

Philosophy of society and of history, and the cool and yet sarcastic effrontery with which he assumes that material elements and laws are the only forces and laws which any scientific man can recognize, seem to me to condemn the book as a textbook for a miscellaneous class in an undergraduate course. . . .¹

Morgan appears to have had similar sentiments, although he also attacked him on other grounds, as well, in one of the clubs which he organized, called the Spencer Club, which met fortnightly to discuss Spencer's work. Morgan criticized Spencer in a letter to McIlvaine, to which the latter responded:

. . . . Nor have I read Spencer, not having a doubt but that he has proved himself as great an ass in the discussion of ancient society as you say. As for reviewing him I am doing greater work and cannot come down.

Morgan also wrote to Darwin in disparagement of Spencer's work; and the ever friendly Darwin, busy with his plants, replied in a letter dated July 9, 1877, from Down, Beckenham, Kent:

I thank you kindly for your very kind, long and interesting letter. I write in fact merely to thank you, for I have nothing else to say. I have lately been working so hard on plants, that I have not had time yet to glance at H. Spencer's recent work, and hardly to do more than glance at your last work. But I hope before very long to find more time. It is, however, a great misfortune for me that reading now tires me more than writing, that is, if the subject sets me thinking. I am as great an admirer as any man can be of H. Spencer's genius; but his deductive style of putting almost everything never satisfies me, and the conclusion which I eventually draw is that "here is a grand suggestion for many years' work."

¹ H. E. Starr, *William Graham Sumner*, p. 346.

Your last work must have cost you very much labour and therefore I infer that you are strong and well. I can assure you that I have by no means forgotten my short and very pleasant interview with you.

The religious views of Morgan colored his interpretation of the history of the family and caused him to declare of monogamy, "The whole previous experience and progress of mankind culminated and crystallized in this pre-eminent institution," and to conceive of promiscuity as the earliest stage of relationship between the sexes because it was the antithesis of monogamy. His religious views also impinged on other of his interpretations. In 1853, he wrote:

The last cause of the decline of Athens was the impurity of its religious system. Its civilization did not rest on a moral basis. It not only reposed its hopes of the perpetuity of the race upon the civilization of the intellect and sense of physical beauty, but its religion itself was utterly incapable of maturing and strengthening those moral elements which alone can bind society together with enduring power.

Twenty years later Morgan expressed alarm at changing mores and morals and held that degeneration similar to that of ancient Roman times was imminent.

VIII

When Morgan came to Rochester, he became friendly with, and associated in financial enterprises with, Samuel P. Ely, who remained his financial adviser until he died. His meager resources soon grew. With Ely and a few other capitalists, he financed the construction of, and was a member of the Board of Directors of, a rail-

When Morgan was in England, he made friendly visits to Charles Darwin and John Lubbock. A letter from Darwin, dated June 7, 1871, Down, Beckenham, Kent, indicates that his visit to Darwin was brief due to the latter's weak physical condition:

I shall have great pleasure in seeing you here on any day which will suit you; but please do inform me before hand. The best route is to leave Charing Cross by the 11:15 train for Orpington Station S. E. R. which is 4 miles from my house; and you will arrive here a little after 12:30. We will lunch at one o'clock and you can return by the 2:20 train. It grieves me to propose so short a visit, but my health has been very indifferent during the last week, and I am incapable of conversing with anyone except for a short time. I shall have great pleasure in seeing you

Morgan's visit established a cordial friendship between the two men that was prolonged through correspondence. When Darwin's sons came to America, they carried letters of introduction by Morgan, as Darwin's letter of June 14, 1872, reveals:

I really do not know how to thank you for your extraordinary kindness in having taken such trouble for my sons. Your instructions about their route and your splendid supply of introductions will be invaluable to them.

Morgan, who had repeatedly expressed his antipathy to the Catholic church, nevertheless followed the tourist pattern and secured an audience with the pope, when he came to Rome. Later, Morgan, with a feeling of pride, related the tale that when the pope extended his hand to be kissed, Morgan addressed him, "Your honor, in

eralization in the Science of Sociology. I had no conception that there was a work of such comprehensive reach upon this inaccessible and difficult subject. It ought to be published in such liberal manner that it could be more in reach of the public. I shall endeavor to so use it that it will I hope be of some service in the matter of education. Our Chairs of History in most American colleges have a very narrow range. Ethnography and the broader inductions of a real Social Science, are so cognate—are in fact so fundamental in their relation to History that it is a matter of surprise that any competent knowledge can be expected of it without some knowledge, at least, of these related branches. As for the study of Law, as it is pursued in this country and the grosser practice of legislation, it would never be allowed for a moment if the public had an adequate conception of the bearing of the cognate sciences upon the structure and foundations of society.¹

It was in England that this work of Morgan's received most attention and provoked most discussion. Charles Darwin, in friendly letters, acknowledged the receipt of the book:

I am much obliged for your extremely kind letter and your present of the concluding chapter which I am sure I shall read with the greatest interest. . . .

I fully agree with your remarks as to the extreme importance of studying the habits and institutions, if they can be so called, of savages. I have had lately to attend a little to the subject, as I have sent a MS. to the printer for a work on the "Descent of Man," but I have chiefly to treat of veritably primeval times before man was fully man. With much respect for your admirable investigations, believe me,²

¹ Dated Columbia, South Carolina, September 24, 1877.

² Dated Down, Beckenham, Kent, August 11, 1871.

I have received this morning your grand work on *Consanguinity*, etc. and I am astonished at the labor which it must have cost you.

I am greatly indebted to this proof of your kind feelings toward me and I remain yours very sincerely.¹

In view of the great influence of Herbert Spencer on popular views of the evolution of the family, his letter to Morgan is very significant:

I am indebted to you for the present of your great work on *Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity* which lately reached me. Hitherto I have had but time to glance through it and to be impressed with the value of its immense mass of materials collected and arranged with so much labor.

I thank you for it in more than the mere formal way that is common in the acknowledgment of presentation copies: for it comes to me at a time when I am making elaborate preparations personally and by deputy for the scientific treatment of Sociology and its contents promise to be of immediate service.²

Edward Tylor's letter is more guarded, intentionally, as his later references to Morgan indicate:

Some weeks ago I received a copy of your great work on "Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity" and while waiting to ascertain whether it was to yourself or the Smithsonian Institution that I was indebted for this magnificent treatise, your recent Australian pamphlet reached me sent by you. (I see by this that you have become acquainted with Mr. McLennan's remarkable dissertation.) Pray accept my best thanks for these gifts of which I assure you that I appreciate the great value as bearing on the difficult problem of early social rela-

¹ Dated Down, Beckenham, Kent, January 20, 1872.

² Dated Bayswater, London, February 10, 1872.

Morgan's criticism of the use of the word "instinct" anticipated modern psychology more closely than did Darwin's analysis of instinct in his *Descent of Man*, where he paid tribute to Morgan's study of the beaver but remarked, "I cannot help thinking, however, that he goes too far in underrating the power of instinct."¹

Morgan also anticipated the conclusions of later scientists when he attributed man's ability to accumulate culture to language. After speaking of man's advance from his primitive condition, he wrote:

Language has been the great instrument of this progress, the power of which was increased many fold when it clothed itself in written characters. He was thus enabled to perpetuate the results of individual experience and transmit them through the ages. Each discovery thus became a foundation on which to mount up to new discoveries.²

But that he did not clearly recognize the distinction between the organic and the cultural is evident from his immediate discussion of the progress of animals:

Within the period of human observation, their progress has seemed to be inconsiderable—but yet not absolutely nothing. For example, dogs under training have developed special capacities, such as the pointer and the setter, and have transmitted them to their offspring. This shows not only progress, but that of so marked a character as to work a transformation in the characteristics of the animal. Many animals, as the elephant, the horse, the bear, and even the hog—the type of stupidity—have been taught a variety of performances, under the stimulus of rewards, of which they were previously ignorant. These examples, however are less im-

¹ *Descent of Man*, p. 84.

² *The American Beaver*, p. 280.