

that languages and religions are collective works, that the masses, without any leader, have made Greek, Sanscrit, Hebrew, Buddhism, Christianity, and lastly, that it is by the coercive action of the 'collective' on the individual, small or large, yet always adjusted and utilised, but not at all by the suggestive and contagious action of chosen individuals, that the formations and transformations of societies can be explained. In reality such explanations are illusory; their authors do not perceive that by postulating such a collective force, a similitude of millions of persons, simultaneously under certain relations, they evade the major difficulty, the question of understanding how this general assimilation can have originated. The answer lies precisely in pushing the analysis as far as I have done, down to the intercerebral relation of two minds, to the reflection of one on the other, and it is only thus that we can explain those partial unanimities, those conspirations of the hearts, those communions of the spirits, which, once formed and perpetuated by tradition and imitation of ancestors, exert a pressure often tyrannical, but more frequently salutary, upon the individual. It is to this relation that sociology must attach itself in the same way as astronomy attaches itself to the relation of two attracting and attracted masses; in it we must find the key to the social mystery, the formula for a few simple laws, universally true, which can be disentangled in the midst of the apparent chaos of human life and history." <sup>1</sup>

<sup>87.</sup>  
Laws de-  
veloped by  
him.

These simple laws which M. Tarde further develops are, as he terms them, the law of repetition, the law

<sup>1</sup> See Gabriel Tarde, 'Les Lois Sociales' (5<sup>me</sup> ed., p. 39 *sqq.*)