

**THE THEORY OF
SOCIAL
REVOLUTIONS**

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The theory of social revolutions by Brooks Adams

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BROOKS ADAMS

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THE THEORY OF SOCIAL
REVOLUTIONS

BY

BROOKS ADAMS

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PREFATORY NOTE

THE first chapter of the following book was published, in substantially its present form, in the *Atlantic Monthly* for April, 1913. I have to thank the editor for his courtesy in assenting to my wish to reprint. The other chapters have not appeared before. I desire also to express my obligations to my learned friend, Dr. M. M. Bigelow, who, most kindly, at my request, read chapters two and three, which deal with the constitutional law, and gave me the benefit of his most valuable criticism.

Further than this I have but one word to add. I have written in support of no political movement, nor for any ephemeral purpose. I have written only to express a deep conviction which is the result of more than twenty years of study, and reflection upon this subject.

BROOKS ADAMS.

QUINCY, MASSACHUSETTS,
May 17, 1913.

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THE THEORY OF SOCIAL REVOLUTIONS

CHAPTER I

THE COLLAPSE OF CAPITALISTIC GOVERNMENT

CIVILIZATION, I apprehend, is nearly synonymous with order. However much we may differ touching such matters as the distribution of property, the domestic relations, the law of inheritance and the like, most of us, I should suppose, would agree that without order civilization, as we understand it, cannot exist. Now, although the optimist contends that, since man cannot foresee the future, worry about the future is futile, and that everything, in the best possible of worlds, is inevitably for the best, I think it clear that within recent years an uneasy suspicion has come into being that the principle of authority has been dangerously impaired, and that the social system, if it is to cohere, must be reorganized. So far as my observation has extended, such intuitions are usually not without an adequate