

DEMOCRACY AND REACTION

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Democracy and reaction by L. T. Hobhouse

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L. T. HOBHOUSE

**DEMOCRACY
AND REACTION**

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BY

L. T. HOBHOUSE

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EVOLUTION," ETC.



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NOTE

SOME of the questions with which this volume is concerned were dealt with by the writer in a series of articles published in the *Speaker* between two and three years ago. Parts of these articles are incorporated in the present work, principally in Chapters VI. and VII.

The writer has to thank Lord Hobhouse and Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Hammond for many valuable suggestions and criticisms.

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CHAPTER I

THE SCHOOL OF COBDEN

DURING some twenty, or it may be thirty years, a wave of reaction has spread over the civilised world and invaded one department after another of thought and action. This is no unprecedented occurrence. In the onward movement of mankind history shows us each forward step followed by a pause, and too often by a backsliding in which much of the ground gained is lost. Of the causes of this almost rhythmical, yet tragic, alternation we know little. Sometimes it would seem that the forces gathered together to remove some obstruction which directly blocks advance become themselves a hindrance to further movement. Sometimes the ideas which fill one generation with enthusiasm appear as though spent and worn