

**THE CROWD IN
PEACE AND
WAR. [1915]**

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The Crowd in Peace and War. [1915] by Sir Martin Conway

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SIR MARTIN CONWAY

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THE CROWD IN PEACE AND WAR

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Nullum esse librum tam malum
ut non ex aliquâ parte prodesset.

Pliny the Elder

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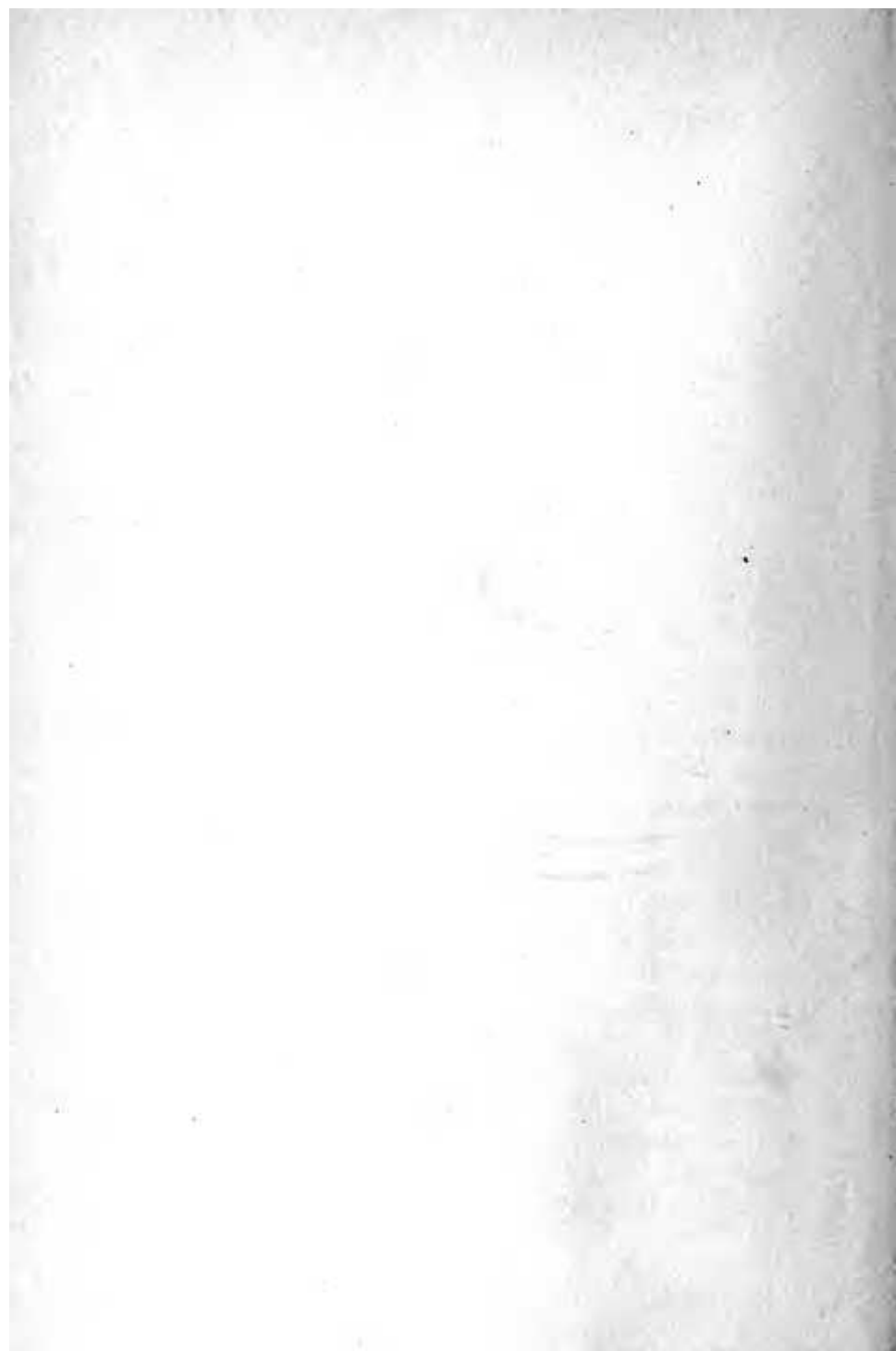
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THE CROWD IN PEACE AND WAR



The Crowd in Peace and War

CHAPTER I

KINDS OF CROWDS

MAN has never decided whether to be a gregarious animal or not. Individualism and socialism attract him alternately. He swings like a pendulum from the one to the other. At times he merges himself completely in some group or crowd and loses his identity there like a sheep in a flock. Then he lives and moves and has his being in the crowd. He follows its routine; *esprit de corps* determines his ideals and dictates his emotions. He is like a soldier in a regiment, or a cell in living tissue: a mere unit whose life, joy, and passion it is to contribute his portion of vitality and power to the larger life of the whole group, or as our brave soldiers say, "to do his bit."

At other times man adopts the attitude of complete detachment from his fellows, like Thoreau at Walden, or a Theban hermit in his desert cave. The crowd then is nothing to him. His aim is to be self-sufficing — to think his own thoughts, go his own ways, provide for his own needs, and perhaps save his own soul. He no longer resembles a sheep in a flock or a wolf in a pack, but re-