

The People Make the Demagogue

It is a common error to suppose that the people make the Demagogue. The willed judgement of the people has [...] this fallacy, and it, like the nauseous weed which lives and thrives as well in a desert as in the hothouse, has taken root and [...] itself into every part of the public mind. To-day it stands a monument of the fallibility of the human standard in [...], morals, law and politics – the public opinion.

There is among all men a love of power. ~~Tis a principle~~ It is universal as space, bringing with it its own rewards and punishments, and its exercise like the sweetest poison is deadly in effect while pleasant to the taste. It is a silent monitor in the human beast which encourages when and how to make the step, and guides ambition in its [...] course. Upon this principle the world has been revolutionized, governments created, dynasties founded, sceptres crumbled, and thrones tottered. ~~Upon~~ In its exercise Napoleon grasped the sceptre of France, and “won without shame and wore without remorse the diadem of the Caesars. ~~Cognate to this~~ ~~In~~ Superadded to this there is a cognate principle which urges to respect and revere power. Upon this principle that the presence of a leader of known ability on the field of combat inspires fresh courage, and the desponding hosts, whose shock but a moment ago was met by their enemies and was hurled back as the angry billows recede from some Titan rock, rush on to victory or death. Men willingly follow if they are convinced of the integrity & ability of their leaders. Attracted by admiration, the masses are too often swept along by the operations of a powerful will, which takes by storm their judgement and sober discretion. Thus, when some political earthquake shakes the nation from centre to circumference; when the patriots’ lamentation of My Country! Oh! My Country! ~~Are~~ is heard; when the public mind is struggling after some ill defined political good, and the beating heart is beating responsive to its own mighty passions, the statesman of commanding will or powerful intellect is soon invested with attributes more than human, in his schemes of ambition & personal aggrandizement and seen only the public good and national glory, and in the wildness of their enthusiasm they unwittingly forge the fetters with which their demigod is to enchain them. Hence all men are willing to assume the responsibility of power & conquest. The country is flooded with these political aspirants, these seven years’ counts, the process of whose apotheosis I have just attempted to describe.