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THE VALUES OF LIFE

ESSAYS ON THE CIRCLES AND CENTERS OF DUTY

BY
ERNEST BARKER

*Those, like so many spheres, but one heaven make
For they are all concentric.*

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To O

Thy firmness makes my circle just

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NOTE TO THE READER

I have used the words 'value' and 'values' more than once in what I have written. I ought to explain that by value I mean 'the quality of being worth while, as attested by a general consensus of opinion which is of long duration and wide extent.' That is only the beginning of definition; and it does not touch (though it seems to pre-judge) the fundamental question whether 'the quality of being worth while' is simply and only attached by the thinking mind, or is also an inherent and real quality independent of human thinking. But it is possible to stop at the level at which value appears to be a character attached by a general consensus, without believing that that is necessarily the end of the matter.

PREFACE

This is a book which I had never intended to write, or indeed ever thought of writing. The first incentive came to me from the Editor of the *Spectator,* who invited me, last summer, to write some articles for him on the things which I held dear and the reasons why they were dear to me. I wrote the articles; and they appeared, under the general title of *The Values of Life,* in the autumn of last year. The publishers of the book asked me to consent to their being reprinted, with some additions which would give them a larger substance. That was the second incentive. I sat down and wrote the additions in the fortnight of Christmas and the New Year. The plan I followed was that of leaving each of the original articles untouched, and of writing what I may call 'variations' on each of the themes. I have always been fond of Brahms' variations on a theme of Haydn. I found it enjoyable to write my own variations on my own themes. Perhaps the enjoyment has led me to write the variations (or at any rate some of them) in a lighter key than that in which I wrote the original themes; and I may have descended from the Dorian into the Lydian, or even the Mixolydian. But I hope that

there is still some harmony; and I would plead that a variety of subjects demands some variety of treatment.

I have written about the things which had a particular interest for me. I hope that this confession will be some explanation not only of what is included but also (and even more) of what has been omitted.

ERNEST BARKER.

Cambridge, January 1939.

THE VALUES OF LIFE

I

DUTY AND THE FAMILY

THE line of Lucretius is famous. *Quasi Cursores*—like runners in a relay race—men hand on the torch of life. We are all runners, keeping some sort of a course, and running, with such patience as we can command, the race that is set before us. As the steps begin to lag, and the torch of this mortal life is about to pass from our hands, we naturally ask ourselves, "What is the race which I have been running; what is the course and faith I have kept; what is the purpose and meaning of this flame of life which I have carried?"

Plato, in a passage of the sixth book of the *Laws*, uses the same metaphor as Lucretius; and he uses it in regard to marriage and the life of the family. "To beget and to rear children, to hand on life, like a torch, from one generation to another, and to maintain the service of God according to the law"—that is the phrase of Plato. It states, in

simple terms, one obvious meaning and purpose of life. We men are under the same biological necessity (which is also, if we look deeper into it, a maintaining of the service of God according to the law of His creation) as birds and animals. We are bound to mate and perpetuate our kind. In obedience to that necessity, and under the urgency of the flame of life in our veins, we are given the gift of attaining spiritual heights which may prove, for many of us, to be the highest in our human course. In the economy of our mixed nature matter and biological necessity bend and bow themselves to the spirit and its growth. We go out to find a mate, and we find a whole kingdom of ends in marriage and the life of the family. The marriage of bodies proves also a marriage of minds, a communication of the inmost thoughts and feelings of two human beings, a salvation from the solitude of the lonely self,[1] a preparation and anticipation of the ultimate communion of spirit with spirit. The Roman jurist who defined marriage as *consortium omnis vitae, divini et humani juris communicatio*, went deep into its meaning. But marriage is not only itself, a boundless bounty of giving and having: it also produces its fruits in the life of the family. The communication of the inmost thoughts and feelings of two human beings creates a tradition

When love with one another so
Interanimates two souls.
The abler soul, which thence doth flow,
Defects of loneliness controls.

or mould or nest of common belief, in the shelter of which the minds of the young can grow to their own maturity. Parents often worry about the inevitable and ineradicable traits which they hand on to their descendants by way of physical transmission and physical inheritance. Far more important is the spiritual tradition—partly received by them from their own parents, but partly (and indeed mainly) built by themselves in their own communication with one another—which they hand on by example and influence. A very great thing in human life is that husband and wife should build together a tradition of common belief, shelter their children under its influence in their young days, and, as they grow, take them into partnership for its further building and betterment. The tradition of a family can go on growing as long as the family endures.

When I look back on my own life, I confess to its great imperfections in the fulfilment of this ideal. I know the rubs of marriage and the friction (which is very far from being always due to the child) in the relations between parents and children. But I cannot but feel—perhaps all the more because of the rubs and the friction, which simply teach us the lesson that we ought to be doing things better—I cannot but feel that marriage and the life of the family have given my life its primary and elemental meaning and purpose. No doubt it is hard to combine a due care for the primary and elemental duties of husband and father with other duties—the duties

of the profession; the duties of social intercourse, the duties of citizenship. However much one may wish to be fair, and more than fair, to the claims of the primary duty, other things will keep breaking in and disturbing the cheerfulness of simple attachment to family duty. That is perhaps why it is easy to feel a passionate longing for the holiday when it is still to come, and a great nostalgia for the holiday when it is over and gone. A family holiday can be almost of the nature of a mystery: it brings a constant communion—a happy sharing of thoughts and feelings and delights hour by hour and all through the day—which is denied at other times. I talked with a mother the other day who spoke of herself as living on, almost in a state of intermission or suspense, 'until the next holiday'. I could sympathize with what she said.

I must not exaggerate the importance or the sanctity of the family. It can become a selfish exacting thing. It can deny its members liberty for affections and delights which lie outside its fold, clinging to them with a sort of animal tenacity. (There is a sort of family feeling which is almost animal in the blind and obstinate sentimentality of its demands.) It can also exalt its own exclusive qualities in a poor and jealous arrogance: 'There is no family like our family—even in Heaven.' But all good things have their perversions; and the family does not cease to be good because it can be perverted. I am inclined to doubt whether we in England have ever come by an adequate philosophy

or understanding of the family. It means more in Latin countries, which have inherited the tradition of Roman Law. We are more of individualists—sometimes (when it comes to talk of love and marriage) romantic individualists, with a romantic notion of freedom that passes my understanding and contradicts my experience. We have no clear notion of the family group and family obligation. We leave the father of a family to dispose of his property at will. We discuss the problem of divorce as if it were a matter of the relations of two individuals. We debate about the means test and the nature of the family income without a philosophy of a working conception of the family unit.

Our ethics are the poorer because we are vague about the ethics of the family. Our general social philosophy is the poorer because it does not reckon, at any rate adequately, with the institution of the family. The one social venture of our times of which I have any knowledge that reckons adequately with the family, and makes the family unit the unit of its structure and its activities, is the Pioneer Health Centre at Peckham. There, for purposes of health and the maintenance of a healthy body, the whole of a family—with all its common physical inheritance and all the mutual physical interactions of its members—is brought into a voluntary system of regular inspection and supervision. There, too, on this physical basis and foundation, there is built and added, for purposes of mental growth and the maintenance of a cheerful

and lively spirit, a general system of social life in which the whole of the family, with all the different but complementary tastes and interests of its members, is once more made the unit. There are lessons to be learned from Peckham; and out of it there may yet come things for the general benefit of our people.

Perhaps I have allowed myself to be carried down a pleasant and leafy path of digression. The upshot of my feeling and experience remains—that the purpose and meaning of life began, and remain very largely to the end, in the family. It is a small but a total society : its interests and its endeavours are catholic : it is a unit of religion and education and mutual moral discipline as well as an economic and social unit : it exists for the worship of God and the service of man (*divini et humani juris communicatio*). I have often quoted to my children—not as one who thought that he was describing himself, but at any rate as one who dearly wished that he was—the words of Michael in Wordsworth's poem :

> Even to the utmost I have been to thee
> A kind and a good Father; and herein
> I but repay a gift which I myself
> Received at others' hands.

There was always a lively and very justifiable protest, which I expected and even enjoyed. I knew that I was too fond of quoting, and especially of quoting Wordsworth; and I knew, from experience, that this quotation was the reddest of red rags to

the natural pride of youth. And yet, at the end of the account and in quiet and sober earnest, the words of Michael tremble in the mind—not as a statement (one remembers the petty done, the undone vast), but rather as a prayer. May it be true, at the last, and in the final judgment, that in this sphere of the family something has been done, and what has been received has been handed on, perhaps not without interest. Then there will have been purpose and meaning, and the keeping of a course and a faith.

ON MARRIAGE

So far as I have hitherto gone, I have spoken of the family as being a single society. But it was a commonplace of the older writers on social and political subjects (basing themselves, I fancy, on Aristotle) to speak of the family as a federal society which united together three different sorts of groups —the *societas nuptialis* between the husband and wife; the *societas paterna* between the parents and children; and the *societas erilis* between the master of the house (*erus*, as he is called in Latin) and his servants. Some of these older writers were somewhat subtle—and also it must be confessed, rather academic and dryasdust. They were so clear about the existence of these three separate societies that they would not unite the three in one, and refused to recognize the family itself as a society. Leibniz was wiser : he was willing to think that the family system contained four societies, and that it included the family itself, or the family as a whole, as well as the three divisions or provinces of the family. It is better to be a follower of Leibniz in this matter. It is dangerous to jump, as those old dryasdusts did, straight from their three societies to the State, as if there were no intervening family which held the three together independently of the State. That makes too much of the State; and anyhow it flouts

our actual experience of life. The three societies fuse and intertwine in a single society which colours and controls them all. If I am husband and father and master (not that I like the word master), I am also one; and it is my oneness that really matters. I may divide myself, and the family to which I belong, for the purpose of analysis; but it, and I, always fly together again when the analysis is finished.

'The nuptial society', or the *consortium* of marriage exists in its pure or isolated state only during the days of the honeymoon. It is palisaded off for that brief time—Adam and Eve in a garden, from which they must necessarily depart, not because they have done any wrong, but because 'Time's winged chariot' comes and carries them off to do something right, or at any rate, something necessary, in the world that lies outside. (The man never comes back to the garden, except in memory : the woman finds another and almost equally wonderful garden when she has her new-born child in her arms.) After that time, and when those days in the garden are ended, the *societas nuptialis* begins to run in harness with other societies. But it still remains itself : it has still its own accommodations to make : it imposes its own discipline and demands its own system of education. The education of marriage goes to the depth of being. It involves the adjustment of two personalities and characters to a common way of life. It is full of delight and difficulty; disagreement and reconcilia-

tion; differences and compromise. It is a microcosm of the process which works in the great society of the State, where men have to find a common way of life by the same process of give and take. The first and primary democracy, in which debate and compromise are used to settle differences, is the institution of marriage.

Man likes a warm room, with windows happily and firmly shut, a good fire, and a pipe of tobacco. Woman loves the singing air, the open window, and the sight of driving clouds. (The pundits say that man's blood is different from that of woman, and, in particular, that the process of metabolism is more constant in him and more unstable in her. But that is to whittle the difference down to physiology and prose.) Then, again, man is apt to think that he is dying whenever he is ill: woman takes illness as something which is all in the day's work, and need not create a fuss. More important still, man is like the Athenians of old: he is always in search of novelty, and always pining to hear or see some new and stirring thing: he has a sovereign and vexing impatience. Woman faces the daily round and the common task, and she faces it equably. I often think that women must smile at men—the amusing, exciting, annoying, obstinate playboys of the human world. If they do, they dissemble their smile; and they work away steadily at their task of pinning men down to stability and the quite ways of good sense.

Men and women, yoked together 'for better, for

worse' (but with such infinite capacities for working and pulling together for better), have to respect one another's differences. Neither is bound to grow like the other, or to imitate the other: why should they have married at all, unless they were different from one another, and each needed the other's difference? They have to wed their differences, or to find a golden mean between them. If the man has a passion for novelty (which is far from being absent, though it may not be so pronounced, in the woman), let them both go out together in search of novelty: they will return together to the old ways with all the greater zest. (There is a great deal of the pendulum in us all, and we are only happy when we are swinging from the old to the new, and then back again, or from the solitude of two to the gregariousness of a general company-keeping, and then, once more, back again.) But it is a fault in marriage that the two should always be acting together, whether in search of novelty or in any other search. There is a necessary 'We' ('*we* have been planning this, or *we* have been doing that'), but there is also a necessary 'you and I' ('if you take up this, I will take up that, and then between us we shall cover the ground'). Marriages seem to be perfect when there is identity of interests and pursuits; but perhaps they are actually more perfect (if the word 'perfect' has any comparative) when there is a difference of interests and pursuits which is the difference of two complements. Of course the difference must be compatible with sympathy, and

even with sharing : either must report to the other about his (or her) particular interest or pursuit, and either must listen to the other's report and profit by listening. To hunt apart does not involve separate larders : if it did, nearly all the fun of the hunting would be gone. And *some* part of the hunting should always be in common. There can be no proper communication in marriage unless some things are done together—and among them not only the search for novelty, but also the cultivation of some permanent and regular habit or interest. A wife who loves music deeply will desire to take her husband with her into the realm of music : it gives a finer edge and flavour to her enjoyment; and even if he were not greatly musical he would be a poor husband, and a poor and thriftless steward of his married days, if he did not gladly go, knowing that he will not only be giving, but may also be gaining himself in the act and moment of giving. Change the name of the habit or interest, and the wife can do the giving, and also receive the gain, in the same degree as her husband. To pursue together novelty (especially in travel); to do some hunting apart, but without forgetting to report to one another on the quarry; to pursue together some steady habit or interest—these are simple counsels, if not of perfection in marriage, at any rate of a quiet and calm felicity.

All this may seem to be the substitution of comradeship, co-operation and the steady hue of hodden grey for the peacock's wing of romance. There

was a time when a glance or a look sent gold into the skies, and made the horizon glow. Does all that come down to this—a calculated and planned rule of life, like the rule of a monastery? Yes, it comes down to this in the end, if marriage is to be an institution and not a passion—a way of life, not an iridescence. The analogy of the monastery goes deeper than at first sight appears. The monk too has had this vision: he too has seen the horizon glow with a revelation. But he has also recognized the great virtue of stability; and he has worked out a technique of life—a technique of common life—which is based on the secure psychological foundations of observation and experience of human ways, and is designed to secure the permanence of the vision. If as much wisdom went into the making of a rule for the common life of marriage as has gone into the making of the rule for the common life of the monastery, there would perhaps be a greater number of happy marriages.

The vision never departs from a monastery; and there is no reason why romance (a poor and nebulous word, but perhaps it may none the less serve) should ever depart from marriage. It would be a hard thing on woman if it went entirely, because she is its natural beneficiary; but it would also be a hard thing on man, because he also would lose what he equally, or even more, needs. If the romance means, in marriage, that either should see the other not only as the other is on the ordinary level of life, but also as the other may become in moments of

exaltation and of the enhancement of power—not only in actuality, but also in potentiality—there is no reason why it should ever depart. Romance has indeed, as a general rule, some sensuous cue; and that cue may cease to be given. But sense is not the only stimulus which can idealize persons for us. To live with a person, and to become aware of the motion of the soul, may carry us far beyond sense, and yet stir up strangely in moments of increased consciousness. The peacock's wing may still flutter, even in old age, when one sees some motion of a soul which

Waves in its plumes the various light.

Some of the old writers of whom I have spoken classified the nuptial society as a *societas voluntaria* based on contract—a sort of partnership agreement, "to be taken up for a little temporary interest, and to be dissolved by the fancy of the parties." There was, however, a divergence on this matter: some thought that only the society of master and servant was contractual, and that the society of husband and wife, like the society of parent and child, transcended the sphere of contract. For most of us there is more in marriage than contract can ever explain. We should agree with Burke (though Burke was speaking of society at large rather than of this particular society): "it is to be looked on with other reverence; because it is not a partnership in things subservient only to the gross animal existence of a temporary and perishable nature." If we believe

that there is a divine scheme behind our mortal existence, into which we are necessarily fitted, we shall not say that marriage is simply a human contract. We shall rather say, as I once attempted to say in another place, "that the agreement of husband and wife is necessary to the existence of marriage, but it does not explain, or create, the institution of marriage: the institution is an inherent part of the divine scheme, and the agreement of the parties is simply an agreement to fit themselves into that scheme, which exists of itself apart from their agreement." That may appear to be mysterious: to some it may even appear to be nonsense. Whatever it be, I cannot but believe that the institution of marriage is, or produces, what the Catholic theologians once called a *corpus mysticum*. I should apply to the society of marriage the saying which I once found in one of them about society at large: "when human beings are gathered together by one bond of society, and for the purpose of helping one another mutually in order to one end, they make one mystical body, which may morally be called one and single by itself." There may be recession of the agreement which was necessary for the existence of the body: there may be what is called, in a Scottish phrase, 'resiling' from the word once given. If there is, it is not only the ending of agreement: it is also the destruction (so far as it can be destroyed) of the body which that agreement summoned into life. And if a society of parent and child has been created

as well as the society of husband and wife, there is a double destruction. The destruction may be necessary. There may be bodies, even mystical bodies, which never were, or have ceased to be, viable bodies. But when they die and are buried, it is the ending of something more than an agreement.

ON PARENTS AND CHILDREN

"The family helps to educate its members, it helps them to enjoy their leisure . . . It is within the family that the child acquires his likes and dislikes, his hates and loves. It is the family that teaches him what goods to seek, what pleasures to enjoy . . . It is within the family that he learns the meaning of co-operation and self-control, of loyalty, sympathy and altruism."—**Sir William Beveridge.**

The very term 'paternal society', which was once applied to the relation of parent and child, carries us back to a masculine society, curiously blind to the fact and the implications of motherhood. There was a time when men practised the *couvade,* and sought to prove the fact of parentage by becoming pretenders to maternity. The past is not altogether dead; but it would be more rational, when one thinks of the relation of parent and child, to speak of *societas materna* than it is to speak of *societas paterna.* It is a wise child that knows its own father; but most children are wise enough to know their mother. It is idle, however, to dispute whether father or mother should count particularly in the society of parents and children. Both father and mother count; and they count so illimitably that there can be no measuring of quan-

tity, or any talk of more or less. If the society of husband and wife is in any sense a mystical body, and in any sense one and single, the whole of that body will go, undivided and without any difference, into the new society of parents and children which springs from its life.

The vital problem in the society of parents and children is the problem of education. In our English life, and so far as our English middle classes are concerned, the solution of that problem takes a peculiar form. It is the form of what may be called resignation—resignation by the society of its duty of training the young (and equally of training the parents themselves through their shouldering of obligation) into the hands of the boarding school. It is true that in any system of education there must be some measure of resignation. When parents send children to the day school, they resign them largely to it : they take to themselves a partner, which must necessarily occupy a large place in the children's life and loyalty for most of the days of the year. But this is not, on any day of the year, a total resignation. It is otherwise under the conditions and on the system of the boarding school. Here, for some three-quarters of the year, the resignation is total. The society of parents and children befriends and guides the child, in its own shelter and under the cover of its own genius, only for a quarter of the year. And this method may run, if the child begins at a boarding preparatory school at the age of eight, and remains at the public

school to the age of eighteen, for eleven whole years —and those the crucial and essential years.

It is an old habit of our countrymen thus to resign the growing child. I sometimes fancy that it is a survival of that mediæval habit, according to which a child was sent by its parents in its early years to a castle or noble house, to be educated till the age of fourteen among the ladies, and then until maturity among the men. Foreign observers have been astonished, and generally critical. I remember reading a quotation from the *Italian Relation of England*, written about 1500 : "the want of natural affection in the English displays itself specially in their conduct towards their children, for having kept them at home till they arrive at the age of seven or nine years at the utmost, every one, however rich he may be, puts away his children into the houses of others." I remember reading, in the same excellent source (Pearson's book on National Life and Character, which is one of the great books in my life), another quotation, from Taine's *Notes on England*, which shows a result of our national habit, or at any rate what a wise Frenchman thought to be a result : "un pere, une mere, est bien moins que chez nous au courant des sentiments de sa fille, des affaires ou des plaisirs de son fils." These are formidable testimonies. But to recite them in advance is to condemn in advance, and therefore to condemn unfairly, a system which must be judged on its own intrinsic qualities, and not on foreign evidence.

There are many solid arguments in favour of the system. One of the strongest is that the growing boy or girl is given quite, and an ordered run of life, for the development of mind and body. There is the blessing of a single allegiance; there are none of the problems which arise from the running of school and family in double harness. For three-quarters of the year there is the simple rule of the school—the rule of the expert : the rule of a wise accumulated experience. The tentative parent, fumbling at a new job, and guided only by the light of nature, has wisely resigned his task to wisdom. He can comfort himself by a lively sense of his own imperfections. (The question remains whether he ought not to have struggled with them himself.) He can comfort himself additionally by thinking that the health of his child, living in a green oasis, and free from the fever and fret of cities, has gained a new and vital assurance. (Perhaps he thinks too much of the health which is purchased by seclusion, and perhaps he forgets the wise remark of Anatole France, that the walk to school in the streets of Paris, past the curious shops and among the bustling life, was itself a liberal education.) But above all, the transcending all other considerations, there is the fact that an impartial cool authority is addressing itself to that task of discipline—that labour of habituation, if one may use an Aristotelian term—which the authority of a parent, possibly fretful and certainly distracted, can never face with an equal equanimity. Rubs

and frictions, complexes and inhibitions, may stand between parent and child. The impartial cool authority speaks with a clear and undivided voice. And if ever such a voice was necessary, it may be said to be necessary to-day. It is hard for the best of parents, in these days, to maintain a household which runs with a quite ease, and gives a quite and easy material background for the growth of the young. Nor are all of us the best of parents. Many of us have our own plays and our own instincts for play : we want to unfold our own individuality : we are not cast for the part of the pelican. If we reflect on our children, we readily fall into a misguided affection which carries them with us, untimely and precociously, into our own amusements and recreations. We create, at the best (and it is a poor sort of best), a prodigy or young virtuoso in the field of our favourite game : at the worst, we may do something which is even worse.

But there is another side to the shield. If we believe in the society of parents and children, the parental society, we can hardly believe that it can be right that this society should be active only for a quarter of the year. The matter becomes the more serious when we reflect that during this quarter of the year the family is not engaged in its normal activity. It is living, to a greater or less degree, under holiday conditions : it is not a sphere of pieties and duties tinged by affection, but a sphere of enjoyments : it even absents itself, for a period or periods during this brief quarter of a year,

from the felicity and stability of the home. But there are considerations even more vital. One is the stinting of family income, which is intended for the general purposes of the family, in order to provide the necessary means for sending the children away from the family to receive the education which the family ought to join in giving. That stinting is a fact, and in many families a cruel fact. The allocation of family income is a part of the ethics of the family. When the allocation is predetermined by the cost of a particular method of education, ethics goes by the board; and other and necessary values are sacrificed for the sake of a single value which, even at the highest assessment, can never be said to be absolute. There is also another stinting involved which is even more serious. This is the stinting of family life itself. For the family *is* stinted—one may even say, truncated—by the absence from its life, for so much of the year, over so long a period of years, of its own essential members in their own most crucial years. Children, after all, are essential members of any and every parental society during the period of childhood and adolescence. What they need to receive, and what they are able to give, is an integral and necessary part of the very existence of the society. Nor is it only the society of parents and children which suffers. The two other societies also suffer. The society of husband and wife lacks one of its links and its common interests—perhaps the greatest of links and the highest of common

interests. The society of master and servants (or, as I should prefer to say, of husband and wife and their fellow-workers in the house) suffers too. Children may be a nuisance; but they are also a bridge. There should always be a bridge between the kitchen and the parlour. Children are natural bridges.

On first principles, and on any true scale of values, the argument goes against our English system of the boarding school—at any rate in terms of the family, and from the point of view of the best common life of the family. This is not to say that there is not a place for boarding schools, even in those terms and even from that point of view. Where the family is necessarily scattered—the parents at work abroad and the children living in England—such schools *are* a necessity. Where the family has only a single child they *may* be necessity, in order that the child may fully share in the company of other children. (But there is also another cure for the single-child family.) There may also be other justifications, even on the ground of the family, for the resignation of children by the family—justifications based on the presence of something abnormal, something outside the common course, in the health or the disposition either of parents or children. But if we cherish the idea of the family (and that, it must be admitted, is a large 'if'), we ought to be steadily on guard against turning the abnormal into the normal. The temptations are great. Many of our English boarding

schools are the best educational institutions, indubitably the best educational institutions, which we have in that kind, and at that stage, anywhere in our country. That is the title which they can plead, and that is their supreme temptation to parents—a temptation which can only be resisted if we say to ourselves that even the best can be purchased at too high a price, especially when the price is paid by the family. There is another temptation, which is more ignoble—the temptation which comes with the reflection that to send a child to such schools is to make a good and lucrative investment; to ensure that he makes good friends and the right sort of friendships; to secure for him a cachet which will also be an open sesame. That is a temptation which counts: few of us can escape it, even if we seek to disguise it: indeed, when we think of the future of our children and the 'start in life' which we can give them, temptation begins to wear the face of obligation.

The argument has gone one way—perhaps too much one way. And yet, if we add to considerations of the welfare of the family the further and larger considerations of the welfare of general English society, the balance tilts even further in the same direction. It is not for the welfare of general English society that there should be two different modes of education, the one with a higher prestige and a greater cost than the other, which divide the one society into two different societies. Money can purchase much, and it establishes many differences;

but it is not clear that it should be able to purchase freely, and to establish differences freely, in the field of the education of the young. That, however, is a larger consideration, which lies outside the sphere of the family. Keeping within that sphere, as the argument properly demands, we can only plead (but the plea is a sovereign plea) that the values of family life should mainly control and determine the methods of education. It is not right to obey the convention of a class, as if that were the final arbiter; nor is it right to purchase the best, in a mood of calculation (or abnegation), blind to the price which the family must pay in order to purchase the best. A true calculation must weigh the cost to the family (not merely in terms of money) as well as the gain to the child in the course of his future career. To many a parent the balance must be hard to strike. The temptation to abnegation is strong; and it may well seem selfishness to shrink from opening an account in which the child has so many and so clear gains. But there are gains less easily ponderable (or perhaps we had better say losses) which also enter into the account. For myself, I cannot but reflect on the gain to the total life of the family, and thereby to the child (and particularly to the child), which comes from the inclusion of children in that life to the end of adolescence. I am also bound to reflect, as one who has lived in Universities for some five-and-forty years, that the University can give—and give at what seems to me to be the right stage of deve-

lopment—that opportunity for a common life of the young, in a separate environment, which is given by the public schools. I would not anticipate the University. It is there, in my own experience (and I can also cite the experience of others), that the friendships are formed which count in life and bind men closely together. We have pushed things back and back in England—back from the University to the public school: back from the public school (this began to happen, on any scale, about seventy years ago) to the boarding preparatory school. On every count I should be willing—and not only willing but anxious—to postpone the flying away from the family into the residential life of an educational institution till the days of the University.

ON THE HOUSEHOLD

The society of 'master and servant', of which the old writers spoke, bears a name which is now outmoded. Mistress and maid is a kindlier term; but that still leaves the word 'mistress'. The old Athenians had a gentler language, when they spoke of those who rendered service by the name of 'fellow-workers.' But apart from language, there is a difficulty in the thing itself. Of the three societies which are federated and blended in the family, two may be said to transcend the sphere of contract: the third—the society of employer and employed, if it can be called a society at all—is based upon contract, and is at the most a partnership agreement, renewable from month to month. It is not easy to blend a temporary contractual society with two permanent societies based on a deeper foundation. It is the less easy because in those two societies there is now no suggestion of inequality, or of rule and subordination (except such as may be involved in the passing subordination of children), and in the other society that suggestion cannot be hidden. It was different in the past, when the husband, as the Romans said, had the wife 'under his hand', and the father had children 'under his power', in the same sort of way as he had

authority over the helpers in his house. The emancipation of women and children has left the distinctive position of the family servant more obvious. Children, as I have said, may be, at any rate for a time, a bridge of reconciliation; but they may also be a rock of stumbling and a cause of offence. In any case there is a bridge to be built in the life of the family which cannot be left to intermediaries, but demands direct and equal negotiation, and a fair compromise, between the main parties—wife and husband on the one side, and their fellow-workers on the other.

There is a natural divergence of outlook and expectation. The wife and the husband long for permanence: they would gladly lift the temporary contract into something approaching the stability of a fixed relation which gives each party the dignity of status. But they want permanence, primarily, on their own terms and to suit their own needs. They may try to see the other side; but the maintenance of the life of the family is so exacting, and ramifies in so many directions, that it must always tend to cloud the vision of the other side's needs and just requirements. A wife and mother struggling with difficulties has little liberty for herself, and may tend to judge others by herself. On the other hand her fellow-workers have their own lives; their own desires for recreation; their own hopes and plans for a future which reaches beyond the immediate span of the house of their occupation. They value liberty more than security: they

zest for novelty (service is a recurrent round, and novelty is a necessary sauce of human life) : they also wish to be free for the occasions and the calls of their own family—for they too have families, and they too cherish a family loyalty.

It is a natural divergence; and it is accentuated and enhanced, for the heads of the household, by the claims, whether real or imagined; of social intercourse. The family cannot live undisturbed an internal life of its own; the world will keep breaking in, sometimes cheerfully, and sometimes like an invader. The French family is more secluded : the English family, willy nilly, has a promiscuity of guests. Perhaps we have exaggerated the to-and-fro of social intercourse; but that is another problem, belonging to another inquiry. The fact remains that it adds a complication to a problem already complicated.

Can the problem be solved? Is it likely to remain a problem; or will it disappear because it cannot be solved? It may be said that domestic service is only a relic of the past—the successor of slavery and serfdom, destined to go as they have gone, "old feudal nonsense in a toppling world." But that is a difficult saying. The family will always need fellow-workers, unless it condemns itself to mere living instead of the pursuit of a good way of life, and unless it condemns the mother to constant drudgery. If it is to do any work of grace, and if it is to find any good way of common life, there must be some leisure about its doings. But

it must be a leisure shared equally with the fellow-workers; a leisure enjoyed and used for the benefits of the mind, and not frittered away in the cult of mere amusement. Any good and skilled work demands a free space and a liberal environment; those who share in clearing the space and providing the environment must share in its benefits. "Nonsense and trouble," says the writer who has just spoken of feudal nonsense, "nonsense and trouble, but it had to go on. No other way of living, if you wanted to walk to your grave cloaked in the English life."

I shall alter the emphasis and the nuance of those phrases. The cloak of an English life may pass: what is in question is the vesture of a good general human life, anywhere and at any time. Nor need there be any nonsense—though there must always be trouble, in the sense of care and forethought and considerate planning—in the making and wearing of the vesture. Planning is always necessary for any form of cœnobitic life; and the three societies which form the family are engaged in such a life. Nature knows symbiosis as well as parasitism; she can set two plants to live together in mutual support, as well as in a system by which one lives at the other's expense. Parasitism is a disease which may readily attack the family, especially when the employer builds a life at the expense of the employed. But symbiosis is possible; and in human life it is the only right way. It involves the conception and the practice of the single life of the

family, in all its three divers societies. It involves a sharing of the family income, in settled and agreed proportion : it involves a sharing of leisure time : it involves a sharing of common interests (that is where, if I may repeat that point, children may serve as a bridge); it involves the sharing in common, so far as it can be managed, of that equipment and those amenities of the household which modern invention has multiplied so rapidly. All this needs planning. But a cœnobitic life has always needed planning, ever since the days of St. Macrina and St. Basil, who planned their modes of common life on either side of the same river. There was once a good way of common life planned in England by Nicolas Ferrar, and his mother and sister and their kinsfolk, at a place called Little Gidding. There might be many Little Giddings in England if we would follow that good example.

II

MY DUTY TO MY NEIGHBOUR

NEXT to the claims of the family and our duties to the family—next not in the sense of being lower, or of less importance, but in the sense that they first come home to most of us at a later stage of our development—there are the claims of our neighbours and our duties to our neighbours. The English Catechism in the Book of Common Prayer, under the head of my duty to my neighbour, gives a catholic and comprehensive list. It includes together our family duty, or political duty, and what may be called our social duty. What I mean myself, when I think of the claims of neighbours and of duties to neighbours, is something less catholic; and yet it is also something which is broad enough to stretch every faculty of giving and serving. My neighbours are not the members of my family, nor "all that are put in authority" : they are those with whom I am brought into voluntary social relations, or with whom I feel that I ought to bring myself into such relations. They form a circle—a circle that I

can widen or contract, and therein lies a great problem of life—including all who make natural human claims upon me, and to whom I feel that I owe natural human duties. Sometimes I feel that I must widen the circle; and I say to myself, "the multiplication of interests" (interests in others and in relations with others) "is the maximization of man." Sometimes I feel that I must contract the circle; and I say to myself that the good wine of one effective if restricted interest is better than the 'watery friendship' which comes from multiplied interests.

Who is my neighbour? The word seems to involve some physical contiguity, as the family involves the fact of consanguinity. One who lives in a village will readily feel the pull of contiguity, and acknowledge the claims made on him by his actual physical neighbours. There is, or there can be, a natural piety in the village, which links each to each and binds all together. Indeed there must always be a duty to the physical neighbour; but it is a duty hard to fulfil in a town. I have always felt that I have been a bad townsman, in whatever town I have lived; and this has been a dereliction of duty and a failure to acknowledge and meet the natural claims of the physical neighbourhood. It is some excuse for this dereliction and failure that our towns are mostly too large to form easy units of piety. I have often thought that if my ward were a real neighbourhood, and not an abstract geographical area for purposes of polling, I might have been a better townsman; and I have often dreamed that it might

help me to do my duty towards my physical neighbour, under the conditions of urban life, if there could be some decentralization—"some introduction of small units", as Mr. Lewis Mumford has put it, "scaled to direct activity and participation. . . ." But I accuse myself in excusing myself.

Another excuse, perhaps more valid, is the claim of a larger piety. When one thinks of social duty to one's neighbours, it is easy to hear "London calling". Some national organization—it may even be some international organization—claims one's service. The claim may well be just and imperative. The neighbour to whom I owe my duty is not necessarily my physical neighbour. He is the man or woman, wherever he be (in China or Czechoslovakia, in distressed areas or on new housing estates), whose natural claim for help tugs at my personal sense of duty and evokes my personal acknowledgement. Each of us, in the last resort, makes his own circle or circles of neighbourhood, by virtue of his own sense of claims and his own response to claims. It is one of the great choices and problems of life to determine who, *for you*, are your neighbours. But still it would be a poor sort of life if you had so many neighbours, and so large a circle or circles of neighbourhood, that you did not know or help your actual physical neighbours.

What are these "natural claims" of my neighbours? They are simple human claims, which one man makes on another without speaking, to be made happy, if there is a power of giving happiness, and to

be made better, if there is a capacity for bringing about improvement. The claims are made on a sense of obligation which we carry within us : the sense perceives the claim, and makes the response. There is a moral sense, as well as the five senses; there is a moral response, as well as the sensory responses. Animals may make claims as well as men; indeed there are some who feel the claims of trees and flowers. The claims that men and women make on us are beyond enumeration. But there are two simple claims which must be included in any enumeration, and which my own experience (by which I mean my experience not of the shortcomings of others, but rather of my own lapses) has brought particularly home to me. One is the claim to have promises kept. *Fides est servanda:* the word once given creates a claim of expectation which must always be acknowledged, and not only acknowledged but honoured. We only create unhappiness (we may even create something worse than unhappiness) if we defraud expectation; and however much we may feel that our personality should be free—free to meet a new conjuncture by action different from that to which we had given our word in an old and different conjuncture—the fact remains that such a feeling is a cheat and a deceiver both of ourselves and (if we indulge it) of others.

The other claim which I should emphasize is the claim to consideration—the claim that behaviour should be considerate, and not unreflecting. It is a

duty which we owe to others (in driving a car or in walking along the street or in any action which necessarily involves relation to others) to be aware of their existence and to consider their feelings and reactions. In the crowded and hustling life which we live consideration becomes increasingly difficult, and increasingly necessary. To practise it, and so to practise it that we turn conscious awareness of others into an automatic habit of considerate manners in all our contacts with others, is one of our chief and greatest duties to others.

There are different ways in which the claims of man on man can be met and satisfied. One way is the legal way. When that way is followed, the claim is made into a legal right, and the response to it or acknowledgement of it is made into a legal duty, compulsorily enforced. But there is another way of meeting and satisfying human claims. It may be called the social way. We can serve the claims of others not only by fulfilling (as, in the last resort, we shall be compelled to fulfil) our legal duties to them, but also by fulfilling our social and voluntary duties, in the temper of social service. It is a natural temptation of the eager heart to turn to politics, to seek to increase the sphere of legal duty, and to be willing accordingly to extend the sphere of legal control of human life. For myself, I cherish the idea of voluntary response to claims; and I believe that that has been the tradition and the strength of our general English way of life. But I hasten to confess that the traditional modes of

voluntary social response to human claims, or, in other words, the traditional methods of social service, have to be reconsidered and recast.

We should all confess that there has been, and we might even say there still is, an element of patronage in the idea of social service. One went to a settlement, carried light into the darkness, and brought down, as it were from above, something that was better and happier than the darkness could itself achieve. So far as that was ever the case (and it is perhaps an over-colouring to speak of the past in that crude way), we may say that the case is now altered. Those who have a claim to happier and better lives (in distressed areas, or on new housing estates, or wherever it may be) are bestirring themselves to-day to build their own happiness and their own improvement. What they ask from others is an understanding of their own effort, and a helping hand, given on the basis of simple equality, in the getting clear of their own ideas and the translation of them into effect. To do social service to-day is to be an interpreter of your neighbour's aspirations—a co-operator, or even a willing servant, in the planning and laying of the way of life he is trying to make for himself. That is the lesson one learns from the community associations, for example, which are arising on our new municipal housing estates. The claim their members make is for understanding (may one say "consideration"?) and for voluntary co-operation in a voluntary effort to make a happier and better life. But

that is as good a claim as one man can make on another—that he should ask for help when he is already helping himself.

ON CONSIDERATION AND MANNERS

I have spoken of the value and the duty of consideration for others. The other I get the more I long for the reign of consideration. It is a simple, and yet a difficult thing, to put yourself in the place of others; to project yourself into their feelings; and having done so to act—when it comes to action which concerns them—not only with regard to your own feelings (which may be hustling you along with a careless and unqualified singleness of aim), but also with regard to *theirs*. An obvious illustration has often occurred to my mind. I am a different person so far as my own instinctive feelings are concerned, according as I am walking or cycling or driving. When I am walking, I think and behave as a walker, imagining that all the world is meant for walkers, and that cyclists and drivers of motor-cars are their natural enemies. Put me on a bicycle, and my feelings change—at any rate as regards walkers, though I may cherish even livelier feelings towards the drivers of cars. Let me sit in a car, and I am entirely transformed: I become like Toad in Kenneth Graham's *Wind in the Willows*, and long to sweep walkers and cyclists heedlessly on one side. I am often amused at the three persons who dwell, at different times, in my body; and I like to set them to talk together. They have much

to learn from one another. But there are other conversations—imaginary conversations—in which I also indulge. When I am walking, I talk with the other walker who is shoving heedlessly past me, or with the loitering knot who are blocking the way at a corner, in order to hold a symposium, and are shoving me into the gutter. When I am cycling, I talk with the other cyclist, who cuts his corner on the wrong side and makes me dismount with such rapidity as I can still command. And when I am in a car—well, I have a variety of talks with a large variety of drivers.

There is something morbid in introspection; and there may also be something morbid in what I would call 'extrospection' or a quivering anxiety to see into the minds and to share the feelings of others. (Who could sleep at night if he projected himself fully into the feelings of a citizen of Madrid, or of a Jew waiting for the tramp of feet and the knock at the door, or of a Chinese family just hearing the guns, or of a prisoner on one of the 'islands' or in a concentration camp?) But extrospection has its claims. Perhaps it would be better described as imaginative sympathy. Such sympathy, I should conjecture, has been the foundation and the creator of manners. Manners is a mode of conduct, a way of behaviour, determined by regard (and ideally by a conscious regard) for the feelings of others. It is the expression of imaginative sympathy and the child of extrospection.

The natural man has a natural objection to

manners. He regards manners as conventional, a vizor or mask set into a permanent smile, which hides the true play of the features. It would be as easy to say that dress is unnatural. Man is an animal; but he covers the marks of his animality by dress. Man has animal passions (surges of hot blood and peeps of the beast buried in the subconscious); but he covers those passions by manners. There is nothing unnatural in manners, unless the whole process of civilization has been a distortion of the nature of man. On the contrary it may be argued that the man of good manners is the natural man, the man who moves easily and naturally among his fellows, the man who has conquered awkwardness and stiffness in human intercourse. To be natural you must have manners; one might even say that in order to be natural you must have a manner, your own set way of expression in which you express yourself easily and are as easily understood by others because they have come to expect it from you. We all wear some sort of mask, and the mask is the condition of our being ourselves. It makes us expectable or secure beings, who behave to others in expectable ways which give them a sense of security. Manners, in the plural, may be called a collective mask, a sort of collection or average of the different sorts of manner, so constructed (by a process of pooling or averaging) that it gives to general society that security of expectation which makes ordinary intercourse easy and natural.

Of course any manner may become a pose; and any set of manners may become a decorative and insincere convention. A set of manners is something which has to be continually reshaped. New factors in human intercourse (for example, new inventions, which bring with them new problems of conduct) are constantly emerging. There is a time-lag before new manners are created to meet the new factors; and during that time-lag the old manners are out of date. The very circle in which manners are practised is a changing circle : once it was the narrow circle of an aristocracy : to-day it is the general circle of a whole society in which every member claims the dignity of an equal. Here again there is also a time-lag; and here again, during that time-lag, the old manners are out of date and reduced to a mere convention. The general system of manners is not superannuated by these temporary difficulties; but it is jarred. It has lost elasticity : it has suffered an ossification. The difficulty of our days is that we have to bring old manners, which were the fruits of old consideration, abreast of new demands; to bring them into line with the factors of new invention, and to make them fill (in the new form which the new width demands) the widening circle of their application.

It is particularly difficult to bring manners abreast of the factors of new invention. Manners, the great shadow which faithfully follows the substance of morals and the virtue of consideration, is involved in the use of them all; they all demand, as

their necessary control, some effort of imaginative sympathy. But in these matters men are still in the stage of children playing with toys, resolved to try them out to the uttermost and to experiment in all possible uses. The car is still, for many, a toy: the question it still suggests is how fast it can possibly go, and how nimbly it can swerve on its way. Some measure of use and wont is needed for manners: we must become familiar with recurrent situations before we can find a steady and considerate response. Moreover our times are times of emancipation—emancipation of the young from the old patriarchal yoke: emancipation of new classes into the use and enjoyment of new amenities. The emancipated rejoice in a new-found liberty: they naturally forget that the passing away of external controls involves the burden of a new self-control.

Imaginative sympathy—a lively sense of the feelings of others, a consequent sense of their claims, and a consequent recognition of our own duty—is a faculty which needs constant practice. We move about in the dark, each of us self-contained in the walls and behind the shell of our own personal feelings. We need feelers, antennæ, filaments of apprehension (or rather of comprehension) of the feelings at work inside other walls and behind other shells. Wherever the relations of man to man are concerned, this is a vital necessity. It is a necessity particularly vital where the relations of a group of men to another group are concerned. It is an easy thing to shut oneself in the group, and to interpret the duty

of sympathy as a duty to the other members of the group—and only to them. If this is done, any sympathy with the other side becomes the opposite of duty : it becomes a wrong and even a treason. Along this easy way men enter a sad and storm-vexed world of the necessary hostility of groups—the war of social classes : the war of political parties : the war of national ideologies, democratic and dictatorial. But groups have a duty of sympathy as well as individuals. After all, they must live together; and they can only live together on the basis of some understanding of one another, which in its turn involves some minimum measure of sympathy. Behind the labels of 'Capital' and 'Labour' there are very similar human beings, actuated by very similar motives and feelings. Why should the affixing of labels make one side black and the other side white? Behind the labels of 'Democracy' and 'Dictatorship' there are graver differences, so far as the circle of governing persons is concerned; but if we look at the ordinary citizen (and he is the great and main thing behind the labels) we shall find that he is the same sort of human being, trying in the same sort of way to make something out of life.

Insistence on the distinctiveness and the differences of labels produces the one ideology of which I am particularly afraid. I sometimes call it 'the nominalistic ideology'; and then I am led to speak of 'the bellicosity of nominalistic ideology'. One creates a noun of assemblage : one worships that noun, and hates another noun of the same type; and the result

is the thunder of war, or at the least a massing of thunder-clouds. It is necessary to look behind labels; to find the human beings whom the labels profess to describe; to discover for oneself the feelings and the motives of those beings, which in nine cases out of ten are much the same as one's own.

I see well enough that what I have said may seem to be a sacrifice of ideals and a surrender of values. To call an ideal a label, a name, a noun of assemblage, would indeed be a treason to ideals. But I feel that an ideal which is worth the name is never a thing which divides. It is something which all men can follow, and indeed are already endeavouring, in their stumbling way, to follow. Liberty, for example, is an ideal, a large and generous ideal; and I see it being pursued—in different ways, because it has different aspects—by different countries, different classes, different parties. Something is wrong, and gravely wrong, when one aspect is pursued to the exclusion, and even the negation, of other aspects—when the liberty of the toiling workers imposes chains on religious liberty, or again when the liberty of a people to enjoy a free 'life-space' imposes chains on another people or peoples, and even on its own members. But even here, and in spite of the wrong, I would plead for the virtue of consideration. There is generally something to be considered in the other side and in the other-group—some soul of goodness, some aspect of what we ourselves hold dear. In any case we have a duty of good manners, whether or no good manners be shown to us. There are manners

between nations as well as between individuals—manners which demand consideration, extrospection, imaginative understanding. And he who has good manners does not lecture others about them; he simply practises them, hoping for a return, but knowing that they must be practised even if there is no return.

In a word, I desire to see the individuals behind the labels : I desire to see any good that there is in the label itself; I desire the grace and the dignity of national good manners towards all other nations, and generally of group good manners towards all other groups. Not that I should ever desire good manners to become a polite condoning of wrong. They would lose their own moral foundation if they ever fell into that vice. But it is possible to blame the wrong in another side without failing to acknowledge the right which, in this mixed world (not a dazzling contrast of black and white, but a chequered pattern), is also likely to be present.

ON THE ART OF SOCIAL INTERCOURSE

One of the things which most men feel to be valuable (except the natural solitary), and which they count among the values of life, is social intercourse. We reckon among our duties to our neighbours the duty of mutual entertainment—that they should be willing to come to us, and that we should readily go to them, in order to give and to get the profit of one another's minds, ideas, conversation, tastes. Aristotle, dividing life into the three compartments of work, recreation, and leisure, and assigning a sovereign importance to the activities of a well-spent leisure, included among those activities that of "intercourse with friends who have been chosen for their worth." But it is an easy thing so to organize—one may even say, to stereotype—the orb of social intercourse that it ceases to belong to the compartment of leisure (where the mind plays freely for its own delight, and for the sake of the profit which is inherent in the mere activity of play), and comes to belong instead to the compartment of work, in which performance is necessary for the sake of some external result—some profit, prestige or advancement. Social intercourse then becomes a social round; and the end of the social round is social success. A fixed code of 'social duties' develops : a set succession

of 'social events' is invented; and attendance becomes obligatory under penalty of falling into oblivion, or even of being accounted a shirker of the 'social responsibility' involved in the membership of some circle. Perhaps the Anglo-Saxons have this gift, or defect, in an especial degree. Perhaps they show it particularly when they live in another country, engaged in administration or in business among people of another stock. They rally together to some centre; they organize a round which holds them closely together—but also holds them apart. There can be few visitors to India who are not impressed by this tendency.

In our English life today—which is very unlike the masculine life of Aristotle's world—women are the natural organizers of the social round; or if men are the organizers, they will plead that they are acting for the sake and in the interest of women. Perhaps both sexes are equally concerned; and perhaps one of the chief foundations of the social round is the interest of sex in sex, and all the by-play which passes when men and women, disengaged and at ease, can strike sparks from one another in the encounter of wits. Perhaps too there is also another motive, especially among the young, but even more especially among the old who feel that they are charged with the destinies of the young—the motive of desire for a mating-ground, or an area of sexual selection, in which mutual discoveries can readily be made. Plato himself, when he was writing the *Laws* in his old age, proposed the holding of

regular fortnightly assemblies, with an eye, among other things, to the fellowship of marriage, and with a view to removing the ignorance in which it is too often contracted and preventing the mistakes in which it is too often involved. If Plato could think of that object, we have some warrant for doing the same.

But, however important sex may be, there is something that goes beyond sex in the art of social intercourse. One of the highest reaches of that art is good conversation, rising to the dignity of discussion, in which daily happenings and personal foibles (too frequent and too easy a theme) are transcended, and the wings of some general discussion are freely unfolded. There is nothing to prevent this higher reach from being attained in a mixed company. If we may trust Castiglione's book of *The Courtier*, it was attained in Urbino readily some four centuries ago. The records of the French *Salon* show how women may participate in discussion, and even guide its course; and I have been told, on good authority, that even today, and already in the schoolroom, a French girl may be trained for this high duty. We are not so ready for these flights. Englishmen and Englishwomen become awkward, and seek their native shell, when the conversation becomes general, and still more when it begins to turn on generalities. They have a silent capacity of judgment in practical affairs, and a sort of instinct for what Plato called 'right opinion' (but he valued it much lower than he did a reasoned conviction) on actual and current

issues : but they have also an instinctive shrinking from being carried off their feet into the upper air of first principles. Generalize a conversation (in both senses of the word) in France, and you make it instantly lively : do the same in England, and you are likely to kill it.

Things are a little easier when men gather by themselves in clubs; and women, following their example, have begun to find new powers. But there is still room (plenty of room) for the development of an art of *creative* social intercourse, in which something is done and achieved, and some genuine play of the mind is attained. Talk is far from being the only thing which can be created by the practice of that art. Music can also be created—music which we perform ourselves, refusing to adopt the device of *semper ego auditor tantum.* I often wonder why the private musical party, where the guests were themselves the performers, has passed so much out of our life. It was a part of national life in the seventeenth century : it was a part which the stern Cromwell himself loved; and it has left its memorials which deserve to be treasured. What is always to be desired is some sort of creation proceeding from leisure—happy creation, just for its own sake, done in company, and therefore resulting in the giving of delight to others as well as the getting of delight for oneself. It is not that we fail, as a people, to be creative in our leisure time. How many there are, for example, who create gardens—"the purest of humane pleasures", as Bacon said, "and the greatest

refreshment to the spirits of man." But we create in solitude. There is also room for social creation.

I wonder whether the community associations on our new housing estates, busied in their community centres, are not finding an art of creative social intercourse which is perhaps the best of its time. If one visits these centres, one finds, at any rate in the best (and the best will spread), a varied social life with a large creative strain. The members are all neighbours; the ground in which they are rooted is the good mother earth of neighbourhood. They are generally engaged in creating or making something *together*. Each has his garden, and each remembers to cultivate his garden; but the keenest will join in a garden guild, which pursues in common the art and craft of gardening—clubbing for purchases, clubbing for a show, exchanging knowledge and plants. Then there is the dramatic group, with its members producing and acting a play, and sometimes there may be one of its members (I have actually known it) who writes the play for the producer and actors. I should be wearisome if I mentioned all the activities—the orchestra, the operatic society, the singers, the groups for talk and discussion, the study groups —and I might even convey a wrong impression of precocity or of academic inspiration. (It is all spontaneous: it all springs from the people themselves and is all done by the people themselves.) But I think it is clear that there is an example of creative social intercourse which deserves to be recognized—and to be imitated. The people them-

selves have not the inhibitions, or the conventions, which restrain men in other circles.

I suppose any set of social customs for the regulation of social intercourse is the most difficult thing in the world to change. The laws of the State are far more easily changed than the rules of society. But any man who has a longing to pass himself, to serve his family, and to cultivate friendship in the form of joint activity of friends, must sometimes chafe against custom. The social round is a flocking of like to like for the doing of repetitive work disguised under the name of amusement. Good fellowship, if I may quote Aristotle once more, is not composed of those who are likes, but of those who are 'different in kind', and can therefore give something to one another; and I will add to his saying that it also exists for the sake of free activity, and not of repetitive recreation. If Cromwell came again (a speculation in which I like to indulge), I think that he might look askant at some of our baubles. He might even bid us, in the name of Heaven, do something which it was worth Heaven's while to see. But I fear I have drifted into extravagance. All that I had in mind was simple enough; and there was no need to involve the name of Cromwell on its behalf. It was that social intercourse should be so practised that it was not an exaggerated round, impinging both on family life and on individual self-possession; that it should involve and include, as one of its parts, some creative element, whether of high debate or of the pursuit of music or some

other form of beauty; that it should be an intercourse not only or even mainly of likes (who run together easily but only confirm one another in what they already are), but also of dissimilars who can exchange their differences with one another and give to one another; and finally that it should be based on more than one interest (certainly on more than an interest in one particular game) and should have some depth of dimension and some variety of riches. This implies a body of friends (or at any rate of neighbours who regard neighbourhood as in itself a sort of friendship), seeking to cultivate friendship's garden, in its different beds, with all its different flowers. Perhaps a dream—an impossible dream. Perhaps the passing and fugitive contacts of the ordinary round are enough for most of us. However much they demand of our time, they demand little else than time. They allow us to keep ourselves to ourselves—nodding to one another, passing the time of day, and parting. And yet there is something missed. What might be an art is left uncultivated. What might be a time of creation becomes a time of passive procession. What might be a giving to others, and a perpetual springing of service as well as a renewing of pleasure, becomes a satiety. Pleasure has its own revenges when amusement ceases to amuse.

ON THE MODES OF SOCIAL SERVICE

Fashion rules social intercourse: it has its influence even in the sphere of what is called social service. There are vogues in everything; and there may be two different sorts of vogues. There is one sort of vogue when a particular activity (let us say, for example, 'slumming') becomes the fashion in the circle which itself sets the fashion, and comes to be accepted by those who follow the fashion with that mixture of gusto and flippancy which such followers affect. That need not occupy our thoughts—unless we are interested in the curious life-history of this sort of vogue, and anxious to know how it is bred, 'how begot, how nourished.' But there is a second kind of vogue which is more interesting and more worthy of attention. There are vogues—successive waves of vogue—in each particular activity, whether it is itself in fashion (and possessed of vogue in the first sense of the word) or has gone out of fashion. In dress, in medicine (where now one sort of cure seems to have vogue, and now another), in methods of teaching, in the writing of poetry, in social service, one sort of vogue succeeds another.

Each changing place with that which went before.

There was a time when, in the world of social

service, the vogue set towards social work in some area of darkest England; towards the opening and running of clubs (for boys or for adults or both) where professional men resided, and worked, when they were free, in the earlier and less occupied years of their career; towards the foundation of 'houses' or 'settlements', connected with universities or colleges or schools. The fruits of this period, which began only some fifty or sixty years ago, are still with us; and they are very good fruits. No man who knows Toynbee Hall, for example, but must admire its work and the spirit in which it works—all the more because under its wardens and not least under its present warden, it has lengthened its steps to keep pace with the movement of the spirit of the times. But there has come a change in the general world of social service—perhaps since the war; perhaps, I am sometimes inclined to think, since the 'general strike' of 1926 (which produced its good results, as a jolt often may); but more particularly since the problem of unemployment made itself generally felt as a national problem which concerned and involved us all in responsibilities. In the old days service had still something of a tinge of the system which Disraeli called by the name of the Two Nations. One 'nation' was the giver; the other was the receiver. One 'nation' inculcated thrift and temperance, and sought to organize charity and the works of charity on a sound basis; the other learned and profited. There was something of patronage, even if it was unconscious; and the suspicion of patronage

still lingers. It is still a handicap to social service, even at the present time. And yet there has been a change, which we are all beginning slowly to realize.

The essence of the change is that the Two Nations are much less two, and much more one. Prophets may still ingerminate the notion of class-war; but life is contradicting the prophets. We are much more one than we were when I was a boy, and went to the elementary school in my village. Then, there was a distinction even of dress : I cannot see it today. I remember two photographs, published, I think, by the Education Committee of the London County Council, which show two groups of boys, attending the same school, as they were dressed and looked in the nineties, and as they were dressed and looked forty years afterwards. It is a symbol, and a very striking symbol. We all look much the same today : we dress in much the same way : we share the new common interests of film and radio games : it is difficult to feel any particular difference whether one talks to those who are above one or to those who (in terms of wealth) are below. I remember Mr. Justice Holmes saying to me in Washington, in 1929, that when he lunched with J. S. Mill in the House of Commons about 1867, Mill struck him as the one man in the English Middle Classes who did not labour under a conscious sense of inferiority. I remember replying then, and I should reply with even more conviction today, that I was not aware of any conscious sense of inferiority, nowadays, anywhere.

Under these conditions social service has now become a mode of social intercourse between the members of a single society. (That is the reason why the word service, with its old connotations, is hardly an ideal word.) It is a matter of equals working with equals : at any rate that is what I feel about anything that I do. There are, of course, still differences : there are those who have had better chances in life, and there are those who have had worse. But those who have had the better chances are working with those who have had the worse (whether in unemployment clubs or in community centres or in village halls), not in order to give or to suggest to them a mode of life which it would be better for them to live, but in order to help them to disengage their own selves. I should put it even higher than that. I should say that those who have had better chances have something to learn from the new modes of life which those who have had worse are trying to create. In what I have already said, in speaking of the art of social intercourse, I have given some reasons for thinking that the practice of that art in community centres has lessons for all of us— even for those who have had, and still have, the better chances in life.

It is an important fact, and one about which it is worth while to reflect, that there is a busy laboratory of social invention at work among the people themselves. There is no need to put before them a suggested pattern of life; the people are shaping their own patterns. This is the lesson which I have learn-

ed from what I have seen in the last few years of the life of new housing estates. In such conditions social service assumes a new form. It may still, in some measure, take the form of advice in regard to difficulties in the shaping of patterns. It may still, in some measure, take the form of the provision of help, from the funds of charitable trusts, to make the shaping of the pattern quicker and fuller than it would otherwise be. But the chief form which it will assume is that of discovering and recording, for the general benefit, the gist of the experiments being made : it is that of drawing together those who make the experiments, in order that they may pool their experience and pull together for its advancement (They will do that in time for themselves; but in their initial stages they will be helped by some central body of service which seeks to understand and connect all the various struggling developments). I once heard a phrase (perhaps I may even have used it myself), "cross-fertilization by the diffusion of information". It is a pemmican phrase; but what it means is that one good experiment may fertilize and forward others, if only the news of it is disseminated and the good seed given its chance. Bees are necessary; and social service does the work of bees.

But that is not all. Social service is also, as has already been said, something more. It mixes the whole community : it means a practice of social intercourse (in camps, in centres, in clubs) of all the members of the community. The practice of social

intercourse among all the members of the community is nothing peculiar to our country. It has been recently developed, and highly developed, in the countries which we call dictatorial. In Germany there is the system of *Arbeitsdienst,* by which the State draws together the youth of all classes and districts for service in reclaiming the waste spaces and improving the beauty of Germany; and there is also the system of *Kraft druch Freude*—maintained by the Labour Front of employers and employed, with its 26,000,000 members—which draws the German people together for the benefits of travel, the enjoyment of drama and music, and the recreation of sport. In Italy, parallel to the system of *Kraft druch Freude,* and earlier than it (indeed as early as 1925), there is the system of *Dopolavoro* (instituted by decree of the State, but with a voluntary membership which runs to some two millions), which provides for workers, both manual and intellectual, facilities for travel and sport, for music and drama and films, for popular culture (or what we should ourselves call adult education), and even for professional training and for medical and legal assistance. *Dopolavoro* has its centres, like our own centres and clubs : I remember vividly a centre in Florence, with its canteen and its various rooms for music and dancing and games and study, which I visited before I had ever seen an English community centre. We may say, if we wish, that State or party (or State and party acting together) have sought in these two countries to fill leisure for the

people with what they thought good for the people lest the people should fill it for themselves. But that would be an ungracious saying; and it would not be true. Authority has in both cases sought to give something which was worth giving and was needed. No doubt it preferred to give it itself, rather than see it given by any other organization, religious or economic; but what has been given has been greater than could have been given by other means. The gift has served, and has been intended to serve, the idea of the unity of the folk or nation. But it is just that idea which we too, if in different ways and with a different understanding of what is involved in the unity of folk or nation, have equally to serve.

The real question which arises is whether the social intercourse of the whole community should come of itself and 'find itself', or should be inculcated by authority. We naturally prefer the first alternative; and for ourselves—there is no need to speak of others, or to indulge in comparisons—with our voluntary traditions which go back to the free churches of the seventeenth century, it is the better alternative, if only we can make it work. In order to make it work, we need two things. One is that the people themselves—the working people who 'maintain the state of the world'—should practise the art of social intercourse among themselves. It is there that the movement should begin; not in what is called 'above', but in what is called 'below'; in the depths and among the great masses. Here is the great germinating ground; and it is here that

movements are born. Then there comes the second thing needed. It is that those who have curiosity about what is happening, and have admiration (when they begin to know) for what is happening, should come and co-operate—voluntarily come and co-operate. They will bring something with them (indeed they would be useless if they did not); but it is receiving as well as bringing that matters, and the essence is co-operation rather than bringing or receiving, so that each can say to the other :

The more I give to thee,
The more I have, for both are infinite.

I am sometimes inclined to fall into a paradox, and to think that in matters social there is progress by going downwards as well as by going upwards—perhaps progress downwards is even more than upwards. The progress downwards is not decadence; it is rather renewal, revival, revivification. It would be foolish to idealize the common man, as those Lutheran preachers did, early in the history of the German Reformation, who took their Bibles to peasants to have knotty passages explained. But it would also be foolish to be blind to the stirrings of new life which emerge among ordinary men. That is why I have spoken of the great germinating ground, and that is why I have spoken of progress downwards. Such speech may seem a sort of communism : it may seem to point to an art of workers which is *the* art, a logic of workers which is *the* logic,

a general life of workers which is *the* life. I do not believe that : I only believe that there are different forms of art, logic and life which have to be put together, or to live together, and I only plead that it may be the right thing to begin at the workers' end. My fear would be that the workers might refuse co-operation, or at any rate be shy of co-operation; that they might say, 'We can manage for ourselves and prefer to manage for ourselves, without what *you* call co-operation but *we* are apt to term patronage.' Not that I should be astonished if that were said. There is some reason in past history which would explain to me why it was said. But I do not think that my fear would be justified. The people welcome co-operation—when it is given by equals to equals; when it respects their own self-management of their own institutions; when it is a fair and equal partnership. Anything I have learned from what I have seen of the working of community centres is enough to teach me that lesson. . . . Social service, on this ground, is just social co-operation. Social co-operation means social intercourse through the length and breadth of the community. And in such intercourse there is mutual profit and common gain, with what is called upper learning and benefiting as well as, and as much as, what is called lower.

I am led, in conclusion, to say one last word about neighbourhood, as the ground and basis of social co-operation. There are three main links which draw men together in a common life. They may act

separately or in combination. One of these links is consanguinity, or the link of common blood. It is a link which is being forged and hammered in Germany today. Another is the link of contiguity or neighbourhood, which binds men together in a common residence and brings them together through all the contacts which that involves. A third is the link of co-operation in a particular activity which corresponds to a particular interest; and this link will bind men together who share that interest, however much they may be scattered in space and however little they may be connected by blood. All these three links count; but of all the three the greatest is the link of contiguity. It is not greatest in the sense that it clamps men most closely together : it is greatest in the sense that it can bind them together in more ways, and for more purposes, than either of the other two; it is the greatest also in the sense that it can readily add to itself one of the other two —the link of co-operation. In the neighbourhood there naturally arise many co-operations in particular activities : in the neighbourhood there can also arise a general co-operation. It is neighbourhood that we need to cultivate particularly today, drawing together in it and working together for it. The pity is that our neighbourhoods—our areas of contiguity —have become sadly blurred for us by the growth and sprawling of cities and by the promiscuity of our building. How shall a man find his neighbourhood? That is one of our great problems today. A great deal hangs on its solution. If we could only

find real neighbourhoods and then, having found them, cultivate our neighbours, of all sorts, kinds and estates, we should be setting Jerusalem in the land—or many Jerusalems. That is why, after the wanderings of the argument, I end with a simple longing for the planning of regions and cities and even wards of cities. A lame and prosaic conclusion. But until the units of social life have been disengaged from their blur, it is difficult to practise the art of social intercourse with any articulate clearness. We need a clear and firm definition "to make our circle just."

III

POLITICAL DUTY

IF I were asked to define the idea of political duty to which I have come, I should say that it was simply this—to begin by being a good Englishman, and then to transcend without losing that quality of good Englishman. I should argue that there was propriety in that particular order, which proceeds from the poet's feeling for "this dear city of Cecrops" to the philosopher's inculcation of allegiance to all humanity. The young men of today—gallant but perhaps hasty jumpers to the ultimate—often start with a passion for a world-State, or, more especially, for communist Russia as the germ and the nucleus of a coming world-order. I find that what I read about Russia is fascinating, and sometimes heartening, though I notice that a number of things have been done there "as by fire". But I also find that it has taken me a long time to understand my own country and its history and tradition; and I believe that such understanding is a prior condition of any good understanding of other

countries, their histories and traditions, our relations with them, and the ways in which we and they can make the best of our mutual relations. This is not to say that I want to look at Europe or the world at large, through English spectacles. That is indeed an English habit, and not, I believe, a useful habit. We are too prone to look at the world through an English monocle, and too prodigal of English advice which falls on unhearing ears. But no man can jump out of his own skin; and the more you understand what is happening inside your own skin, the more ready you are to understand what is happening inside other skins—provided that you do not assume that exactly the same either should or will happen.

I begin, then, with a duty of understanding my own country, and of fitting myself by my understanding into the niche which I can occupy and the job which I can do. That duty has two aspects. One of them I should call geographical. This is the duty of patriotism, in the peculiar and proper sense in which I want to use that word. Patriotism consists in knowing—to the point of loving, but equally also criticizing wherever it has been left derelict or defaced—the look and the general countenance of your country. It is what Rousseau called *l'amour du pays natal* : It is an affection for it, based on intimacies and associations, which makes you wish to cherish its beauty and remove its blemishes. It is an affection which extends to towns and cities as well as the countryside, making you see in each

town a person (individual and unique), as well as a picture in every valley. This modest patriotism is a pleasure as well as a duty: it brings the reward of a quiet eye and the sweet cud of memory. The other aspect of the duty of understanding one's country relates to the people rather than the soil. It is the duty of nationalism, if in these days one may speak of nationalism as a duty. The enormities of an exaggerated nationalism are patent to us all; but they do not destroy the duty of that normal nationalism which consists in understanding the tradition, and accepting and adorning the inheritance, in which one has been born and bred. The idea and the fact of *natio*, as well as the idea and the fact of *patria*, have their claims. I am inclined to think that it is a very particular duty of Englishmen, in these times, to understand what I have heard a leader of labour describe by the name of "the meaning of England." What is the set of traditions and ideals, and the general manner of doing things, which we have acquired in the centuries of continuous development vouchsafed to us by the fortune of an insular position and the genius of a practical temperament? We need not answer that question in any temper of boasting. Few of us would think of boasting at all today. We need to answer the question in order to understand what it is that we have to give and ought to be giving to a troubled world, and in order that we may resolve to give it to the best of our ability. A great deal depends on the clarity of our understanding and the vigour of our resolution, but

particularly on the clarity of our understanding. A practical people such as we are, accustomed to finding expedients and getting things somehow done, is also a silent and perhaps a confused people. It does not readily produce a *dottrina* or a *weltanschauung*. I am not sure of the value of the things which bear these names; but I feel tolerably sure of our duty of understanding the meaning of the tradition by which we have lived and are living, and for which we should be ready in the last resort to die.

One cannot think of political duty, in a country which during the last three centuries has developed a form of government by disscussion between different views and different schools of opinion (or, in other words, by the process of parliamentary democracy), without also thinking of party. I should say that in such a country the duty of espousing and supporting a party was a part of political duty and an imperative issuing the general national tradition. This is not to say that it is a duty of all, nor that it lasts for the whole of life. There are minds—perhaps too mobile for a steady loyalty, or perhaps more sensitive to art than action—to which party can make no appeal and on which it has no serious claim. And even those who have felt its claim for most of their lives hear the call more faintly towards the end. I used to fear, in the days when I belonged to Party A, that I should end by sliding into Party B, as I observed that most of my elders did. Now that I am an elder myself, I find a cross-bench most comfortable. But that is not

only the result of age. It is also due to a feeling that my social duty of service to my neighbour is at least as important, at any rate for me, as political duty. It is hard to be a great partisan when you are drawn to causes which are irrespective of party and political affiliations. Perhaps, too, the world has altered, as well as we ourselves. When foreign affairs engulf attention, it is less easy to think of the internal issues which are the main and the natural dividers of parties. In any case the duty of party loyalty has sunk for me in the scale.

The duty which rises higher and higher, so far as politics go, is my duty to Europe, as a part, and a great and immediate part of my duty to humanity. Tom Paine writes somewhere in the *Rights of Man* : "I am a citizen of the world, and my religion is to do good". That is like Paine's amusing, and yet engaging, flamboyance. And yet it remains a duty to be a citizen of something more than England. It is a duty which first comes home to the mind in the course of foreign travel. In that sense, and from that point of view, it is a happy duty; it is the child of pleasure, and again, in return, the parent of pleasure; it is born of the happiness of travel, and it commands us to renew and extend that happiness. Never, perhaps, was it more a duty than it is today to take ourselves abroad : to cultivate friends and friendships in Italy and in Germany as well as in France and the other countries that are our nearer neighbours; to understand the cities and the minds of other peoples. Merely to know—and knowing, it

may be, to love—the physical aspect and countenance of another country is a gain. One becomes a better citizen of Europe through cherishing in the mind and the memory the surge of the Rhine among vineclad hills, or the winding of the Danube through fruit-blossom before it reaches Vienna, or the Rhone in its brimming flow past Avignon and Tarascon, or the Arno running under its bridges in Florence. But this is only the beginning of European citizenship. There is a further reach which comes from some understanding of different national traditions and cultures, and from the discovery (which sooner or later one makes) that underneath all these differences there is a common European element—a common classical and Christian heritage persisting through variations and even through aberrations. It is a good thing if a man can find, in his latter days, that life has brought him foreign friendships, and that he can meet and talk with friends abroad on the common ground of a common heritage.

The members of the English aristocracy were once good travellers and good Europeans. It is a duty which has now passed to the English democracy. It is true that there have been moments, during the last few years, in which many of us have been sorely tempted to think that our duty was a duty to principles, and that in loyalty to our principles we ought to absent ourselves from the felicity of being in countries which we should otherwise wish to visit again and to know more deeply. The temp-

tation was not ignoble; but perhaps it was a temptation. We in this country have a peculiar liberty and opportunity of getting abroad into the countries of Europe; and I am inclined to think that it is our particular duty, in these days, to cultivate the garden of any foreign friendships which we may have, and to grapple other countries to us by any links which we can use. To some it may seem a very simple duty, of which it is almost foolish to speak : to others it may seem no duty at all, but almost a treason. For myself I cannot but feel that it is a high form of political duty, today, for the private citizen who has the opportunity and the power, to cultivate by his personal action the cause of the mutual understanding of nations. If we go abroad in quiet possession of ourselves and our own ideals, we shall be giving as well as gaining; and if there is any infection, I am proud enough to believe that the infection may proceed from us. The thing I am beginning to fear is that we should ourselves prove guilty of falling into that cult of an 'ideology' which we deprecate in others. I dearly want us to maintain, intact and undiminished, our own national way of life. But I cannot, in modesty, seek to make it the universal way, or proceed to consider other nations entirely by the criterion of their agreement with that way. That would be an ideology which might readily run into bellicosity. The higher duty is to understand other nations as what they are in themselves, and as what they may come to be if they develop their own best elements—to understand that, and, having done

so, to cultivate what is common (the best is always common) for the sake of the peace, the concert and the unity of Europe.

ON RESPONSIBILITY IN THE REALM OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Many men and women take their political duty hardly today. The sense of political duty passes into a sense, at once acute and constant, of political responsibility—a sense that the burden of the world is laid directly upon us, and that we must ourselves be about its business. This sense is outward-looking : it acts particularly in the sphere of foreign affairs. A German thinker said, some twenty years ago, that economics was destiny : today it might be said that foreign affairs are destiny, and a very grave destiny. Most of us run to this way of thinking, whether we are young or old. Not being fatalists—having, on the contrary, the feeling, natural to our stock, that 'something must be done about it'—we resolve to escape our destiny by shaping it to our will. The young men of the Universities sent deputations of protest, or of suggestion and pressure, to London : their seniors—even the most senior among the seniors—send counsels of perfection to their contemporaries or pupils who sit in the seats of authority. It is a measure of the anxieties of our times. But it has also older roots.

The end of the war, twenty years ago, drew the peoples of the world into the area of interest in

foreign affairs. The League of Nations was founded on that basis: the League of Nations Union, and similar societies, were founded to strengthen and buttress the basis. Popular opinion had been aroused even earlier to spasms of concern with foreign affairs: I can just remember the passion about the Bulgarian atrocities, some sixty years ago. But it is a new thing that popular opinion should be regularly, and on set principle, brought into action in this area. The result is an extending of the scope of democratic responsibility, but the question which is beginning to arise is whether democratic responsibility has not been extended beyond the point to which, in the present state of the world and with the present grasp of our faculties, it can safely be stretched. Not that the people has shown any spirit of ambition, or any anxiety to acquire and exercise new powers for the sake of their exercise. If it has moved more into foreign affairs (especially in the last three years, since the beginning of war in Abyssinia) it has been moved itself by a number of forces—the force of conscience, aroused by what seemed to be clear moral issues: the force of sympathy, excited by the sufferings of friendly causes and peoples: the force of concern for itself and its own peace and preservation, a concern stirred and quickened by the massing of dark banks of clouds on the near horizon. It is no ignoble desire which impels men to broaden their shoulders, to erect their height and to seek to carry an orb of fate which has become so threateningly vast.

But it is little, after all, that private citizens can do. We can sign joint letters to newspapers, or subscribe our signatures to great petitions, as the Chartists did in their day. We can found new societies for meetings and demonstrations: we can seek to put pressure on members of Parliament: we can request interviews with ministers, and press our policy on their consideration if our request is conceded. The form and spirit of our government give us these freedoms; and it seems a dereliction of duty, and a treason to the great values of our collective life, not to use the freedoms which we happily possess. But the power we possess is the power of thought and the word; and the question which arises is the question of the real extent of that power, in an iron world which knows also the sword. "I too have lived in Arcadia." There was a time, a little more than three years ago, when I saw a clear moral issue in the beginning of the Abyssinian war, and I gladly joined with others in using the power of thought and the word to press a view of that issue. I shall feel that there was a moral issue; but I realize that it was not clear, or simple, or single. Behind it rose other issues, and behind them still other issues. You could not pluck one issue out; and isolate it for treatment, as the scientist can isolate some element of matter. The human world is far more tangled than the material; and it does not permit an isolation of issues. When you are acting in the human world, even with the purest of moral intention, you are faced with a tangle of issues, and

confronted by the conflict of moral duties. Action is not the climbing of a single peak : it is the engineering of a way through a confused series of interlocked ranges. The citizen in the valley sees a peak, or two, or even three : he can hardly hope to see the interesting folds and convolutions. He will tend to simplify issues; he will tend to do so all the more, the more thought he brings into play and the more he uses the process of reason. It is not only, or mainly, deficiency of knowledge from which he suffers. It is also a surplus of logic.

All this may seem to be a very familiar and a very trite argument against democracy in general. Interlocked issues; conflicting considerations; the citizen who sees but 'broken arcs'—are not all these phrases only stepping-stones to an idolatry of the superior wisdom and the higher view of an authoritative governing circle? Not in intention; certainly not in intention—though the want of intention of error is seldom a guarantee against the commission of error. I should desire, and I should advocate, the application of the spirit of democracy not only to domestic issues, but also to foreign affairs; and not only to foreign affairs, but also and even (if war *should* come) to the conduct of war. One of the essential elements of the spirit of democracy is that it permits, and even welcomes, criticism—criticism which is the necessary salt of public life. But here there are two things to be said. In the first place the criticism which counts—the criticism which, we may even say, *acts*, in the sense that it influences

and helps to determine action—is the criticism which proceeds from knowledge, and still more from actual experience, of the things which are to be handled. It is not all opinion which matters, and not all criticism which counts. In the second place (and this is the more important consideration) criticism operates differently in the three different spheres in which it may act—the sphere of domestic issues; the sphere of foreign affairs; and the sphere of war. It operates differently because the matter on which it operates is different. Not to speak of the conduct of war (which is a specialized and professional province in which the critic if he speaks at all, must speak from a depth of knowledge and from the very heart of responsibility), I cannot but notice a very great difference between the settlement of domestic issues and the conduct of foreign affairs. In domestic issues we are all speaking in a common language about questions of our common life. Some may know more than others; but all are likely to know something. Again we can isolate issues, if not altogether, at any rate very largely: indeed the very fact that we agree to concentrate our attention, at a given moment, upon a particular issue (the issue of Home Rule, or the issue of Free Trade, or the issue of the rights of Trade Unions), produces, of itself, an isolation of that issue. It is far otherwise in foreign affairs. The issues are not merely issues of the texture of our own life, though they deeply affect our life: they are issues involving the different textures of different national lives. Above all, no

issue can be isolated. It is not we alone, or our own wishes for concentration, that determine the issue at any moment. Others are also involved, whether as allies or opponents; others also help to determine (and it may be in greater measure than we) the issue, or issues, to be settled. The play of our *own* opinion cannot make a particular issue. The debate is a debate of nations; and the play of debate within any single nation upon these issues is conditioned by that fact.

Now it may be contended, in answer to such considerations, that we all know something from the texture of our own lives, about what is right and what is wrong and that there *is* isolated, and *is* placed before us, a clear and simple issue—the issue between right and wrong. There *is*, therefore, a common knowledge and a common language in foreign affairs, as there is in domestic matters; there *is* a concentration of the issue, in the same way as issues are concentrated in the domestic sphere. I confess that I cannot see the world before me with this simplicity of vision. I see a tangle of issues : I see each issue affecting other issues : I see upon any issue, if I try to isolate it in my mind, no total right on one side and no total right on the other, though I still prefer one side to the other on the balance. The one thing about which I am clear is that any statesman, charged with the government of his country, is bound by the ethics of his office to the primary duty of securing the immediate safety and the ultimate welfare of the inhabitants of his

country. He would be doing wrong if he became a crusader for right at the cost of his country's safety and welfare. And that is a sobering reflection for him, and for all who put themselves in his place by an effort of sympathy.

In this matter of foreign affairs, if the argument be true, single issues cannot be isolated, nor can the whole tangle of issues be simplified into the simple issue of right against wrong. That is what limits (and, as it seems to me, inevitably limits) the play of the democratic process; and that is what may comfort, however sadly and soberly, the citizen who feels his responsibility acutely. He will not shed his responsibility; but he will recognize that responsibility is function of knowledge and power, and that it can only operate to the extent of knowledge and power. He may also come by a livelier sense of the responsibility placed on the shoulders of those, both in the government and in the opposition (two integral parts of our system), who have greater knowledge and power. But above all he will think, and think more than once, before joining in agitations and manifestoes on particular issues of foreign affairs. Those who have knowledge are always entitled, and indeed bound, to speak : those of us who know less are not indeed bound to silence, but we are at any rate entitled to maintain it without any reproach of shirking. It is not that foreign affairs are a veiled mystery, or an unapproachable *arcanum imperii*. It is simply that they involve, in comparison with domestic affairs, far more factors which

are unknown, and likely to remain unknown, to the private citizen—and that not because of any policy of secrecy, but in the very nature of the case. The foreign policy of Great Britain cannot be solved by the simple will of the inhabitants of Great Britain, at a given moment of time, even if that will were unanimous. The past is involved as well as the present: there is the steady tradition of policy pursued since 1688, which is still a necessary factor in the consideration of present issues. The Dominions are involved as well as Great Britain in any discussion of policy: friends are involved, both actual and potential, as well as Great Britain and the Dominions: and the views of those who are not friends, as well as of those who are, are also involved in any just calculation. It is hard for those who are not in the clearing-house to know what is passing through, or how much each item counts.

It follows that leadership must count for more in foreign affairs, than it can in domestic. That has been our tradition: we talk, and we rightly talk, of the foreign policy of Canning, or of Palmerston, or of Salisbury, or of Grey. It has not been a solitary leadership: the responsible minister has had, on the one hand, a permanent staff (which perhaps matters more, and justifiably exerts a greater influence on ministers, than any other branch of civil service), and, on the other hand, the criticism and the support of Parliament. Leadership so strengthened and so restrained deserves the trust which has been generally and fully given. We cannot all be leaders; and

even if our feelings carry us into generous explosions of sympathy or indignation, we must remember that the responsible leaders (whose private feelings are probably the same as our own) are in a position which demands that they should walk warily. Least of all are the 'intellectuals' of a country qualified to take a lead in the sphere of foreign policy. They are naturally tempted, and indeed impelled, to do so. If they are writers of fame, they have connexions with the writers, and even perhaps with the readers, of other countries. In their own country their opinions command a ready hearing on any theme; and whether or not they are anxious they will be solicited to speak. But the writer, by his very cast of mind, will tend to bring the simplifications of logic into the ordering of tangled issues. Lord Morley once spoke of the pedantocracy to which the literary mind is liable. We need not use a term so formidable. But it is true that such minds cannot bring to tangled issues that basic and almost inexplicable faculty of judgment which more silent men, less accustomed to clear formulations but more versed in the complexities of actual life, are somehow able to attain. Another phrase of Lord Morley is illuminating. He spoke once of "the intuitive instinct that often goes farther in the statesman's mind than deliberate analysis or argument". Great and crucial decisions generally lie beyond logic.

If we come down, in the issue, to the recognition that the sphere of our own immediate responsibility in the issues of foreign affairs is small and circum-

scribed, are we surrendering what might have been a value of our lives and an area of the performance of duty? Are we shortening the stature of our souls? I should answer the question in the negative. We are only acknowledging limits, and recovering from an ardour which overleaped itself. Something has been taken which we hoped that we might possess; but more than enough abides. International righteousness is not the whole of righteousness (though it is a very difficult part, which has to be achieved in slow tribulation); nor is foreign policy the new religion of our days. Religion abides; and it is greater than any politics, foreign or domestic. The issues of social life, and the problems of the betterment of social life, survive; and they claim the thought and the activity of every man. We must remember the need of balance and practise a just perspective. We oversimplify the world, and we magnify both our own guilt and our own power; if we say that through us, and through what we have done or not done in the realm of foreign affairs, God is defeated and the Devil is victorious when this or that happens in that realm. There are other realms; and God is not mocked at the end of the account.

ON NATIONALISM AND ITS VIRTUES AND VICES

It is curious how patriotism and nationalism tend to become an appanage of the political Right, and a bugbear of the political Left. It is more than curious—it is tragic—that they tend to become a grave in which the individual must bury his power of living his own life, or a battle-ground on which he must perish in their name and for their sake. The love of the natal soil, which is the definition of patriotism, would seem to be something which both Right and Left can share; and the thought of its hills and valleys and familiar smiling face should suggest the goodness of living and growing rather than the necessity of sacrifice or death. The sense of the breed of men to which one belongs, which is the definition of nationalism, should similarly be a common link; and the idea of its general achievement in all the fields of the mind (which has been the making and is now the being of the breed) should be the spur to a new internal growth and a fresh internal activity. It is the entry of comparisons—the awareness of other natal soils and other breeds—which produces a change. It introduces the motives which Hobbes called by the names of competition,

difference (in the sense of distrust), and glory. These motives put soils and breeds in the state and posture of gladiators towards one another. They may also lead to internal dissension within each soil and among each breed. A party of the Right may summon adherents with a clarion to defend the soil and exalt the breed. A party of the Left, feeling that the summons is a distraction, and even a calculated distraction, from the real duty of improving the soil and bettering the breed, will go into opposition, and denounce the flamboyance of patriotism and the aggressions of nationalism.

It has been said that feudalism was not a disease. It may be equally said that nationalism is not a disease : on the contrary, it is one of the things which make life worth living, one of the values which men (at any rate in their present constitution and with their present habit of life) must necessarily acknowledge. But it must be admitted that feudal ism, if it was not a disease, was prone to disease, and died of disease; and it must equally be admitted that nationalism too, even if it is not a disease, is liable to it and may conceivably die from it. We see the disease today : *crescit indulgens sibi dirus hydrops*. But it is not clear that the disease is universal, though it is certainly widespread; nor is it clear that it is an inevitable consequence of the constitution of nationalism. There is, after all, a healthy nationalism which has claims and a title to life. A man would be a little thing without the substance of the nation around him and in him; he would be

hollow unless he were filled and sustained by something of its legend (by which we in our country perhaps set too little store), its literature, its art and its architecture, its particular variety of religious experience, its general treasures of achievement. There are few expressions of the human mind which have not some national colour. Music perhaps is the purest; but even in music (and especially in the music of the voice) the nations have their own dialects. Nationalism, so universally present, so colouring, so sustaining, is a thing of value in human life; and we might even be tempted (as some nations are tempted) to call it a value behind the values, were not the phrase so dangerous, and so easily perverted into a false sense, that it had far better be avoided. Nationalism is not the ultimate which determines for each nation what shall be good for *it*, what shall be true for *it*, what shall be beautiful for *it*; nor are goodness and truth and beauty subordinate to the nation. Nationalism is not value behind values, in the sense that it transcends values, and differentiates them for each nation : it is rather a colour or tinge behind values (which themselves are common to all humanity), colouring and tincturing the common line and the common design with its own light; adding but not creating; differentiating the hue but not the nature of whatsoever it touches.

Colour matters, but colour is not everything, as our untutored taste too readily assumes. The essential memory which we retain of a great picture is

memory of the design and line. And yet that memory would never have been recorded unless there had been some charm and wonder of colour to draw the attention and fix the impression. The same is true of national colouring. It is the colouring of added grace : it is of the nature of what the old grammar books called an *epitheton ornans* : it is something adjectival to the essential thing, which conciliates attention and even affection. Those who feel (and they are not a few) that 'nationalism is the enemy' would banish colour in order to get line clear : they would sacrifice individual variations (each tending to claim that it is perfection) in order to reveal the pure design of the common reason of man. Shelley united this feeling with a cult of individuality so strong that it ran into anarchism (and indeed the longing for the cosmopolis has often a lively individualism for its bedfellow), celebrating man released from the bondage of many colours,

> Uncircumscribed, but man;
> Equal, unclassed, tribeless and nationless.

This banishing of colour has a Platonic quality. But to seek to banish the colour of the nation is to fail to reckon with the factor of emotion : it is also to fail to take into account the carrying power of emotion. when it attaches itself to values and ideals. Shelley had a passion for liberty and equality; but they would never have been carried as far as they were in the space of his lifetime if the emotion of French

nationalism had not attached itself to their proclamation. Our modern doubts about the quality of nationalism are the result of a natural reaction against those who hold, and seek to enforce, the doctrine that colour is everything : who begin and end with the idea of 'our breed', deducing from it and referring to it law, ethics and religion itself, as well as the structure of politics and the system of economics. The extravagances of this pan-nationalism bring discredit on the very notion of national colour. Yet an uncoloured world would be grey; and colours can blend in a harmony, as well as clash in a discord.

It is difficult to see what other bond than the bond of nationalism will hold a great society together in a permanent system of unity. A sense of common economic interest has not, in itself, that power; and even the longing for peace, which all men acutely feel, is not by itself sufficient to produce what it longs to enjoy. Democracy, of all forms of government, is most dependent on the existence of this bond of nationalism : it presupposes a society so nerved by the will to agree that its members can agree to differ and to debate their differences. But an uncensored nationalism still stands at the bar of judgment. The English have been fortunate (it has not been their own merit) in the presence of a constant censorship. Their nationalism has had to make its peace, and still has to make its peace, with the nationalism of Scotland and of Wales. That was an initial lesson in the

doctrine that one's own colour is not everything, that it needs its complements; and that different colours can prove to be complementary. The lesson has been carried further. The British Commonwealth at large is a commonwealth of nations. Each has its own nationalism : in some nationalism may be said to be tugging at the reins—so far as any reins now exist. India herself, fundamentally different and yet not disjoined (nor likely to be disjoined, if only the sense and practice of mutual concession continue to grow), is already a nation, and rapidly becoming a partner of the other nations. All this is a liberal education in the practice of self-censorship. We are educated by the fact that we are but a part of something which is greater than we are. Self-censorship is far more difficult for nations which are self-contained, within a ring of frontiers which is or is felt to be, menaced. This is an added reason, if any were needed, why we should not play the part of censor to other nationalisms. Self-censorship is the only education which, in the end, avails.

Europe has been the parent of nationalism; and the continent of Europe still presents the most variegated kaleidoscope of nationalisms. Perhaps that has been a source of its vitality and its progress, as it is now a source of its trouble and its distress. But the variegation of the face of Europe does not destroy the common aspect or the common heritage. Europe has received from Athens and Rome the common heritage of the classical tradition. Europe

has received from Jerusalem the common heritage of the Christian faith; which was acquainted from the first and during the height of the Middle Ages was blended, with the classical tradition of Athens and Rome. Renaissances of the classical tradition and Reformations of the Christian faith have been common European movements. Today, it is true, it would seem that movements of Renaissance and Reformation have themselves become national. In Italy a Renaissance of the Roman part of the classical tradition is being practised; the common heritage of Europe is being vindicated as the special prerogative of the Italian nation; and a new Augustus is seeking to recreate the glories of the old. In Germany a new Reformation, secular and atavistic, is seeking to draw inspiration from the pre-classical and pre-Christian fountains of original Teutonism; the common inheritance is condemned as unnational and 'un-German' : a new Arminius rejects the tradition of Roman law, and with it all alien traditions, as Arminius of old hurled back the legions of Rome. But these modern insurgences, however Titanic they may seem, are still confronted by the fact of the common heritage of Europe. It may be expelled; but it will always return. There may yet be a Renaissance, and a Reformation, which will unite and not divide.

Some who have felt strongly how much there was which was common to all our continent have dreamed of a United States of Europe. Today the dream has shrunk; and even the most Utopian can

dream of no more than a western federation. But political unions, of whatever sort, are not likely to be the next stage in European development. Federations may come, in some distant (perhaps very distant) future; but the utmost span of contemporary hope cannot reach so far. Europe today, with her common heritage, confronts a system (or perhaps it should be called a chaos) of ardent nationalisms. There is no sign of their going—unless the system slides into a cataclysm; and even then the faces of the nations will re-emerge. Far from going, the different nationalisms seem to be rooting themselves more deeply. Eire proclaims the national faith of the Irish people, and its intention 'to develop its life in accordance with its own genius and traditions', in the new constitution of 1937; the U.S.S.R. itself, once the apostle of a non-national proletariat, in the new constitution of 1936 summons its citizens to the sacred duty of the defence of the fatherland, and proclaims treason to the homeland as the gravest crime. The new Europe has to be built with the stones which the builders find shaped and ready.

The political map of Europe is a shifting thing. It shifted again and again in the nineteenth century —in the area of Germany, the area of Italy, the area of the Balkans. It has shifted, and is shifting still, in these opening years of the twentieth century. However much we may long for fixed boundaries and known landmarks, we must admit that it may still continue to shift in the future. Different national aggregates from those we know

may be formed; but if we can repeat our recent experience we may hope that they will be formed by the method of peaceful change. New distributions of power will be involved; and as long as nations think in terms of power, this will raise difficulties in advance about the coming of change, as it will also raise doubts and fears after each change has come. But whatever the difficulties may be, Europe has still to face change, and to face it in consultation, with a view to its peaceful achievement. There are still loose ends and uncertain limits in the system of national states. And yet all this is only a matter of colour—national colour—the colours of the map. It it were settled and out of the way, the real problem would then begin to emerge. That is the problem of line and design—of the common values—of the restoration and reinvigoration of the common heritage—of the new Renaissance and the new Reformation.

This may also be called the problem of censorship of nationalisms—the voluntary and self-imposed censorship of the good which is imperfect and the partial which has to be made whole. The problem has to be solved in the various fields, with the workers in each field working side by side towards the same end, and helping each other when they can. There is the field of religion, the field of the common Christian faith of Europe and the new Reformation. The Church of Rome still speaks to Europe at large, and can speak with a single voice of authority, in censorship of nationalisms; and the

protestant and Orthodox Churches, gathering themselves in conferences (as they have done from time to time in the last twenty years, and notably at Oxford in 1937) have sought to speak to all their members in the same sense. There is the field of peace, the field of a system of inter-state organization intended to secure the peace of Europe. The League of Nations is not dead; but so far as Europe is concerned, it is certainly disrupted. Europe needs its own concert of states (however that concert may be related to the general system of the League); and the construction of that concert is the first necessity for a voluntary criticism and a voluntary curtailing of the claims of nationalism. There is the field of economics, the field of the restoration of inter-state commerce in Europe and of the censorship of the nationalist cult of 'autarky' in the interest of a common level of life. That would be partly a work for the economic section of a concert of Europe, and partly a matter for regional groups particularly linked by propinquity or a common interest in the easy exchange of the different products of their members. There is finally the field of culture, the field of a new Renaissance which the nation can resolve to share even while, and even because, they are resolved to maintain and expand their separate national cultures. Nations have now begun to broadcast to one another and to listen to one another. As yet it is a little thing; and its immediate origin is simply a zest for national propaganda. But it also means, and it will mean still

more if it continues to grow, an appeal to the opinion of others—we may even say, an appeal to a common opinion. We have new tools and instruments for a new Renaissance. We are only fumbling with them. Perhaps we may learn to use them, and to turn them to common uses. The more we know one another's minds, the less we shall be set in the unqualified and uncensored nationalism of any one particular stock.

Europe is coloured (we need not say 'stained') by 'the many-coloured dome' of all its nationalisms. Each of its nations sees life *sub specie coloris sui*. The idealist would gladly see life in white light, a dry light, which was commonly and universally diffused. It is a counsel of perfection. Most of us would not see at all unless we saw in a coloured light. But we see imperfectly in that way; and we gradually learn that we can see more, and see more perfectly, if we see in different lights. In that way we may rise to the idea of the common—the thing we can all see together through the use of our different lights. That is what I meant when I began by saying that it was my duty to begin by being a good Englishman, and then to transcend without losing that quality.

ON PARTY AND THE DUTY OF LOYALTY TO PARTY

Party is an electric spark which, for nearly all of us, is necessary to any political thinking. Without it we might have particular private opinions or interests which we wished to press—but which, in our isolation, we were entirely unable to press—on the attention of the State. With it we acquire not only power, but also an education. A party is a school, with a definite curriculum which goes by the name of a programme. It provides a regular, if spasmodic, system of instruction in the subjects of its curriculum : it has its text-books and its pedagogical methods, which range from the 'summer school' to the little discussion group or the speech (which is much the same as a lecture) delivered to a larger audience. But party is not only a school; it is also a workshop which runs with a bustle and zest, and elicits and enlists the activity of a number of busy workers. Zest for the success of the side is a stimulus to action; the partisan who has caught fire from the process of party education can generate an energy of public service which would otherwise lie dormant. Besides being a school and a workshop party is also what may be called a circle

of friendship. Burke, thinking perhaps of the Rockingham circle to which he belonged, quoted the words of Cicero: "to seek and to shun the same things in politics is the firmest ground of friendship." This is so inveterate an opinion that friendships which transcend the terms of party still excite surprise, and still produce doubts.

But any psychological study of party, however elementary, will show that it is not only a ground of friendship, but also a ground of hate—hate which is half in fun, but yet is more than 'a playing at hate'. *Odisse alteram partem* is expected from the sound partisan. A party subsists, to no small extent, on the diet of dislike for other parties; and if parties are reduced to a single party (as has happened in three of the great countries of Europe) the diet of dislike must still be provided, so that another country, or another cause which is supposed to be typified in another country, is made to provide the diet in lieu of another party. That is one—though it is only one—of the dangers of a single party. It is better to find the diet of dislike in our own country than it is to go outside. It is more conducive to general peace. This fact of dislike of the other side is mainly connected with the 'workshop' activity of party. The school can exist without any emotion except that of a zest for the school and its teaching: the circle of friendship can exist on the ground of a common liking, though it may conceivably gain more piquancy from an element of common dislike. But

the activity of the workshop is particularly stirred by the dynamics of dislike for the other side—a dislike which is not necessarily personal (though it may easily slide into that) but which is none the less a dislike for a generalized 'enemy'. The passages of party speeches which stir an audience, and receive its acclaim, are the passages of denunciation. The head of steam which carries a party into action is a head which is largely generated in this way. It is this generation of emotion—and that not the noblest of emotions—which frightens the quiet and rational mind. No doubt there is a good deal of froth and bubble in the whole business of whipping up emotion. The passionate orator may lie down like a lamb after he has spoken his lines like a lion. But this only leads to another problem in the psychology of party—the problem of pretence; the problem of dramatization; the problem of the surrender of free intellectual integrity to the necessity of playing a part.

Burke faced this problem, and sought to answer it by saying that as all measures of party policy were related to great leading general principles, "a man must be peculiarly unfortunate in the choice of his political company if he does not agree with them at least nine times in ten." But the organization and the stress of party have grown since the time of Burke: the great general principles have broadened into detailed programmes: the 'general line' which demands conformity has become a very particular and a very definite line. Thought is

always, in some degree, a rebel; and the man who tries to think for himself has a tinge of the anarchist. The rational mind (which, it must be admitted, is not necessarily the best type of mind when a common business has to be done and a common effort has to be made) is not only frightened by the emotional demands of party: it is also restive at the prospect of party-harness. But this restiveness, though it may be the result of intellectual mettle, may also be the result of intellectual conceit. Dissidence may be the child of honest thought; but it may also be the offspring of egoism. When a man goes against the general trend, he may find it difficult to decide (if he is honest with himself) whether it is his reason and common sense, or just his Ego, which is speaking. It is wise to believe that it is at least as likely to be the Ego as it is to be common sense.

When all is said, the duty of party attachment and party loyalty remains one of the main political duties. There is a sort of Pharisaism, or it may be merely of indolence, in the unattached man. To wish political ends is to wish also political means; and the great political means is the method of concerted action by a common school of thought which is also a common workshop and a common circle of friends. At the same time party loyalty is not an easy matter which simply 'goes of itself'. It always involves two problems of adjustment. One is a collective problem; it is the problem of the adjustment of party to party. The other is a problem

which mainly concerns the individual. It is the problem of his own relation to his party, or, it may be, to the general system of party.

It is only *prima facie* that the adjustment of party to party seems to be an adjustment of warfare, with the issue of victory or defeat. It is really a more subtle matter than that. Parties work in the common framework of a national life. They owe a duty to that life, which is indeed the major duty, as well as a duty to themselves. For themselves the immediate duty is victory—the putting of the hands on the levers of power—the control of national policy. But victory does not annihilate the other side. It still remains, and it still expresses a current of national opinion. Nor does the control of national policy mean a total and unqualified control. It means a control which is exercised with a proper regard to the total and general national interest, and therefore with a proper respect to the view of that interest which is held by the other side. There is an ethics of party; an ethics of the behaviour of party to party. There is more involved than dislike or warfare; there is also co-operation, which means, in the issue, compromise. Compromise is a hateful word in the ear of the convinced partisan, but it is a necessary word—indeed the most necessary of all words—in the vocabulary of any system of party which refuses to risk the peril of an uncontrolled party struggle, or to incur the danger of a war of extermination resulting in the solitary reign of a single party. Either

the practice of compromise, or the victory of the single party.

The problem of the adjustment of the individual to party has no general solution. It arises particularly for the man, once immersed in a party, who finds that his faith has grown cold, and that he is drifting away to the other side, or away from all sides. It is a difficult problem for any man : it is particularly difficult for the man who has been a leader in his own party. If he crosses to the other side, and becomes its leader or one of its leaders, he is condemned to the role of the 'transfugee', pursued by the contumely of his old party, and never welcomed to the heart of the new. The history of the transfugees of our party system has not been happy; and if there is any moral, it would seem to be that it is better to 'fade upon the midnight' than to pass into a new and smarting limelight. Perhaps the same is true, *mutatis mutandis*, of the ordinary man. If he finds that he is losing his old label, he had better pass into the category of the unlabelled, the men who cannot be placed, even at the cost of becoming—to that extent, and so far as politics in the narrower sense is concerned—extinct and ineffective. Party loyalties run deep. An old party loyalty, long held, creates a character, or at any rate a tinge, in the holder, and produces an expectation of corresponding speech and behaviour in the minds of others. We may disappoint the expectation by silence; but we shock it if, like Balaam, we speak on the other side. . . .

nd yet Balaam was justified of his words.

It is a different question whether a man should djust himself to party at all, and whether he may ot refrain from membership of any party. Some nay be eunuchs for the sake of a kingdom, abjuring the virility of party in devotion to some cause which stands above party, or needs all parties ndifferently, and would be served less effectively f the server were devoted to any particular party. Some may be simple lovers of the unattached life; nd they may plead in their own defence that the party system itself requires an unattached mass unless indeed the same party is always to be in power) which will now give the palm to this side nd now again to another. What proportion of the population of a country may safely remain unattached? A whole nation which was unattached, and yet tried to practise democracy, would lead a poor sort of life. But such a consummation is unlikely. We can trust human nature and the human passion for taking sides to fill the ranks both of Rome and Tusculum. The unattached, if they award the prize (or, more exactly, help to award it) have had no share in determining the stakes or playing the game. They may have enjoyed the pleasures of tranquillity : they have not enjoyed the happiness of energy.

Party remains a duty. Indeed it involves a number of duties, which may conflict with one another. It is a war which must be also peace : it is a loyalty which must be also fidelity to individual

conviction; it is a school, but also a workshop; it is a loving, but also a hating; it is disagreement, but also agreement. It is a dangerous and adventurous thing; a partiality which seeks to become a totality, and knows that it must not become what it seeks to become. It may well cry "Up Guards, and at them" but as soon as the partisan becomes actually a soldier, and literally wears uniform, the system of party is at an end. All in all, party may be called a curious English experiment in club life on the grand scale (the first party was born in a London tavern in 1675); and so long as it preserves the spirit of the club it will serve the citizen and nerve the State. It will collect opinion freely and present it in organized choices, so that the citizen can gather himself together to choose and the State can deploy its resources to execute the choice.

IV

ULTIMATE DUTY

> I saw Eternity the other night
> Like a great ring of pure and endless light.

THE duties of which I have hitherto spoken are duties in time and space. They are the duties (if I may revert to the metaphor from which I started) of one who runs his course in a given tract of country along a given line of time. They involve natural and earthly pieties to others of our kind. But there is also the Heaven which abides above time and space, and yet shines down, when cloud-rifts broaden and moments of illumination come, on the human beings who are running their earthly and mortal course. Even in this life, and even on earth, we can be caught up into the timelessness and the spacelessness of Heaven; and we can come back with a purged and finer sense to the doing of mortal duties. For that reason it may be said that our supreme duty is the duty of practising the sense of eternity.

The Heaven into which we can rise while we are still on earth is for most of us a mixed Heaven. It comes in different ways and different glimpses. It comes in private prayer and meditation, and in

the common service in church; and that is a way so great and sovereign that it may well seem the only way. But there are also other ways in which Heaven breaks in upon us. There is a glory in great literature, when words are married to thoughts in a glowing fusion which transports the mind. Milton's poem on Time, which is some twenty golden lines; the first chorus of the Agamemnon of Æschylus; Wordsworth's lines on Tintern Abbey; the beginning of Goethe's *Faust;* the end of Shakespeare's *Tempest;* a couple of the poems of Francis Thompson—all these, and many more, are doors to eternity. There is a splendour in great music which has the same quality; and there are paintings which are eloquent of far more than what they depict. Indeed there are many cues which make us start and say

> O world invisible, we view thee,
> O world intangible, we touch thee.

There are revelations in personal friendship which touch the soul of goodness. There are starlit nights which reveal the army of unalterable law, and sober the mind with a sudden sense of the march of eternal truth. (Perhaps it is one of our simple duties to walk abroad under the stars at night, when the world is hushed.) There is, in a word, a many-sided discipline which men can cultivate in order to practise the sense of eternity and the feeling for Heaven.

The fundamental discipline, and the fundamental

duty, in the face of the eternal is prayer. I speak of it as a discipline because it is more than an outpouring and far more than an entreating. It is a gripping of the self, by an act of painful and arduous abstraction from the concerns of time and space, for the purpose of facing eternity and speaking with the Eternal. Heaven breaks in upon us, by grace : we have also to break in upon Heaven, by prayer. Prayer has no meaning, except to a person : whenever we pray, we pray to the Eternal who inhabits eternity and the Father which is in Heaven. We make an assumption, when we dare to think of the personal : but we equally make an assumption when we dare to think of eternity. The assumptions go together : neither is possible without the other; and both are warranted by the same testimony. Whatever the assumptions involved, I cannot but make them; and having made them I am bound by the supreme duty of practising the sense of eternity and of facing (as best I may) the Eternal. How often we fail and how often the practice becomes a mere mechanism!

> My words fly up: my thoughts remain below:
> Words without thoughts never to Heaven go.

but the discipline and the duty remain—unless we have said in our hearts that for us there is no Heaven and no eternity which has any room for a person.

Even for those who deny the personal there is still a duty and a discipline to be faced—so long

as they recognize that there are values called Beauty and Truth and Goodness, and that these values must be cherished. Admit that these values, in their way and on their level, are so many forms of Heaven and so many phases of eternity. They have still to be cultivated: they demand their discipline: they impose their duty. There is no automatic or readymade apprehension of Beauty, even if some are more naturally gifted than others to apprehend it. Beauty demands a discipline; "it is not to be had unless a man will make himself a slave to its having." There is a duty even here; and art itself has its Puritanism. To peep into Heaven through the door of beauty is not a matter of simple sensuous experience: it involves a refining of sense, a training of taste, a voluntary asceticism of self-discipline. It is one of the perils of our age that we should forget and lose this discipline. Literature is unloaded in its masses: the visible is paraded to the eye, and the audible is interacted in the ear: a writer lamented lately, in a memorable phrase, "The standards have been destroyed, and the values adulterated." Effort is needed to purify values, to recover standards, and to escape from the mass of the transitory into some communion with the abiding 'idea'. There is room even here, and on this level, for the spirit of prayer and the temper of mind which leads to prayer.

That temper and spirit demand the virtue of contemplation; and the virtue of contemplation demands the quality of mind which is

patient of solitude and dares to be alone. Contemplation is a virtue which was cherished in the thought of Greek and Roman antiquity as well as in Christian thought. It was accompanied by the idea of leisure, the leisure not of vacuity but of the free activity of the higher faculties; it was also accompanied by the idea of solitude, and the younger Scipio could claim that "he was never less alone than when he was by himself." One of the injunctions (and I am sure that it *is* an injunction) which I find it most difficult to obey is the injunction "Dare to be alone." I know that there is a corollary added to the injunction : if I expressed it fully, I should say, "Dare to be alone—in order that you may be in the great company." But there is a natural terror of solitude. One longs to be in the swim : the gregarious instinct, which has its rights and demands its dues, is a terrible compelling instinct. But the duty of solitude remains. There is much to be done in the stream of the world, but the world will see to that : there is also something to be done in stillness, and there is also a time "to stand and stare." Where shall a man find his secret chamber and the leisure to spend time there, and the courage to enter and shut the door? It is the most difficult of the questions which we are asked to answer. But it contains, or it implies, the last and ultimate duty which a man owes to himself, to others through himself, and to the self which is behind himself and all other selves.

Solitude never need be solitary; and contemplation

is so far from being the opposite of action that it is, at its height, the mother and mainspring of all considered and fruitful action. "In the patience of thyself thou shalt gain the soul of thyself." The soul that is gained in solitude and contemplation goes out beyond itself, even in the act and article of standing by itself. It goes out to practise the sense of eternity and communication with the Eternal. It goes out to practise, with a strong and fresh advantage, the duties it owes in the concentric circles (family, neighbourhood, country, continent, general humanity) through which it moves. Whatever we have seen and learned in the secret of contemplation we are bound to express and communicate. It is no easy thing to do. One sometimes wonders whether one has anything to express or give : there is so much talking in the world; and all that is good has been said, and said far better, already. I often find the words coming into my mind, unbidden and with no reference to my immediate thoughts, *Est et fideli tuta silentio merces*. But that is perhaps a sort of cowardice. Sometimes one finds, after an interval of years, that the word which was said and the advice which was given long ago have stuck and remained, for good. And the mattter is not merely a matter of words and advice and counsel, spoken or written; it is also, and mainly, a matter of action. Communication with others. in some course of common action, is the best way of communicating to others whatever we can report and whatever we are able to give. In common

action we learn from others, who have also seen and can also report; and we learn far more than we teach. That is how we come back from solitude to home and neighbours and country—to the circles of communication—to the company of social rights and social duties. Wordsworth returns to the mind again—as he so often does. In one of his poems to a skylark (the less rapturous and the more profound) he sends the lark to the last point of vision and beyond, but brings him back to his nest upon the dewy ground :

> Type of the wise who soar, but never roam,
> True to the kindred points of Heaven and Home.

That is the wisdom with which we can all of us long to be wise.

ON STANDARDS OF ART AND POETIC DUTY

By poetic duty I mean the general duty of the creative artist; for poetry, in its original sense, is a making or a creation. I mean too the duty of the reader, or the spectator, who joins by sympathy in the creation and re-creates for himself, the thing first created by the artist. But I shall limit myself to the writing and the reading of poetry, in the narrower and modern sense of the word—not that I have ever written poetry, or have the poet's title to speak; but I have been a reader of it for at least some fifty years, and I cannot divorce writing and reading. Unless the writer creates what the reader can re-create, neither can get very far; they are linked in the common effort of giving and answering the cue. And in this respect what is true of poetry is true of other branches of literature, and even, in some degree, of other forms of creative art.

It was an old idea that there were canons of poetry—general rules which writers and readers were conceived as being under some sort of duty to acknowledge. The Muse was an authority: she imposed laws and obligations. The laws, it is true, were somewhat formal: they were derived from the

precept or example of classical literature : they were of the nature of the rule which, in Dryden's phrase, "the French call Des Trois Unitez, which ought to be observed in every regular play." However formal they were, they served their office. They gave the writer a mould into which he could pour his inspiration—a given mould, ready to hand, which he had not to pre-create before he began his own work of creation. They gave the reader, at the same time, a secure expectation and a standard of enjoyment; he and the writer could join and co-operate in the shelter of a common manner. There were poetic 'manners', in those days, as well as manners of social intercourse. There was an affinity between the two. Manner became a nature : it eased the intercourse of mind with mind : it helped to make an expectable and understandable world. To read Racine, nearly three hundred years after, is still to realize vividly what a sovereign beauty could be created in obedience to manner and rule and canon.

Today there is a general revolt against poetic rules. The poet is a law to himself, and therefore a law to the reader, who loses expectation, who may also lose co-operation, and may thus be left, in the issue, abandoned and floundering. The revolt began at the time of the French Revolution; but the Lyrical Ballads were less revolutionary than the Revolution. It began again, so far as England is concerned, at the end of the War; and this time the poetic revolution was more revolutionary than the

political. It was not only that new experiments were made in vocabulary, metre, rhythm and the general form of verse. It was also that poets retreated into the depths of the unconscious; or of an esoteric self-consciousness; that they broke the bond between writer and reader by creating without communicating; that they became a profession which wrote puzzles for a profession, instead of giving cues to the world.

To have wrestled with such poetry for years, and to remain defeated at the end—to be defeated by lack of comprehension and incapacity for co-operation—may simply argue defects in the reader. One would gladly subscribe to that verdict, in a modest humility, if it were not that the range of defeat is so narrow. To be undefeated and to be able to co-operate elsewhere—to be defeated and reduced to impotence in this one field—does not the evidence run in the opposite direction? True, age is always a barrier; and if "the newest sons are always sweetest," the newest opinions and doctrines are not always welcome to the old. But this is not a matter of doctrines and opinions. It is a matter of manner, and manners: a matter of the modes of creation, and of the rules which they should observe, and not of the substance and content of the thing which has been created. One is driven back, after all, to the idea of poetic duty and canons of poetic art.

One simple rule, if we assume that poetry is communication, is the rule that a poem should be

understandable—not without effort, but at any rate by means of effort, provided always that the effort is a necessary effort, in the sense that it is demanded by the intensity of the message to be communicated to the reader. But in order to be understandable, a poet himself owes the duty of effort—the effort of seizing firmly the hovering and tantalizing glimpse which flutters on the edge of feeling and thought; the effort of choosing among the flocking ideas which wheel in the mind; the effort of knowing, in a word, what it is that he wishes to say, and of saying it as clearly as in its nature it can be said. Horace must have wrestled with the problem (after all, he too was a poet, however lucid he may-be), and he has expressed the rule which must guide its solution. It is for him a question of order—*lucidus ordo.*

> Ordinis haec virtus erit et Venus, aut ego fallor,
> Ut jam nunc dicat jam nunc debentia disi, ...
> Hoc amet, hoc spernat promissi carminis auctor.

It is this ordering of flocking thoughts, by an effort of choice and a determination of sequence, with a view to their communication and a consequent sharing of them by others, which the poet (no less than other writers, if in a different way and a different medium) is bound to impose on himself in obedience to the Muse. It is this discipline—the discipline demanded by Beauty—which I must confess that I miss in modern poetry. One poet has said, "A good poem generally turns out

to be rich in meanings, and it is safe to say that the poet never saw any of them clearly as his 'in tended' meaning when he wrote." I cannot but question the fundamental truth of this saying. It has, of course, its truth. Different readers, with their different approaches and preconceptions, will see different shades of meaning in the same poem. The poet himself may have intended a double meaning—the literal and the allegorical. But if it is suggested that the poet has communicated something indeterminate, which may be stamped and determined in a variety of possible ways, I should say that he has failed to communicate, and that he has not been a poet or creator. He has allowed himself to be confused; he has used noble words and phrases in unapprehended meanings, seeing something dimly great, but failing to clarify what he has seen for want of sweat and what Ovid calls "the ultimate file". He has collocated thoughts without sequence, and strung images together in a dark and mysterious corridor.

There is one simple test of poetry, which follows on the rule that it should be understandable It is that it should be such, at any rate in its great passages of cadence or crescendo, that it may be carried in the mind and memory of the reader, to emerge in moments of need and to give its solemn comfort. Poetry began before the days of writing: Homer was memorized and chanted by wandering minstrels; and the memory of the chant still hangs about the poem. It is not the mere act of reading

that matters, or that gives the greatest delight and the steadiest glimpse into the poet's Heaven : it is the act of repeating to oneself, on a solitary walk or in the watches of the night, what has stayed in the mind as a permanent possession. Nothing stays, and fixes itself by nails, which is not built in a clear succession, 'saying now', with a clean incision, "the things which ought now to be said". Horace knew that; and Horace still lives in the mind.

I should not have laboured this matter of the discipline and duty of the poet, if it had not seemed to me a crucial instance of the need of that discipline of Beauty which must be undergone by all, poet and reader alike, who wish to show or to see the Heaven of beauty. There are many definitions of poetry. To me it is one of the keys (one of the keys—there are also others) which unlock the door into timelessness. It admits us into the eternal-human, and also (if one may use that word) into the human-eternal. The poet particularly practises the sense of eternity, holding infinity in the palm of his hand and eternity in an hour. It is not his only function. He may seek to give pure delight, professing himself humbly the idle singer of an empty day : he may attempt a criticism of life, as it is lived under the conditions of his time. But in the last issue 'day' and 'time' will recede; and he will become the spectator of all time and all existence. To keep his mind free for this last issue, and to ensure that he shall make a true and clear report, he will not condescend too much

upon the temporary—the temporary modern mode of expression, which mixes Oddity and Obscurity, or even (if it may so be called *sub specie æternitatis*) the temporary modern concern of substance, which is pre-eminently a concern with political and social issues. Such issues cannot but enter: the poet is of his age, and the age sets its own problems to any critic of life. But even here his concern is with the eternal-human; and the eternal-human does not speak in the vocabulary of Marx, any more than it speaks, as Shelley was once inclined to believe, in the vocabulary of Godwin. The poet is not the mouthpiece of the philosopher; he is himself his own philosopher. The Shelley who remains is not the Shelley who versified Godwin, but the Shelley who mourned for his friend, as all men in all ages have done the same, or who saw the lark ascending, as all men in all ages have seen the same. The poet's touch is the touch which makes the whole world kin, not only drawing writer and reader together in a common vision, but drawing together the ends of the earth and the ends of time as the object of their vision.

Stillness . . . . and the stream of the world. Talent built in the one, thought Goethe: in the other, character. But there is more than talent built in stillness, and there are many things which have to be built in the stream of the world. Stillness and the stream are natural foils; either may enhance the other; and certainly the sound of the stream without can enhance the stillness within. Elizabeth Browning, dreaming of the stillness of a marriage of true souls, longed not for an absolute solitude, but for the busy earth and a deep quiet among its hubbub.

> Where the unfit
> Contrarious moods of men recoil away
> And isolate pure spirits.

The most perfect memory of stillness and solitude is the memory of communion in church—scattered kneeling figures, each alone and not alone: the priest speaking quiet words (but they proceed from the silence within, and leave it intact): stillness, but outside the rushing stream; accentuating stillness to a quintessence.

To distinguish between multitude and solitude is no easy thing. Each is a different phase or accent

of the single movement of life. There may be solitude in the multitude of the congregation, when each of its members is intent on his act of worship : there may be multitude in the solitude of the study, when it is thronged with pressing affairs and the business of human life. But if we isolate the accent or phase of solitude, we cannot but see how deeply it counts. Achievement begins in solitude; and that is what Goethe meant when he spoke of the building of talent. The scholar has made a vow of solitude; and if he finds it hard to keep (not only because things are always breaking in upon him, but also because something in him will insist on breaking out) it still remains a vow and a condition of scholarship. But more than achievement or talent is built in solitude. ("He was in the desert apart"), and they have gone back to it for new strength. Character itself needs solitude. And this is perhaps that particular fruit of solitude which most needs to be known and cultivated.

In the saying of Jesus, that in his own patience a man shall gain his own soul, the word which we translate 'patience' has in the original Greek a more specific meaning. It suggests the idea of remaining at a post and holding out. There is a 'holding out' which is required, particularly in these days, against the temptation which draws the mind towards immersion in the 'stream of life' of some intimate group. The temptation suggests that we should let ourselves go; that we should be swayed

and carried by the life of the group; that we should forget, or surrender, the burden of our own responsibility for our own lives. It is a particular temptation of the modern world. It is strong in the realm of politics, where the engulfing wave of this or that group-movement (be it of the Folk or the *Fasces* or of proletarian fraternity) seeks to embrace and to sweep the individual in its course; it appears even in the realm of religion, where the cult of 'the Group' is beginning to beckon. The practice of one's own patience, and of one's own power of holding out, demands a capacity for loneliness. The capacity for loneliness was a gift of the Puritans, as it has always been (though seldom in so austere a form) the gift of the Christian who seeks to hide his life in God. The same capacity, on a lower level, is a gift which has to be cultivated as the basis and the condition of the life of the democratic state. Group movements issue in the leadership of a dictator. Where each seeks to be a leader, or rather to be a contributor (in such measure as he can attain) to the leadership of his State, each has to stand by himself on his own moral ground of responsibility. No man becomes an 'individualist' by taking his stand on that ground. He simply decides that he will walk alone to the extent of thinking for himself (which is the opposite of *laissez faire*), and that he will stand alone to the extent of making a choice for himself, as every free citizen should.

This may seem a confusion of responsibility

with solitude, and a placing of 'the valley of decision' always in loneliness. It is certainly an experience of life that crucial decisions, in the last resort and after all deliberation, have to be made alone. But the prophet who speaks of the valley of decision assembles there 'multitudes, multitudes'; and it is certainly in the stream of the multitude, among all the human relations which it carries, that decisions are demanded, acts follow decisions, and character, even if it is not built, is wrought and hammered and shaped. Action is a matter of 'multitude' and the relations which multitude brings. It has a gregarious quality. It assembles men together for deliberation in the busy council chamber; it draws them together for production among the humming machines of the factory. Nor is it only the activity of work which imposes a collective way of life. It is also activity of amusement, which involves a concerted arrangement for play. Today we are most of us shuttlecocks impelled to and fro, alternating between periods of gregarious work and periods of even more gregarious amusement. Solitary amusement fails to amuse. Solitary work has ceased to create. The craftsman who worked by himself, and created in his solitude beauties we still admire, has lost his place.

But it is idle to lament the passing of solitude. Most of those who practised solitude in the past practised it in their own despite, because they were forced to be alone; and most of those who have

found a new and gregarious life will say, and say with truth, that they have found a new stimulus, a new drawing out of capacity, and a new happiness. We must accept the fact that it is in the busy stream of 'multitude' that both talent and character are now mainly exercised. The artist himself needs the inspiration of some current school of painting, or poetry, or music; the very scholar has become a partner in collective undertakings, and is organized, or organizes himself, on the methods of collective work. It is not an abnegation of responsibility : it is rather a new distribution. Each still takes his share (if perhaps a less share) on his own shoulders; but all join also in sharing a common responsibility. Individually we have a less clear and definite outline. But the individual outline is not the measure of the whole of our stature.

And yet the ancient difference and the old war remain. There is an ineradicable lonely centre of being which will always be struggling against immersion. The struggle may take various forms, or express itself in a variety of terms. Sometimes, as in ancient Greece, it may issue in a feeling for the value of the 'theoretic' life : sometimes it may express itself in monasticism (the cult of the 'lonely' life or more exactly of joint solitude); sometimes it may take the form of mysticism, which seeks to direct the lonely centre, by the practice of a new technique of intuition, into the apprehension of what it longs to find. The struggle between specu-

lation and action is present in the thought of Aristotle: it vexed not only the thought, but also the life of Plato: it has always renewed itself, and will continue to renew itself. There is no solution, at any rate in general terms. Each man must make his choice—not in the sense that he chooses either the one or the other, but rather in the sense that he chooses what weight he will give to the one and what he will give to the other; for both are necessities. Contemplation is not altogether loneliness, nor loneliness contemplation. Loneliness may be vacuous of anything; contemplation may be pursued in company. But the two things are akin, if they are not the same; and to pass from solitude to contemplation is to pass from sister to sister.

Contemplation readily takes its beginning, and its cue, from the face and the aspects of Nature. This was the contemplation which Wordsworth pursued, and which he expressed in the Lines on Tintern Abbey. The 'beauteous forms' of Nature were to him the givers of a mood, a 'serene and blessed mood' of contemplative vision.

> We are laid asleep
> In body, and become a living soul;
> While with an eye made quiet by the power
> Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
> We see into the life of things.

Perhaps Nature is not only a cue, but also a

mother of contemplation. Would Wordsworth have been Wordsworth if he had not been born and lived his life among the English Lakes? Contemplation, like many other things in our life, has its climatic quality. Those who have stood on the soil of Greece, and seen mountains and sea in the light of that delicate air, can understand how 'Theoria' arose in that environment. Those who have been in the Himalayas, even if only on the fringes, can understand something of the lesson learned from those immensities. "It was the first time" (the words are those of a mountaineer) "I had travelled *alone* in the Himalayas. For the first time in my life I was able to think . . . . rather to surrender thought to my surroundings. The Eternal speaks; the mutations of the universe are apparent; the very atmosphere is filled with life. . . . ."

Wherever it may have been bred, or under whatever impulses, the gift of contemplation has followed a variety of historical forms and phases. In the theory and practice of Hinduism, contemplation belongs to a stage of life; to the years when the life of the family has flowered and borne its fruit, and an end can be set to doing and action; to the period of retirement into the 'forest' and the hermitage. It is indeed a natural and a true idea that contemplation has its particular home in age, when men have renounced activity. The example of the Emperor Charles V, who at the age of fifty-five resigned his dominions and retired into the seclusion of a monastery, is famous in Western

history. But in the practice of the West, from the first emergence of Christian monasticism, another way has generally been followed. Instead of assigning contemplation to a stage of life, the Catholic Church has assigned it to a special class or vocation, which has been regarded as undertaking—not only for itself or its own profit, but also for the benefit of the whole Christian body—the function of vision and contemplation. This vocation or class is recruited, regardless of age, from those who have the particular capacity for its duties; and if contemplation is thus specialized, and instead of being regarded as the duty of all (if only for one period of life) is regarded as the duty of only the chosen (though for the whole of their lives), we have to remember the Catholic conception of the organic unity of the whole Christian body. Since that body is one, any special work or merit redounds for the general benefit, and is undertaken for that benefit; and the monk thus exercises his faculty of contemplation as one *non sibi, sed toti genitus orbi.* Proceeding upon this view (which at once relieves the burden of general individual responsibility, and accentuates the significance and importance of the particular responsibility of each man in his station), the Catholic Church has built a series of grades or forms of contemplation, each serving in its degree, which culminate in the austerity of the Carthusian order. Whether the regular planning of contemplation in the organized life of different orders, devoted to its pursuit in different forms and degrees,

may not defeat the spirit and diminish the play of contemplation; whether contemplation is not a universal duty, which cannot be remitted to a vocation; whether it involves the activity of a lonely centre of being, or may be practised, and had better be practised, in communities—these are all grave questions, which each must confront and answer according to his own experience.

It is at any rate a possible answer that contemplation, just as it need not be remitted (we may even say, should not be remitted) to a stage of life, need not be specialized (and again we may even say, should not be specialized) in a particular vocation. It is a matter for the whole of life, which may begin even in adolescence : it is also a matter for all men, though it is a matter to be handled by each according to his powers. There have been 'contemplatives' who were also working craftsmen, knowing, as it has been said, 'how to combine vision and industry' : the Indian Kabir was a weaver, who worked at the loom : Boehme, the German, was a shoemaker. Kabir was also a married man, and the father of a family, as well as a working craftsman. He did not believe, as Heloise laboured to induce Abelard to believe, that marriage and the home were fatal to the faculty of contemplating the truth. He writes in one of his poems, as it is translated by Tagore, "The home is the abiding place : in the home is reality : the home helps to attain Him who is real". So again he says, rebuking the man who renounces life for the sake of finding the

Life and the Way, "You do not see that the Real is in your home, and you wander from forest to forest listlessly."

Behind every life, then, and *in* every life, this faculty of contemplation is possible. It is possible in the home, among all its concerns, and indeed it may be said to be most at home in the home : it is possible even in the life of busy industry. All depends on finding for oneself that leisure-time (given neither to work nor amusement which may also be called the growing time of the spirit. Men have sought to find a seventh day which should be a particular time of leisure. It is a just and proper feeling, though the man who seeks to husband and 'redeem' his time, not 'because the days are evil' but because they fly, will seek to find leisure in any moment in which it can possibly be found. We may still desire that the seventh day should have its due. It was once organized too severely and too exclusively on a basis of strict Sabbatarianism. The danger today is that it should go unorganized and uncontrolled by the individual choice to which it is now remitted. *Dies contemplationis, dies illa.* We have a freedom to redeem the seventh day which is not given in the same measure on other days. If we can carry a contemplative mind, and not merely our body, to church, we shall recognize that there was a wisdom, after all, in our ancestors, when they set such store by church-going. Contemplation is built in loneliness; but it expands itself in the congregation. The old organized discipline of the

congregation arrived at a self-arrest of the mind, practised by each, but practised in common in order that it might be sure, for the purpose of reflection and recollection. If we take our minds to church, we can still achieve that aim. But whatever the method we use in this age of experiment, the aim remains. Some effort at self-arrest is a necessity of the spirit of man.

Contemplation is a word which is pre-eminently used, in our ordinary language, to signify the devotion of religious thought. When Shakespeare wrote

> So sweet is zealous contemplation

he had in mind the time

> When holy and devout religious men
> Are at their beads.

But it is no great stretch of the word to extend it to all those times in which the mind, free and disengaged, looks with a quiet eye at any beauty or grace which can be found in the life of things. There is contemplation of nature and art as well as eternity—if only nature and art are viewed "in the guise of eternity". Wordsworth was a contemplative of Nature. In my own young days, if I may make a personal confession, I sought to be his disciple; and I still remember a vernal wood, on the steep bank of a river, as I saw it fifty years ago, which seemed to transport me into "a sense sublime"

of something interfused which lived in the sunset and the sea and in man's mind. I came to regard that as pantheism; but the earth has never become a "sterile promontory", and the sky still remains a "majestical roof fretted with golden fire" on any starry night. Whatever may be beyond them, they have their claims; and the warrant of the *Benedicite* and of the saints authorizes us to sing canticles to them.

In later years (perhaps not for us all—I can only speak from my own experience) the art of man makes larger claims upon the contemplation of the mind. "What a piece of work is a man . . . . in apprehension, how like a God!" Man's apprehensions also guide us, and they too help us to say

> O world unknowable, we know thee,
> Inapprehensible, we clutch thee.

Here the mind may seem to be escaping from pantheism only to fall into humanism. But it would be an ingratitude to the poet, the painter, the musician—and also to the philosopher (the great Greek, the great Jew, the great German)—if the debt went unconfessed, and if the inspiration which they have given to vision and contemplation were unacknowledged. Francis Thompson's poem on the Kingdom of God, which has just been quoted, and the poem of Gerard Manley Hopkins on the Windhover, are among the prophesies. So too, and to me even more

is Milton's poem on Time, and indeed nearly everything in Milton. (But that is perhaps because Milton speaks in that language—or should I say dialect?—of religion in which I was also taught.) There is no need to speak of the prophesies of painting—the half-dozen pictures of da Vinci which stand in one of the galleries of the Louvre speak for themselves, and speak equally with the greatest of poetry; nor is there need to speak of the prophecies of music, or of the tones and language of Handel. They are records of vision, and the record of vision is itself a door and peep-hole of vision. It is not humanism to study and love the record—unless one sees only the seer and apprehender, and is blind to the vision seen and the thing which has been apprehended. "In apprehension, how like a god!" One might also say, "In apprehension, how near to seizing and showing the very likeness and image of God".

What treasures man has accumulated for his contemplation in art, and what treasures nature has given him in the lines and colours of her aspects! If one reflects on the endowment of man, at this stage of his growth, in the things that can nourish and enlarge his spirit, one can only wonder and be thankful. But if one reflects on what he has hitherto learned to do for himself, in the simple way of providing "security and sufficiency of life"—the security of an ordered peace, and the sufficiency of a just distribution of an adequate supply of material goods—the reflection is cold and chill. It has been easier to find the treasure than it is to

build the treasure-house; and the progress of the spirit of man has outrun the progress he has hitherto made in the art of organizing his own material life. He has to face great enemies, entrenched in his own being—inheritances and survivals of the old animality from which he has come; passions of pride and possession and power which, far from receding, seem to grow in proportion as they encounter a greater scale and apparatus of life and arm themselves for the encounter with fresh devices of the intelligence. For the greater scale and apparatus of life which we call by the name of civilization can offer a larger scope of activity to passions which are older than Adam; and intelligence is an accommodating servant who can serve evil as well as good.

In a world where the animal is still rampant, and there is still so much to be done in building the house of security and sufficiency of life, contemplation may well be condemned as escape. "Escapism" is a new word of our times, which is not yet recorded in the dictionaries. It is a word of condemnation, which may be used to condemn any play of the mind which is not directed to the simple and immediate business of building the house. It may be used to condemn religion, as an opiate by which men escape from their actual present into a world of visions. It is particularly used to condemn any literature, or form of art, which does not face, and seek to better, the ailing and aching world of our actual life. Those who have the strong feelings epitomized in this word would gladly bring down

the faculties which are operative in contemplation, and harness them to construction. Inspire us with no more dreams; lead us not into contemplation : do not give us, or let us give to others, mere shadows of satisfaction; make no more giants of prophecy;

> But elevate the race at once! We ask
> To put forth just our strength, our human strength
> All starting fairly, all equipped alike,
> Gifted alike, all eagle-eyed, true-hearted—
> See if we cannot beat thine angels yet!

It is a gallant impatience; an *Eia, miles*! for a new and last crusade. But contemplation is not inaction. It strengthens the faculties for action; and the very discrepancy between vision and actuality (which is only felt when there has been some vision) is an added incentive to action. Blake had a vision of Jerusalem which made him see the dark Satanic mills in a new light. He could be poet and painter and social reformer in one—perpetually escaping, but not forgetting to return. Indeed the great escapers, from the days of Plato onwards, have generally practised return, and brought back light and leading. It would be a strange and inverted asceticism if we refused to look at heaven because the earth was dark.

And so, without any extravagance, without any idea of escape, in no spirit of idle romanticism, and with no dereliction of duty, we can practise the inward eye which is the bliss of our solitude, saying

In lumine tuo videbimus lumen, and asking that light may shine.

O pure clear Sun on high, bright fountain-head of grace!
O beat of angels' wings! O ministers of fire!
Unseal, dear Lord, my eyes; fulfil my soul's desire;
And make me in thy light see thy light face to face.