in a sense is an ideal. We must look forward, he says, (Im. conclusion) till that pressure of socialization from which we are now suffering in so many ways, becomes less urgent. "Then the highest flower of social life will blossom: the aesthetic life, which, while all share in it, will open its fullness to all, freely, not rarely and imperfectly as to-day. Then social life, with all its complicated apparatus of constraints and monotonies, will appear, like the organic life which it follows and consummates, in its own essence. It will give us the vision of a long passage, winding and dark,
Concluding remarks often conclude the diversity to individuality; the vision of a mysterious alembic, of unnumbered whorls, wherein personality is sublimated; an alembic where out of elements that have been crumpled and crushed and shorn of the characters that once made them themselves, there is slowly extracted a fugitive but fundamental principle, that profound yet fleeting essence of individuality, its qualities of thought, of feeling, of very being, which exist only once and exist only for a moment.”

This does not lack intellectual inspiration. Yet Tarde’s conception of individuality is merely that of something peculiar to itself, different from everything else in the universe. It fails wholly as an ethical stimulus, because it does not tell the human qualities which are to be most desired by the individual. That the future life is to be the aesthetic life, is not enough to say, even if one is disposed to agree with the thesis. Like Tarde’s conception of personality itself, his conception of the aesthetic life is a form without content. With what substance is the aesthetic life to be filled? Baldwin has said that Tarde’s whole theory of society is incomplete, because it is a theory of the forms of human action, not of its substance. This is true. It is true, throughout his works, that Tarde’s interest is sociological rather than social. His work is like a book upon railroads which should describe the railway lines of a country without telling anything of the commodities which they transported. Such work is necessary and desirable in its place, but its incompleteness must be recognized.

V

On comparing Tarde’s work with that of other men upon sociological problems, we see best the phases of social life for whose interpretation Tarde’s principles are least helpful. Tarde, as we have seen, was an eminently independent as well as an original thinker. It would not be worth while to trace his historical relation to contemporary sociologists. We need, however, to take his contribution together with those made by workers of different interests, in order to show his work in its truest perspective, and
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to make the best synthetic interpretation of the sociological questions at issue.

In the first place, the contributions made by Genetic Psychology were not utilized by Tarde. He became familiar with Baldwin’s work on Mental Development, and speaks with much pleasure (S. L. 42 n.) of the corroboration apparently given his own principles by Baldwin’s independent theory of imitation. But for Sociology, the most important part of Baldwin’s work* was his analysis of the development of the social qualities, through the give and take between the social environment and the individual, during early years. Baldwin’s “dialectic” of personal and of social growth shows, that the social environment into which we are born is the chief factor in molding to be what they are, our habits, tastes, and conceptions, including our conception of our own selves. (The genetic psychologist has disclosed how man, the social animal, is made, by showing through studies of concrete, individual growth, how children are developed into adults, capable of cooperation with others. These studies display concretely how innate (biological) tendencies and physical conditions interplay inextricably with stimuli from the social surroundings, in producing adaptive reactions. Had Tarde taken up the contributions which Genetic Psychology would have given him, as he might have done during his later years, he would have been able to give a more satisfactory analysis of the mental processes making up imitation; and would also have been enabled to approach the general problems of his Sociology from the standpoint of the individual as well as from the standpoint of the group. From both standpoints we may proceed to one result. That of the individual is helpful for many special problems, toward which the other does not assist, and it also makes it easier for us to keep close to the concrete.)

Conclusion

There is another view of society, which should have been considered more fully by Tarde. Society is in a real sense a psychical unity. There are certain traditions, ideals, standards, which are of such common acceptance by the members of a group, that these standards are potent factors in shaping those members toward social conformity. Emile Durkheim* bases his sociological theory upon this factor of "social constraint," holding that the essence of society is the constraint which the social mass exercises upon the individual. This view has dangers, which Durkheim himself does not escape. He is so impressed with the preponderance of the mass over the individual, that he speaks of society operating as a sort of collective self, "independent" of the individuals composing it. To this statement Durkheim somehow clung, apparently unable to see the practical absurdity involved. Tarde, with his keen sense of individual initiative, could not fail to take issue with what seemed to him a recrudescence of mediæval realism. Tarde and Durkheim might have been called, for a number of years, the pet antagonists of the sociological arena. Unfortunately, Tarde failed somehow to understand the real significance of Durkheim's view, perhaps because he was too much repelled by Durkheim's statement.**

Durkheim's is a much broader view of "mass action" than the mere suggestive influence of the crowd, to which Le Bon and others have devoted themselves.*** As we have seen, Tarde recognized the influence of suggestion. It is thoroughly true, that individuals are drawn into cooperative action through an internal pressure, due to their realization that the majority of


**) In opening the discussions held before the Ecole des Hautes Etudes Sociales in 1903, Tarde and Durkheim crossed swords for the last time in characteristic fashion. As their discussion closed, Tarde said that Durkheim's view was "pure ontology", and Durkheim said that Tarde was not talking to the point (Rev. Internat. de Sociol. 13 (1904): 83 seq.)

their fellows hold certain ideas and standards which demand such cooperation. Tarde looks so insistently at individual acts and initiatives, that he does not give its due weight to this important factor in the determination of individual acts. Both he and Durkheim would have been helped, had they assumed here the genetic point of view, which shows so clearly how the child is molded by what he believes to be the standard of those about him. This is a real constraining influence, as well as simply a mass of facts supplied by the environment for possible imitation by the child.

The third point of view to which Tarde gave hardly any attention, is that derived from Biology. By this is not meant the so-called “biological school” of Sociology, whose elaborately constructed analogies between society and an organism Tarde took pleasure in assisting to destroy. The study of the laws of heredity, and the application of statistics to human ability and the conditions of its appearance, has supplied essential material for Sociology, which no sociologist can afford to neglect. This point, like each of the two preceding points, requires an essay rather than a paragraph. In brief, the work of Quetelet, Galton, Karl Pearson, and others, has shown that human ability is inherited according to laws which can now be approximately formulated; that the different degrees of human ability appear with different frequencies amid a population, the frequency of the higher degrees being increasingly less as we rise in the scale, and varying also in different sections of society. All this bears directly upon those problems of invention, their quality, their frequency, their order, which Tarde discusses so abstractly. Had Tarde combined with his abstract discussion the concrete and definite considerations with which Galton could have furnished him, he could have made his view of invention of vastly more value, and would have been able to state laws, of a much more useful sort, relating invention with social progress. The working of the principle of selection in society, moreover, was a related topic to which Tarde also paid
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little attention. Every environment, physical and social, every city, every occupation, not only influences those who are within it, but it draws selectively a certain type of man or mind to be within it. Only beginnings have been made at the scientific study of social selection, yet on certain points, particularly upon the great city as a selective agent, important results have already been attained. The City, to Tarde, seems chiefly interesting because it illustrates his law that imitation proceeds from the "superior" to the "inferior", from the more active centers of social life to the less active. It is a pity Tarde did not think this thought in connection with the material with which Lapouge, Hansen or Weber might have furnished him. Instead of a formal rule, he might then have put forth a specifically applicable principle, illuminated by the concrete motor forces which are its social basis.

Tarde was not wholly ignorant of Galton's work, any more than he was of Baldwin's; but it was perhaps because he became so much interested in elaborating his own thoughts into a system, that he did not rather connect and supplement them with other thoughts. This is the common and justly criticised fault of contemporary sociologies, that they are sociologies of one idea. In the case of another factor in social development, Tarde's lack of consideration was due to conviction rather than neglect. The influence of race was one to which Tarde devoted some attention, but which, according to him, was not to be considered by the sociologist proper, because it was of the "vital" or biological order. His law that "imitations are refracted by their media,"

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tacitly recognized the factor of race. Yet, especially within mixed populations, differences of race differ only in degree from individual variations in mental traits (variations themselves whose origin is partly racial). Viewed in this light, the law that imitations are refracted by their media, that every individual imitates more or less, or in such wise as his individual nature tends, takes us nowhere in especial. On the other hand, it is of course true, that differences between great masses of men segregated as race or national types, are of great historical importance, and from the psychological as well as from the historical standpoint, it is entirely unjustifiable to put up race influence apart from true social factors. Enough has already been said as to the reasons for this.

From the broadest point of view, Tarde's Sociology lost much in shelving the factor of race. He was, therefore, unable to give concrete interpretations of historical development. His method would have compelled him, even had he desired otherwise, to confine his attention primarily to the mere form of social processes. It is similarly true, that his neglect to analyze the influence of special human motives, particularly the economic, leaves large gaps in his work. No Psychological Sociology can be satisfactory, much less complete, if it neglects such analysis.*

The work of Georg Simmel exemplifies another method which Tarde does not employ. Simmel takes a certain formal process such as "differentiation", or an abstract relation between men such as "superiority and subordination", and by noting the ways in which these processes or relations are concretely manifested in society, he is able to show the degree in which they are significant for the interpretation of social problems.** Tarde

*) Cf. Lacombe, *De l'histoire considérée comme science*, Paris 1894.

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might have been directly helped by some of Simmel's work, had he followed it; and Simmel's method would have been useful to Tarde, in carrying out the study of some of his own abstract conceptions.

VI

It is related in the biography of Huxley, that Herbert Spencer once sent a speculative essay to his critical friend, requesting an opinion. Huxley returned the essay with the comment: "No objection, except to the whole." Tarde's books are always good reading; their style makes them works of literature as few scientific books can be. They are made interesting by imagination and illustration, as well as by the intrinsic originality of the thought. Yet originality does not always mean scientific or practical usefulness. A main part of Tarde's work was spent in the deductive elaboration, of an illuminating social insight, into a philosophic system which does not illuminate. Lewes has somewhere said, that the fundamental difference between the deductive and the inductive type of mind is, that the former tests its conclusions, the latter its premises. Tarde's mind was essentially of the former type.

We have seen how, in Tarde's later work, the simple theory that "society is imitation" was expanded into: "Society is repetition and opposition and adaptation"; and that he came to think of adaptation as the most important, certainly so from the teleological point of view. He still clings, however, to imitation as the essential social fact, although imitation is here used more broadly than in the earlier works. The fundamental premises with which Tarde started and with which he may be said to have ended are: first, there is an essential distinguishing mark of society, some essential social thing which it is incumbent upon the sociologists to seek; second, this essence of society is a production of similarity, or is similarity itself, for which the term imitation is only convenient shorthand.

In pursuance of our method of working from the special to
the general in this critique, the second premise, which comes logically after the other, should be treated first. No one questions that imitation has an important place in society. What we practically want to know is, its relation to those contrasting aspects of the social process which have to do with individual initiative and originality. Where we permit ourselves to take so general a conception of imitation that it includes invention or originality, we lose the essential characteristic of imitation. On the other hand, it is an undoubted fact that imitation is usually not precise, and thus involves an individual factor. The logical cul de sac to which we come, is due to trying to build up an organic whole out of elements. Imitation and invention are both aspects of the reactions of individuals to stimuli. In the social process, as Bosanquet says in a suggestive essay*, "we have to deal at once with phenomena of identity and with phenomena of difference." (p. 170) To uphold dualism by pitting individuality against social constraint, as do Durkheim and Le Bon, is not scientific. Nor does Baldwin's refutation of dualism (Interpretations, p. 90) place him beyond criticism, because he does not supply any unifying principle for the two aspects. Baldwin generalizes the conception of imitation, so that it loses its differentia and is of no value in sociological explanation. It cannot explain difference.

Royce in a paper of 1894 (see Chapter II, p. 32), emphasized the continuity between imitation and originality, and criticized the "false separation of imitativeness and spontaneity, a separation which can be avoided only by a careful psychological study of this fascinating process" (p. 145). Royce thus bring us to regard originality and imitation as two aspects of one thing; but he does not take this view explicitly, and fails like Baldwin to supply us with a unifying principle possessing a social application. Bosanquet comes closer to the root of the matter. "Nothing of serious importance happens by genuine

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*) Social Automatism and the Imitation Theory, Mind, 24 (1899) : 167—175.
imitation.....All the business of society goes on by differentiated reactions.....Pure imitation is an extreme sub-case of this principle, a sub-case in which differentiation is at a minimum.....All social cooperation necessarily involves a unity of intelligence, a habit which is in its nature logical and inventive, the invention not being confined within individual minds, but being simply an aspect of the differentiated reactions by which a cooperative body, taken as a whole, endeavors to be equal to the situation at a given moment.” (p. 175.)

That is to say, adaptive reaction is the general term, of which imitation is only one phase. In mathematical phraseology, imitation is one of the limiting cases of adaptation. The truly general conception of social process is the mutually adaptive reactions of individuals; and that special form of adaptation which we call imitation is neither its only social form nor its only social form of importance.

Similarity is not the typical outcome of social action. A large part of those correlations which make social life possible are conditioned by difference rather than by similarity. The harmonious functioning of the cells and organs of an animal essentially implies the co-adaptation of different cells and organs; and the process by which the organic harmony was produced, was a process of selection, in which the selective criteria included those of difference as well as of similarity. Durkheim, in his Division du travail social, brings out strongly many aspects of society which are based upon differentiation, and many parts of the social process which are differentiating in their effects. Society is neither similarity nor difference, but is a co-adaptation of individuals partly similar and partly different. Historical progress is primarily to be interpreted as an increasing co-adaptation, accompanied by increases of difference as well as of similarity.

This does not disagree with statements which might be quoted from Tarde, in those passages where he lays stress upon adaptation; but it is fundamentally opposed to the advancement
of similarity, or of any other one aspect of life, as the essential
social thing. We are brought back to the erroneous method in-
volved in Tarde's first premise, that there is some one social
datum in terms of which social life may be completely inter-
preted. Any one datum must be partial. Society, as a complex
organic unity, requires a more general conception for its inter-
pretation. As Charles Horton Cooley says, in that book "Human
Nature and the Social Order" (N. Y. 1902), which expresses
so strongly his sense of this unity: there are other aspects of
society, besides imitation, which may be viewed as social pro-
cesses; competition, communication, differentiation, and others,
are each worthy of a volume like Tarde's "Laws of Imitation."
We can take, he thinks, any one of these conceptions, and in
terms of it interpret all or a great part of social life. "The truth
is," says Cooley (p. 372), "that the real process is a multiform
thing, of which these are glimpses."

We may view society from any one of these aspects, and
from other aspects also. For certain purposes, we may con-
sider society as based upon a contract, expressed or implicit.
We may consider it, in relation to the individual, as a part of
his environment which exercises a peculiar pressure upon him.
We may consider it as a growth of likemindedness among indi-
guals, due to many causes, among them a developing conscious-
ness of the likemindedness itself. We may consider it as a
process of differentiation, in which higher orders of individuality
are produced, through increasing co-adaptation of finer qualities.
We may consider it as a process of competition and selection;
or once more, viewing individual and social environment to-
gether, we may regard society as a group of organisms, attain-
ing certain common ends through certain coordinated activities.
At the basis of any one of these views is some abstract concep-
tions—contract, constraint, likemindedness, imitation, etc.; and
the assumption of each view implies, that we utilize the cor-
responding conception in order to interpret the mass of concrete
social phenomena.
Conclusion

The view we take at any one time, depends on the purpose we are pursuing. To make a special analysis of society and to distill out certain aspects or characteristics, is wholly legitimate in its place. For purposes of classification it may be necessary to adopt such a method. For pursuing some particular problem, such as the relation of the individual to the State, or the results of competition, we are justified in selecting one aspect and following it through its social ramifications, until we have reached the goal we seek. We shall never attain the goal by such a method, however, unless while following the trail of our special interest we watch the windings of the track as they interfuse with paths that lead elsewhere. Our direction in such cases is determined by the special interest we have in view. Any complex phenomenon can be classified in many ways: it is our special interest at the time which determines the particular principle of classification we select. Any complex organic phenomenon can be viewed from many aspects: it depends upon our particular interest, theoretical or practical, which aspect we select for analytic treatment. To take one aspect as inherently primal and "essential," is to commit the fallacy already demonstrated on the psychological side, of interpreting an organic product in terms of a single factor of analysis. Such an attitude obscures the right view of any process in the organic world; namely that the elements of such a process, whatever their genetic relations, are so mutually connected in dynamic relations that the concrete manifestations of their cooperation must be explained in terms of all, not as a resultant of any one.

The way in which the matter finally presents itself is this: from the theoretical point of view, the complex thing society cannot be explained in terms of any one principle, unless we make that principle so general that it fails to help us much in dealing directly with the concrete. Adaptation is such a principle; and, like any other of equal generality, it splits itself into an indefinite number of phases, each of which may be employed for certain purposes. Suppose, for example, we wish to define
the term “social”. The word is one upon which sociologists clash, chiefly through failure to realize that a term of this sort has as many definitions as it has aspects, and that it has as many aspects as we have interests. Where our interest for the time being is clear, a definition is found readily enough to meet the case. Such a definition always involves the statement of a social problem (N. B.—a statement merely, not a judgment as to its solution), and it will be practically significant in proportion as the interest upon which it is based is trenchant upon present questions. For example, a sociological problem of theoretical and practical significance, is the right relation between personal initiative and social activity. Having this in mind, and contrasting individual with concerted effort as means of attaining common personal ends, we may define society as an adaptive cooperation for the attainment of common ends of individual organisms, and may regard the extent of this cooperation as the criterion of the social. This definition could be put to many uses.

Such definitions can be made more specific by limiting them in accordance with some more limited interest which we pursue. On the other hand, we may start from a special conception like competition,, or from a still narrower one like those abstract relations with which Simmel deals, and, after making an interpretation of all or part of social life in terms of these principles, we may fit our interpretation into the more general sociological conception.

Of what real help are such general conceptions, however, if both from the point of view of practical social helpfulness and also from that of the scientific specialist, we always need more definitely drawn guiding lines? The answer is that these lines, which are always laid out between points of special interest, all pass across a common area, that of the generic sociological conception. There is no fundamental contradiction between the requirements of the “general sociologist” and those of the special investigator, because the interests of the two classes,
though different, are complementary. Both the practical worker and the scientific specialist desire to analyze phenomena from certain definite aspects, with particular interests or particular social problems in mind. The sociologist pursues such analyses, or accepts them from other men, but his effort as a sociologist is a coordinating one. He must be a specialist in his analyses and a synthesizer in his conclusions*. He must realize that neither scientific analyses nor conclusions upon practical social problems can ever have more than a subjective completeness, and that even the broadest philosophic interpretation cannot but possess that qualiy of timeliness which, in the changing focus of social life, must deny to it as a whole any more than a transient validity.

This essentially subjective and tentative character of the results of social study impresses another point. Chief among the dangers of intellectual investigation, as Tarde and other sinners of the "systematic error" illustrate, is that of wasting mental energy upon thoughts, definitions, or analyses, which have little or no social significance except perhaps to round out our own mental pictures. In face of so large, complex, and changeful a thing as society, which it is hopeless to suppose we can at once analyze completely, at least with the amount of time and effort that one generation will devote to it, we are bound somehow to make a selection. The criterion for selection must be the subjective criterion of interest, but what is the right directive of interest? Obviously, men will not all agree upon a positive criterion, but one negative criterion ought to be clear. The selection of aspects of society for study should not be made without reference to those present problems of the time which have a human interest and a bearing upon social progress. This

*) Tarde's work, in parts, illustrates one of the sociologist's dangers, viz., that he may take too special an aspect of society for his synthesizing principle; instead of taking a very general principle, and focussing this down to the concrete by coordinating, under it, the results of the labors of many specialists working from different points of view.
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does not mean limiting sociological work to the investigation of matters like tenements, trusts, and religious revivals. It does mean turning a cold shoulder to system-making and methodology. It does not mean that abstract investigation must be forsworn. It does mean that definitions, or other results of such investigations, are to be tested by some such criterion as this: What direct or indirect application have these results upon problems of present human interest, or upon present social progress? From this point of view, a comparison of various definitions of "the social" would be worth while.

Proceeding from this standpoint a little farther, a certain division appears between the ends to be held in mind according as we are concerned with present or with past social phenomena. In historical study, the sociological attempt should be primarily to show social process within the mass of facts presented by some period or institution. Social process means psychological process, but it also means that mental action must be shown in its relations to physical and biological conditions. Psychologically, we may start with a given set of stimuli, and, showing the reaction which takes place according to actual mental processes, we may go on to the interpretation of past phenomena by illuminating each step of development with the psychic process which, inductively and deductively, we see must have created it. The sociological gist of history is, what the truly "philosophic" historians give us, insight into how things happen. The ascertaining of historical facts as such has some claim, by reason of its technique and its organization, to be called a "science" (properly speaking, it is a technology), but it is at best only a propaedeutic to the investigation of the process behind the facts, of the ways in which human interests and impulses have been translated into acts and institutions.

As the fruitful scientific way of treating past phenomena is to treat them to show process, the fruitful way of dealing scientifically with present problems is to analyze them to show tendency. Here each social process already known to be some-
Conclusion.

times in operation, is applicable as a sounding rod to each present problem. Through knowledge of processes we test for tendency; and as tendencies are found, we step by step coordinate them and estimate their relative importance. The "practical man" goes through precisely this procedure in a subconscious way, turning a complex question over in his mind from many points of view (i.e. making special analyses) and bringing to bear his knowledge of how things have gone in his previous experience to cast light upon the probable tendencies in the case before him. Thereafter, he appraises the relative weights of these tendencies, and decides upon a course of action.

The scientific attitude in the study of present problems involves more than this commonsense procedure, because it means bringing to the problem care, patience, serenity of view and conscious self-criticism. The sociological attitude should mean still more, namely, the direction of energy through a larger consciousness of all the possible points to which it may be turned. Throughout all special studies, practical or abstract, the sociological viewpoint is helpful, correcting, as Durkheim says, "the tendency of specialisms to move at random without adequate conception of the definitive purpose, and hence not only to waste effort, but also to leave important areas of the sociological field uncultivated" (Sociological Papers, London 1904, p. 199.) Human consciousness is partly the shaper of its own destiny, and in proportion as our scientific conclusions carry weight to demands for social alteration, they bear within themselves the witness of an essential impermanence. Systems of sociology, nevertheless, are justified, and from time to time are desirable, as intellectual stocktakeings and summarizations of special studies from the broadest point of view. After all, whether as specialist or as philosophical investigators, the sociological standpoint finds for us its largest justification in the belief that our efforts will be the more enduring as their basis is the more wide, and the more secure as their methods are the more conscious.
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In listing Tarde's works, the date of the first edition is given in each case. Many of the books have passed through a number of editions. When an edition besides the first is noted, with the number of pages in the volume indicated, it is to be inferred that the page references throughout this text refer to such edition. The abbreviations used to denote the more frequently cited works are printed in brackets, in Italics.

In additions to his sociological writings, Tarde published Contes et poèmes (Paris 1879), several plays, and also the following (none of these have been obtainable for examination):

La Roque de Gajac, monographie archéologique (Bulletin de la Société historique et archéologique de Périgord-Périgueux, 1881).

Introduction aux Chroniques de Jean Tarde, aumônier de Henri IV, pour servir à l'histoire de Périgord. Paris 1888.

Les deux Statues (brochure, Paris, 1892).

As a literary man and a sociologist, Tarde served at various periods, as joint editor or as collaborator, with the Revue philosophique, Revue des deux mondes, Revue scientifique, Revue politique et litteraire, Archives d'anthropologie criminelle, Revue internationale de Sociologie, etc.

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