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MAN AND THE MULTITUDE

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Man and the Multitude!

BY

A. C. Hill

LONDON
ARTHUR H STOCKWELL LTD.
29, Ludgate Hill, E.C.

Made and Printed in Great Britain for Arthur H. Stockwell Ltd.,
by H. E. Warne Ltd., St. Austell.

FOREWORD

I WISH to state a case for the individual as against the crowd, for personal opinion and conduct as opposed to the collective consciousness and organised action by which the life of the private citizen is being increasingly regulated. Against the growing pressure of the social mass I would speak on behalf of those who desire to think their own thoughts, manage their own affairs and live their own life. Such men as I have in mind have no desire to escape the necessary duties of citizenship, or to fail in recognition of their relations to mankind in general and to their countrymen and neighbours in particular. But they view with apprehension the growth of that mass of common and frequently unenlightened opinion, taking to itself in our days the authority and strength of governmental rule, by which the private citizen is being reduced to a cipher in the sum of massed human forces. In contrast to the multitude of men I would set the claims of the man.

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MAN AND THE MULTITUDE

It might well have been supposed that the pressure of social forms in ordinary life was enough to guarantee the continuance of the social conscience. But our contemporaries do not think so. They would have their generation taught to repeat the social Credo with every sort of intonation from dawn till dusk of each day. It is superfluous labour and might be amusing if it were not so dangerous in its consequences.

In reality, what is more striking in any modern society than the crushing authority of the social atmosphere on the ordinary individual? It begins, of course, with the family itself. But as our opponents have taken the family very much to task and seem inclined to abolish it we may leave out that factor. The real strength of social custom is felt originally in the school. It weighs upon the individual boy or girl with an irresistible force. There is the necessary similarity of the lessons given. This cannot be avoided. If education is to be general there must be some principles on which it is founded and some rules by which it is regulated. I do not know whether we have yet arrived at the uniformity desired by Napoleon, who said that he wanted every school in France to be reciting the same lines of Virgil at the same moment of the day. But we have come near it. Education has taken uniformity as its watchword. And judging by its product the result answers to expectations. School is the child's introduction to life. And school moulds the child's

mind in the direction of obedience to the general will. The herd mind begins to show itself. Heterodoxy is frowned upon and stamped out with ruthless severity. The future citizen is being shaped after the desired pattern.

I do not complain of these things. I know that they must be. But I submit that the influences thus let loose upon the child are so strong that every encouragement should be given to the contrary energies. We know what some of the more sensitive boys have suffered in their school career. Certainly we cannot legislate for Shelleys and Byrons. The abnormal must always suffer in a world bent on being normal. But we have not yet recognised the misery that is caused to many sensitive souls by being compelled to endure the tribal joustings and bullyings, the clan jamborees and tourneys, and all those performances which have as their avowed object the subjection of the individual mind to the common standard. And who could speak adequately of that petty tyranny of opinion which reduces everything in school life to a set of fiercely dogmatic though unformulated rules. There is a social rule, a common form in school life which is more cruel than that known in the world, since it is not mitigated by that small measure of sympathy and understanding, born of painful experience, which may be found sometimes with older people. Woe to the boy who dares to act differently from the crowd. Every effort will be made to destroy in him those growing indications of an independent mind. Masters and pupils will conspire to create in him what they are pleased to call the team spirit. He will be exhorted to remember always that he belongs to Snooper's Academy or to Bullivant College and to forget that he is poor little Jimmy Smith, an entity cast forth into this universe without any real support or defence against its terrors and tyrannies save what he can find in his own timid heart or dimly lit intelligence.

And the school life of the ordinary boy is only a prelude to the life that will await him in society and the world. When he goes into the office, or enters the factory, he will find there already a host of superior persons who will make it part of their life's task to inculcate the truth that he must do exactly as all the others of his set or order are doing. Already the career of this small creature is predictable. He will become a clerk like millions of other clerks, or a business man like some thousands of others, or professional person similar to some hundreds who have chosen the same line. And in each of these phases of human activity he will find a battalion prepared for him into which he must fit, suiting himself to his number and station in the file at the risk of being punished by the commander for the slightest act of independence.

Does he succeed in life? Is it likely that he will become rich? Then there is already fitted for him the social framework into which he must twist and glide if he would continue to live socially. From the suburb, where he has lived exactly like the rest of his neighbours, he will pass into the mansion prepared for him. His butler and footmen will decree for him the modes in which he must live. His guests will be determined for him. The very stags he shoots or misses, the birds he rears, the fish he angles for, are all decided upon by superior persons who occupy the same position in that upper world as the sergeant major in the regiment or the prefect in the school. Never in his career as a modern man is he allowed to think independently or act on his own initiative, save at the risk of losing the esteem of his fellows and being sent to Coventry as an outsider. We live in a world in which the influence of society, in the small or large sense, is already so powerful that it is sheer waste of time and energy to seek to strengthen it. Society? Men cannot escape from it. The social gospel? It is preached to them,

sung to them in their cradle, chanted to them by their school mates, repeated in every tone throughout their life until at last they are buried according to the social rites and remembered according to the social formulas of their little hour.

I do not resent these things. They are the necessary, the indispensable accompaniments of social life. Men being what they are we cannot have social life on any other terms. And the gains admittedly outweigh any disadvantages that may reveal themselves. But surely the conclusion to be drawn from this cursory survey would be just the contrary of that which is popular to-day. We ought to seek by every means to reduce to the minimum this natural oppression of the individual by society, and to encourage all those influences which, whilst recognising the importance of the social milieu, and repudiating every form of anarchy as irrational, yet seek to release the springs of personal will and the peculiar qualities of the personal being, that at the last there may be produced an individual. In any modern society there will undoubtedly be more than enough of the team spirit. The constitution of society compels its growth. That we should seek to add to that already weighted power by our words and concerted actions seems to me a kind of madness.

All this is strengthened and accentuated in the life of the working classes of our day. Modern methods of industry necessitate the gathering of men in large numbers at one spot. They must be assembled, directed, disciplined, pretty much as the soldiers of an army, if the work on which they are engaged is to be done effectively. Rule, gradation, repetition are indispensable factors in the management of large bodies of industrial workers. And there is little hope that the system can be altered or its harshness modified to any large extent.

If to-day the pressure exercised on working men during

their hours of labour is severe, the control under which they live in hours of leisure is not less burdensome. The games they play are organised. All their sports are brought under the governance of directing powers whose idea seems to be to create a uniformity of conduct and of thought amongst the working classes which will make it comparatively easy to exploit their inclinations and even their passions. I do not condemn the crowds at a football match. They are there because they like the game. There is a natural inclination amongst them to move in large multitudes. They feel the attraction of the crowd, and yield to it with that thoughtless impulsion which has always characterised the masses of large cities. And since games of this kind cannot be played without being organised we must accept the conditions of the amusement offered and be grateful. But there is little room for individual taste in such entertainments. Each of the persons in these mobs is presumably an individual. But the sameness of their pursuits, the similarity of their taste, the overwhelming sense of a herd movement which is created by their presence, seems to remove the possibility of personal inclination altogether.

Can one deny also that there is a great deal of good-natured but yet severe tyranny exercised by these crowds over their respective members? Each must feel with his own particular gang. There is demanded from all of them the same enthusiasm for the particular player. Anything like independent judgment, a calm consideration of the respective merits of the players, and an effort at real reflection is frowned upon. Shout with the largest crowd. There is Pickwick's solution of the problem of the individual and the multitude. And it would seem that there is no other rule. The human creature is only safe when he takes on the colour of his surroundings. He must speak the lingo of his district, share

the prejudices and interests of his circle, or he will be marked down as an eccentric and regarded therefore as a probable enemy.

The moment we come to look at the artisan of to-day closely, we see that all the influences which operate so powerfully on his fellow creature who belongs to a social class above him are strengthened to an enormous degree. The duke, the new-made knight, the successful tea merchant, the bank-manager, the clerk, have all their social regulations made out for them. They must wear the colours of their party, speak the language of their class, interest themselves in the politics, sports, arts, amusements of their crowd. Should they fail at any of these points, they are ostracised. The shell is handed to them and they become social exiles as surely as Aristides for being just or Alcibiades for being too popular or too good-looking were dismissed from Athens of old. But they are free men compared with the modern worker in factory or mill.

This does not mean that the modern worker is a wage slave. He is not. He enjoys a larger measure of economic freedom than has been known to any great population of urban folk since the earliest times. He has been delivered, from the tyranny of status into the comparative liberty of contract. He is theoretically free to take his labour to any market, and sell it to the highest bidder. The world is open to him and he may travel where he will. It is not wage slavery from which he suffers. It is from the slavery which has been created for him by his equals, the social serfdom which has been created for him in the name of the social gospel.

We all know the usual routine of his life. For eight or ten hours of the day he works at his appointed task in mill or factory or mine or shipyard. Of necessity during that time he is compelled to work with others, either at the same task

or at tasks which have some relation to his own, each being a contribution to the common product of the establishment. But is he free to work according to his ability, or even in agreement with his mood? He is not. The amount of his production is decreed for him by his companions. Once it was settled for him by an employer or an overseer. Now it is decided in agreement with the standard set by the craft, the corporation, to which he belongs. Any effort on his part to earn more than the average, to make his special contribution of more value to his employer than the general product of the individual workers in the shop will be frowned upon. More than this, he will discover that there is a tyranny of the workshop more searching even than the social rule of school or club. It is understood that any effort to rise above his class is regarded as treason to his own platoon. He has been thrust back, not by the cruelty of masters, or by the pressure of unjust laws, but by the will of his own peers into a position which differs little from the status out of which the industrial revolution is supposed to have delivered him. Seeing that mass production is now a necessary element in industrial life, we might have supposed that everything would have been done to mitigate the severities of this system. The individual man should have been encouraged to put his own personality into his work, to show the best qualities that were in him. Nothing of the kind. His own peers have decided that, if they can prevent it, he shall not pass from the station of rivetter, clicker, carpenter, into one superior.

What is his position when he escapes from the daily round of toil? He goes to his home which will be one of many similar homes in a distinct part of the town. There he will find himself surrounded by neighbours, all of whom are decent, kindly people like himself, engaged in something like the same sort of employment. There is nothing to be

said against these folk. They are just as good, have quite as many human virtues, probably more than those who live in villas or mansions. But they belong to their own particular tribe, their clan is known and the members of it are expected to behave as the clan or tribe think fitting.

There is as much social control over the conduct of Jack Dobbin, of Paradise Row, as there is over Sir Harold Bungsby of Mayfair. And the ladies of Paradise Row will see to it that the worthy Mrs. Dobbin toes the line according to the social rules of the district as carefully as the Duchesses and Countesses of Society will scrutinise the conduct of Lady Bungsby. Inclinations for the Pub or Chapel on the part of the husband, extravagance in costume, excessive cleanliness or domestic neglect on the part of the wife, are observed and commented on, frequently with happy results, in Paradise Row, as surely as in Sloane Street. The social consciousness is at work, moulding the honest toiler and his family according to the received ideas of the folk amongst whom he must spend his leisure time. And it requires an unusual strength of character for a man living in these conditions to mark out for himself a line of independent thought, to act as his mind and conscience direct, without first considering what will be said by the decent people who surround him. This is a force of enormous value in the maintenance of any society. But because it has power to produce virtues, it is also strong in the creation of vices. And the mere fact of contiguity, of frequent intercourse with the people of ones own set and circle is a guarantee that a social consciousness of some sort will be created in the mind of the average man of our time. Not to strengthen this, but to give to the individual force of character on occasion to rise above it, would be the best method of benefiting him. Another form of the pressure exercised on the individual by society is the new development,

new for us, of the conscious oversight and inspection of moral conduct by paid servants of the community.

There has been a growth of inquisitorial scrutiny into the life and conduct of the private citizen which threatens to bring back all the unpleasant features of the Torquemada regime in Spain. The policeman is no longer regarded as the protector of private property, the guardian of the peace of the realm. He has been elevated into a moral censor, whose task is to move about his district exercising strict supervision over the moral conduct of the citizen. And pray, let it be observed that the very people who pride themselves on being "advanced" in all good things, because they approve of this mode of supervising the conduct of their neighbours, are those who scoff at the minute investigations which were once made into the actions of a church member by Scotch elders and treat the men who made Hester Prynne stand in public with a red letter on her breast as almost murderers. I see little to choose between the regulations enforced by a church and the restrictions and punishments imposed by the State on matters which are best left to the personal judgment of the citizen. But the church has at least this advantage over the State, that she seldom exercised authority save over those who were of their own will, members of her communion and had therefore given her some right to judge them.

Certainly where there is an outrage on public decency it is the duty of the policeman to prevent it and to see that the offender is properly dealt with by the authorities. But where there is no such offence given and where the arrangements are made between two persons, it should be understood again by our people that the world is free. I count as of little worth this enforced virtue. If men are to be chaste and women to be pure I do not look to the detective to aid them greatly in their efforts. Without disparaging that excellent body of

men, we may question their wisdom and deny their right to act as moral censors. It is but another proof that we should do well to revert to the doctrine of our fathers, that the only virtue worth considering is that which is the fruit of a personal choice.

That a crime against the community is one thing and a moral error another was accepted as an axiom by a former generation. We left to Mrs. Grundy, precious possession of all highly civilised peoples, the task of correcting the manners of the citizens. We have improved on that. It is now the task of the policeman to spy out the conduct of the private individual. The supervising and inquisitive official of the State is to be the secret witness of our most personal and private actions. He is to judge, correct and bring to punishment those persons whose conduct, innocuous in itself, is yet not agreeable to the opinions of the ruling class. And he will do this in the interests of a secular morality which is to be enforced by the State. The right, not to commit crime, but to commit sin, the necessary correlative of the will to virtue, is to be removed. This is a consequence of that social pressure of the multitude under which we now suffer.

Another consequence of the same forces acting on the individual is that we no longer expect our statesmen to regard their policies and their personal honour as indissolubly connected. A politician may now declare that, having strongly opposed the granting of the vote to women on equal terms with men, he finds that, the thing being accomplished, it is wise on his part to accept the inevitable situation. We have heard this doctrine expounded before, but usually with an apology. It is now frankly accepted as the sensible course of action. When Palmerston complained that he could light his fire with Gladstones letters of resignation, he was paying that statesman an unintended compliment. It is no longer

necessary for a statesman to pledge himself to a policy so boldly that, the contrary being adopted, he is bound to resign. Instead he adapts himself to the new situation, that is, he hangs on to office at any price. This is intelligible, but it means the extinction of political sincerity. And however thin the veneer of sincerity in politics it should be retained, if only as the homage vice pays to virtue.

In the new world for which men are now hoping, it is believed there will be more leisure than is now granted to the mass of workers. It is hoped that a time will come when men will be able, not merely to earn their daily bread, but also to cultivate the arts and sciences by which life is enriched and adorned.

But if leisure time is to be increased in anything like the proportion desired by the reformer the intelligence of men must be enriched beyond anything yet known. Indeed, one of the hardest things to learn is just this art of using spare time with profit. There is reason in the remark of Johnson, that men are seldom better engaged than when making money. For the moralist knows that what men need to acquire knowledge and taste is not only the time but the desire to possess these things. And without that desire time will be of little use.

For the man who wishes to see his fellows engaged in the free pursuity of their own tastes, the development of their own talents, the irritating thing is that they are already so submissive to the will of the crowd. There is very little of conscious endeavour to use leisure in a manner likely to strengthen and enlarge the distinctly personal gifts of the individual. Circumstances have doubtless much to do with this. But there is little prospect of a general raising of the standard of intelligence until it is agreed that each person is free to follow his own tastes. And in sport, amusement,

entertainment, the effort should be directed towards the enfranchisement of the citizen from the pressure of the multitude.

What we ought to work for is the creation of a body of citizens whose minds are liberated from the fear of mass control. If this cannot be brought about then the increase of leisure would only mean that men would come, in their hours of play, still more under the governance of that crowd pressure which already tends to make them almost as alike as peas. And this ought to be dreaded as one of the greater evils. At present the tendency is all the other way. Men are urged to follow the mob. They are exhorted to assemble themselves in multitudes, to keep step in their movements, to do always what the other fellows are doing, to engage in amusements which are common to all, to feel that they are outsiders, unless they can think the same thoughts and use the same expressions, and feel the same emotions as their acquaintances and contemporaries. What humanity needs is variety. What we try to create for humanity is similarity. We are standardised to death. And commerce, education, politics, religion, are all regarded as capable of being measured, their real worth being decided in proportion to their effectiveness in increasing this already excessive likeness of man to man. The unusual, the eccentric, the expression of a definitely personal inclination, is regarded as an affront to the school, the group, the society, in which a man is compelled to move. And the result is a drabness and uniformity of aspect which would justify to-day the saying of Leconte de Lisle about his own time, "I hate my epoch."

No man has clearer ideas on this subject than the most successful business man of our epoch, Mr. Henry Ford. Everybody knows that in his works he has reduced the division of labour almost to the last hair, has fixed for each person the thing he shall do and arranges that this one thing shall be

done by that person, repeatedly, without intermission, during the working hours of the day. And since Mr. Ford is something of a philosopher and thinks about his business and his employees, his experience has led him to entertain the conviction that the majority of men do not wish to be independent, to think freely, to regulate their own life in its essentials. What they ask for is that some power, personal or collective, shall provide them with the requisite food and shelter, high wages to meet high prices; and that the concerns of the world, all that belongs to the realm of thought and mental action should be taken hold of by others than themselves. Whether he knows it or not, Mr. Ford has discovered in America, what Aristotle believed he had found long ago in Greece, that the mass of men are slaves by the ordination of fate. Aristotle, Legree and Mr. Ford are agreed on this, the multitude must be cared for, since they are unable to take care of themselves, being slaves by divine decree. Let him who denies this have much to do with rough humanity in the mass, let him deal with it as Ford has dealt with it and he will find it hard to deny that the slave element in man is strong.

And Mr. Ford's methods and conclusions are only the exaggeration of what has been and is being shown experimentally in all the countries of the world to-day. Wherever the great industry travels it brings with it this necessity for mass production. And the result is bound to be that men work in crowds, that their labour is standardised, that they are compelled to sacrifice their personal independence in order that they may keep their place in the line, do the job provided for them and draw their pay at the week's end. And if the prophets are correct this must increasingly be the rule for all industrial lands. I have no hope of a return to peasant proprietorship, small holdings, three acres and a cow, the

garden, the small plot tended by one family and its produce marketed in the district. There is little reason to expect that the industries of the future will be relegated to the pleasant country places and that the combination of country and town, the quiet pursuit of artistic excellence in rural surroundings, or the development of handwork as opposed to the use of machinery, or any one of the score of dreams with which men have cheated themselves as they have thought about the future, will realise themselves. We are booked through for the long journey of machinery and mass production until this civilisation of ours bursts through its own explosive energy, or dies of its own rottenness and a new form of the Protean figure of human life takes its place. Hundreds of millions of men during the next thousand years will be born and live out their day in precisely that mode which has been rendered common at Detroit by the genius of Mr. Ford. They will be the servants of the great industry and their value to the State and to the world will be measured by their assimilation to a common type.

Because these things are sure to be, I maintain that every effort should be made by the moralist and the teacher to instil into the minds of men the duty and privilege of asserting, wherever possible, their right to think and feel and act in the manner most suitable to their own natures. In a world where men shoot each other at sight, where the nomad rules tracts of land which would keep great populations in plenty, where the elements of social life have not yet been learned, it is desirable that every encouragement should be given to the communal impulse. Social pressure needs to be strengthened there until it has become a crust thick enough to resist the disruptive influences of the dissident and disloyal. But in the world of to-day where society holds us from our cradle enmeshed in forms which bind us like swaddling

clothes, it is the passion for variation which should be encouraged. And the search for freedom should be carried on irrespective of the fears of old women of either sex or, since we are now in the period of the monstrous regimentation of women once again, the young ones either. For it is certain that if men do not resist the socialising pressures, if they meekly hand themselves over to the masters on the one hand and the women on the other, they will be robbed of every vestige of personal freedom and reduced in everything but form, to the status of slaves. And I repeat, this will not be the work of any organised capitalism or corporation of employers, it will be wrought by the mass will, the rage for equality, the hatred of the unusual. Only an impassioned will to think ones own thoughts, to cultivate an inner life which is independent of the coercion exerted from without can save mankind in the future from becoming a herd of oxen, without volition, intellect, imagination, affection which has not been dragooned into submission to the general will. And that equality of all amongst the living, is but an introduction to the one equality from which we cannot escape, the equality of death.

Can contemporary man look for release from State control? Our finer spirits contemplate with dismay the disposition of the State to press its claim for regulation over the individual citizen. We are being transformed into children of a larger growth. Qualities which have been beneficial to our national character are being destroyed. And there are limits to the benefits of paternal legislation. Rebellion against the social will may come to be the mark of the distinguished personality. And where the notable character points the way, others will follow.

Let no one think we can escape this by socialism. Better Mr. Ford than the regimented dragoons of the State. But

for the person who loves freedom the prospect is not pleasant. Man's life is being standardised. There is the cause of our complaint. In certain respects man has attained a liberty unknown to our ancestors. But there are new forms of oppression as onerous as those we have agreed to forget. The passion for uniformity may well fill us with apprehension. Must the fervour of the reformer continually reduce the freedom of the citizen? It will be argued that such restrictions are needful. But we are watching an extension of authority over the citizen without precedent in civilised society. Actually it means that certain persons enforce upon others their own idea of what is right and proper. Sections of society are claiming rulership over the community. The consumer is neglected that the producer and his agents may profit. Bodies of workmen decide the conditions upon which they will work. Against this no objection can be raised. But they have no right to interfere with persons who desire to work under other conditions. It is sophistry to say that such men gain a larger freedom. The workshop is closed and I am not allowed to exercise my skill as an artisan. But the Art Galleries are open and I can admire the pictures of Rembrandt and Turner. It is true that I am not interested in pictures. But certain people think I ought to be concerned about Art. I must do as they say or twiddle my thumbs. Let the truth be told. The people who thus arrange the life of the working man are not concerned about his freedom. They act like every benevolent autocrat from Cæsar to Joseph of Austria. They force upon a reluctant population their own habits and inclinations. Flattering the mob with honeyed words their actions show that they despise the individuals who compose it. We tie the child into his chair, put a guard before the fire, remove every knife and fork, lock up the matches, close door and windows, and then

admire the intelligence and self control of the baby. All of which is excellent when we have to do with Baby. But it is Plato's "splendid lie" when applied to the management of men.

Of escape from this control, I see no promise save in those who refuse to be cheated by its pretences. Laws must be obeyed. But laws detrimental to the expansion of individual life may be abrogated by the authority which created them. There will be many dead laws on our statute books in a hundred years. From this extension of State control we already see a strengthening of the herd instinct. And there is enough of this in the mentality of modern man. Cut off from personal acquaintance with Nature and her ways he hears only the opinions of men of his own station and culture. He distrusts any impulse which has not received the benediction of his own class. And all this is exploited to-day. Arts which depend upon personal culture must be made attractive to the popular mind. Statesmanship is to be judged by its appeal to the crowd. The pilot must expatiate upon tides and winds, rocks and waves, as though his function were, not to save, but to entertain the passengers. Excellent for the editor, the political orator! Fatal for the people which cannot discriminate between good work and fine phrases. How then manage this turbulent giant? Reduce his force. And this must be done by the cultivation of independent minds. There is no antidote to crowd-mentality but this increase of minds which spontaneously react against popular judgments. The domination of the gangster and his acolytes needs to be met by the challenge of the solitary who dares to live and think alone. Leave men then to make their blunders and rectify them as best they can. Encourage a man to save and you will remove him from the society of communists. Let him know that he is free to play the fool,

but that he must pay the piper. We need independent minds. Your self-poised intelligent man is perplexing to the political agent. So he should be. He is critical but he is not presumptuous, since he is prepared to respect those who may be supposed to know. But to the polite bandits who seek, on one pretext or another, to further their own ends by enslaving him, in the name of whatever cult of fashion or illusion of the hour, he offers a face of brass and ears stuffed against all their wiles.

THE SERVILE MIND

THERE are reasons why those claims of the individual should be restated and reconsidered. They are being swiftly reduced to a quantity which makes them negligible and worthless. The tendency in contemporary thought is to regard the individual as a factor in society and no more. He exists merely that society may function more easily and profitably. Any suggestion of his right to free action is frowned upon. That he is himself the end for which society exists, that his free action is the only justification for society and the many claims it makes upon him, is likely to be laughed out of court. Daily the pressure of the popular cult, the general theory that each person in any given society is there only that he may serve the general good, that good being defined for him by others, becomes more insistent and burdensome.

The indications of this are plentiful as they are intricate and emphatic. The new attitude of the citizen of these islands towards all persons having public positions, serving the State in any official capacity, is enough to indicate the change in feeling which has taken place. Men go in fear of the public official. His power is so considerable, his capacities for annoyance, if not for positive injury, are so great, that even the strong characters and those whose position might be supposed to render them naturally independent in their judgments and free in their actions, are wary and even timid in the presence of these representatives of communal authority. The collector of taxes, the assessor of rates, the multitude

of those who have to deal with the financial side of the citizens' relations to the State, have become a terror to the ordinary man. He deels himself almost impotent in their grasp. Accustomed as by daily routine to the management of figures, specialists in their own department, these men persist in their inquisitive search for all information bearing on the private affairs of the citizen. To them he is a tax-payer, therefore a ready victim, a natural enemy, a compulsory martyr.

As a body of men these servants of the public are entirely honest. There is no suggestion that they have either the will or the power to make themselves into dishonest peculators with the money of the citizen. In that respect they are above reproach. But the attitude which they adopt is the result of the changed mood of the nation. Instead of regarding the individual citizen as the important person, since upon his enterprise and industry the welfare of the community must depend, which was the attitude of the 19th century, we have adopted a manner and made our own a disposition which is the exact opposite. The free citizen of other days has become the tax payer of to-day. He is to be harried and worried and pursued until every shred of independence is taken from him. Should he be a man of some substance, he will be driven in sheer self defence, to employ an accountant to manage his finances. Thus he stands a helpless creature, between two professionals, fighting over what he once foolishly regarded as his own private affairs. And this condition of things is regarded as progress.

Even the work that he has done, the business he has created, will not be regarded as in any serious sense belonging to him, pertaining to his own person. From the side of the workers on the one hand and from the side of the State official on the other, he will be persuaded to believe that his

business is the property of the community. I recall a trifling illustration of this tendency. A man of my acquaintance had made a small business out of which he managed to draw a modest livelihood. When I say he had made it, I mean the word literally. Before his time that business, in its existing form, had no being. He had created it as surely as Browning created "Prospice." One day, there came a young lady, emissary of the State, to enquire about things. She claimed to look at the books, to enquire of the workers whether their wages corresponded to the amounts stated in the books and asked other questions. When the man demurred to some of these questions, pointing out also that she was robbing him of time which might be more profitably employed, she said, "Don't you understand, sir? This business is not yours, this business belongs to the State." To which the man very properly answered, with words which I will not repeat that, since the business belonged to the State he would be glad if the State would take care of it. This is but a mild example of what is happening all over the country. The young lady had doubtless been to one of the numerous colleges in which this nonsense is taught as part of the curriculum. She would be convinced that it was gospel truth. Of her utter ignorance and childish impudence in the presence of a man who had done something, by the side of which her performances were contemptibly insignificant and valueless, she herself would have not the slightest idea. Multiply that young woman by the thousand, repeat that experience of the struggling business man by the ten thousand, and you have some notion of the ignorant, well meaning but pernicious tyranny which is being encouraged daily in our midst.

In face of such facts it is difficult to believe that we are Englishmen living in our own country. The relationship

between the private citizen and the person invested with controlling powers has completely changed. We no longer stand up to him on the ground of our rights as members of a free commonwealth. We bow before him, open to his enquiring gaze all our most private affairs, crave his indulgence, tremble at his word, frown and shiver at the sight of a uniform as if we had been disciplined by Junkers or bludgeoned into insensibility by New York policemen and could not forget the experience. Nothing is more startling than the spirit of meek submissiveness with which the best people in these islands, the long suffering middle classes, endure the ever increasing tyranny of State and Municipal authority. Build a garage which is no more than an enlarged rabbit hutch in your back garden and you have given the rating authorities another hold upon you. Put an electric sign over your shop door, and you must pay for the privilege of telling people that you sell watch chains or stockings. In every conceivable way the energetic worker, who wishes to get on, to do something in the world for his own interests, and incidentally for the wellbeing of the community, is hindered, his efforts discouraged, by all sorts of restrictions and penalties. It used to be regarded as a virtue in men that they should love work, whatever their motive might be.

To-day, the man who loves his work and wishes to keep at it, since he finds it more amusing than standing at the street corner or sitting in a picture house, is regarded as a public danger. Young men tell me they cannot obtain capital and without capital they cannot begin business for themselves. The Banks will not lend without security. The Jew will strip them naked at the first failure to meet their engagements. I reply to them that I am not surprised. How did the men of fifty years ago obtain their capital? By working harder than their fellows. By depriving them-

selves of small luxuries. By saving to the last penny until they had gathered their first hundred pounds together. But is any man encouraged to do this to-day? He is not. The laws of his country, the opinion of his fellow workers, the vast and subtle ramifications of a credit system which seems attractive but is deadly in its effects on small incomes and the habit of frugality, tend to make this impossible. We complain of the increased diffusion of the gambling spirit amongst men. How could it be otherwise? Since they are practically prohibited from rising above their present social level by efforts of their own; since the passion for uniformity holds them in thrall to their present station; they appeal to Chance. Dog racing, horse racing, Calcutta sweepstakes, lotteries; all these represent the proper reaction of mankind against a system which tends to repress their natural aspirations, to force each of them to be just one of a herd. And since economy is laughed at in City and State, proclaimed to be a vice by men who profess to understand Political Economy, the result is that men spend more than ever they did and trust to chance. Luck, a turn of the wheel, communal assistance when they break down, pensions when they are finally counted out of the arena; to anything rather than to their own industry and talents.

The citizen who pays Income Tax is being taught from his noviciate as a voter that he exists, breathes, works, saves only for the State. An industrialist in the North told me lately that he pays thirteen and sixpence out of every pound to the State. And the startling thing is that this situation is regarded as normal, nay, that there are people in the country who actually believe that even now he is not paying enough. If possible they would strip him to the extent of nineteen and sixpence in the pound and then fight amongst themselves as to whether he should be left with that odd sixpence.

That way madness lies. And our statesmen complacently assure us that all is well. If industries are falling to pieces, if the shipyards are empty and the coal mines unworked because nobody wants our ships, will buy our coal, or look at our iron and steel, the remedy is simple. Increase the wages of the workers, cut down the capital so that the pound becomes six and eightpence, put on a bigger army than ever of useless inspectors to watch other people doing the work, pay with unceasing regularity the tribute money that we owe to America, and wait for better times. It is, of course, true that high wages mean high prices, that bacon, tea, sugar, bread, boots, clothing, hats, shirts, socks, all cost more ; that rents are almost prohibitive, that the house which, twenty-five years ago could be bought for four hundred pounds will now cost you a thousand, that even yet the masses of our population find the rent of any sort of a house almost prohibitive and that the new houses being built by the Municipalities are occupied, not by the manual workers, but by the clerks, small lawyers, accountants, clergy and others, who belong to the black-coated brigade because the hand-workers cannot afford to pay the rents. But the reason for all this is ignored. It is true that the railway workers have made for themselves, by political action, a position of unexampled security, and that having accomplished this, they have the privilege of standing about Railway stations with nothing to do, whilst the shareholders see their capital slowly dwindling away. Everybody see this. Any intelligent man can understand the cause of it. But this does not prevent men from advocating on a universal scale precisely the same methods and ideals which have ruined half our industries and transformed us into a spendthrift and largely idle population. And our cheerful Chancellors gleefully tell us that in about fifty years, by continuing our

present custom of paying a large part of our income to the State and spending the rest on whatever attracts us at the moment, we shall have liquidated our debt to the United States and be free once more. If he or any other man believes that this people is going to be favoured by Providence for ever whilst neglecting the plain teaching of experience they may be proud of their optimism, but should not boast of their acumen. Long before that half-century is over we shall be relegated to the second rank of States, or we shall have altered our ideas. And no work of the reformer in politics or morals will save us from this necessity.

What, then, is to be done? The first thing necessary is that we, who are the inheritors of a great tradition, should know our own position. We need to preach passionately the rights of the individual as against the State. The academic hosts have scoffed for half a century at this doctrine. But intelligent men have long since realised that philosophies follow the interests. And the time will yet come when the nation, taught by experience, will again make free action for the individual a leading tenet of its political creed. Then the philosophers will change their minds. At present herded, drilled by the Pashas who armed with their brief but terrifying authority, order us to live, to labour, to play and to pay according to their own sweet will, we can do nothing but submit, argue and protest. But our turn will come.

MONEY AND MORALS

THE PLACE OF MONEY IN LIFE

GIVE me neither poverty nor riches is the prayer of wisdom. But to-day there is a strong and general desire for wealth. And the increase of the world's treasure has not kept pace with the desire for opulence. There is more discontent in the cities of the modern world than was known in feudal or classical times. There was always some discontent and at certain periods it has been organised into a weapon of war. From Spartacus to Jean Marat, the energetic rebels have seen in the disaffected poor their strongest weapon of attack against the existing order. The difference between the discontent of to-day and that of former times is that now it is conscious, deliberate, militant. The poor have an object. They propose to limit the wealth of the rich. And they believe that it can be done. They have a philosophy and economics of their own. True that theory of theirs has never yet stood the test of practice through a lengthened period. But their leaders believe that it has yet to be subjected to an appropriate trial. And they are confident that it will emerge triumphant from the ordeal and will be accepted as the chief benefaction offered by progress to mankind. One may admire their buoyant optimism and yet question the wisdom of their expectation. The problem of money on this large scale resolves itself into two phases. The actuality of the money situation as it has been and is now, and the proper attitude for the reasonable and honest man towards that situation.

The remarkable thing about the money problem is that with the increase of conscious disaffection, there has been an increase of the number of moneyed men. And the wealth of the rich man to-day is greater proportionally than in preceding ages. What the fortune of Lucullus was we do not know, but he was certainly not as rich as Henry Ford. The Fuggers were wealthy, but the Rothschilds control more wealth than the Fuggers ever did. The Medici were leading financiers as well as patrons of Art. But in both directions the Pierpont Morgans have outpaced them. This offers no support to the theory of Marx, that the rich become richer whilst the poor grow poorer through the automatic action of the Capitalist system. For the poor in our own society know nothing of the bitter poverty which roused to madness the French peasantry of the 18th century. And no population of Europe has suffered even during the late war, anything like the penalties and privations which fell on the indigent during the Thirty Years War. The Marxian theory of social evolution has been proved false in its most important prophecies. The poor are better off than they used to be. The rich are increasing in number and the quantity of their wealth is growing.

A politician belonging to the Left has declared that the future Government of this country will arrange for a pitched battle with the City of London. To those who fear the moment when Labour arrives at power this must be good news. For it is certain that any political party which seriously set out to humiliate and break the City would not last a month. In these set conflicts between the will of the politician and the power of money the latter will always win. And it is good for the community that this should be so. For who are the proper custodians of money? Surely those people who are interested in it, who care greatly for it and

therefore guard it vigilantly. These are, speaking generally and allowing for exceptions, the proper guardians of the national purse. The best proof of this is not given by argument, but by example. Now it is certain that the chief material agent in the winning of the late war was the wealth of our people. That wealth was scattered over the world. But during the war it was gradually called home, converted into currency and used for the purchase of things indispensable for the prosecution of the war. But that wealth had been accumulated during the preceding century by a race of men almost unequalled in history for industry, integrity and frugality. It is certain that the commercialists of the Victorian age prepared the financial sustenance on which we lived, as a people, during those four years of strife. And that was done successfully because the wealth of the country was chiefly in private hands. The method by which the rich man was compelled to surrender a large portion of his gains to the State had only begun to function and that in a tentative fashion. Had there been a Socialist Government in power for the half century preceding 1914, supposing that the government had acted upon its principles logically and boldly, it is fairly certain that we should have lost the war. The reason is plain enough. Large aggregations of capital are indispensable for the management of business on the grand scale. But these masses of wealth, such as we associate with the name of Lever, Coats, Mond, Rothschild, naturally offer themselves as an object of plunder to those whose belief it is that equality, or the nearest thing to it, is desirable in society. The passion for reducing all to one level can find no more fitting target than these vast heaps of money. And who on earth can blame the poor beggar who is starving on 25 shillings a week for thinking that the beginning of all reforms must be here, in the diminution of these Pyramids of

gold and the levelling up thereby of the inequalities of society !

But then these vast fortunes, these Capitals, can only be maintained by constant watchfulness and ceaseless effort to increase them. The thing that does not grow must wither. And the melancholy examples of this truth offered to us during the last ten years are known to all. Capital cut down, the business re-organised, these are the consequences of the failure to increase. What would have happened to the wealth of the country had it been left during the last 50 years to State management and control ? It would practically have ceased to exist. The politician and the State employee between them would have spent it all on social services, on improvements in the condition of the voting population, which may be desirable enough, but are not worth buying at the price of bankruptcy. That disaster is prevented by the deeply wise selfishness of those who have control of the country's wealth. And so long as that control is in private hands we may reasonably hope that as a nation we shall continue to be solvent. The rich man is yet an object of suspicion to the patriot and the humanitarian. His sons and daughters may easily become ridiculous in the eyes of sensible men. This is because they have not yet learned how to modulate their private expenditure by taste and good judgment. A great deal of the disaffection felt by the poor towards the rich has its origin in this tasteless display of luxury. Such display becomes offensive when it is continuous. It is the more distasteful nowadays because it is usually devoid of that frank association between different classes which marked the expenditure of wealth by the landed and titled classes in other times. And the publicity given to the luxury of the wealthy by the Press helps to embitter the minds of the poor. Yet the wildest extravagance of the gambler and the roue has but little effect on the financial security of a nation. For at

its worst it only means that wealth passes by a swift process from the people who cannot keep it to those who can. And the important thing is that wealth should be in the hands of those who know how to take care of it. One or two bad laws directed against wealth will do more harm to the financial stability of a nation than can be wrought by a host of social drones and parasites. For what is it what a man can spend upon himself, though he use all the devices of modern luxury in the effort to get rid of his money? Little or nothing. The most skilful epicure, the heaviest drinker, has a strictly limited capacity for personal consumption of his favourite meats and drinks. Left to itself, any society will speedily work out its own economic salvation. The spendthrift becomes poor. The usurer becomes rich. And for the good of society, setting personal ethics aside, this is as it should be. The shrewd and prudent man become the possessor of the floating wealth of the world. And it can never be in better hands. For what happens to it when it is thus held by the competent person? Is it put in a strong box and hidden away. Quite the contrary. These men know better. It is put to use. They invest it in what they believe to be sound securities. And every such investment means that capital is provided for the furtherance of some project in the execution of which labour will be employed. Being versed in their profession they turn down every proposal which does not promise a sufficient return upon their money. At a stroke the multitude of gentlemen who trade upon the ignorance and credulity of the curate, the widow and the orphan are sent about their business. Some mistakes are made.

The inventor of a new machine may starve for lack of capital. Fine qualities in Art and Science may miss their way through lack of appreciation. But on balance, this method of leaving the grand tool, Money, in the hands of

those who know how to use it works efficiently. The other method, for there is only one other, is being advocated by many thoughtful men who are animated by the best intentions. The care of the individuals surplus wealth, all that remains after his wants have been supplied, is to be taken by the State. This means that other people are to have the disposal of his wealth. For of course, the State is not an abstraction, which works in a vacuum. The State, for all practical purposes, means the men who for the time being have secured control of the helm and are running the ship. And it is to these men that we must look for any wisdom of direction which we may attribute to the State and for any benefits that we expect or desire from our association with the State.

Without casting any reflections on our Civil Service or disparaging the Heads of Departments, though these gentlemen are now so securely entrenched that they need pay no heed to the complaints of the individual citizen, we may confidently say that they will not look after our money as carefully and with as full a regard for our own interests as we should ourselves. That is natural. No doctor ever yet felt as acutely for the sufferings of his patient as the patient feels for himself. A Government moved by humanitarian impulses and desirous of rectifying the inequalities of social life will endeavour to reduce the monetary power of the rich and to increase the monetary power of the poor. Especially will it do this when its continued existence depends upon the votes of the majority, since the poor are always in greater number than the rich. The Government will therefore take away money from the rich where it can. Under the pressure of the will to live, as a Government, it may proceed, or its successor may proceed, so far as to despoil the rich of all their goods and wealth beyond what is needed for a bare subsistence,

This has been done in Russia Or it may go on, by the road of inevitable gradualness, to take from the rich by taxation large portions of their wealth, stopping just at the point where there is still enough left to the rich to encourage that acquisitive instinct in man which impels him to seek wealth. This method has been adopted in our own country So far, probably because of the special conditions created by the war, it has proved effective. But the probable result of a continuance of the system throughout a long period of time will be that the motive for acquiring wealth will gradually diminish in intensity, since the rewards are less certain and substantial and the penalties attaching to poverty less severe. Should this prove true, then the idea of equalisation by taxation will be discarded and the policy of free acquisition will be tried again The sooner this is done the better We shall not be on solid financial ground again until it is understood that the last power to be trusted with the money of the citizen is the Municipality or the State, and their officials. The bookmaker, the publican, and the pander, may be detrimental to the financial status of the individual, but their worst inflictions are but as measles to leprosy compared with the harm done by mistaken laws and those who enforce them.

It is a popular idea that the handling of money can be moralised by the process of law. By legal measures the application of money to industry is to be brought completely under the control of a moral principle. The rate of interest is to be fixed according to a general rule. Usually it is settled at something like five per cent. The person who supplies the capital is expected to be satisfied with this remuneration. Anything beyond it is regarded as usury. The effort made by the Church in the Middle Ages to fix the rate of interest is to be repeated. All these ideas, however, ignore certain important facts. For example, it is forgotten

that with most industries, especially those which have to do with the exploiting of new ideas and fresh methods, considerable losses in the beginning of the industry are the rule, rather than the exception. Take mining. The Scotch Laird who complained that he had lost a fortune by digging holes in the ground was only recounting an experience which is too common to need remark. All the minerals are produced by this purely speculative system. No man, not even the boldest of bucket shop touts, can tell whether a particular mine will really pay until the ore has been brought to the surface. Let it be coal, or gold, or nickel, or platinum or diamonds, or silver, in every case, even with mines which have been proved, the speculative element is bound to be very strong in all these industries. And the rewards are proportioned to the risks. The lucky or shrewd men make fortunes. The unlucky lose them. How absurd then to suppose that by any mean rule of five per cent. there can be found a reward sufficiently great to induce men to risk their money in these enterprises! Yet mining is important. And our own people would be in a melancholy condition if it were agreed that the uncertainty attaching to mining enterprise were so great that the work should be definitely discontinued. If the State takes over the mines and works them then there will be the necessity for these risks to be spread over the purse of the body politic. Since the individual reward will be small and the risk for each person also small, there will be much more of speculation introduced into the process of exploration. Money will be wasted on bad mines. Prevision will be at a discount. All those checks which have operated so far to introduce a measure of caution into mining management will be disregarded. Then, since the condition of the worker is the chief thing and his reward comes first, the expenses of working these mines will be

increased indefinitely. A business which needs, more than most, all the qualities of the alert manager, will be left to the control of those whose motives of acquisition have been weakened and who are to that extent less concerned for the prosperity of their own section of the common property. Any mine owner could foretell the results with mathematical certitude. But mining is only one of many industries which are conditioned by the same uncertainties. New inventions always bring this element of risk into active play. Artificial silk is a quite modern instance. Already fortunes have been lost in this business. That fortunes have also been made seems to the Socialist unjust. But to any mind not prejudiced against the facts it would seem but fair that the men who confront the great financial perils should also have the chance of the great financial rewards. The motor car industry is not a whit less uncertain than mining or textiles. Two or three new gadgets on a car, a slight change in the gearing, some new arrangement of the body of labour, resulting in economies in working, will change the fortunes of a company from bad to good. And we are to suppose that people who have lent their money for five, ten, fifteen years, with no reward at all, having the opportunity of obtaining 10 to 40 per cent. on their capital are to be contented with five per cent. and to give the rest to the workmen in the business or hand it over to the State. In such a business, the workmen have contributed nothing save their labour, that labour being made possible by the existence of enterprising men possessed of capital who are prepared to risk their contribution to the common fund of the company. Yet it is suggested that the workmen have the first claim on the rewards which come to the company after success has been achieved. Suppose then that this principle is followed out. It is not a rare experience that a company, having been suc-

cessful for a decade, paying good dividends, is suddenly reduced to impotence through the efforts of a competitor, who sells a better article at the same price, or the same article at a lower price. Where there was a dividend of 40 per cent. there is now no dividend at all. Will it therefore be said that the workmen shall now have their wages reduced in proportion to the losses sustained by the company, it being understood that they continue working through the bad times ahead for a smaller wage, or for nothing at all, as a return for the good wages and profits which they have received in the good time? Let any man propose that to his helpers in the factory and immediately he will be told that the Trade Union rules forbid any such arrangement. And if this did not happen the result in most instances would be that the workers, motived by self-interest, would move to the firms which had many orders, were paying good wages, although the existence of these firms and their success is the direct cause of the failure of their former employers. Does one blame the workmen? Not at all. But the example is sufficient to indicate how impossible it is to substitute some so-called ethical measure of reward for that measure which comes from the free interplay of economic forces. And all our speech about the living wage, the rights of the worker to a decent livelihood, will not alter this rule. Given a continuous demand for the goods he works upon, the artisan can push his claims for reward up to the last limit. He may then suppose, and his modern teachers will encourage him in the notion, that there is no real boundary to what he can claim, that he has a right to the reward on capital as well as that of labour. But let the demand cease, let his employer cease to have control of the market and at once the worker finds that his fancied security is but a dream. Like Lear he can say, "They told me I was everything. They lied, I

am not ague proof." If China will not wear cotton cloth, nothing can save Lancashire from reverting to a change of industry, or even to small tillage on the land. If Bradford wool ceases to attract the buyer then the citizens of that town must change their employment. And no government can alter these things. For the politics of a nation and its economics are made, first of all, not by any assembly of talking men, but by the physical conditions, the geographical situation, in which men find themselves. We are such things as wind and water make us. The reason for stressing these truths is that the contrary falsehoods are now so widely diffused among us. We are seriously taught that there is a kind of absolute level in economic life beneath which modern man must not be allowed to fall. The truth is that there are no such absolute rules. Men get, in each century, in each country, what they can get by the pressure of demand upon supply, by the resistance of supply to demand.

Accompanying this disposition there is the inclination to believe that the State can moralise the monetary relations of men. The government is to fix, in accord with strictly moral considerations, the right of the individual to his portion of the monetary fund. Dealing with private individuals you are in danger of being cheated. Trust the government and you will always be secure. Strange illusion ! What is the financial history of the world's governments during recent years ! Wholesale robbery. They have cheated, thieved, embezzled, robbed, played the highwayman to their subjects with an unblushing effrontery scarcely equalled by the Turk or the Hindoo at his worst. Germany has deliberately gone bankrupt, thereby impoverishing multitudes of its citizens. France has done the same to the extent of three-quarters by reducing the value of the franc to a fourth of its normal worth. Of course there is one explanation and excuse for all

this, necessity of State. It had to be done. A nation may be regarded as a commercial company and as such it will be necessary on occasion to reduce the capital and to make a composition with its creditors. True enough. But the difference is that with the private company there is a choice, an alternative, before the creditors, for the subjects of the State there is none. And for the outside creditors also there is no choice. They take, not what they have a right to, according to the pledged word of the government, but what the government decides to give. The recent performances, in this kind, of Germany and France are not new in the world. Every man who skirts the edge of finance knows that South America, through its various States, has played this game often enough, that Mexico is skilled at it and that even the United States has still debts on its books, through its separate States, incurred in the Civil War, which ought to be paid, which probably never will be paid. As to France, her story is but a succession of bankruptcies, with the assignats of the Revolution as the countersign of them all. Her noble people have probably suffered more from the venality and treachery of governments than any other in Europe. It required the rock-like will and alert intelligence of Napoleon to rescue her from the miserable condition, brought about by the scoundrels and fanatics, men of the breed of Barras and Sieyes, into which she had fallen. And there are few men to-day who have the wisdom and courage of that great statesman with his rigid rule of finance, no new taxes, no fresh borrowing. What then is the meaning of these things? They mean that there is no moral rule applying to the dealing with money which can go beyond the law and, in the clever phrase of Cambaceres, "the law is the general rule made by those who have the right and power." What is the use of saying to the French Government that they owe

you a hundred francs? They have decreed that they owe you only 25 francs and you must be content. It is true they gave you their word for 100, but they will justly say that necessity of State forbids them to acknowledge more than the 25. And the debate is settled. From which I draw the conclusion that it is useless to talk about the moralising of money, that always the real power which coerces it, if it ever is coerced, is the law, and the law is utterance of the will of the State, from which you have no appeal save that of force. The publicist, eager for the morality of mankind, will say there is another course open. You can compel these people who wish to go bankrupt, to escape payment of their debts, to meet their obligations by declaring that you will not lend to them again. Yes, there is that also. And what is that but the ancient and useful maxim that honesty is the best policy, it being still but a policy, a rule of expediency, a balancing of rewards and gains against possible losses. Undoubtedly it is the best policy. And the gentry who are now advocating that we should repudiate our National Debt would on the morrow of the fulfilment of their idea, realise with frightful suddenness and pain the truth of the old adage, for they would find themselves, as statesmen, without the chance of borrowing money from anybody in the world, even from the rash Americans. But it is a policy, not an ethical law, which is being considered. And there is all the difference in the world between that law by which the stars themselves are strong and the maxim by which men are guided in their financial relations with each other All these considerations can only lead to the conclusion that we are on the wrong track when we talk about regulating money affairs, contracts between master and man, buyer and seller, according to a strict and universal moral law. Prices, wages, interest, profits, these things, around which the debate whirls

for ever in the industrial and commercial world, are not subject to absolute morals. They are conditioned by circumstances, and the wages paid to the worker, the interest obtained by the capitalist, the prices offered for goods, never can be brought within the ambit of a strict and universal ethic.

It is a common remark that men must be granted economic as well as political freedom. For liberty can only be enjoyed when a man has the necessary means and as this is not feasible in a society which allows of competition, society must be so organised that competition ceases to operate. Economic freedom is to be attained by alteration of the laws under which men live. And this is to be done by men who will be destroying for themselves all hope of attaining that which in each individual is still the secret and strong desire. Normal humanity desires wealth and power. These can only be possessed by some if many others are precluded from obtaining them. Yet in the not too remote future there is to be a condition of affairs in which it will be impossible for any one to attain riches and rule. That such a complete overturning might be brought about is not inconceivable. But it can only happen when there has been found a motive which will change the desires of mankind.

The truth is that mankind as a whole never can be economically free. Political liberty men may have. Each member of a given society may possess and enjoy it. But economic freedom is a horse of another colour. Without some wealth giving a measure of control over others, the citizen cannot be free. If his means are small let him circumscribe his desires within the ambit of his financial holding and then he is free. Let him be poor and he must needs be dependent in every degree on some other man. Master or customer, what is the difference? The man who

serves either is not free. The only way to obtain economic freedom is for men to cut their coat to their cloth.

Well, what indications have we that men are willing to suppress desires and live by a wise economy? Is there any diminution of the appetities of mankind? Are the Puritan virtues popular? Exactly the opposite is true. Stimulated by America, European mankind is eager to enjoy the pleasures offered by the hour. Everybody praises economy. Nobody practises it. The Englishman hates to be thought mean. This generation, untrained in self-amusement, dependent upon money for the endurance of life, and its tedium, desires to be economically dependent. The Puritan, the stoic, the saint, these could be economically free. But the undisciplined man, whose appetite grows with every new enjoyment, never can be free for long.

From another standpoint the subject gives the same result. Economic freedom is the right of the nation as of the citizen. And there have been periods when England has been practically independent of other Powers. But is that likely in the future? Already we are pledged by our manufacturers, our neglect of the land, to dependence on other countries. Our statesmen understand how essential to us is the captaincy of the seas. Economically independent! The contradiction is plain to all. We cannot live without markets in foreign lands, without food brought from all parts of the world.

How then liberate men from economic bonds? The relations between States are regulated by self-interest. The statesmen who acts upon the opposite theory would be regarded as unfaithful to his trust. He must be sufficiently moderate in his demands, but he must not sacrifice the interests of his own people to any Quixotic ideal. Scipio Africanus almost lost the prestige gained by his victories through his clemency to the Carthaginians. The American

people might have cancelled the Allied debts. They would rather have the money than the moral credit. If this is how States are guided why suppose that individuals will act on any other motive. Let them practise the economic virtues, increase their business, seek fresh profits, conserve their financial resources. For such men economic freedom is not an impossible dream. Increased income or reduced expenditure are the only roads to economic liberty.

What, then, is the relation of the good man to this important matter of money? Certain negative propositions at once announce themselves. He cannot ignore it. The world revolves on a money basis. To be entirely without money is to be dependent on the pity of others, always a painful situation. That pity may be disguised as a social sentiment, but it is just as humiliating when personified in a workhouse official as in a generous relative or friend. A man must have some money if he is to continue living. Then he must get it by borrowing, stealing or earning. The two first are excluded. He must work. What can he do? He must be prepared to do anything, anywhere, at any time and for any wage whatever, though it be but the promise of food and shelter for the night. It must be stamped into his soul as with an iron brand that it is to himself he must look for help in time of distress. It will take a generation to work out the poison generated in our moral system by the prevalent idea that whenever we stumble it is the duty of the whole community to come and pick us up. Having secured a day's wage, however small, the man must learn how to live on a moiety of it and retain the rest. Six months of this will do more for him in the way of real culture than the whole of Oxford could give him. No man is educated who has never tightened his belt and set his mind to fighting the world on the world's terms. Then, having found his footing, let him choose his

metier. If he wants money, to the extent that he wants it more than a quiet life, than books, games, friendships, let him seek it. He should seek it earnestly, but always with the knowledge that it is dangerous to handle, more deadly than dynamite to its possessor unless it is kept in its due place.

Money is a mighty power. It is one of the agencies through which the will of the good man may most effectively be done. And there is no reason why he should refuse to avail himself of its services. Let him make money if he can. Let him use it for the benefit of what he believes to be worthy causes. The ministry of money in private hands may be sacramental. But suppose he cannot make money. Then his relation to the money problem is not altered in essence. He has still to keep money in its place. And he will do this by refraining from envy, by cultivating virtues which are independent of money and by living his own life in the light of mind and conscience.

He who reduces his wants by finding inward satisfactions may be independent of the world. But this is not the popular idea. We have begun at the wrong end. Contemporary teachers would create a world in which desires are allowed to grow without limit and then demand that each of these shall be satisfied out of the social treasury. The end is bankruptcy.

THE LIMITS OF SOCIAL AUTHORITY

To speak of individualism to-day, seems to many of our contemporaries like an effort to put back the clock. And if it meant the separation of society into its parts, the reduction of the citizen to the position of an unrelated unit, they would be right. We cannot hinder the movement of men towards unity. That will go on by force of circumstance, if not of will. The work of the great builders of society remains, even when the mould into which they have cast their rough clay has been broken. We are the children of these great ones. Charlemange hammering the Europe of his time into some sort of unity ; Peter the Great forcing his people to accept the civilisation of the West, a Titan breaking the rocks into fragments and wielding them at his will ; Napoleon reviving the tradition of Richelieu and binding the French people together whilst attempting to unite Europe under one head ; all these giants have left their impress on the modern world. Their work is being carried on now by other and more impersonal agencies. The solidarity of mankind is being wrought out. Economic forces are compelling men to accept their relations with each other. The sea may divide countries and peoples. But their common needs unite them. Lancashire depends on America and Egypt. Russia must have the iron products of Britain and Germany, however much her political leaders may desire to make her independent of other nations. The man who desires to undo this work, to separate the peoples from each other by the creation of insurmountable barriers, or the withdrawal of the citizen

into his shell, away from the necessary relations of man with man, is wasting his time. Of all these things the intelligent individualist is as well aware as the socialist who makes of them the ground plea for State management of all life and industry. What the individualist desires to do is to discriminate between those relations which are needful and beneficial and that oppression of the unit by the crowd, under the name of government or philanthropy, or at the behest of the abstract theorist.

For the danger now threatening men is not that which arises from solitude or isolation. It comes from the increasing oppression of the individual by the multitude. The process of intregation is necessary. Men must accept their place in society. Diogenes, Crusoe, cannot be taken as models for the ordinary working life of men. All these things are admitted. Who denies them ? Not the sensible individualist. But what he maintains is that the process of integration may be carried too far, that human beings are not to be treated as stones in a building, bricks in a house, insentient blocks which have nothing to do but remain in the place chosen for them by the builder. They are themselves entities, personal beings, capable of expansion or retraction, of development and degradation, and it is by the growth of their personal qualities, the enlargement of their individual capacities through the exercise of freedom and responsibility, that they may best make their contribution to the welfare of the whole. Aztec culture had a worth of its own beyond doubt. But it was founded on the nothingness of the citizen, his nullity apart from the community. It made of him a thing without worth, save such worth as came to him from being a member of his race and tribe. And it went down like a stack of corn before the first serious attack made by a race of bold and independent characters.

Let it be granted that without system, order, rule, nothing great can be accomplished by a people. There must be systems within which men can work out their salvation. Luther nearly broke the great system of his time and had perforce to try to create another. Calvin fashioned a system within which men could go about their business with some security. But the system tends to perpetuate itself. It becomes hard, a crust which will not break, cannot bend. Then the disintegrator must do his work. He must destroy that some one else may build. For life will not be confined within any system for ever. And the best statesman is he who knows how to blend the continuity of the system with the ever-expanding freedom-loving instinct of life.

Guizot believed that as civilisation progresses the area of authority contracts. Present conditions seem to contradict this notion. But the existing tendency may be only temporary. For if the world is ever to be at peace many differences and distinctions amongst men must be permitted to endure. There are varieties of standard and these will remain, for the notion of a humanity all on one level, even if it be high, is repugnant to our artistic sense. And this necessitates the limitation of State authority. This is the logic of the individualist and it must be heard.

Montesquieu's theory is that instutitions and laws make men what they are. Benjamin Kidd has amplified the notion in his *Science of Power*. The State can shape the social inheritance of man. The individual heritage counts for little but the social inheritance is of vast importance. Germany has been changed within two generations. Japan comes to the front through the labours of her leaders. The rulers of States in the future will note these things.

But laws which are in opposition to the needs proceeding from geographical and climatic conditions, or the national

genius of a people, are bound to be restricted in their control. And if they are maintained by force for a time they bring peril and even disaster in their train.

Mill believes that emancipation from the control of the State is chiefly important. History showed him the individual crushed by the community. Adopting Bentham's opinions, he fought for liberty of the mind. He is a philosophical anarchist. Believers in the virtue of man, these look askance at government.

Spencer carried the doctrine of individualism further still. The State is to keep the ring for those who are seeking their own interest. Jowett thought his work so much rubbish. But perhaps Jowett was wrong. Experience has shown that officialism produces inferior work at an increased cost. Private enterprise will always produce better results than corporate endeavour. Spencer sees the State as a necessary evil. It must be watched with jealous eyes. Since men having power desire to increase that power, the private citizen must assert his right to self-rule. Tolstoy has declared his belief in the independence of the individual. He too belongs to the philosophical anarchists. He is a voice through which humanity articulates its hatred of tyranny, its desire for a free existence. Similar in temper, Ibsen is equally hostile to the State. Man is never so strong as when he is alone. Society is always crushing the natural contours of the individual life. His women press their bleeding breasts against the bars of their prison and cry out for the right to live, to be themselves. Max Stirmer is the preacher of anarchistic egoism. He has few followers. Emerson and Thoreau have in common a proud antagonism to control from without. The community may receive all, but the giver is the independent citizen, the free man. Let men dig their own wells, draw their own water, travel to their

own goal. All these are priests of the cult of the individual, seekers for a life which is their own.

The philosphic idea of State control is that through the State alone can the individual find the revelation of his essential being. Through it he realises himself. Fine as the theory may be, when we look at the results they are less beautiful than we expected. The individual is frequently of more spiritual texture than the State of which he is a part. He can only retain that quality by resisting the pressure brought to bear upon him by the whole body of his compatriots. Our constant error indeed is to think of the State as a thing separable from its elements, a fictitious Being divisible from the factors which compose it. The spirit of a race, the soul of a nation, these things are actual, can embody themselves in words and colours, but in actual practice when we speak of the State we mean those who for the time being are in charge of the Car. The notion of an absolute State, something which is immune from judgment, is dangerous, precisely because by means of this idea unlimited power and discretion may be claimed by those ruling at the time, on the ground that they are acting for the State. Of this absolute State Hegel is the chief prophet. Its end and anticlimax is Prussia under the Hohenzollerns. Hobbes had seen this solution of the problem before the German claimed it. His Leviathan is Prussia antedated, with a neater, more precise form. For them both the State is the Power above which there is no other. Evolved or created it is there, not to be investigated or criticised but obeyed, lest men should again find that life is painful, brutal and brief. Men have sought authority, have found it here. Let them retain it and see that its commands are obeyed. There is reason in the appeal so long as the State confines itself to its true functions. Let it repress disorder, protect life and property,

challenge every claim of the one citizen to exercise tyranny over another. That is its task. But when it proposes to regulate individual life in the interests of any theory, seeks to do men's thinking for them, to educate them according to a doctrine of its own, it prepares the way, under whatever specious disguises, for all those abuses from which the grand organised communities have suffered in the past.

Supply, administration, and guidance are the three functions of the State. These adequately performed, the State has done its work. When it goes beyond these, enters into the private life of the individual, decides his opinions, regulates religious doctrine or undertakes business on a large scale, thus extruding the ordinary citizen from departments of trade, it enters on a course dangerous and even fatal to society.

It is singular that the men of the same race as those who fought so biterly against the divine right of kings, which was a rational and logical theory, seeing that the monarch embodied in personal form the authority of the State, should now eagerly submit themselves to a control by that same power, embodied in such transitory phantoms as Members of Parliament, or dispersed through a corporation like that of the Civil Service. Yet such is the fact. Perhaps it is the consideration that, as citizen, he has at least the forty millionth fraction of choice in the selection of these phantoms which creates in modern man the proper sense of meekness and gratitude. If the cockerel may choose the hand which shall pluck it, perhaps the plucking may be less painful. But I doubt it.

It is conceivable and arguable that man is and can be nothing in himself. It may be that we are each of us but a momentary phase of the universal life, blossoms on the tree, which fall and leave no trace behind. It may be so. But

the teaching of those who have felt most keenly the joys and pains of consciousness has been otherwise. They have seen themselves as travellers on life's track, touching other forms of life, but remaining always separate and alone because they are themselves. Is it that we Western men are too keenly aware of this, our separateness? May be so. The Easterns have not the same fierce will to live, to be themselves. But such as we are we feel it. And we resent the thought of a return to nothingness, to the loss of our personal being.

It is precisely this sense of our personal life and the need for the virtues which strengthen and adorn it, that leads men to rebel against the pressure of the common will on the individual. And this sentiment will surely produce a revolt against much that now is accepted, and a return to the freer systems of other times. Reward must be proportioned to merit. Within the family this rule cannot be applied, but outside there must be room for its application. All the protestations of the kindly heart will not alter the need for this. The particular merit is not defined, there is no surety that the merit may be strictly moral according to the standard of the time. But he who has it is at least capable of the work asked from him.

We have tried to alter this, to adapt the facts to a presumably better moral principle. Such an interference is not to be condemned. We dare not leave the weak entirely at the mercy of the strong. But we have carried this habit of ....diation too far, so that the whole idea of rewards and merit has been brought into contempt. We act as though it were iniquitous for one man to receive more than another.

We would abolish the penalties of life. We would equalise opportunities. We would level the world. It may be sublime. It is certainly foolish. In revolt against this dominative

and protective disposition of society there will reappear the claim for self-government. The right of self-determination will be demanded by the citizen as against an aggressively intrusive State, playing the parent to a wilful child.

This demand for liberty will not be founded on any absurd notion that man is born free. Aristotle is nearer the truth than Rousseau when he says that men are born slaves. That is a defensible position. But freedom is not a gift, it is something which is acquired. And he who has once earned it, proving his right to regulate his own life by doing it, is justified in his protest against the modern tendency to enslave him again. Equality never can be obtained, save in the legal sense. And all man's efforts will not do more than remove some of the more striking inequalities by which his life is necessarily conditioned. Education only brings out more clearly the essential differences in endowment. Birth and fortune will always give some men precedence over others. But liberty is more than a dream. It can be made a reality.

This is no plea for practical anarchy. The need for some regimentation, if only as an educational process, is a fact. The Montessori system is often absurd in its theories and practice, though better than that of Dotheboys Hall. Yet its application to society would mean declension of manners and the loss of security for most of our population. The fact of evil as well as good in human nature is patent. And we need not regard as criminals those men who seek to reorganise society on a basis of authority, compelling the unwilling worker to contribute his share to the general wealth. But I would urge that the tendency towards regimentation is being carried to excess.

Men must realise once more the necessary limitations which confine the legislators' activity. By making many laws

he may be defeating his own ends. Laws against usury, passed with the purpose of keeping the rate of interest down to four per cent. only increased the rate to five per cent. and six per cent. The effort to prevent forestalling has at times made it impossible to buy more than two bushels of wheat in the market, a consequence not in the minds of those who made the laws. Let it be understood that some suffering is curative, that no body of laws can always save the fool from his folly, that government cannot act the part of bear-leader to all its citizens and that the passion of the philanthropist for instant action is not the last effort of man for improvement.

The reformer often expects too much. He thinks that, Prospero being in the Senate, Caliban ought to obey his will. But Caliban may have other ideas and since Caliban is now a voter, sometimes even a legislator, if he is to be made capable of seeing the wisdom of Prospero, it will be needful that he be allowed to form his own opinions on many subjects and on occasion to go hopelessly wrong that he may learn to appreciate the importance of going right.

The popular idea seems to be that the community can take over practically all those elements of human life and experience which go to the making of a man. And the true inference from this would be that the community is responsible morally for the personal life of its members from within outwards. Does the man pay his debts? It is in virtue of an honesty ingrained in the community and as it were loaned to the citizen. Is he faithful to his marriage vows? Then the community must take the moral merit of this, if such there be, to itself. Does he refrain from robbing his neighbour? Credit the community with this useful quality of self-restraint. Is he sober and diligent? It is the community working through him which has produced this desirable result. Nay, one should carry the argument through. Is the

man a saint who has sought the graces of the spirit as other men seek gold ? That is the happy result of the communal influences brought to bear upon him. After all, this is but the inverse of those many statements, to be met with in every popular journal, to the effect that the community is responsible for the offences, crimes, errors, sins of its members. It has been almost forgotten, in the plethora of this teaching with which we are now provided, that even this marvellous thing, the Community, is made up of individuals and depends for its ethical worth upon the ethical qualities of the units composing its mass. If the community can claim all this credit for the works and virtues of its citizens, then it must also accept responsibility for their defects, vices, misdemeanours, offences, sins, guilt. And to whom shall we attribute the responsibility ? The Town Council ? What ? Those forty elderly gentlemen, grocers, builders, bakers, shoemakers, who met in conference over the management of drains, water taps, sewage farms ; or dissertate to each other at public dinners on the importance of social service ? Are they responsible for the life, morals, character, conduct, kindliness, cruelty, solvency, bankruptcy, adultery, fidelity, of the hundred thousand folk of whom twenty per cent. voted that they should occupy their present position ? Heaven help them ! Why, it is as much as they can do to shoulder responsibility for their own haberdashery establishments and the wife and children for whom they have to provide. There is not one of them who will not find it a difficult enough job to keep his own slate clean from mistakes and avoid the greater errors of the foolish man. Excellent fellows withal ! They do their best to keep the lighting arrangements in good order, to see that the trams run to time. But to suggest that these worthy persons are responsible for the rest of their citizens, save in the most limited

degree, is so outrageously absurd that to mention it is to provoke a sardonic smile. And when we have enlarged the Council to a Parliament, even the Mother of that interesting progeny, the situation is not less provocative of laughter. These assemblies may justly be held responsible for those matters which come naturally within their provenance, the raising and disbursement of funds, the defence of the people from outside attack, the protection of property and life. And that is all. Otherwise there is no absurd conclusion which may not be drawn from the premiss that the representatives of the people are responsible for the people. Tim Murphy shoots his mother-in-law. Andrew McGillicuddy has three bastards. Blakey's mill workers, on strike, have smashed the machinery, Jim Thomson fell down a well. And all these things happened because the Council or the Parliament did or did not do something which they should or should not have done, and therefore they are responsible and therefore also, being responsible, they should be judged, imprisoned, hanged according to law. Why not? If these men want to rule us from the core of life outwards, let them take the consequences, which are that we can do anything we like, good or bad, and the merit or the shame will be theirs, not ours.

There is another plan, old and tried, which settles the question more expeditiously and equitably than this. A man is responsible for the management of his own life. And he takes the punishment of his misdeeds, claims such reward as may be going for his good works, and thanks no community or public body, however well intentioned it may be, for acting as his proxy. Regarding himself as a person and not a thing, he desires that the Community should only leave him in peace to go about his own affairs, helping him, perchance when he is down, but leaving to

him the belief that his life is his own and that he alone is responsible for its management and control. Either the community, city or State, must abandon some of the pretensions which its servitors have been putting into its mouth, or it must accept the consequences of its own temerity and folly, changing free citizens into machines, with some bolder Robot leading them to the general smash and ruin which waits upon societies gone mad.

THE EXISTING SYSTEM

It is repeatedly declared to day that the cause of all human defect and discomfort is to be found in social conditions. Is there a growing indifference to the Fine Arts, do men beat their wives, are children ill-trained and undisciplined, have women taken the bit between their teeth, has the reading habit decreased, is betting becoming more common ? the cause of what you regret or approve is to be found before you in the social conditions.

What does it mean after all ? Discontent with existing arrangements in society it certainly implies. Clear notions of some more satisfactory state of affairs it ought to mean. Yet it is hard to discover what social conditions would meet with commendation. Any Utopia so far imagined would drive its citizens mad with boredom in a year. Offer to the critic a Bolshevist State and he shivers in terror. Unless he be a fanatic, he would probably agree that the worst crimes of Czardom are preferable to the tryannies of Lenin and the murders of Djerzhinsky. The secret police of Nicholas was merciful compared with the Tcheka. Suggest the creation of a government controlled by Trade Union officials and our discontented friend will find no delight in the prospect. The plumber and slater, operating in his own house, will have more than satisfied him with that type of authority. On the whole, he thinks the Duke's younger son, with an Oxford training, as good a manipulator of the strings in the Governmental puppet show. Offer to him the agricultural state. The idea of feeding cattle or ploughing fields will not

tempt him. The Russian moujik does not thrill him. Europe's central plains, Russia's steppes, do not allure him. Even a farm in Canada, assisted by Government during early years, will not draw him to those wide spaces where men are free. But he still believes that social conditions are the cause of human ills and that we ought to get them altered to something different.

No economic system is perfect. Each has the defects of its virtues. Competition in industry is nearest to the natural state of man and has the advantage that it responds to his normal impulses. But it can be harsh in its workings, and the philanthropist has spent much time and energy in recent years in pointing out its defects. Corporate control brings about an excess of interference with the movements of the individual trader and worker which constitutes a serious menace to the activity and liberty of the citizen. The ultimate results are perhaps more dangerous and more severe in their incidence on the poor than even the worst consequences of the other system.

Considering that humanity has only begun to enter into its inheritance of wealth during the last hundred years, we ought to realise, with Smart, the economist, that in the interests of people who have risen so rapidly it is expedient rather to confirm the traditions of property than to destroy them. There are now certain forms of wealth which can hardly be destroyed since the printing press has made them common property. However catastrophic any social upheaval might be, this acquired wealth of humanity would remain. Intellectual power would still be in the hands of those who knew how to use this stored knowledge, and intellectual power would gather to itself again, under any new system, the treasure of the world. But in such an upheaval much that has helped to ameliorate the condition of

humanity and a great deal of the industrial wealth of the world would almost certainly be destroyed.

Much that we are doing to-day, with the best intentions, may have as its outcome results which are the very reverse of what we have desired. We might yet learn from our predecessors with profit, imitate them in conduct and so prepare for the future. For there are certain conditions which seem, on the long view, inseparable from social life on the great scale, and it is those conditions which we have to learn and adapt ourselves to.

Such an alteration of our recent methods is needed. We have been extravagant to the point of folly because it seemed unavoidable under the stress of war. We must learn to practise the frugality of our grandfathers if we would not end in bankruptcy. And we ought to begin with the reduction of our public services to our capacity to pay. On all hands we see the bureaucracy increasing. This will probably go on in many directions for a time. But it is a tendency which, once set in motion, is not easily arrested. For these possessors of the seats of authority are disposed to propagate their kind. As against these the producers of the world will have to organise themselves for protection. They must recapture the control of expenditure and stop the immense extravagance of State departments. Otherwise the task of carrying on government may become a greater burden than the State can bear. At a time when industry ought to be free, when men should be repairing the heavy wastage of war, we cannot afford to throw away money on the maintenance of a vast army of officials.

The State as an employer ought not to be more generous than the private capitalist. There may be a measure of security offered to its servants. Such security is part of their wages. But if the State is to be an employer of labour on the

large scale it must enforce economy as earnestly as does the private trader who dreads bankruptcy. It can no more employ men for work that is not wanted, than the man who is engaged in a private venture. The socialist believes that the State ought to employ men on ideal terms. If unable to do this it is owing to the State being in the hands of those who exploit it as a financial instrument for their own welfare. Unfortunately if the State, on its commercial side, is not conducted on business principles, it can only end like other industrial enterprises, in disaster. Then there is no hope of any sort of employment being offered to men.

Shrewd observers have long since noted that the Labour State would have to be as merciless to the individual as ever the capitalist has been. For to live as a State it must enter into relations of co-operation and competition with other States. If the means of production in the Labour State were more expensive, then it would be undersold by its competitor. This would result in loss of markets and finally in destitution, as surely as it works out in the competitive struggle between rival grocers in the same town. The dream of a State system which will be generous and tender in dealing with the individual has already been shattered by the facts. Even now there is a deep distrust in the minds of many workers who have learned that they have reason to fear the heavy hand of the State more even than that of the private owner.

Of course, where men have made for themselves a closed State, it may be possible, for a time, to dispense with the competitive principle. But this can only be for so long as the State remains barred against all communication from without. Such a condition would speedily reduce an Empire to a province and a country to a village. Tariffs might help us to trade on better terms. But the breath of our existence is trade. And we cannot trade with others save by persuading them to buy our goods.

Much of the irritation now felt in industrial circles arises from the fact that contracts must be made years ahead and these operations cannot be conducted unless there is some possibility of confidence between the masters and workmen. To-day the test of a business man is not only in the buying and selling, though these must always be immensely important, but also in the management of those who work for him. Without their co-operation there can be no lasting success achieved by any business. Yet men dislike the necessary discipline without which these far-seeing arrangements on which their livelihood depends cannot be made. Misguided often by those whose duty it is to lead them, taught that the employer is their natural enemy, they are disposed to throw the wrench into the machinery for small causes and vent their irritability in making things unpleasant for those who are, as they believe, systematically exploiting them. Let these momentary clashings between the bodies of workmen and their employers not mislead us.

The class war has had much sway recently over the minds of men. But universal antagonism between separate strata of society, culminating in the shock of conflict the world over, is an ideal dream. No such war is possible. The interests of men are too complex to permit of such a sharp lateral division. It is not true that the interests of the workers of the world, as opposed to the interests of the capitalist class, are in all cases the same. The appeal of Marx and Engels to the workers of the world to unite for the furtherance of their own class interests, is as absurd as it is immoral. For it assumes that the only interests of men are economic. The notion that all other relations are to be subdued to the relations between men as workers is as baseless as the supposition that the interests of all peas are opposed to the interests of the pods which contain them and the stem from which

they grow. A class war logically carried out would mean the annihilation of society.

The disposition then to seek some way of escape from a situation which has become painful is to be expected. There is a mass of resentment against the economic system. Before the ordinary worker there stretches a long period of laborious days. Since his reading and hearing incline him to compare his present with an ideal future rather than an actual past, he is dissatisfied with his condition. Much of this is irrational, founded on a false standard of values. These joys that they long for, wine, women and song and the delights of travel, the wealth which can buy all these, are not essential to true happiness. But the people are not philosophers. They want happiness and their notion of happiness is still that of Belshazzar or Lucullus. Their teachers have so taught them and the lesson has been learned.

It may be that there is nothing new about this spirit of rebellion. When the battle has been lost and won the workers will go back to their drudgery, defeated by those who know how to handle the situation. Spartacus and Blanqui, Jack Cade and Robert Smellie are recurring social phenomena, mutineers who are always beaten by the will of society. That is probably true. Yet there are some new factors in the situation. Business is no longer a completely secret process. Its theory is known. Men who have never entered a bank are yet no strangers to the mysteries of finance.

This mass of acquired knowledge will count, just as the biologist counts though he has never felled an ox or assisted at an accouchement. Then there is the disposition to inter-communion of peoples. This is exaggerated, but it exists. And concerted action between similar classes in different nations is not impossible. That all this is bound to make for peace and democratic unity is an absurd belief. But it will

play its part in the creation of a soil favourable to socialistic ideas.

Then there are the vast acquisitions of the human mind gathered under the head of Science. Out of this there should be produced some results which would help to ameliorate the condition of the working masses. But the real strength of the movement which is agitating the depths of society at present is not in its economic literature nor in the scientific acquisitions of mankind. The real force lies in the mass movement itself. This might seem to be sufficient refutation of the claims made for it. These swellings and billowings of the sea of life should not be taken too seriously. The men who ultimately count, since they direct the course of events in society, are those who believe in reason. Yet mass movements are factors in the world's life. They may spell the fall of an empire like Rome, the departure of a Stuart line, the downfall of a Bourbon dynasty.

A mass movement does not reason. It is guided by sympathies and antipathies which are outside rational analysis or explanation. It is not a business then of presenting a theory which will stand criticism, but rather of capturing the floating mass of discontent and canalising it along channels dug by those who will to direct it.

If this is the case, if there is really taking place one of the great embryonic movements of history, then it behoves us to try to understand it. Perhaps it cannot be guided by any external will and force, must just work itself out to its own appointed end. In any event we ought to think out, if we can, some of the consequences of this movement. And if we believe that it is booked for disaster, that its triumph can only be attained by the complete destruction of a civilisation which has after all done something to justify its own existence, then we should say so, giving reasons for our belief though it may

be that our contemporaries only think of us as blind bats and moles because we cannot see the walls of the oft promised Jerusalem.

THE HOPE OF FREEDOM

It is a fact that the individual is born into society. He is not born a Timon or a St. Anthony. The man on the desert island so dear to writers on economics does not exist save by a fiction. But we have ignored the truth that whilst man is born into society his movements have always been, in keeping with the advance of civilisation, in the direction of freeing himself from the pressure of the crowd. No tyranny can quite equal that of the clan, the tribe, in savage lands. There freedom is practically unknown. All is decided for the citizen, not by his own will, but by the judgment of the tribe. The customs which move us to a smile as we read about them have a terrible reality for those who suffer from them. To wear the prescribed raiment, to speak the common tongue in the recognised way, to walk in the beaten track, to accept the decision of the tribe in all matters of life and conduct, this is the rule for the millions of men who still live out their day under tribal rule.

Considering these things, as no man has more skill in doing, Sir James Frazer has recorded his judgment that collectivism is savagery, individualism is civilisation. And it is certain that the line along which the races of the world have travelled has been away from this binding control of the herd, this cruel and suppressive authority of the clan, towards a condition in which the individual was left free to follow his own inclinations. As trade has developed; as coinage has made men free to wander about the world and to buy in all markets; as financial arrangements such as

bills of exchange, cheques and letters of credit have become increasingly common ; so the freedom of men to live their own life, think their own thoughts, and their will to do so, have increased. From the family, the clan, the nation, the individual man has at last emerged. And to put him back within the limits of the tribe, to bind him down to a place, a creed, a formula of life, which is the will of not a few of our contemporaries, is to challenge the course of history and to betray mankind.

It is understood that absolute liberty in any given society is impossible. But freedom to regulate one's own life in accord with one's own judgment and tastes, is so precious a possession to men, that scarcely any boon granted as compensation is an equivalent for its loss.

Those liberties which we enjoy are not contemptible. There is freedom of thought for all. No one now pretends to the right of dictating what his neighbour shall believe. Every creed has liberty of utterance and the historic faiths have no superiority in the eye of the law over the new fantasies so long as they remain forms of belief only. There is, ostensibly, full liberty of conduct, deportment, dress, so long as conduct does not interfere with the peace or threaten the safety of others.

Against these liberties must be set the growing influence of the communal body over manners, the increasing dislike of the unusual in character, or the unaccustomed in dress and deportment. No man is obliged to wear the costume of his trade or profession. But the pressure of the social mass has become so strong that there is little real freedom in these things and a drab similarity is the mark of all modern societies.

The citizen is, of course, related to the State. But we do not interpret that relation properly unless we bear in mind the importance of the individual to himself. His worth is

first of all a worth to himself. Then comes his worth or value to the community. But the community is now bent on considering the citizen's value to itself and is ignoring the worth he may have in his own eyes. He is to be taught, trained, so that he may serve the community. On this principle he may be made a chattel, a slave. For himself he is not allowed to exist. This is wrong. Granted that if he refuses to labour, if he makes no effort to greaten his own personal worth, still more if he becomes a burden to his fellows through his own negligence, it is right that he should be compelled to serve social ends. But otherwise the first claim that the individual may make on others is that of Diogenes to Alexander. Be so good as to get out of the light.

As a social being, man's worth is conditioned by function. He is valuable to society for what he does in society. To himself, however, he is valuable because he is himself. If he be maimed, wounded, brought nigh to death, his value to himself, his hold upon life, is to that extent weakened. Another man has to that extent infringed upon his rights.

We must, therefore, always guard ourselves against the insidious tyranny of the group. Economic science has liberated man from the authority of man. The moralist would now, in the name of morality and the rights of the community, reimpose that authority. The man who shifts muck or lifts coal is to be regarded as of the same social importance as the master of mathematical science. By equating morals and economics we are to be compelled to regard the once free man as bound to us because he serves us in economic fashion, whilst we become slaves to others, through the same mixture of thought. The moralist invents for himself and others what he calls the good life. Then he thrusts this upon others and declares that the whole world must be so organised that this particular mode of life, which

he designates as good, may be adopted by and enforced upon the whole of humanity. He forgets that no life can be the good life which is not spontaneously recognised as such by the individual. Hence come the tyrannies by which the crowd legally crushes the individual.

It is an ancient truth that the sole source of original life is the individual. But what is the use of saying this if we take away, by force of opinion, by the institutions of society, the capacity for self-direction which is the characteristic quality of the individual? Having made man merely a fragment of the group, a bit of life stuff having no reality until he is incorporated in the common life, the whole, we then speak to him of his worth as a person. We expect him to rise to the full measure of the free man when we have done our best to make him a serf. And we are annoyed with him when he shows that he has practically no sense of independence, so that he acts about as freely as a barnacle on a ship's keel.

But we are told that society cannot function, if there is not this ground work of unity, this consciousness of being basally blended with each other. I demur to that. Society would function better if men were left to the free exercise of their own wills, on the one condition that their activities were not manifestly injurious to the interests of others. The contribution of the individual would be of more value to the society, because it would be definitely his own. If he acts unsocially, is obviously bent on injuring others, then the rewards of his conduct will naturally bring to him that which he has deserved. As it is, the unusual person, the original man, if such there be, will find himself opposed by the solid body of normal citizens. Socrates and Swift, Wilkes and Rochefort, are valuable correctives to the social system in which they live. Their reward is that of the duckling amongst the chickens.

Yet whatever the founders of States and their servant may do, they cannot remove the individual man from the world. He has arrived. And he will lift his voice until once more it is permitted to him to think and speak with the freedom befitting a man. His is not the positive constructive work of those who would treat men as mortar for their Chinese walls, muck with which to fill the ditches over which their brigades march to victory. These builders, integrators of life, constructors of communities which have a social soul but no individual spirit, will always be followed by the mass of obscure toilers. But the free man has discovered that this life of the herd is not good for him. And against the State which would enforce it, extracting from him his wealth, changing him into a citizen, which is little better than a voting machine, obedient to the will of the last journalist or speaker, against this power he has rebelled, determined that it shall not obliterate him without at least an audible protest.

It is said truly that in these days the workers have found their voice. They are to be heard. And the one desire of every politician is to harness these to his chariot. They are his dogs of war. But have they gained much by their arrival? They have obtained a measure of equality. But they have paid for this with their liberty. Once they could use their native gifts to force a path to the upper world. They are treated now as if they ought to remain in the station into which they have been born. The corporations of workmen have proved themselves more averse to free movement of the individual than did the masters of a former day. Labour is fixed to certain hours. Wages are brought to a common level. Even in his leisure time a man is not allowed to choose his mode of employing his spare hours, lest he be thought to filch some reward from his fellow man. And this sharp

division has been strengthened by the introduction of science into industry. The trained engineer now holds a position more exclusive than that of the officer in a German regiment. The ship's rivetter has little hope of reaching to the rank of ship's architect. We have given man a limited equality, equality at the polling booth, equality with their mates in the shop, and for this they have sold their birthright of free men.

For the philosopher Hegel, the people is that portion of the State which does not know what it wants. That is in accord with the doctrine which found the kingdom of God in the State of Prussia. It agrees with the academic theory now favoured by professors that mankind should be governed by experts. Mr. Cole anticipates gleefully the time when the regulation of human life in all important matters will be entirely in the hands of qualified specialists. The grocer will sell tea, the housewife will mash it, the husband will drink it according to rhythm and rule. Eating and drinking, buying and selling, sleeping and waking, playing and working will be taken finally out of the hands of the miserable creatures who for so many millenniums have muddled these crucial matters, and will be handed over to the wise, enlightened, educated sons and daughters of Oxford and Cambridge. It is the doctrine of the Mandarin. Alas for all those fervid apostles of the new order who imagine that if they can only persuade the crowd to vote for them, socialists, anarchists, communists, dramatists, novelists, journalists, they will then become the managers and rulers of the altered world. Not at all. On the morrow of the earthquake, they will be sacked. Clydebankers, Silvertowners, pinchbeck Mirabeaus, imitation Cromwells, pasteboard Washingtons will all be given the boot, to make room for the Mandarins.

There will be some wailing in the New Jerusalem and

perhaps some gnashing of teeth, but since we have it on the best authority, that of the Mandarins themselves, that it is all for the good of the people, who do not know what they want and since the Mirabeaus, etcetera, have all taught and presumably believe that the leaders of the people must sacrifice themselves for the public good, their retirement into obscurity will be consummated with all the grace of Cincinattus going to his farm. We hope so. But when the philosophers declare so chirpily that the people do not know what they want, they may be mistaken. In fact, it is not true. There are many men who do not know what they want if by knowing we mean the ability to formulate it in academic terms. But these same people have a clear idea of what they don't want. They don't want the incessant, irritating supervision by paid officials, which is to-day the concomitant of life in the community. They don't want their hard earned wages, their small salaries, their savings, acquired as the result of an abstinence which has cost them painful efforts, to be at the mercy of wire-pulling politicians. They don't want their inclinations to labour to be repressed by restrictions until they are almost afraid to work lest there be a fine imposed upon them by the benevolent despots who have taken their souls and bodies into their keeping.

And there is another class of men in the modern State who also know what they don't want and have clear ideas of what to desire. These men ask for a fair field and no favour. They will not complain if the verdict goes against them. But they resent the trickery by which those persons who have known how to impose their own prejudice or resentments or benevolences on the popular mind are able to seize and exercise a power which makes that of the ancient tyrants seem small and limited by comparison. Because a statesman has won the favour of the populace for a time he

can to-day carry legislation which will crush industry, make the strong mass still stronger, the weak to be weaker still, and force the energetic men of the nation to tramp behind his chariot as so many prisoners of his sword and spear. The oppression of the minority by the majority, the majority being but the instrument in the hands of the political dictator of the hour, tends to make modern life intolerable for all those who are not willing to be cast in the same mould and to repeat the catchwords fashionable at the time. When men were dealing with the acknowledged usurper, the Cæsar, or Macbeth, or Cromwell of the day, they knew themselves to be in the presence of an heroic character, whose judgment might be wrong, whose temper might be cruel, but who was at least a highly intelligent person or he would not have been where he was. But to-day the mob mind has no such redeeming grace. And the man who catches it does so by bowing to it, by flattering its prejudices, feeding its hatreds and fostering its affections. The tyranny, therefore, of the modern democratic leader is far more searching, though it may not end in the fagot or the block, than were the personal tyrannies of antiquity. Fortunately, we know something of the psychology of crowds and their leaders. Ancestral voices still have their magic, inherited tendencies will tell. The personality disintegrated by the influence of the crowd may re-discover and re-unite itself in calmer mood. Drunk with words at the public meeting, Citizen John may become sober at the polling booth. The contagion of example may be dangerous, but the influence of the few clear minds should not be unimportant.

For this reason, the importance of the individual must be stressed. The great revolutions are those of manner and thought. "We would lose courage if we were not sustained by false ideas," says Fontenelle. False or true, men are

sustained by ideas. The independent thinking man thus becomes a source of power to his race and time. But his worth will also depend on the mentality of the race. If the citizens are mobile, flexuous, patient of varying moods, he may be of little use to stem the torrent. Bolivian revolutions are less serious than Japanese. English revolutions, when they come, change the course of history. Our people are cooler, but they act with more weight than others. And their profoundest changes are often silent. This gives room for the personal factor to count. Therefore, whilst all sensible men understand the peril of the experiments we are now making, that sense of peril is not the result of any contempt for democracy. Of Clarendon it was said that he despised most the people and Sir Harry Vane. We may have our own opinion about the Vanes of any time, but the people can no longer be despised, either by statesman or philosopher. They are enthroned and the task is to see that their Grand Viziers are well chosen.

This new society of ours can only exist if through it, the individual may reach fruition. And the individual, the personal life, is that which is impenetrable. Neither by the world nor by other persons can the special quality of the individual be finally destroyed. The distinction between himself and another holds through all changes. Neither in humanity nor in God, does the individual lose himself. And the citizen is only interpreted aright when he is thus seen as a separate entity, living a life which is his own and not another's.

Freedom, then, for this personal character, is liberation from all restraints from without save those which are necessary for the maintenance of the same measure of freedom for others and the preservation of the community from external perils. This is the minimum. Where the idea is carried inwards and acted upon, there will be an increasing liberation

of the inner life from dependence upon circumstance, a search for the personal and characteristic quality native to oneself. But with this the community has nothing to do. It is a freedom which must be earned for oneself and cannot be given. The peculiar mark of the finer minds, it is some thing for which all men may strive and to those who will pay the price it is always accessible and attainable. But the community could not give it if it would, and the general tendency is for the community to dislike it where it appears. Yet it is by the presence of such free men that a society is saved from subservience, lethargy and moral decay.

THE RIGHTS OF MAN

THE phrase, the rights of man, has caught the popular ear. We can hear it at any street corner, when the reformer is airing his views on the proper management of the world. And it creates an echo in the mind, a reverberation, which suggests that the speaker is touching the deeper chords of human feeling. Yet there are few phrases which lend themselves more easily to dissection and contemptuous dismissal. It is generally known that the phrase, if not actually coined by Thomas Paine, was used by him in such a manner as to stamp it into the popular mind. Replying to the strictures of Edmund Burke on the French Revolution, he wrote his book under this title and may claim to have secured a place in political literature. I do not attempt to follow him in his argument but shall try to state briefly what are, by general consent, the rights of man.

In speaking of human rights, we must avoid the word natural. It belongs to the discredited system of thought, which Huxley pilloried, as that of the Physiocrats, of whom Rousseau is chief, the men who believed in rule and law, according to nature. There are no natural rights, that is, rights which we hold either through and by nature, or as against nature. For nature knows nothing of our so-called rights, being indeed indifferent, so far as we can judge, to our ethical discussions, and proceeding on her way, careless of whether man be blessed or injured by her procedure. The right which man has against her is what he can compel

her by force or guile to yield to him. Yet there is something real in the idea, though the expression is misleading. For the phrase seems to refer to something primitive, some conception of what is proper and fitting, to deny which is a sort of outrage against our instincts. But instead of calling these natural rights, we should be nearer the truth if we spoke of them as inherent rights, rights which appear to be bound up with our existence as thinking beings.

In this sense, we may speak of the right to life. Not that we have any right even to life, as against nature. The lightning and the flood will destroy us without compunction. But as against our fellow man, we have a right to life ; that is, no other person has the right to take life away from us, merely to gratify his own passion, or to remove an inconvenient obstacle. In savage conditions, the right may be non-existent, save as it can be supported by force, but even in savage conditions it would be understood that a man who takes life, except in declared war, has trespassed on the rights of another. If he should attempt the deed and not succeed, then the injured man would exercise vindictive justice against his agressor. And wherever society has come into existence it is understood that the right to life exists. If the man who enters into a society sacrifices some portion of his freedom, he does it with the purpose of guaranteeing to himself this right to life and the security necessary to maintain it.

Yet another inherent right is that of pursuing one's own happiness. The definition of happiness is impossible. One man's meat is another man's poison. We shall never succeed in persuading men that they all ought to enjoy Wagner's Operas, or be entranced by the melody of Jazz, live on oranges and cokernuts, or wear soft collars and sandals. Experience has proved that the tastes of men differ, that men

must follow their own whims and find happiness according to their own method. And so long as the pursuit of happiness does not mean injury or annoyance to others, each man has the right to seek and find felicity in his own fashion. These seem to be inherent rights.

There are others, however, which are plainly of a different nature, they are conditional, because they can only be enjoyed in society and therefore their possession must be regulated by agreements. Chief of these, in our present thinking, is the right to liberty. Now the very idea of liberty implies the presence of some constraint, against which the right is directed. That constraining power is society acting through Government. A man in society has liberty to do something on condition that he does or abstains from doing certain other things. We believe in the liberty of speech,speech being the expression of our thought and thought being the seal of our quality as men. But this liberty can only exist on condition that it is exercised with due deference to the liberties of others, their right to enjoy the same privilege.

Another right is the right of association. Men have sentiments in common, ideas which they share. Having these they wish to meet, to unite themselves in some body. Thus we have the Christian Church, the Freemasons, the Trade Unions. But this right of combination can only be granted where it is exercised without detriment to the greater combination, the community, the State. Freemasons have been harried,Trade Unions have been criticised because they were thought to be inimical to the welfare of the State. The right of association is conditional, never absolute.

Or consider the right to trade. This would seem to be radical, since there is nothing more important to the welfare of society, than that the individual should be able freely to barter and exchange goods with others. And as society

becomes more complex, this right to freedom of trade has become more pronounced, because without it our huge populations might be starved. Yet this right, too, is conditional, depending on the judgment of the great society that such freedom is beneficial to the community. In every age it has been hedged round with provisions and preventive laws. Smith's famous phrase, defence before opulence, implies the right to restrain freedom of trade on occasion.

Along with this there goes the right to property. This also, as applied to land especially, is never absolute but conditional. Whether property was originally communal or private, it is certain that from time immemorial the right to own property in such sense that the owner could do what he liked with it, has existed. And to this institution of private property the greater part of the driving force by which civilisation has been created may be attributed. Yet this right can never be other than a limited right. For one could conceive of a person coming to own all the houses and the whole of the land, thus dispossessing the rest of the community or holding them to ransom. Then the community would claim by force the right to live and would dispossess the owner of the monopoly. With the right to property, goes the right of bequest, that is, of leaving to persons selected by the owner, the rights in his property after his death. This creates continuity, enables families and estates to be built up, gives to the prudent and frugal person, an incentive to industry and economy. All aristocracies and squirearchies are built up on this right of property and bequest, and every nation which has sought for stability in its institutions has recognised this right and given some degree of honour to those who acquired or inherited property. But the right is conditional. All taxation, from the poor rate up to the super tax, is a declaration of the superior right of the society.

Much of this will seem of little interest to those who have no property, save their ability to labour. Discussions as to entail and the terrors of Death Duties will not greatly stir these persons. Yet the rights of man are no less significant to these than to the owner of deer forests and salmon rivers. For they, too, are men. And the reality of these rights was, perhaps, never more plain than in our own time. What, then, are the rights asserted by our modern industrial populations? First, there is that which seems to be a corollary of the right to life, there is the right to work. Now the immediate answer to such a claim is "The world is all before you, go and exercise your right." But the claim is not so easily met. For with the industrial revolution this change has taken place, that the greater portion of our population has been divorced from the land. If the weaver is to work it must be in some mill or factory, the shipwright must enter into a large society of men, engaged in similar occupations, who can only work under the direction of skilled overseers, when capital in large quantities has been invested by other men in plant, machinery, buildings, tools, without which the greater forms of industry cannot be carried on and in the working of which the individual toiler is only one soldier in an army of ten thousand men. And unless these big establishments are able to offer him employment, the industrious man, willing to work, may find himself in a world which has no apparent use for him. The right to work then may be on occasion acknowledged since without it the individual is unable to assure his own livelihood. But it is a right which needs the utmost care in controlling, alike in the interests of the great society and those of the worker who claims it.

The exigencies of a social situation may compel men to refrain from driving their principles to a logical end. I agree Life plays tricks with our theories. Take the obvious case.

We cannot allow a man to starve in a country which still has sufficient food to meet all the needs of the population. No. When men are unable to find employment and are threatened with the death of their loved ones, through hunger, no reasoning can alter our plain duty. We must find them bread. And if we can we must discover for them the means whereby they may earn their bread honestly. If miners, weavers, cutlers, are for one reason or another, driven out of employment in large numbers, then it is the duty of the rest of the citizens to see that they are at least protected from danger of death by starvation. Common humanity in civilised lands has reached this point.

But does this constitute a right on the part of the impoverished citizen to claim what he conceives to be his share of the common product? It cannot do any such thing. And for the best of reasons. If men once establish as a right, their claim to what they conceive to be their share of the communal wealth, there is no inducement to others to save, and the fruits of labour will be squandered every year. In a brief time there would be no common stock on which the individual, being in need, could draw. Or else there must be a general renouncement of the right to private property, and the society, acting through its representatives takes possession of all acquired wealth and uses it at discretion. In that case, the man who does not wish to work, must be compelled, and he who asks more than an equal share of the product must be refused. To avoid these dangerous consequences, it must be urged that help given to citizens in need is a boon rather than a right.

The examples of the dangerous effect following on every acknowledgment of rights are not wanting. In the times of distress which followed the Napoleonic wars, Pitt stated the popular doctrine, in the words, "Let us make relief

where there are many children a matter of right and honour." It was done. The result was that the Poor Rates were quadrupled in fifty years. A further consequence was that women with illegitimate children found themselves in a better position than those who had children in lawful wedlock. This might easily follow from similar legislation in our time. There are forty thousand illegitimate children born in Britain during the year. When the child appears, it must be properly maintained. No one denies that. But the wildest enthusiast for free love would hardly desire to encourage the growth of population at the public expense to this degree. After all, even he or she might admit that there should be certain differences between men and rabbits.

Already public relief works have reproduced many of the bad methods in force before 1834. To find regular employment is the natural and laudable desire of the workman. And if the regulations of the Unions were relaxed, if it was understood that in a time of national emergency, no minor regulations could be allowed to stand, something like regular employment could probably be found, for most of our population. But it would imply a regimentation of labour from above, which would certainly challenge the rights of the Unions. And this no modern Government is anxious to do. No man had more sympathy for the poor than Mill. But he declared that the right to work could only be granted, if it were combined with such conditions as would make the work undesirable. Things in this world a.e so insecure, each trade is so dependent on changing demands, that it would require a supervision of the severest kind if men were allowed to choose their work and yet to claim full payment for it from the public funds. For a brief period, as when the army is in process of demobilisation, or when certain trades are endangered by the introduction of new machinery, some

provision of this nature may be made. But as a general thing the right to work can only be admitted if the worker accepts the condition of permanent status and sacrifices his rights as a free citizen. Otherwise the State would be compelled to provide work, and each man would choose that which was most agreeable to himself. The whole product would be of only secondary value to the community, since there was no economic demand for it. The loss would therefore fall upon the tax payer. This is but another method of pauperising many of the citizens. It makes the condition of the worker thus provided for better by comparison than that of the worker who is still finding work for himself and contributing proportionally to the maintenance of those who are engaged on public employment. Such men would have reason to complain that it was better to be a pauper than to be an honest self-supporting citizen. Which is sufficient condemnation of any system.

This method of dealing with the problem of poverty and unemployment in our modern cities may seem severe. But it is not nearly so harsh as would be the application of a biological law which refused to acknowledge the right of the humane sentiments to modify social action. That extreme doctrine of the biologist has sometimes been accepted. Men have admitted that acting in accordance with this creed the unfit should be destroyed. That teaching is as dangerous as it is inhuman. A nation of supermen has no moral right to murder the citizens of inferior quality. In any moral scheme of the universe the individual, however low down in the social scale, has some moral rights. He has the negative right to his own existence. No other has the moral right to take it from him, save when he has forfeited it according to the law. But this right to live is quite different from a claim made by the inferior that he should have the same treatment

in all things as his superior. He cannot rightly be encouraged by largesse to throw heavier burdens on society.

I have no desire to forget the misery of men or to persuade others, the rich and comfortable, that it does not exist. I sympathize with that declaration of the Russian Tchekov, "At the door of each happy man should stand one with a hammer to remind him of the unhappy." But there are enough and to spare of the purveyors of social griefs and quack remedies. It is time that men had the courage to point out the real conditions of life in society and to speak unwelcome truths. There is too much of that temper ascribed to James Mill, of whom it was said that his industry was actuated less by love of the many than by hatred of the few It will not help men to find remedies for social ills. The world will not be greatly benefited by those who cut off the heads of the tallest flowers only that their own superiority may not be offended.

A certain austerity of mind is necessary if we are not to be drowned in a flood of sentiment which will destroy the good without giving us any hope of reducing the evil.

For where men are protected against the results of their own folly, where there is no competition, no friction, no strife, men cease to grow. Social institutions become petrified. Resistance is necessary to the full expansion of natural forces. The energy of the volcano is intensified by the opposition it encounters. And men who meet no antagonism can never know the full measure of their own capacities. Therefore any society which makes security and ease its primary consideration will suffer in the quality of its citizens and will offer itself as a victim to the harder and bolder races.

There is another economic right which is much more complicated, the right to a just reward for work done.

At present, as we all know, the settlement is arrived at by

the working of ordinary economic laws. A man's work is worth just what it will fetch in the market. It is decided by that standard of value which is created by supply and demand. If ten thousand people want an etching and there are only ten copies available, the price of the etching will be high. If there are only ten people want the etching and there are fifty copies the price will be low. If there are many ship's riveters and no ships are building, in a free market, the value of a ship's riveters work will be small ; if there are many ships on the stocks and few riveters going, the wages in a free market will rise. For the value of an article, whether it be diamonds or spades, or the labour of a man, is decided by the wants of others. And where there is no want, no desire for the article, people will not pay for the thing, though it may be desirable and even precious. That is the whole competitive system as it applies to goods and services in the world of commerce. It seems to be rooted in the facts of human life. It has grown up with humanity, and it may be that it is bound to continue as the ruling principle of all industry to the end of time. But there has grown up in recent years another conception, that of the Socialist, who maintains that this method of deciding the value of labour is unethical, that it will finally be supplanted by another, that of intrinsic worth, and that production, in an ethically ruled community, will be for use rather than for profit.

The answer to much of this reasoning, whether clothed in the musical prose of Ruskin, or in the plain language of the street orator, is that it is nonsense. And the man who thus scornfully dismisses the theorist, though he may be unlettered and entirely ignorant of economics, has an immense weight of argument of his side. He has the universal practice of mankind to support him. For the purposes of buying and selling, of paying wages and making money, intrinsic values

do not exist. If a thing has value it is because somebody wants it. Where there is no want, no demand, there is no value. Many a poor fellow trying to sell soap or note paper at the housedoor, during these recent years, has discovered this for himself. And it is as true of human labour as of diamonds or candles. Men are paid for doing work that is wanted. And no government can continue to pay wages for work which has no commercial value. The socialist must make his account with this as with an axiom of mechanics.

Another claim of modern democracy is the right to rise. The situation of the ordinary man in relation to his superiors has changed during historic time. Formerly, as Sir Henry Maine has shown us, the connection with his superiors was one of status. The serf was born a serf and as such he remained. Caste was the rule, not the exception. To-day, the relation is different. It is one of contract not of status. He relates himself by contract terminable on both sides at will, to any employer. But wealth, with social position, still combine to make it difficult for the lowly born man to pass freely into the ranks above him. That it is possible there are proofs enough. We have seen two men become Premier, both of whom were born poor. The career is open to the talents. And the democrat claims loudly that there shall be this freedom of movement from the lower stages to the higher. At the same time this seems to cut against any theory of equality and brings the competitive principle into play in full force. But the movement of democracy is against any form of privilege. And the right to rise is being granted freely by all societies.

Finally, there is the right to respect. Bricklayers, plumbers, carpenters, partly because they have exercised their right of association with profit to themselves, partly because of the keenness with which they analyse social conditions, have come

to see that their work, humble or dignified, is indispensable to society. It is easy to show that they have exaggerated this importance. They have forgotten the gulf between their own work and that of the thinker, the scientist and the capable manager of industry. But they maintain that without their work the world cannot go on and they are right.

Into this new world of thought there have persisted certain ideas which come from the time when men's situation was decreed by birth, by status. There is the idea that manual labour is degrading, that to be in Trade is vulgar. And along with this goes the perception by the masses that their superiors are less competent than some of those who have hitherto obeyed them. Barrie's *Admirable Crichton* is an illustration of this awakening. Out of these strands of thought and feeling has been woven a resentment against the lack of respect shown to labour as such. Some of this resentment is founded on false grounds. Some of it is perfectly rational. That decent girls should resent being called slaveys, being jested at in every Music Hall as female idiots, only capable of carrying coals and smashing china, has more to do with the servant problem than long hours and low wages. And that skilled mechanics should resent being treated as inferiors, that clerks and shopmen should hate the patronising tone of the woman from the suburban villa, is no more surprising than that a finger should bleed when cut. The falseness which enters into this feeling may be due to some exaggeration of personal value, to ignorance of their real position in the world, to the mistaken notion that manual labour produces the greater part of wealth ; but the truth which enters into it is a lively sense of human worth, a justifiable sense of the inanity and boobyism which hides itself behind assumed superiority on the part of the wealthier classes. Good masters make good servants, good mistresses make good maids. We

have all to make our account in these days of this right to respect.

We have come far indeed from the age of Paine and the revolutionists whose work he defended. We are dealing with a selfconscious democracy, which has many faults, suffers from the prevalence of many ideas which will have to be tested by time. But we are a prudent folk, seeking to move always on the lines of ordered development in accordance with precedent and law. In such a society it is all to the good that there should be kept before those who are fortunately placed in this world the claims of the plain man.

THE HUMAN ELEMENT

It is an instance of the endless recurrence of leading ideas that the thinking world should again be returned to acknowledge the existence of an actual Evil. Modern French drama is moving in this direction. Before the war the optimists had it their own way. The best of all possible worlds was already in existence. Things were on the upgrade. The world was to be Americanised. The bricklayer would go to his task in the newest of motor cars. Young women would all find suitable husbands. Children would enjoy the weird process called Education. Whipping and tears, grammar and sobs would be relegated to the dustbin of forgotten things. And in a few decades a reluctant earth would be turned into the garden of the prophet's dream. Then came the war. Prophets, pietists, plutocrats and proletarians were disgusted. There commenced that chant of angry reproach addressed to the Supreme Being, a song which still continues, for permitting this outrage upon the fair dreams with which humanity had amused itself. Few seemed to realise that the Good God might be a little annoyed with them. They had rather neglected His temples. Some of them even doubted His existence. The folk who had declared that God could be dispensed with were eloquent in their expostulations with Him for allowing this intrusion on their plans for a joyous existence. American ladies, whose husbands were buying jewellery from Tiffany's out of their war profits, made it clear that they did not raise their boys to be soldiers. Men engaged in necessary

occupations made money. But the war went on and at last reached its end. Since then men have been thinking. Dr. Pangloss is dead, or seems so for the present. The voluble prophets of a New Order chanting their orisons to the rising sun of triumphant democracy, of which they were to be the Grand Viziers, have fallen upon silence. The astonishing reality struck even these pretentious cacklers dumb. The Devil had passed so utterly beyond the ken of that generation of the New Dawn, that this resurrection terrified all but the blind and deaf. At length the painful truth has been borne in upon the mind of this generation, and Evil is confessed to have a part to play in the human drama.

This is the discovery made by our contemporaries on which it were profitable for men to meditate. For if Evil is once more to be treated as a factor in the life of mankind and not as something which is null, is nought, is silence implying sound, then several things may happen. What of those prophecies of the blessed future on earth prepared for the Coming Race? They may all be thrust into whatever dung hill or ashpit may be found most convenient. For they are not true. Why continue this falsehood when the reappearance of ancient Ahriman may prove it a vain hallucination, when some Nero is waiting to send up in flames the city which embodies their delusion? How continue to believe in this universal fraternity when some Borgia, burning with lusts and hatreds, is to appear and work his unholy will? And this may happen, not because the heavens are to be opened or the lid of hell uncovered, to allow the exit of the supernatural Destroyer, but because there is in man himself that which will always shatter the fairy palaces he builds for his own delight.

When the masters of cynicism utter their biting phrases, when we listen to La Rochefoucauld, or La Bruyere, or sit

at the feet of Swift or Pope, we are moved to believe that the men who could say such things about their kind must have in themselves the vices they blame in others. The good man finds goodness everywhere, evoking it, almost creating it, as he moves; and the badman, carrying poison in his own breast, naturally sees evil in everything, since it is but the reflection of his own base nature. We need not deny the truth in that suggestion. The depreciation of human character in the mass is a serious offence against the common welfare. Yet men ought to be on guard against the disposition to admire themselves. And there are reasons why we should consider the less lovely side of human nature.

For there is no reviler of mankind so merciless as the disappointed idealist, who, having looked for much from humanity and being unsupported by trust in God, believes that he has been cheated by men, when he has been deceived by his own wilful refusal to see things as they are. It is therefore worth while to discuss this popular presupposition, for such it is, that ordinary mankind is animated chiefly by altruistic desires and seeks only the good life. The candid statement that most men are actuated by self-interest, in their ordinary pursuits, would not have shocked our ancestors, not less capable than ourselves of seeing plain facts. They would have understood that it might be true, though it was not a thing to boast about. And some of them wrote good and useful books, grounding their teachings on the doctrine that this motive or self-interest was the chief agent in common human activity.

The present disposition is the contrary of this. We assume that, universally, goodness is the mark of man. This combination has been helped by the discovery that the alleged Original Sin of man has no historical foundation. The story of Genesis and its teaching has come under the

disapproval of the modern thinker. Revolting from the theory that men are governed by self-interest, a synonym for Sin, we have swung to the opposite extreme. Our age appears to believe that the average human being desires only the welfare of others. Since he is willing, on occasion, as in war, or under some strong counter-impulse to egotism, to lose his life for the sake of others, we suppose that in normal times he will show his altruism by working for the common good, thinking of the advantage of others rather than his own.

Our politics, our industry, are sometimes spoken of as if they were in future to be founded on this belief. We are to assume that men are willing to be subordinated to the good of others and that whenever we appeal to their better nature they will cheerfully respond, acting as would the hero, the saint, on some great occasion. Now this is so false, so contradictory to the actions of mankind at any period that we marvel how men could entertain such a notion.

The reason for this prevalence of a fallacious theory may be found, first, in our inclination for self-deception, then in the diffusion of false ideas by misguided teachers. These teachers have created an atmosphere in which it is difficult for plain truth about human conduct to be spoken. Chief of these is Rosseau and the crowd of those who allied themselves with his ideas. They have set themselves the task of emancipating men from control by facts and plain sense, inducing them to believe that because they wish a thing to be, it will of necessity arrive. In addition, there are those who take one part of charity, that which stresses the need for regulating the selfish impulses by conscience and heart, to the exclusion of that which emphasises the need for wisdom, the care to be taken by the individual of his own temporal and spiritual interests.

Now no sensible person would deny the capacities of mankind for noble and generous activity. History illustrates its pages by the portraits of men who, like the Curtins of legend, have leapt into the gulf to save the State, have counted life and treasure as nothing if they might deliver the captive from bondage. These things are known to all. But it is a kind of insanity to suppose that men are immediately to be lifted to these great heights, and left there in the performance of ordinary tasks. Such an idea has only to be announced to be received with the scorn it deserves. For plain men know that it is contradicted by the commonest incidents of life. Must we assume that the advertisements of the Jewish usurer are a true indication of his real purpose, that his one desire is to aid people in temporary distress, to show himself in practice the philanthropist he is at heart? It is certain that grocers, shoemakers, butchers, are as worthy a class of men as any other, capable on occasion of just as many generous actions as the same number of lawyers, classical professors, and veterinary surgeons. But shall we therefore agree that their goods are to be taken without examination by the purchaser? Must we believe that Crispin is so filled with human affection that he will put in the best leather and workmanship, though he should know his customer to be incapable of telling the difference between brown paper and ox hide? The common sense of men long since embodied itself on this subject in *caveat emptor*, in "Moses and the green spectacles," in thousands of examples which go to show that men in common affairs are not always guided by the principles of altruism.

But we need not go to these instances alone, as though the principle thus illustrated were confined to the seller of Persian carpets made in Kidderminster, to the vendor of Oriental jewellery fresh from the factories of Birmingham.

The State itself offers the best example. For the exciseman will tax you according to his judgment of your income. And if you protest against the excessive claim, or discover that you have made a mistake to your own disadvantage, the burden of proof rests with you, the citizen, as against the State. Doubtless, there is some occult reason for this, known to the lawyers. But it is certainly strange that the citizen should be liable to severe punishment for false returns, and the State or its officials incur no responsibility for having taken from the citizen more than was legally due. And in a country where this practice, with its enforcement of self-interest as a motive, is the rule, there are angry protests when it is said that in common affairs men are not animated only by altruism.

In deference, therefore, to the needs for some relation between word and fact, to honesty of mind, we ought to cease from speaking of normal humanity as though it were chronically virtuous. It is nothing of the kind. If we have thrown aside some of the ancient forms by which the popular idea of morality found expression, if we no longer speak of Sin and Guilt as though they were the portion of all, it is not less an error of the other kind to suppose that the mass of mankind are prepared to accept the Ten Commandments, to say nothing of the Beatitudes, and live by them. The liar, the thief, the rogue, the hypocrite, the profligate, are probably as common amongst us to-day as in former ages. If we do not trouble about our sins the reason may be, not that we have got beyond them, but that the dyer's hand is subdued to what it works in, that the blackamoor has grown accustomed to the sight of his own inky visage. It is certainly not because the things that human sin stood for have passed out of the cognizance of men.

Nor should we permit ourselves to be deluded by the

theory that owing to some recent transformation in human nature, or some fresh discoveries in science, biological or psychological, we are dealing with an entirely different humanity from what was known to our ancestors. This might seem a trite saying, but it has point, in view of existing tendencies in society. The franchise has become the property of all the men and women in the country.

Now this increase in voting power, carrying no educational or other test, save that of age, seems likely to be turned in the direction of social changes, deep and wide. In confronting those alterations in the body and constitution of the State, it is well to remind ourselves that men are, for the most, what they have been within historic time. They are guided, in the common affairs of life, to a very large extent by self-interest. Capable of the grandest heroism, the most startling proofs of utter forgetfulness of self, they remain, as they have always been, in average hours, students of what they think to be their own welfare. It is with this material, not with any imaginary humanity, fed on specially prepared diet, or blessed with a double portion of genius and sensibility, that the new social order is to be made. Many men have considered the nature of mankind and have tried to come to conclusions concerning it. They have worked, for the greater part, from what they saw in process, from the actual conduct of man as it has been seen in the world. And their conclusions have not been flattering. In proportion to the depth of their thought and the clearness of their judgment has been their disposition to speak modestly of man's virtues and sternly of man's disposition to evil. Such men have believed that this is the only conclusion to draw from the spectacle of the world. And they have not been slow to confess their faith Over the future of the soul they have cast the darkest shadows believing that corruption is inherent in human nature'

They have created Hell, not because they loved the prospect of it, but because they saw no other way of accommodating their truth seeking minds to the stark realities of human character. It is nonsense to suggest that the terrific spectacle opened to our eyes in the other world by the genius of Dante, still less the majestic and awful scenes sketched for us by the great prophets and apostles of the Church, are simply the product of spleen and envious rage. They have a nobler and sadder origin than that. When Calvin and his predecessors or successors, Augustine or Jonathan Edwards, spoke so menacingly of the future it was not because they hated mankind, but because they detested the evils in the midst of which they lived and which they knew well to be the direct result of human action. We may think of this as produced by the times in which they lived or the contemplation of their own soul's misery in contrast with the felicity and purity for which they believed they were intended. But however we explain it, the fact of this view of the race and the mental integrity of those who supported it is beyond dispute.

Nor should we suppose that we have altogether escaped the contagion of this mode of thinking by changing the modes of speech and using another language. We do not now speak much of original sin. But that there is a bias towards evil in human nature is admitted in fact even when denied in words by the professors of much modern thought. When a leading teacher tells us that the primordial energy of man is that of sex and that this force rules all his thinking and acting and is to be brought in as the explanation of all his crimes and errors as well as his virtue and greatness, what is this teacher doing but giving another name to that something in man which perplexed and terrified the older thinkers? Or when another teacher informs us that the primal urge is the "will to power," that is, the passion for domination over others,

one of the strongest and most dangerous of all the emotions by which the soul of man can be stirred, do we need to be philosophers to see that they are describing, under other names, precisely those troublous causes which led the theologians of a former age to speak so harshly about human nature? The Freuds and the Adlers are not much more complimentary to the ordinary man than were John Knox or Cardinal Newman. I can understand, therefore, what Melville, bold sailor and little indeed of a theologian meant when he said, "In certain moods no man can weigh this world without throwing in something like original sin to strike the uneven balance."

Suppose we take the other tack and affirm the contrary, which is that far from men being all or chiefly bad, they are all really good from birth. We may say that circumstances have corrupted them, bad example has had an unfortunate influence, but of man as he is, unsophisticated and not morally deformed, we declare that he is by nature virtuous, chaste, sober and true. Now we have this advantage in considering the second line of belief, that there have been offered to us examples where the doctrine has been really believed and taught. And it was taught, not as a secondary element in a large scheme of thought which had other counteracting factors to modify the original idea, but as the chief, the signal doctrine from which almost all the rest could be deduced. That grand example is offered to us in what is really the source of almost all our modern thinking, the French Revolution. Doubtless much of the same kind might be found in the Russian revolution but we do not yet know that sufficiently well. The French Revolution, that great movement of the human spirit, was projected originally by thinkers. It was born in the minds of men before it was created in political reality.

Half a dozen men taught the world to believe that man was radically good. "Man is born free and he is everywhere in chains." It might have been changed to many other variations on the same motive. "Man is born pure and he is everywhere corrupt," or "Man is born honest and he is everywhere a cheat." None of them would have been more daring or more false than the famous declaration of Rousseau. Then there is Condorcet's bold belief in human perfectibility. Men were in process of becoming perfect and all that was needed was the free expansion of their native energies to attain that end. Well, all that was, as the Americans says, tried out in full, in the most illustrious of persons and on the grandest of scales. Rousseau himself became the most suspicious, jealous and miserable of men, fearing the human race as soon as it ceased to be an indiscriminate mob and took form in an individual. Condorcet took his own life as the one way to escape from his murderers. The men who had believed the doctrines of these teachers went into the arena of public affairs. They brought to the scaffold a good, simple king and a beautiful queen. Then they turned upon each other. The saviours of the human race, the impassioned believers in the virtue and wisdom of all men, became subtle and tyrannical assassins. The names are known to all, Danton, St. Just, Desmoulins, Robespierre, Marat—they moved, as melancholy and horrifying a procession as ever shook the walls of hell, across the stage of actual life and they left a witness to the falsity of their doctrines as vivid and sanguinary as even the harshest of theologians could have desired. The friends of the human race, the would-be brothers of all humanity, within ten years had proved themselves the cruelest and bloodiest of tyrants. May it not be justly said that of the two theories and beliefs, when put into practice, the belief in man's evil nature is likely to be less

prejudicial to the happiness and well-being of the mass of men than the belief in the complete goodness and natural virtue of the whole human race ?

There is another example of this failure of man to reach the highest level in morals. Woodrow Wilson found a political greatness thrust upon him. He seemed to be the new Moses, who would lead mankind out of the slavery to passion and force, which they had endured for so long. The partial achievement and then the failure of the idealist, the need for compromise, the petty triumph, the complete defeat, are known to all. Many explanations of that moral rout have been given but, when analysed, do they not all come back to this ? Wisdom failed, because the mass of his countrymen, like the rest of us, are motived to a large degree by the selfish impulses. That he did not succeed is not the fault of the diplomatic blundering, but the natural sequence of the fact, that the human race is not good enough to seek peace and ensue it with devoted mind.

What then is the conclusion ? If we have seen that on a given occasion men fall below such high ideals, is it not a just inference that the ideal, the dream itself, is vain. We cannot be surprised that men should have argued thus, and acted upon this logic. And in the matter of social improvement, especially where there has been any effort made to give precision to the ideal of a better social state, the reasoning has been applied with good grounds. It is the argument from experience, and in politics experience is indispensable as a guide. Men have tried to put the notion of cummunal possession into practice. There are many examples. We can go back to the absurd fancy of Coleridge and the Pantisocratic scheme. We may turn to the efforts of the Brook Farm community in America. We may look at the attempt made by Robert Owen. New Harmony or Brook Farm,

the end has been failure. And now we may watch the development, on a basis of murder and robbery, of the experiment in Russia, uncertain yet what the result will be. But we may fairly suppose that now and in the future as in the past, where the self regarding impulses are ignored, the end will be rebellion, disruption and defeat.

Yet the state of man may not be entirely deplorable as we might be led to believe. There has already been some advance made in the moral disposition of mankind. And that advance permits us to hope for further progress along the same lines. We all know that man has arrived at his present stage of development through ages of strife with nature, with wild animals, with his fellow man. In those distant times, when he was emerging from the state of sheer brutalism, there must have been a succession of incidents of acts which, if we could now form a mental picture of them all, would shock the least sensitive among us. Children left to die ; the aged, incapable of keeping pace with the fighting or wandering tribe, deserted as prey to the tempest or the feral brute, to the slow death of starvation. Along with the slowly growing moral consciousness, there would be acts of fierce rage, of deadly cruelty prompted by the sheer will to live. And all this would be done without compunction, with little or no feeling of shame or regret. It was part of the life of man. The weak shall suffer and the strong shall rule.

By no means can we say that all this belongs to the past. It still has its dreadful part to play in human life. But I note one difference between the past and the present. I see that there has arisen something, call it a sentiment, a weakness, or what you will. It has come and now forms part of the life of man. It is that feeling of shame or anger, which we all instinctively feel in the presence of treachery, brutal selfishness, inhuman cruelty. When we see children ill-

treated, their young souls seared by inhuman acts, we resent it as an injury done to ourselves. Nay, even the sight of some poor cripple, seated day after day in his chair by the roadside, making his mute appeal for charity, moves us to irritation, anger, at the nature of things. We feel that this ought not to be, should be remedied if remedy can be found by the wit of man. In a word, we have developed that sensibility which makes us rebel against circumstances and situations brought about by that envy and love of power, which we share with our fellow man. True, this feeling will not be shared by all in the same degree. There are still too many who can look on the misery of man, without feeling any emotion save that of satisfaction at having themselves escaped these ills. But the ordinary human being does feel these regrets, this shame, before the inhumanity of man. There is a healthy hatred for the usurer who strips his victim to the skin, for the bully who lives on the earnings of a prostitute, for the swindler who cheats the orphan out of his heritage. Thus far, at least, we have advanced. We know there is cruelty, pain, deceit. But we detest it when we meet it and we must, if we would retain our self respect, enter our protest in some way against it. It is on this sentiment that the social reformer who takes the long view, relies. He is not primarily troubled about whether to the capitalist or to the labourer, should go the surplus, produced by industry. He is anxious that there should be deepened in the human soul the sense of human error, the pity for human wrongs, the just resentment against human cruelty. He believes that with this keener sensibility to the imperfections and iniquities of mankind, there will go a steady effort, intellectual, reasoned, to mitigate and limit some of these wrongs, inflicted by man on man. And he reasons that past advances, although slow, yet permit us to hope that still further progress may be made in

educating the human race to a knowledge of what constitutes its true happiness. Having created this feeling in sufficient strength, then it will be for the statesman to turn into laws, these repulsions and aspirations of the human spirit.

THE COMPETITIVE IMPULSE

OPINION is practically unanimous that there is in man a fighting instinct. When our leaders endeavour to discover the reasons for the late war in some state of affairs, some condition of society, they fail to give due place to something which goes deeper than any social circumstances, to the impulse towards combat which comes to man from his primordial past and remains as one of the elements of his constitution.

The impulse to conflict seems to show itself in children. Common observation would have proved this to any reasonable being, but we have now cumulative proof, drawn from wide experience of parents and teachers who have looked at children's quarrels with understanding eyes, that there is an innate impulse to strife, almost co-existent with life itself in the human being. This disposition shows itself in verbal provocation, in all those forms of teasing, which enter so largely into the comradeship, the friendships and the enmities of childhood. Verbal provocations, the invention of nicknames, the calling attention to personal peculiarities and defects of the victim, the will to irritate and annoy whoever may for the moment have excited the boy's anger or dislike, may all be traced to this primitive impulse to conflict. Contests may then arise from real hostility, brought about by natural dislike. They may proceed from play, an impulse to sport, or they may come from the desire of possession, the covetous impulse having been aroused by the knowledge that the enemy has something which the aggressor strongly desires to possess.

Nor should we ignore the motive of cruelty, the desire to inflict pain on others. When Schopenhauer said that the three motives of all human action were egotism, malice and compassion, he showed a deeper knowledge of mankind than is usual with philosophers by giving malice a distinct position as one of the compelling motives of conduct. And where there is malice, as in Iago or Quilp, there will be cruelty, limited only by the power of the malicious mind to work out its own will on its victims. If we turn over most instances this abnormality to the pathologist, we ought to remember that the masters of religious truth have always recognised this potential cruelty of man as an element of his constitution.

It may then be agreed that there is a fighting instinct in man. The really strange thing is therefore, not that there are outbreaks of hostility, wars great and small, but that the fighting creature, man, is not constantly engaged in the expression of this impulse to combat. Why is this? The reason plainly is that the instinct has been thwarted, is continually being checked and repressed, by the various authorities under whom the growing child lives out its days. Parents have their own work to do here. Then there is the teacher, of all grades, who has to bring this instinct for combat under regulation and control. And society, on the largest scale, has to continue the process, until the street fight becomes illegal, the vendetta and the duel an offence against the law.

The individual, then, has become more or less a peaceful person. Yet the State is still threatened by war. But then, the individual lives a simpler life, with less complicated relations than the community. The citizen may seem morally superior to the State because he does not fight, is not aggressive, carries no weapons, But this can only be because there already exists the community or State which guards him

against attack and thus allows him to cultivate the moral sentiments. Banish the policeman, remove the laws, and the ethical individual would become the pugnacious defender of his own person. Agencies which rule men to-day are not, however, altogether dependent on bullet or baton for their authority, though he would be a rash man who thought the world could dispense with these aids to decorous conduct. Men obey the law because they acknowledge principles, which law has made the common property of social man. To-day the private individual is ruled by the will of society, by administrative and sacredotal authority, by custom and convention. Spencer's dream of a time when man shall live in harmony with the spirit of law may yet be realised and man find the source of authority in his own conscience. Then international courts will be as superfluous as the civil magistrate. Until then, we must seek for some arrangement for the discussion of international questions and settlement by consent. The objections to all such peaceful schemes are many. War is said to be inevitable, being founded on economic necessity. To find food because they have not sufficient or want more, men go to war. Rome and Carthage fought for the wheat fields of Sicily. Even the Crusader is more the victim of hunger than the devotee of religion. The hope that it will pay is more inspiring than the belief that it will purify his soul. The battles which rage for generations round the Mediterranean spring from the desire for land, food and plunder.

Of war, this can be said : it emphasises the need for veracity. By turning the word into a deed, war reveals to men the import of their own ideas. He who relies on words alone, who thinks that brag and bluster can disguise his own cowardice or weakness will be sharply awakened. The Persian war taught the Greeks the geography of their day.

And we no longer have place for the statesman who could ask : " Where are these damned Colonies ? "

For us the Crimean war was a mistake. But it broke the sleep of ages, which has enwrapped Russia, and proved that the absolutism of Nicholas was no remedy for national evils. This is one of the possible results of war. From our long wars against Napoleon, we got nothing save a measure of security, the partial safety born of a crippled enemy. And from our last struggle we have obtained a moderate degree of safety and no more, to be held, on condition of perpetual watchfulness by the sentinel who catches, on the horizon, the sun gleaming on the helm of an approaching foe.

Certain qualities which war encourages, have great value. The spirit of sacrifice, risk for others, courage, the commonest of all virtues yet no despicable quality, and discipline, the will to obey, the sense of comradeship, esprit de corps, all these are developed by the shock of war. Even the decencies of character may be strengthened by it. There is something fine in the braced and sturdy figure of the soldier, lacking in that of the slack youth who lounges against the lamp post, shouts himself hoarse on football fields, bets on horses he has never seen, and helps to preserve civic order by sand bagging inoffensive pedestrains. The rough, the apache, the hooligan is not a better man than the soldier who stands to attention at word of command. If we abolish war we must provide humanity with some agency which will create as good a masculine creature as the soldier.

It may be that war has reached its end, that men will accept peace, not because they love it, but because it is forced upon them by necessity. The wolves agree when menaced by extermination from without.

Fortunately, however, humanity has not been limited to the methods of constraint in the treatment of this fighting

instinct. It has succeeded in bringing the instinct partially under control, by allowing it to find utterance, to some degree, in the play and sport which form so large a part of life to the men of our time. To walk a tight tope, to dance, to ride the bicycle, to skate, to play at football, to climb mountains, to box, to play tennis are means by which the instinct has been deflected into another channel. The benefit thus conferred on humanity is great. Without sport and games, it would have been almost impossible for humanity to make progress, since there would have been little co-operation between men constantly inclined to indulge their passion for personal combat.

Not only, however, can the instinct be deflected. More important still, it can be sublimated. That is, it can be turned to the service of something higher. Crude examples of this are not unknown. There have been professional pugilists, who, under spiritual influences, have become devoted evangelists, such men as the famous Bendigo and others. But even on the nobler scale illustrations of this sublimated combativeness can be found. It is true of nearly all vigorous leaders of men that they have a considerable proportion of this combative element in their composition. Ignatius Loyola, the gay and bold cavalier is turned, by a vision of Our Lady, into the soldier of the Cross, becomes the founder of the most powerful of all religious orders and one of the spiritual forces of the modern world. Wm. Booth had all the combative and dominating characteristics, but these are subordinated to his devotion to Christ, and thus make him one of the social and religious leaders of his time. This change of direction, sublimating the secret energies of human nature and directing them to a new target, is an effective means of using propensities which would otherwise produce discord and strife. The inclination to conflict

when thus sublimated, may also reveal itself in the desire to unite with the good. Such men as George Fox and Wm. Penn are examples of men who fought against the spirit of war and sought for all forms of peaceful settlement. Or it may be that the emotion is turned from every external enemy to the inward foes. Then we have the saint wrestling in his cloister, with the enemies of the soul, those lusts and evils out of which, according to St. James, all wars and conflicts originally spring.

Nor does sport fail to give us here an analogy to this condition. For many sports to-day are contests not with visible, but with a hidden or imaginary foe. When the golfer tries to beat bogey, the billiard player to make a famous break, the runner, rower, or swimmer, to beat an existing record, it is not so much against any personal opponent as against an imaginary figure, that he pits himself. Thus, even in sport the combative tendency is sublimated, purged of its most dangerous and offensive element, and becomes a harmless and profitable amusement for the sportsman.

Is there any hope of educating the race for peace, as we have partially educated the individual? Can we make crowds as enthusiastic for peace as they usually are for war? To achieve this is the task of the educator of mankind.

One method suggested, in reference to the young generation, is that of Silence about the miseries and cruelties, the heroisms and glories of history. That is a counsel of despair. It never could be done and should not if it could. We are bound up with history, with the past. The nation which sought to begin altogether anew, would be severing the arteries by which the lifeblood of one age is transmitted, for good or evil, to the next. There is another method called Inversion. And the supporters of this would have us show war in its most horrible colours. That also is a counsel of despair.

For men never have been and I believe never will be driven away from war, by any emotion of fear, or even of horror. There is the native instinct for the fight always there. And the nation which allowed the instinct of fear to control its people, would die and deserve to die.

Another mode of treating this impulse, however, offered as a suggestion by Wm. James, is more to the purpose. He would have the nation conscribe its youth in a campaign against Nature, for the opening up of new tracts of soil, the ploughing and tilling of old lands, the forcing of Nature to surrender her secrets and her wealth to mankind. And this should be as compulsory, as universal, as the conscription for war. Then there is another method which James, in view of the moral plight of his American countrymen and perhaps of the world, deemed equally desirable. Let the youth of the nation deliberately choose, be taught the wisdom of choosing, poverty instead of riches as their ideal. Then there would be created in the world a body of men, always growing, who would have as their ideal of life, not the house of the millionaire, not the economic dominance of thousands of other men, but the life of simple and austere poverty. Whether this also might not entail great evils (the Monastic institutions of the Middle Ages are there to warn us), whether the mass of men ever can be taught to be enamoured of poverty for its own sake, are doubtful questions. But at least wherever this ideal gripped the minds of men, it would set them free from the tyranny of modern wealth, and would yet conserve this fighting instinct, actively operating against nature and human passions.

On one point, however, there ought to be no doubt. Competition in war and competition in industry are branches from the same stem, have their roots in the same instinct to excel, to strive against rather than with one's fellow men.

And we shall never grasp the social problem until we realise that the novelist keenly desirious of being the best seller, the oil magnate who breaks his rivals, and the soldier who bayonets his enemy, are all variants of one common germ, the passion for superiority, and the battle by which supremacy is lost and won. And against the cry of the socialist for equal distribution of goods there will always remain the argument of those who see all life in terms of stress, opposition and final battle for life's prizes. It is with this idea always in mind, the existence of a competitive instinct which runs through the life of man as a steel thread, that the industrial problem must be considered.

There are those who say bluntly that this is in itself a condemnation of the system. It is grounded in competition, and competition is the way of death rather than of life. Yet whilst the cry of those who indict competition in industry, rises ever higher, there goes on increasing the passion for competition in sport and amusement. Never was the judgment on competitive industry more severe. Never was the eager interest in the boxing ring, the football field, the tennis court, the racing and betting amusements of men, all rooted in strenuous competition, more notable than to-day.

Suppose that we were to eliminate altogether the competitive principle from life. Should we therefore have gained? There would be a smoothness in our life we may suppose, which would at first seem delightful enough, But would not Nemesis be waiting for us? Would there not be every chance of a real degeneration? On the international scale, his story seems to teach that when the nation has become refined up to a certain point, it is at the mercy of the less cultured, but more vigorous, more animal-like stocks, who may attack it and in default of response to this sharp stimulus, it will be destroyed. And within the community also this

seems to be true. In times of ease, Art becomes the minister to passion or to effeminate æstheticism, shading off into pleasant vices and moral turpitude. Struggle then seems to be necessary to the maintenance of a high standard. It may deprive us of superlative excellence, but it is the condition on which comparative excellence manages to exist.

May it not be, however, that the critics of the competitive system are unfair in their estimate of its operation? They do not give it credit for the moral qualities which, in spite of its imperfections, have yet found a footing in this world of strife. The struggle itself is largely modified already by ethical considerations. Men may speak unadvisedly of murderous competition, but this is to abuse language. In the pursuit of the great prizes the race is furious, swift and stern. But the men who enter for these are trained gladiators, who know the rules of the game, and by their entrance have subscribed to those rules. If men have decided, by tacit agreement, that they shall struggle among themselves for the big fortunes, the great positions, I see no reason to waste excess of compassion over those who are beaten, any more than over the boxer who is knocked out by his opponent. Rothschild capturing his millions for banking, Rockefeller winning the Oil game, Gould fighting for the Railways, these are men who enter, knowing what they risk, to lose or win all, to compete with their peers for the high places. The men who strive against them are able men, who know what they risk, who will win if they can. Why take the sportsman's victory as a thing of course, the financier's victory as a crime? The natural man in these things judges better than some of our economists.

If, however, we come to the really important things, life and bread, the struggle here has been enormously modified by the ethical forces. Few are starved out of existence in

the normal course of the civilised world of to-day. Charity of private origin, aid given by the community to its members, personal assistance rendered by the group to its units, these have made the casualties of life comparatively few. The modern world, setting wartime aside, is less of a battlefield than a hospital. The men who have fallen are tended in a hundred ways. That they are sick, wounded, in need, this is all true. But that modern society slays its members wholesale, by an abominable system which gives all the prizes to the undeserving, all the lashings to the worthiest of its members, is untrue. The struggle is there as part of life, it seems to be of the constitution of things that it should be there, since its entire absence, as we have seen, might result in even less production of life, but it is modified continually by the ethical principle which springs from the higher elements in man.

When the objection is urged that the present system tends to make cheapness the end of industry, there is reason in the remark. Yet he would be a brave man who urged upon the masses in these days the superior merit of dear food, dear clothing, dear housing. They might answer truthfully enough that of dearness in all its forms they had had enough that they would like to try its opposite for a time. What is the use of talking about the perils of cheapness to an electorate which has shown in the plainest manner that it will have nothing to do with taxation on corn? If our people will risk the failure of their agriculture at home, its practical disappearance, rather than submit to paying a higher price for bread, is it likely that these urban populations, so careless of the farmer except in time of war, will submit to any other form of enhanced price, even though it might be in the long run better for the nation? Cheapness is not always the highest ideal. But modern cities cannot be maintained, an

industrial civilisation cannot live for long to-day, without cheap food, cheap boots, cheap houses, and the men who think that by some magic they can continue to pay high wages and yet sell their goods in the world market, that is, compete, as sellers, with all nations, and remain, as buyers, the purchasers of the best and dearest, are living in dream-land. Any State, socialist or otherwise, will either have to limit its population, find fresh markets for its trade, or seek for cheapness in the necessaries of life.

If it be said that each community within itself shall eliminate internal competition and divide the product of industry within its own borders, then this is to sacrifice the idea of world unity, in the collectivist sense, and to reinstate the competitive principle in its most effective form. For there are certain countries, our own is one, which cannot be continually self-sustaining and self-centred. And if this be so, then such countries must either buy at a fixed price or create competition amongst those who sell to them. We cannot decree that the Frenchman or the Japanese shall only work eight hours whilst the Chinaman may work twelve, merely because the Englishman desires to limit himself to an eight-hours day. And where there is more work done there will be more commodities to sell, and the rate at which they are offered will be cheaper, despite all that may be done by the legislature of a given country to protect labour from excessive toil and to guarantee its security. And this will result even if men, the world over, actuated by the best intentions, and desiring to see a stable industrial order, are willing to sacrifice all thought of superior gain.

It will exist because of the natural inequalities of condition, the variations of human ability, the fact that some land will grow corn better than others, and that men who will not work according to the received ideas, must either starve or

be dependent on others. The objection to all such schemes is that, however good the intention, they must needs fail in their object. This does not mean that the State is to remain utterly indifferent to the conduct of its members. But the relation ought to be fraternal rather than paternal. The State can counsel, urge, persuade. It can set up rewards for good conduct. It must institute punishments for open and flagitious wrong-doing. But though the ideal of a community compelled to virtue by superior force, haunts the mind of the impatient idealist, there is no instance in history of its having been attempted, whether in Sparta, Peru, Geneva, or Puritan England, without the result being a disastrous failure. And it is improbable that humanity, even though tempted by the prospect of ease and plenty, will again put itself in leading strings.

Is it said that the whole theory of life and conduct connected with competition is hostile to the ethical precepts born of the higher consciousness of man? Yet if we go to the other extreme we produce greater evils. If we refine the individual too much, produce the pure aristocratic type, where intellect morals and physique all seem in harmonious proportion we touch a point at which we remain only for a moment. There is no continuity in the strain. Beauty disappears, weakness supervenes, the flower once having bloomed bends over, begins to fade and dies. Aristocracies die out unless continually replenished from the coarser stock. The Pitts and Gladstones, Goethes and Schillers are spiritually childless. Nature brings us back inexorably to the common level. The conclusion seems to be that men must compete. Yet every man who realises that he is born into a community must recognise that there are boundaries needed for this impulse towards emulation and conflict. Men are not to be guided only by the will to conquer, to win, to dominate others. They may compete, but there are limits within which they must play out their game.

COMPETITION AND SOCIAL LIFE

SOCIALISM is the younger brother of the dying despotisms. The tryanny of the one having been broken, we are invited to submit to the tyranny of the many. Every vigorous personality is to be restrained within the circle of the commonplace by the decree of the State. And the present peril of humanity is that we may sacrifice too much for a poor reward. All that men have gained by centuries of effort is to be surrendered to the rapacity of Leviathan. It gives reason for thought. That some enterprises can be taken up by the State with advantage to all concerned will not be disputed. That there are others, and by far the larger number, which should be left to the free play of human interests is equally true. A community of free men ought not to allow the State to take over the management of all its affairs.

There are many men who believe, with reason, that the ills of the present hour are less cruel than the greater ills resulting from government by idealists who misconstrue human nature. They know the truth of Napoleon's words, "If there existed a monarchy of granite, the ideologues would reduce it to powder." From the biological side, where men seek the best human types that they may be multiplied, socialism is dangerous. Between the ideals of socialism and nationalism for instance, there must always be conflict. One or the other must yield. Nationalism means the cultivation of special qualities, the sharpening of differences. Athens and Sparta, England and France represent different

cultures. The world would be the poorer without either. Socialism means the merging of the individual in the mass. To some it appears an attractive possibility. But have we counted the cost? Is there nothing in race, in the thought that through the labour and self-culture of others, one has received a personal and culutral heritage which is ones own? Press socialism to its logical end and race ceases to be. Humanity becomes a homogeneous mass with no lines of division. By force of an economic unity, sought after in socialism, individual distinctions, national qualities, are to be destroyed. Will it ever come to pass? Can the lines of cleavage be thus eliminated? We hope and believe not. What of the negro and the white man? Shall the white woman find in the black man her natural companion? Is the earth to be peopled by a mongrel breed? The result is not promising. And the yellow races are certain to claim their place in the sun. What of their descendants when all have been mingled and racial distinctions are destroyed? Nationalism is needed. And nationalism means separateness, distinction, exclusiveness and a reasoned hatred of the cosmopolitan. Gobineau, with his theory of the importance of race in history is nearer the truth than these lovers of composite photography who would change differentiated mankind into a mushy mess of similarities. If socialism ever conquers the world, humanity may indeed be as the grass of the field, it will certainly not be as the flowers of the forest.

Under all the forms which socialistic theory assumes, one can discover the radical idea common to them all. Equality through pressure or scission is the purpose in view. Consider some of these forms. Renan has told us that the future belongs to those who are not disillusioned. When the rebel has ceased to hold his illusions he will have lost his power. Out of some such perception of the truth has come Sorel's

doctrine of violence. For him the veil of illusion has fallen. But he would keep it hanging for the mass of mankind. Because men must believe in something if they are to act on the world, he proclaims the cult of the impossible, the social Myth. Like a sceptical priest he serves at an altar he does not worship that others may be inspired. Though the thing desired cannot happen he yet urges men to seek the Age of Gold. The unpredictable element in human affairs he knows too well to be cheated by the reformers' promises. Optimism he sees to be the gospel of the wilfully blind.

No man has more boldly thrown down the glove to fellow believers. Like every Adullamite, his own turn comes to be asked for a plan of campaign. The answer is another proof of Sorel's lucid intelligence. He declines, with a sardonic smile, to predict the future. Whoever outlines a programme for mankind he dismisses as a reactionary. The only use of programmes is to incite men to prove that they are valueless. He distrusts all proposals which solve difficulties, since the difficulties will prove to be other than those imagined. He has no patience with the builders of Utopias. In what then does he believe? In the Myth. He lives in a world of which everything can be predicted, because no one knows anything about it. But everywhere he sees men moved to heroic achievement, if at all, not by reason, but by feeling, imagination, impulse, all those emotions which lie in the depths of the soul.

Is this to extinguish the lamp of reason, of culture? He will answer that even in the so-called sciences, the very home of the reason he mistrusts, his principle holds good. For in every body of knowledge there is a clear and an obscure region and it is the latter, the twilight region, which lures man on by the promise of complete enlightenment. For the politicians of all orders he has only contempt.

Their conception of society is a compromise of conflicting interests under the auspices of political lawyers. Any serious hope for the elevation of mankind must come from other sources. What he asks for is a faith which will enable men to make a great venture. He knows that for man to suppress in himself immoral tendencies he must have a source of conviction and must act before he calculates or reflects. And such moral convictions depend for their support, not on reason, but on a state of war. Sorel's syndicalism then seems likely to fail for the same reasons as have made invalid most of the prophecies of Marx. There is no such unity amongst the workers of the world as these thinkers suggest. Man is related to his own people, his tribe, his platoon, and there is a moral twist in those who make themselves joiners and slaters first and Englishmen and Germans after that.

To offer men endless strife as reward for their sacrifices, to exchange their natural for a fictitious solidarity, all in devotion to an acknowledged Myth, is not a promising venture. This socialism of the Chair has suffered eclipse.

Advocated by all sorts of people, beginning with the discontented poor, it has laid hold of the idealists and the intellectuals. Morris believed in and preached it. For the artist, the pure doctrine meant a world in which economics had ceased to play any part. By a transformation of which no reasoned account is given men had become generous, sympathetic, free from the gross vices common to the race. Supply and demand had ceased to function. Creative genius had become universal. Poets and painters controlled the world and arranged the trifling details of civic and personal life, the labour of the community and the policy of the State in brief hours snatched from literary composition and the mural decoration of Halls of Science. It was a land East

of the sun and West of the moon. Since then the doctrine has been made the property of a party and brought into the field of practical politics. And the result has been different from that anticipated by its members. This has been brought about by that method of compromise which takes the heart out of every reformer and turns him from a flaming prophet to a public servant. Instead of the falling towers of Ilium, the Aladdins' palace of the fancy, men talk about the inevitability of gradualness. They had preached a crusade against the world. They have accepted the slow improvement of social conditions. And a man's span of life is three score years and ten ! What promise of the Earthly Paradise is there in the hope that washhouses for the poor will be built in the next decade ? From restrictions which would have made the Puritan of Salem gasp with horror and a personal tyranny more odious than that of Israel in Egypt, there arise the hope that the labourers' wages may be raised five shillings a week at the end of a century or more. The dream is shattered. The socialist is now a politician and we may be sure will play the political game as his ancestors, under many colours, have played it for centuries.

The socialist asserts that common ownership of all by all is the rational method of social life. For him property is theft. On the other hand, the individualist holds that property ought to be vested in a person and that its rights are always to be carefully weighed. Jaures believes in the socialisation of all things. Taine sees the evil wrought by the Paris commune, realises how slight is the barrier between culture and savagery and says that the right to property should be absolute. This does not imply that there are no social rights over property. The individualist admits the need for such an occasion. Land cannot be held absolutely and is not. But the stress is laid on collective property by

the socialist and on private property by the individualist. And it is where you put the emphasis which will decide the camp to which you belong. I believe, with Taine, that the long-sighted statesman will do all things possible to secure the acquisition of property by private persons.

I do this because it is always better to take first things as they are, and private ownership is the system by which civilisation, as we know it, has been built up. With the further development of society there may arise conditions which make it desirable that certain forms of property hitherto regarded as private should become public. They have become necessary utilities without which the society cannot continue to live and function successfully. To discover the point at which that transference may be made with the least detriment to society and the minimum of injustice to the private owner is the task of the statesman.

The public ownership of certain common necessities, the water supply, the tramway system, the Post Office is not sufficient argument for the full blown socialist programme, still less for the communism which insists on a rigid equality of possession. It is effective against those who would have everything, from the headship of the State downwards, subject to competition. Not "Either" "Or," but "How much" is the problem. And viewing present tendencies and past experience in this matter we may say that the less socialism we have in the future the better.

That unlimited application of the socialistic principle in communal and industrial affairs may be detrimental to the best interests of the race will probably prove to be the verdict of those who watch the working of socialistic theory. For the attempt to equalise wealth will tend to diminish the accumulation of capital. With the diminution of the reward for saving the impulse to save would be correspondingly

weaker. In Oriental countries the rapacity of Rajah or Vizier has often prevented the development of capital though not able to kill the acquisitive instinct. Before this point was reached any government in this country would have discovered its mistake and reverted to private enterprise. But the experiment might cost us our position as one of the first nations of the world.

Socialist principles would probably depreciate the administration of affairs. Men manage borrowed money less efficiently and carefully than they manage their own. Recent growth of expenditure in municipalities, increased rates, are proof enough that men do not examine their own handling of public moneys as they do the using of their private fortune. The man jealous of the public purse as of his own is a rare bird. And he is never popular.

As to the desired equality of opportunity, that may, within limits, be secured. But the limits are precise. Education is now accessible to all. But this gives no guarantee of equal opportunity. The province of education is certainly not to level men. The iron and brass sink whilst the gold rises. And there is still the inequality of life, the difference in natural faculty, defiant of any levelling process.

Some will have it that land should be removed from the private holder. Movable goods may be held and transmitted, but not land. The reason is that the unearned increment here is more of a tangible quantity. But in land the unearned and the earned are too closely woven to be thus cleanly severed. Spencer and Sidgwick are agreed that expropriated landowners must be compensated. The money needed would give a statesman pause. Equitable price fixing would not be easy. Should it be intended to transform the country into a land of small holdings, it must be shown that the system is economically workable. It is

highly doubtful. Small holdings and market gardening claim a concentration of manual labour, common in China, known in France, but never yet practised in these islands. A Scotch farmer cultivating lettuces as single plants would be a sight for the gods. Under such a system either the farmer must produce stuff now imported from Denmark and Ireland, or, if he continue to grow corn, some protective measure must secure him a fair price for his produce. And the urban populations are not anxious to see their bread dearer.

There is one point where the socialist does seem to have the current of the time indisputably with him. The movement towards the creation of combines and the rationalising of industry appears to be in his favour. Competition here has reached its limit and in self-defence the competing parties have combined together, pooled their resources and thus delivered themselves from the results of internal strife. And all this is in the direction of socialism, we are told, for it is but preparing the way for that larger monopoly which is found in State ownership and control. Yet here, too, there is something to be said for the middle path, for the Combine as against the State. So long as we are dealing with a Combine or Cartel, we are dealing with a body which, however strong, is still limited in some degree. Its power of restriction is not absolute. A new invention may destroy its fancied security. The small firms outside of the big organisation have yet the right to compete, though their task is rendered more difficult. And none know better than the leaders in these vast organisations that, however strong they may be they are not immune from attack, and often successful attack, from the smaller opponent. And then, should the large Combine proceed too far with the elevation of its price or the restriction of its output, managing the

market too obviously in its own interest, the pressure of public opinion is still a force to be reckoned with. Oil, cotton, wool, soap, copper, tin, may be open to the process of cornering, and for some brief time a Combination may be able to hold the world to ransom for these articles. But the victory is usually short lived. A substitute is found for the wanted commodity. Or a temporary abstention by the buying public may be organised, or in the last resort the threat of legislative action by the State may be brought into play. And the Combine discovers that it is not omnipotent. All these things can be done so long as the monopoly stops short of State control. But when the business has once been taken over by the community, made a national possession, then the pressure of external force is reduced to a minimum. All threat of competition being removed, the managers of the industry find themselves in a privileged position, speedily discover their power, and assert with increasing boldness their right to impose their will on the public. Nothing but the privilege of State ownership could have compelled civilised human beings to consume the vile tobaccos thrust upon the French public by its Government. It is not true then that the movement towards combination in the larger industries is bound to be regarded as the prelude to complete national ownership. So long as competition is allowed, even though the conflict may appear to be unequal, there is always a means open to the public by which it can exercise pressure on the magnates of commerce. Being men they will be inclined to play the bully when they can. But being citizens in a free commonwealth and therefore subject to opposition, they are prevented from becoming tyrants.

A movement so vague and indeterminate as this of Socialism gathers within its current many different minds

and characters. Already one may see some discern some of the dangers threatening it in the near future. Chief amongst these will the adhesion of those who always shout with the largest mob, the professional politicians and place hunters and the social leaders of both sexes who are indifferent to names but anxious for front seats in the theatre. All these will probably be found in the ranks of Socialism during this century, ousting the faithful servant of the idea from the leadership he has fairly earned. Socialism become a political creed will develope the vices inseparable from popular forms of political faith.

To some of the intellectuals of the party the difficulties of applying the theory are becoming clear. Mr. Bertrand Russell, a convinced Socialist, confessed that Socialism, exercised through an authority composed of "men still animated by envy and love and power," would be compelled to destroy all freedom of thought in order to preserve itself from criticism. Experience in recent years has convinced, even ardent socialists that to give great power to the State as men are now constituted, is no guarantee for the worker against fraud or tyranny, least of all from severity of toil.

Of Anarchism also we learn from this candid critic that it would not last more than a year or two. Needing a strong central government to prevent the creation of any organised force by those objecting to the existence of an anarchistic State, the principle of anarchism would prove self contradictory in practice and would lead to a severity of government, greater than that of most States as now organised.

Kropotkins dream of a society in which the policeman has ceased to exist, and all men act by their finer impulses, vanishes like a cloud. We are left again with the dictator, the strong man either of the Press, the Army or the Senate, who knows how to govern, and cares not a straw about theory.

The prospects of Syndicalism, when men settle down after the revolution, are equally grey. For the Syndicalist must have a central authority to control the rivalries of those separate producers, trades, societies, corporations, amongst whom the powers of production have been distributed ; so that the Syndicalist also finds himself confronted by the difficulty of reconciling his method of production and distribution with the need for a central authority which will preserve in being the system he advocates. Even though he should "sweep away all ideas of guilt and sin," recognise that man is merely the creation of his environment and is in no sense responsible for his actions, it would still be necessary to have some force to prevent theft, violence, rebellion and all other anti-social acts.

If then socialism, logically worked out, means the stifling of liberty, of thought and speech, if syndicalism and anarchism can only exist by maintaining a trained and disciplined force to crush the antisyndicalist and the opponent of anarchy, is there any other method by which the tyranny of bureaucracy and the severity of the anarchist in power may be prevented whilst guarding the fruits of a socialisation of wealth and the instruments of production ? The Guild Socialist believes that such a method can be found. Under this system, two authorities are to be constituted, one geographical, corresponding to the existing State, the other industrial, having control of the interests belonging to a particular trade, individuals having the right to act in the service of both as occasion might demand.

But here, also, there would be the possibility of conflict of interests between two bodies of producers, with the consequent necessity of an authority, such as the State, intervening at critical moments and determining the action of each, so that the authority of the Guild would be strictly

limited, being simply the right of two or more bodies to deliberate without taking decisive action. And Mr. J. A. Hobson is doubtful whether, if the Guilds had real authority, the State would or could allow another body within itself to arrogate powers which would make of it another State, capable of activities possibly dangerous or hostile to the welfare of the great State. Yet this is the most promising of all the industrial forms suggested.

When the advocates of Guild Socialism claim that Labour should have authority over investments, as well as over the disposal of their own time and talents, it is evidently assumed that the contribution of labour is the sole element in production, the Marxian error. There are four factors essential to industry, Capital, Labour, Management and the Community. To give labour absolute control over the whole of production, making the elements contributed by the three other factors subordinate to the interests of labour, would merely reproduce the industrial problem in another form. In fact, turn the problem as you will, there always remains the final question, "Who is to rule?"

There is the further consideration that mass production is going to be the method of industry. For successful working this requires organising ability of a high order on the part of those responsible. To induce these persons to serve they must be paid in such forms as they will accept. Whether Socialism can offer such rewards has yet to be proved.

These things are perfectly well known to the majority of men to-day. No one can ignore the occasions, too numerous to mention, when this kind of experiment has been made, with little success. Even now we have Mussolini sweeping out the multitude of officials who fastened themselves on the socialised industries of Italy, like flies on meat; and but yesterday, we had the pleasing spectacle of the New Jerusalem

in Hungary, under Karolyi and Keri, Bela-Kun, Szanuelly and Pogany, as pretty a gang of fanatics as ever made the scum of the political cauldron. No man need go far to find proof enough, in these days, that in politics men are much the same as they have always been, and that the overturning of present society would bring to the surface, all the Irish Larkins, the Hebrew Kunfis and Trotskys, now scattered up and down the world.

Assuming that there is still in the average man the normal proportion of self interested motives the failure of any full fledged socialistic scheme is not merely probable but inevitable.

THE CHOICE BEFORE US

UNFORTUNATELY for the dreamer who looks for an ideal kingdom on earth, there is one problem which remains, the Sphinxs question, to be confronted by all who would think seriously about the prospects of the human race.

Thinking men are always perplexed by the steadily increasing pressure of population. Ever impinging on the borders of subsistence, this compels nations to find an outlet for their surplus human wealth, or to command larger areas of territory, which can usually only be obtained by fighting. Thus in 1800, the population of Western Europe was 122 millions. In 1900, it was 240 millions, having doubled in the century. In 1821, England and Wales had a population of 12 millions. In 1911, they had 36 millions. At present the European excess of births over deaths is 40 millions per decade. It needs little imagination to perceive that here is a process which has only to be continued long enough and the result must be either an immense increase of territory from which to draw food, a vast improvement in cultivating this soil already worked, or the death of many of these superfluous human creatures, either from starvation, by war, or from both combined. Here, then, is the crux of all schemes of reform and social improvements. The humanitarian must confront the fact that population increases more rapidly than means of subsistence, whether by arithmetical or geometrical progression does not matter. And unless he can find some means of circumventing it he must admit that all

his labour is purely empirical, an endeavour to remedy defects in society without touching the cause. Particular cases in proof of the doctrine are not lacking. England was the scene of much misery after the Napoleonic war because on a narrow agricultural basis she was trying to feed a population which, though small by comparison with the present, was yet too large for her resources at the time. Japan, with a limited and infertile soil, is now confronted by the problem of excessive population and had she not obtained Korea and Manchuria, must ere now have known something like starvation. Even America, that land of plenty, has plenty of poor men with no stake in the country. A diminishing agriculture and increasing population is driving her to the import of food-stuff for her people. If, as is conceivable, American agriculture should remain stationary or even recede, if her population should increase, as is not impossible, so that by 1990 she has 200 to 250 millions of people, she will then be in as unstable a situation as any of the European lands. Liable then to internal eruptions which would endanger her whole policy she would be compelled to seek an outlet for her superabundant energies elsewhere. And it is out of such conditions that great wars have arisen. One reason why the question of population is now becoming so acute is that Science, slowly diffused amongst the people, has steadily reduced the death rate in most civilised lands. We are seeing in Europe what has been seen in the wilds of Africa, and the plains of India, the peril which arises when ancient methods of selection are interfered with and the capacity for human increase still has free exercise. War and famine being prevented, disease being hindered in its destructive work, man is confronted by an even greater danger, that of starvation, because of a surplus of mouths to feed. It is not easy then to escape the

conclusion that a progressive decline of births is a necessary agent in the promotion of peace. That fact, with all its implications, once established, we may find it necessary to adapt our minds to a practice which though hitherto discountenanced by the historic church, seems to be an essential element in the life of permanently peaceful communities. Immunity from war, pestilence and famine, the increased security of life, the raised standard of existence for the mass of the people, all of which had become actual in the years before 1914, these are the changes which conspire to make population increase. And there had been no commensurate use of the virgin soils of the earth to make up for the food shortage, with which the world even then seemed to be threatened. Where these conditions prevail there is bound to be war as the outcome. In the early days of civilisation, the practice of infanticide is but another method of disposing of mouths which the conditions of society did not permit to be fed. Children being unwelcome they were either left to die in open places from starvation or exposure, or were delivered over to the beasts of the forest. Some of those early forms of child sacrifice which seem to us now so pitiful, the surrender to Moloch and other deities, had their origin in the economic motive.

Let it be agreed that there is no escape from the Malthusian law and some motive must be given beyond the parental instinct to induce cultured people to rear families. For the question of parentage is no longer outside the realm of human will. With almost complete certainty, it can be prevented, if not desired. The information necessary, once possessed only by a small number of educated people, is now the common property of most dwellers in towns and is not unknown amongst the agricultural classes.

And the steady decline in the birth rate, a phenomenon

not confined to any particular country, is proof that the knowledge is being acted upon by many who would once have regarded it as a moral offence.

The complaint is not that the population does not increase. We have seen that the torrent of human life is still so large and strong that it needs an outlet by emigration, or otherwise, for its superabundant material. The trouble is that the high races, the more cultivated peoples, are not reproducing themselves in sufficient numbers. Some of the reasons for this are obvious. Certain ancient virtues, frugality, industry, sobriety, are in danger of being destroyed by the spreading passion for luxury.

The hope of improving society by overturning it, still cherished by certain undisciplined minds, is fallacious, unless there is a will to alter the moral temper of men. It is midsummer madness for duchesses to talk at large about the duty of frugality, the virtue of temperance, to the masses of the poor, whilst they waste in a night what would keep a village for a year. The side on which the Church should come down on this question has not yet been officially decided. But bluntly, the problem seems to be this: dying races with peace and a high standard of life or vigorous and increasing peoples with the perpetual presence of poverty and the possibility of war. Of the two we believe the latter is at once the bolder, the nobler and the more Christian. Without offering any apology for war, or striving to diminish its horrors, it yet remains true that men buy all things in life, nothing is really given, and if they want greatness, in any mode, if they wish for the larger style in life, rather than the side of the safe and pleasant, then war must be included as a possible factor in experience. And woman must accustom themselves to the truth, that they may bear children whose lot in life is a soldier's grave. With a limited population, we can have more of the delights of life,

We may make consumptionism, as the Americans say, the test of social value. Then we shall have a diminishing population, so that the individual may have a larger portion of wealth to spend on things pleasant. Or we may stand by the old paths, claim that natural increase is the proper result of sexual intercourse, that labour is the lot of man, that life is and must always be dangerous and that war is one of the perils of this world which the Christian must envisage precisely as he looks upon wounds and sudden death. No man wants it. Every man in his senses will do what he can to avoid it. But he will not to this end make life futile by refusing to have children.

The nineteenth century, with that optimism which marked some of its intellectual leaders and most of its people, put the problem of population aside, as having no real existence, shelved it without making any serious attempt to solve it. The twentieth century may find it as baffling as ever, but at least it is aware that the problem exists. And it is clearly bound up with another, the position of woman as wife and mother in society.

The present situation is, indeed, sufficiently disconcerting. But briefly, it amounts to this. The food producing areas of the world are now known and by far the greater part of them are occupied. Exploration and the invention of machinery have resulted in the using up of most of the habitable land of the world. America, the most favoured of all nations, with resources which seem to be unlimited, entered on the stage of diminishing returns between 1890 and 1900. This means that intensive culture, actual manual labour, will in future have to be put into the land. And though intensive culture can do much, as China and the French peasantry have proved, the law holds good that there is, after this point has been reached, a diminishing return for

what is expended upon the land in labour and fertilising material. And there are no more Americas to be discovered. Then the nineteenth century is remarkable for having seen a phenomenal increase of population throughout the world. Taking the figures given by Professor East, of Harvard, for ten thousand years up to the year 1800, the result of human fecundity was 850 millions of people then living. By 1900 the population of the world had reached 1700 millions, that is, in one century the population of the world had doubled itself.

In the face of these figures the men who had scoffed at Malthus, look rather foolish. The reasons for this phenomenal increase of human life are not far to seek. There was the invention of machinery, which made the tillage of the vast lands of America possible, and provided a means of livelihood for the operatives of Lancashire; there was the steady diffusion of life-saving knowledge through the arts of medicine and hygiene, with large influence on the populations of India and China; the comparative diminution of wars, although the century was not without a sufficiency of these throughout the world, and the large decrease in deaths through famine and pestilence resulting from the diffusion of scientific knowledge.

But the chief reason certainly, was the increase in food supply through the opening up of new granaries in Russia and the American Continent. Now the social reformer must ask himself whether this kind of increase or anything like this, is to be looked for in the future. Will the earth continue to produce food for a human race which doubles itself in numbers every hundred years? And the answer is emphatically in the negative. Professor East computes that the highest number of inhabitants the world can feed is 5,200 millions. And these, allowing for all that science can

accomplish, must live on the limited dietary and accustom themselves to the simple necessaries of the European peasantry.

The answer to this will be, firstly, that of the optimistic inventor, like Henry Ford, who believes that already there can be produced by chemistry, a better milk than is given by any cow. But the cool reasoner reminds us that mechanical invention, in the last analysis, probably did not increase agricultural production by a single grain of wheat. What it has done is to expedite the subjection of large tracts of land with a small amount of human labour. But hard labour with simplest tools, produces the greatest return from a given area of land and will probably continue to do so. The notion of a Nature compelled by mechanism to yield unlimited supplies of food is a dream. This can be easily seen when it is realised that for plants to grow there are needed nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium, and these constituents of all plant life exist only in small quantities in the soil. And to the suggestion that fresh plants should be sought for food, East answers that long since all available have been found and used.

These arguments and facts are made still more pointed if we look at the illustrations of them offered by America. That fortunate land has now a population of 110 millions. On her present basis of industry and agriculture, says East, she can support 135 millions. When she has 200 millions, she will have reached saturation point, that is, her resources will be strained to the utmost to find food for her people. The condition of things in America will then be similar to what it has been in Europe, the struggle for survival will become fierce, poverty will be a normal feature of her civilisation. On the present rate of increase, there will be 214 millions of people in America by the end of this century.

In other words, America has seventy years to think out a remedy, or she will commence to reproduce, in more intense form, the history, tragic and glorious, of the Europe from which her people fled. As to her chances of finding a remedy, let it be remembered that less than 20 per cent. of her people are capable of understanding the facts on which the population problem is based, that there are 25 millions of low stock amongst her people, and that the fertility of these, the irresponsibles, is beyond all question ; and it will be seen that Malthus is being proved right, that where more food is provided more people appear to use it, and that the race between subsistence and population is as keen as ever it has been.

It is true that the problem of over population does not press on the attention of many who think the possibility so remote that it may be neglected. But in forty years the population of Great Britain and Ireland has increased from 34 to 46 millions. The surplus of population may not be so great in the future, for the German birth rate which in 1876 was 42 per 1,000 is now said to be only 27 per 1,000. Germany has only recently felt the effects of deliberate prevention. The reduction is even more likely to be felt in countries like France and our own. It is, therefore, possible that population may be kept within bounds by this method.

The one fact which remains fixed after any sort of investigation into this population problem is that in a homogeneous population the people of lowest economic status, invariably outbreed those of the higher. Put in another way, this means that when a certain economic status has been obtained, people no longer multiply their kind with reckless profusion. And this seems to indicate that if it were possible to give these conditions to the greater multitude of human beings, the population problem would solve itself. The one

generation in fear of losing the economic position it had attained, would spontaneously limit its own numbers, Then we should have a practically stationary population with births and deaths mutually cancelling each other, as is the case, more or less accurately, with France to-day. But this again ignores the considerable number of those who, through low mentality, or strong passions, or social apathy, are indifferent to the consequences of their own acts and these would probably soon create a new population problem by their natural tendency to increase. For we have no reason to believe that the proportion, 20 per cent. of persons in America, who are able to understand the facts and figures on which the problem is based, according to Professor East, is any greater in the countries of Europe. And it is certain that in lands like China and India and Africa, the proportion would be considerably less. It is, therefore, highly doubtful whether there is any remedy for this tendency towards excess in reproduction apart from the threat of actual starvation. And even with this imminent, the chances are that, instead of leading to restriction of births, it would merely reproduce that struggle to survive which is so often the real parent of war between nations.

No man is competent to speak on matters political who has not this mental picture of a swarming world, crowded with human life, most of which is of comparatively poor quality. This, and not the fancy picture drawn by the suburban novelist, of a pleasant world in which bananas are handed round to all, free of charge, this and not those dining halls, where half-dressed women drink champagne to the sound of the Jazz band, is the view of the human family which the thinker and leader of men should have always with him. Humanity breeding like rats by the Yellow River, crowding the bazaars of India, heaped in the kraals of

Africa, struggling with poverty on the fields of Connaught, gives material for a mental view of the human race which would stop the socialist orator in the full flight of his declamation, and if he were honest with himself would compel him to refrain from speech until he had meditated long on the terrifying problems which await the man who desires to see mankind, cast upon this wandering orb to work out its strange and tragic destiny, enjoy some gleams of sunshine throughout its brief and uncertain day.

Many of our teachers forget that the population question has not been solved. It has not shown itself amenable to the control of the moral principle, and it is on this rock that all schemes for the perfecting of human society must ultimately be broken. The nations press against each other, urged by the desire for food and the land which will give them food. From this cause spring the great wars. Once prove that men can conquer this, the initial cause of wars and the advance of humanity may become something more than a dream. But can this Cape Horn of politics be rounded ? It is doubtful.

War, famine and pestilence, were the three main causes in the mind of the writer, who first formulated the problem, as the agencies by which the population of the world was kept within bounds. Famine, we have partially, though not completely mastered. Even yet, we cannot stay the coming of famine, in one part of the world, or assure the reign of plenty in another. No king or president can strike a mean between these two extremes and spread contentment round the world. Yet until these scourges have been controlled, there can be no security of employment, whatever may the be philanthropic sentiments of the rulers of the State. Man himself, has no security in this world. He is at the mercy of a hidden Destiny which will not be robbed of its prerogatives. All our boasted safety is no more than the tent of skins which

the ancient hunter erected as shelter against the blast. Pestilence has been kept within limits. There Science has scored a triumph which is one of its chief glories. But famine may still threaten the world with its terrors. And when famine, or the threat of it arrives, there is sure to be war on the horizon.

The remedies for these possible evils do not lie within the reach of governments. They will arrive, if at all, from a change in manners which must go to the root of society. And the coming of these changes may mean that the very thing they are intended to prevent, the weakening of the national life, they rather tend to produce. Direct limitation of families by the use of preventives is one method. All the great religions of the world are opposed to this, and their opposition is not only intellectual and moral but may well be grounded in certain instincts which are of ageless origin and vital importance. Then there is the hope of smaller populations being produced through the elevation of the individual man. This may produce a finer type of nervous organisation, excellent for the creation and maintenance of civil life and naturally averse to the burdens of fatherhood. But it must not be ignored that this type of character, socially useful in many ways, may prove to be the source of final ruin for the nation. The people of which it can be truly said that its men are civilised but have meanwhile lost their virile force, might easily find itself, in the struggle for supremacy, left far behind by the barbarians it has despised. For no intellectual control of the means of destroying human life is likely to prove strong enough to keep at bay those multitudes of men who have yet retained their ancient courage and are consciously fighting for their homes and the right to possess the fruits of the earth. The Goths might easily destroy the proudest of modern Romes in spite of what

the chemist thinks he can do to hinder them. It may well then be the case that the far-sighted statesman will encourage population, though he knows that the introduction of so many new mouths every year must prevent anything like a high standard of life being reached by the majority. He will do this because he sees afar the possibility of another war in which numbers will count as well as quality. And he has a long history to support his thesis.

Charity has emphasised the value of the individual life. By direct teaching and by implication it has discountenanced remedies for over-population which were partially effective in ancient times. Abortion, destruction of the child at birth, exposure of infants, all forms of human sacrifice, murder and massacre, inattention to the young, bad hygiene, famine, plague, all of which have for ages, and especially in tropical lands, played their part in reducing unwanted human stock for the benefit of the remainder, have been persistently opposed by those who represent the ethical ideas of Charity.

In this sense Charity has been at war with nature. We can hardly go back. We cannot well encourage in India and China a return to practices which we believe to be immoral and irreligious. Yet the facts of population warn us that before mankind there is either war and famine or some method of stopping the excessive production of human life.

In these matters the socialist is far from helpful. He does not, like the militarist, cry out for population that he may have more cannon fodder, does not preach the value of mere numbers, does understand, at least, the more reasonable of them, that the marriage bond means something more than the satisfaction of personal desires, that parentage is a business which carries responsibility as well as privilege. But he insists far too much on present evils and does not

concern himself with the really grave issues which underlie all political action. Until he leaves off talking about the distribution of the Wage Fund and the Food Supply and considers the business from the other end, that of an increasing demand created by excess of life, he is not serving the cause of humanity. His case can be destroyed by anyone who knows the facts and indicates where the real difficulties lie. And when a man passes to these wider considerations and begins to study the causes for the rise and fall of civilisations he is already half emancipated from the tyranny of the phrase and the half-baked theory.

It is expected of the writer of to-day that having suggested the presence of certain disconcerting elements in the situation of man, he should immediately offer a remedy which will automatically cure the disease or remove the obstacle, clear up the position, and all this without claiming from average humanity more than a casual attention to his words. The pills, immediately effective, guaranteed cheap. Let us have them and then we'll get on with our work or play as usual. Alas, the quack remedies, plentiful as apples at Covent Garden, are on every hand, equally promising, very little in price, and all as useless as ever eye of newt or toe of frog in which men once trusted. For try as we may to keep the ancient moralities, the stale platitudes, out of a discussion of social questions to-day and especially when we broach this vexed question of population, like King Charles's head they force their way in again and will not be denied. Be scientific as you may, cover the facts with all the jargon of your own branch of knowledge and at the last it boils down simply to this. If the better types of human being wish to hold their own in this world, they must be prepared to reproduce themselves and to accept all the unpleasant, irritating, disgusting implications bound up with that ancient form of planting

oneself firmly in the world. And this means that they must accept modes and ideas about life which are horribly old fashioned, quite demode in our time, but which are no more optional than breathing for those who wish to assure themselves a standing ground on earth for their race and class. To beget and bear children, to live simply, to equip oneself for the conflict of life as a racer for the track, to stand by certain old ideas and sentiments as the soldier by his flag, this is the condition of survival for the best breed of men. Then, when, if ever, the shock of battle comes, in trade, diplomacy or on the tented field, they may hold their own. Otherwise the ocean of the mediocre, the common, will engulf them and they will deserve their doom.

WOMAN AND SOCIETY

WHAT are the causes which produce the rise and fall of states, empires, civilisations? To answer the question in full, would require more than human knowledge, but there are certain factors which are acknowledged to have played a leading part in producing these grand events. The conditions may be external, as Buckle believed. Hills and valleys, the number and swiftness of streams and rivers, the humidity or dryness of the atmosphere, the texture of the soil, whether sand or clay predominates, these are the real causes which produce civilisation. Then these cultures represented by peoples, nations, empires, die out, because the valleymen are conquered by the hillmen, because malaria in many forms attacks whole populations, because an organism naturally passes from life to death, from vigour to decay, because barbarians are always waiting on the frontiers for the chance of loot and pillage, such as is offered by a civilisation which has become decadent, cares more for arts than arms; or finally because its men are enervated by wine, drugs, and all the luxuries, and its women become erotic instead of chaste. Any one of these or all combined may decree the breakdown of a civilisation. And even then it must be understood that other causes may conspire to this end, unknown to any student or thinker.

A theory recently advocated, seems to say that in the character of woman, at a given period, may be found the chief cause of the rise or fall of civilisation. Take two Biblical stories. The one tells us of the woman Delilah, and

her relations with the hero, Samson. We know this woman, as she has been from the beginning of human society. On the other hand, consider the story of Ruth. Virtuous, poor, with much of grace and charm, she has all the qualities that make the wife and mother. Accepting her position, acting according to her ideals, she becomes the mother of Obed, father of Jesse, who is father of David. These two women are radically different in temper and inclination. They divide feminine humanity into two sections, each exercising influence over mankind. The mode of that influence may be thus stated. When women of the Delilah type preponderate as mothers (I refer to her disposition, not to her profession), civilisation proceeds to decline ; when the Ruth type outnumbers them as mothers, civilisation tends to rise.

Such a generalisation can only apply when dealing with groups, over a considerable period of time. Then chaste women becoming mothers in larger numbers than carnal or guileful women civilisation will rise. The reason for this, speaking in terms of biology, is that women of the Ruth type are usually of finer nervous organisation. Their offspring partake of this quality and tend therefore to create that class which is likely to win its way in intellectual conflict. Of this tendency, there are certain notable instances. Thus it is said that the civilisation of Israel can be traced back to this favourable selection of mothers. Left without wives, the tribe of Benjamin was permitted to increase its numbers by forcible marriage with the captured maidens of Shiloh. The second example is that of Athens. For three hundred years, Athens enjoyed a favourable selection of mothers, through severe marriage customs and laws. The result of this was the richest civilisation that the world has known. Rome also offers an example of this kind. There according to the ancient laws, marriage was monogamous.

The laws were observed and strictly enforced by the Patricians, the aristocracy of Rome. The authority of the husband was almost unlimited. The condemnation for breaches of the marriage law was severe. It was under this system, that there grew up the conquering and civilising genius which made Rome from a small town into the mistress first of Italy, then of the world. And so long as this system prevailed, Rome remained, with vicissitudes, the ruling power amongst the nations. Then there came emancipation of women, the claim for freedom, the breaking down of ancient customs, the institution of easy divorce, the corruption of ancient manners, and the increasing influence of women of the Delilah type, Messalinas, Faustinas, with the result that the Roman civilisation began to decline.

In the meantime, however, there had appeared the Christian society, cradled in the Mediterranean cities, but finding its home within Roman civilisation. As the secular power of Rome declined the new religious force began to grow. And it grew because it founded itself, as regards society, on principles in some respects similar to those which had made the Greek and Roman culture predominant. Steadily the Christian fellowship outdistanced the Roman and pagan civilisations. It grew because it discountenanced all breaches of the marriage law, prohibited concubinage, and allowed divorce, according to the teaching of Jesus, for only one reason, and that the gravest of all. As the result of this there developed, up to the fourth century, a new society within the Roman world, which bade fair to save that world from the corruption threatening it.

Then there came the monastic and conventual ideas and customs, brought from the lands south of the Mediterranean. The meaning of that system when applied was that women of the Ruth type did not become mothers. They gave them-

selves to religion. The good women having ceased to be mothers, the women of different type became the mothers of the race. Not without reason have the ages which followed that change been called Dark. From the fourth to the tenth century, European civilisation declined under the influence of conventual and monastic rule. Then came the beginning of modern civilisation, strictly so called. This was signalised and heralded by the revival of fruitful chastity among women, largely attributable to Teutonic tribes as yet untouched by monastic influences, tribes which had retained their ancient virtue. Then came the rediscovery of the Virgin Mother, that is, the acceptance of motherhood as something peculiarly sacred, carrying with it solemn responsibilities, and the revival in the church of Holy matrimony. The consequence was that marriage became once more the most sacred and blessed of callings, and motherhood, falling to the women of the Ruth type, showed itself again as the saving power of civilisation.

From such a cursory survey, a survey which, I freely admit, has many pitfalls for the student, there seem to emerge one or two truths. The first is that, from the biological point of view, the best stock from which to draw the materials for a great race is found in virile men and chaste women. And that idea of chastity carries with it implications which, perhaps distasteful to our present ideas and sentiments, are yet important. The women who ought to become mothers are those who, in all respects, are different from men. They have the qualities of gentleness, meekness, simplicity, they are open to the influence of religion, they create and maintain the home and regard the care of their children as a pious duty as well as a sacred privilege.

Much of this, however, seems to be outside of and contradictory to the conditions of life in which we find ourselves

to-day. Circumstances have changed to such a degree that, in our large populations, the woman has become, of necessity, a wage earner, contributing directly by her labours to the support of the family.

About this and its possible consequences for modern civilisation there need be no fear if the work done is physically healthy and not injurious to the woman's work as mother. The robust Italian peasant woman is no stranger to hard work, but it is for the most part in the open air. It is the factory work, with its heavy toll of human life, and health, which really threatens woman as the potential mother. That peril is not only physical. It is even more in the mental and moral outlook of the modern working woman that danger lies. If we produce and train a succession of women as mothers whose ambition centres upon a public position of any kind, if the notion of a good time becomes the ruling idea of most women, then we are sacrificing Ruth again and welcoming Delilah. Certainly these things are not inevitable. City bred women may doubtless be as industrious and affectionate as mothers as those of rural stock. But if Towner's theory is worth anything it will need to be dinned into the ears of the modern woman that the chief feminine graces are still meekness, gentleness, purity. And their worth is not merely personal, it is racial. For such women are the predestined mothers of able men.

We ought, then, to scrutinise jealously every movement which tends to rob women of those qualities which hitherto have aided in making civilisation. And we ought to question every change which tends to induce people to regard marriage lightly, to think of divorce as simple and natural, to regard free union between men and women, without any consciousness of their prospective responsibilities, as a mere incident of their existence.

This business of marriage is vital to all thinkers and reformers whose inclinations are towards socialist ideals. For without some regulative principle dealing with marriage and motherhood the accumulated wealth of the world would soon be dissipated. If at any time in the future public provision for all human wants is made it will certainly be accompanied by the most stringent regulations concerning marriage and parentage. The individual may be kept out of public funds. But to maintain all his possible progeny, even when he is an absolute king, is a strain on loyalty. The French monarchs discovered this. Our own Charles II knew the difficulties. For an ordinary subject to ask as much would be highly presumptuous. And for each of the citizens to claim and exercise the right would soon deplete the exchequer, even of Haroun or Akbar. The socialistic State would have to exercise stringent control over the procreative powers of its citizens, not for religious or ethical reasons, but because of the threatening pressure of population.

Whether the socially unfit would be rendered sterile, whether the best types would be permitted to reproduce themselves at will or be limited to a certan number of progeny, whether the selection of mates would be left to individuals or be entrusted to a superior authority are questions which, almost amusing to our ears, would be painfully real to the people called upon to endure these regulations. But about this there can be no uncertainty, as security fo parents and children is increased, the surveillance an restraint exercised by social authorities would indefinitel extend.

No one denies that there is grave cause for criticism o the existing social order, when we have in mind this matter of woman and motherhood. Marriage is often difficult for

prudential and financial reasons. Motherhood under decent conditions is often hard to obtain. And it is not so much the poverty of many of these women that matters most. It is the absence of fresh air and light, two things essential for the wellbeing of the human animal, which make our modern cities, on their poorer side, ugly and melancholy objects for contemplation. Could we once get into the head of the average local bigwig and public philanthropist some two or three facts, such as those provided by Dr. Brend in his volume on *Public Health*, we should have accomplished much.

Chief of all human needs, he insists, is fresh air. Clothing matters not, food is secondary, for the young human animal can eat almost anything with profit, if only there is enough of it, shelter matters little, a cave is as good as a mansion for the growing cub, but fresh air is everything to the human youngster. And yet with these things perfectly well known to science we have sentimental women weeping over the sorrows of the shoeless bairns, pouring out money for the purchase of superfluities for children, taking, all as a matter of course, the existence of vast city areas in which human beings can hardly breathe, and fair and wide valleys and soaring hills where the solitary hunter or angler finds his delight. If women are to come into politics they might well confine themselves for a long time to this one theme. Women should be encouraged to give to their offspring these two things at least, plenty of plain, coarse food and fresh air. If we are to interfere at all with the course of natural selection we ought to help in things that do matter. And it should be understood that what we need in young human beings first of all is that they be healthy animals. A lot of our childish babble about education and social training would then be needless, for the healthy animal man launched on the world can generally look after himself.

Nor should we hesitate to declare, in every sort of way, that the most important contribution that any woman can make to the community is the gift of healthy children. There is some danger that this may come to be forgotten. The careers are open to women now as freely as to men. Politics, education, medicine, law, the ministry, each and all are to be subject in future to the pressure exercised by women competing with men. At present it looks as though, in our own country, we are predestined to the rulership of women. And this is the kind of challenge offered by civilised societies to natural equities and venerable customs which may easily be the herald of disaster. One result may be predicted, however, with certitude. As women advance in the particular careers they may choose, encroaching persistently on territory formerly held by men, the more masculine men will deliberately retire. For masculine men, and these, whatever may be their faults, are from the view point of the race, the most important, will not fight with women. Their attitude to women is conditioned by certain facts which are basal in human life. And when they find these facts ignored, see that women forget them, claiming to be treated always and everywhere as though these facts did not exist, they will retire from the arena in which their natural gifts would have found a proper scene for their expression and seek fresh fields for their energy. Let women predominate in the medical schools and the abler men will drop medicine ; let half our pulpits be occupied by female preachers and men of virile temper and strong mind will seek elsewhere an opportunity for exercising influence ; let the law courts be crowded with young women thinking of taking silk, and the best brains amongst men will choose another form of activity than law. Should we ever have two hundred women in the Commons it is certain that the

ablest masculine minds will need to be sought elsewhere. These things will move the feminist to wrathful indignation. But they are not any the less probably true. For the root facts in life are not such as lend themselves to this colourless, sexless cooperation between men and women in the major activities of life. The law of the world is that men shall strive against each other for supremacy in the particular battlefields they have chosen. And where this cannot be done freely, where a woman is offered as antagonist instead of a man, the strong gladiator will leave the ring. The half sexed, the eunuchs, the feminine men, may find it satisfactory to spend their days in competition with women. But the finer bolder type will seek other foes and other fields. The House of Commons will become something different from what it has been. Once it was the scene in which played themselves out the personal energies, the fierce ambitions, and bitter rivalries of first-class political warriors who fought for power. Chatham and Burke, Fox and Pitt, Gladstone and Disraeli were at home there. For it gave them what they needed, a platform on which they could compete for the prizes that men value, influence, authority, rule. And those debates in which they engaged were not merely tourneys of words, schoolboy exercises in logomachy ; they were conflicts in which all the passions of men were brought into play for the attainment of victory and the power that victory brought with it. Does any one suppose that Burke or Gladstone would extend themselves, to borrow the prize ring phrase, if they had been debating with a woman ? Would Daniel Webster have fought in the same manner had his opponent been Mrs. Calhoun ? The question answers itself. Modern women are fond of writing and talking about sex. But they fail to realise, what any intelligent men could have told them long before the days of

Freud and Jung, that sex enters into many phases of life where it is not usually looked for, and that the thing man loves and has always loved is the battle of the male against the male, for the love of the battle, the prize of the conquest, and that what he hates and shrinks from is the battle of the male against the female. A political arena in which women play a predominant or even a considerable part, will doubtless be interesting and amusing still, but the play of the strong passions will have ceased, for the men who have strong passions will have moved elsewhere. Mirabeau had his own ways with women and could serve them or use them as the occasion seemed to demand. But he would have found it difficult to rouse his fighting forces had his opponent in debate been a woman instead of a man. A remark incidentally made by a sportsman of repute convinced me that others besides politicians have felt this distaste for competition with women. "I used to be keen on shooting big game," he said, "but I am more interested in getting photographs of them now. For with the modern gun the chances are all against the beasts and there is little or no danger, save with elephants. Besides, women can do it just as well as men now, with the modern rifle." He did not know it, but he was uttering the protest of modern man against the energetic woman who will do everything and go everywhere. Mechanism has made her the equal of man, and when she goes hunting in the Soudan or on the Indian hills, man, rather regretfully, but very resolutely, packs his bag and goes elsewhere. Or he drops his rifle and takes up his camera. These things mean that woman loses something, perhaps the best things, when she ignores her function as mother and tries to be an imitation man. Men have ceased to oppose her will to stand in the limelight, to have her career. But there is the passive rebellion of man to be reckoned with,

and that is stronger than his spoken antagonism. Where woman goes as conqueror, or even as rival, man escapes if he can. When there is no escape for him, the battle may become a little sterner than it is just now, and the woman may not always be the winner.

A professorial author wrote in the preface to a heavy volume, "My wife has helped me in every way and she will, I hope, accept this book as an apology for long hours of silence." There is a revelation in a phrase. Long hours of silence. I do not remember to have seen that brought forward in any of our celebrated cases as a reason for the wife seeking divorce from bed and board, though probably some clever American woman has discovered it before now. But where is the reading or writing man who would not see there a picture which comes home to be business and bosoms of his tribe? And how few of them have the generosity to make public reparation to the lady who has given them their soup and mended their stockings without complaining of the long hours of silence in which mighty works were germinating. For the Utopians, save the few who have redeemed the futility of their subject by the glory of their style, I have small affection. But to this penitent presenting as his peace offering a volume which the lady, save for love of the scribe, will surely never read, I confess sympathetic admiration. Here at least is no Pharisee, but a plain Publican, acknowledging that he has sinned and craving pardon from the right quarter.

What a debt we men have to pay if ever this offender's spirit should bring us to confess our crimes against the lady to whom we have made all sorts of vows, save the important one that we would try to avoid the sin of silence, when common courtesy should move us to friendly speech? The dull, stodgy, black boredom inflicted by literary men on

their wives, mothers, sisters and female friends is a count in the indictment drawn up by woman against the brutal male, which has never received its due share of attention. We know that John Wesley, name ever venerable, at times suffered sharp chastisement at the hands of his wife, there being legends of the lady clawing his silver hair and generally giving him a bad time, on which the biographers do not dwell. And we can understand in part why this should happen.

For the man who is talking the greater part of the day in the public assembly, busying himself with the creation of a new society, may indulge in long hours of silence when he reaches the domestic hearth. And for the lady who has been working all day at the house accounts, or arranging the family linen, and has seen and heard nothing of the world, save what comes from a glimpse of her next-door neighbour and a moment's chat over the fence, this marital Trappism has little charm. Which of us can fail to see the fatigued preacher, the occupied thinker, brooding over his plans for the next week's work, while the good woman who bears his name is wondering why she accepted this monastic position, in which a silence, as of the tomb, seems the prevailing feature, where even the blithe birds are supposed to be dumb that her spouse may continue his endless thinking? And that the female of the species, more brutal than the male, should sometimes break through these restraints, may be regrettable but is natural. I knew a fine preacher years ago whose brooding, his usual habit of the week, used to change to sharp irritability about Friday, when the prospect of facing his congregation once more monopolised his mind. He too had the gift of silence, broken to emit barks of acrid comment on things in general. Yet he was a good man, desirous of doing his work well.

Of the experiences of the lively Jane with Carlyle, the world has heard plenty. And he, who knew that the debt had never been paid in his lifetime, paid it with interest when the dear, sharp-tongued lady had passed away. Yet those who still find Carlyle readable have, perhaps, not recognised how much they owe to the little lady who sat, night after night, listening to discourses about Ziethen and Wilhelmina and Marshal Keith and the rest, and wondering probably why she had not married the worthy Irving and guaranteed him against those angels who troubled his career. She also remains one of the great unpaid.

Of Spencer's difficulties with ladies, or rather of the trials to which he subjected them, we have hints if no more, as in that saying of the sisters with whom he boarded in Brighton, that they had never met anyone who seemed so unconscious of the trouble he caused and so persistent in causing it. With his padded ears and his faddy mind and his belief that the Synthetic Philosophy was the chief thing for men to attend to in the nineteenth century, it was natural that he should prove a source of affliction to the ladies who took him in charge. Being a bachelor, his female friends and helpers can hardly put in a claim for recognition as his colleagues. But in some world, where justice is less leaden handed and blear eyed, these too will surely receive their reward as the adjutants to a great man's labours.

Perhaps the only two people who, as writing men, have understood what they owed to women and have paid them in the coin of personal gratitude are Mill and Browning. And the reverence of the one for his Mrs. Taylor, his visiting her tomb at Avignon and spending long seasons there in meditation as well as the somewhat high flown praises he bestowed on her in his prefaces are some guerdon for what she was to him as inspiration and friend. And the

poet with his " O lyric love, half angel and half bird and all a wonder and a wild desire," has certainly fixed in immortal verse the helpmeet and companion who brought joy to him through the larger part of his working life.

Surely, then, it is time that men acknowledged their obligations to the women who have helped them to become what they are. But how are they to do this? Do they liquidate the debt by granting to women political privileges? Will the wife of a genius feel repaid for her devotion by the privilege of voting for Hezekiah Peabody? Her interest in the respectable Mr. Peabody or his cause is probably of the slightest. Women are, for the most part, too well aware of the real goods of life to be fobbed off with these sham copies of reward. Some of them have been bitten by the political tarantula, but the clever ones know that there are more important things. Not thus can the debt be paid. A man should make direct acknowledgment of the part played in his work by the woman who has helped him. She will probably not desire it. Her egotism has been satisfied by proof that the sacrifice has not been in vain. The unobtrusive aid she gives will be offered without thought of reward, save that which comes to those who stand and wait. Besides this public acknowledgment we ought to take every convenient occasion for showing to those who have helped us that we are not indifferent to their service. When I consider the devotion shown by women to men, their willing submission to rules laid down by precedent and custom, if those rules are endorsed by the man they love, their carelessness about the acquirement of fame, save as it comes to them through husband or brother, I feel some sense of shame. Henrietta Renan gave all her life's affection to her brother and his work. Herschel's sister made herself his slave, glad to serve the brother she loved. And these are but the merest

specks on that ocean of life in which multitudes of women have surrendered their own egotism to be the auditors and echoes of their mates for love.

THE MARSHAL'S BATON

THERE must be some one to direct affairs. No one knows this better than the man who takes the individual's view of industry. It is supposed that the increasingly large combinations of business make the presence and labours of the individual negligible. According to Marx the Combines are the herald of the coming Socialist triumph. Having organised the small businesses into one vast business, there remains nothing to be done but for the State to take them over at the behest of the people and run them for the benefit of the community. It is a pleasant picture, but it is far from the whole truth. What they have proved is that management is after all more important than labour. The real task of the modern business man is not to find the labour which will serve to tend machines and keep them running, but the ability to control the men and the machinery to an end which will result in profit. This is the true interpretation of the coalescing of small industries into large unities.

Nobody supposes now that the workers in any given industry could take it over and run it successfully by themselves. It was tried in Paris and failed. Later experience has shown that it cannot succeed. The worker suddenly discovers that he is met by problems which challenge his intelligence. Plans must be laid beforehand. Large schemes must be organised for the furtherance of the general well-being of the community, be it factory or mill or workshop. Orders must be obtained in a world which is not overflowing with surplus wealth. And the execution of these orders

implies a training on the part of those responsible which cannot be obtained in a brief time. Capital is required, And those who have capital hide it immediately there is the threat of an attack upon property. Every attempt to expropriate the individual holders and utilise the remainder for oneself only shows with what swift wings this intangible quantity takes flight when its security is menaced.

It seems likely that something resembling wages is an integral factor in the social and industrial order. Other forms of payment or of maintenance for the worker have been put forward. There are schemes which have as their basis the deletion of the wage, substituting for it an acknowledged claim upon a common fund. By what ideas society may be ruled in ten thousand years we cannot say, but that wages are now a part of life is plain to all. This must be the case so long as industry circles around a system of prices and the values that such prices may represent. If the world should agree that need rather than desire be the test of value, if prices were to cease to exist, to assume the apparently impossible, then wages would no longer have reason for being. No such change will occur in our time, and it may be that all such changes are finally impossible. We live under a wage system.

What, then, is the wage? Perhaps it is best described as the means of subsistence granted to the worker until he can finish his work. The theory of a wage fund has been called in question. Some would have us believe that the labourer actually creates saleable value as he proceeds, and that there is no need, in theory, for any fund on which he can draw. But it is obvious that much work is only contributory to a remote end. There is always the chance that the end may not be attained. If that be so, then the work done may be of no value, The oil prospector, the navvy who works on

a railway cutting which is never completed, the unfinished aqueduct built by Louis XIV for Versailles, are but examples of what is common. The wage fund theory has then something to say for itself. It is out of this fund that the labourer is paid, and what he receives is his wage.

Humanity has not, however, been willing to remain at the level of a mere subsistence wage. It has regarded the wage as a means of development as well as of support. For life is not to be stationary. From this has arisen the desire, natural enough, for an increased wage. As wants become more numerous, rising from those felt by the slave to those entertained by the free and civilised man, the will to satisfy these has become more pressing and the wage earner, in every degree, has felt this just as much as the person in possession of independent fortune. And the indication the most certain of a truly varied form of culture, spread throughout a whole people, is this disparity of wage, moving from the subsistence level, or near that of the common labourer, to the remuneration of the highest forms of professional and vocational skill. Where these variations are considerable there will be a proportionately rich form of culture, and where there is little or no disparity in the rewards offered to different forms of labour the culture will be poor.

One of the questions of the day is in this way thrown into the light. Can wages be raised? Can they be so controlled that throughout a long course of time and for a given community, there can be any guarantee of a distinct and palpable improvement in the wage standard?

Take the nominal wage, that is, the amount of money received, irrespective of its purchasing power. Then this, within very narrow limits, may be increased by adding to the price of certain goods, so that the workers on these goods may receive more; or by reducing the income from

investments, so that more money is paid in wages and less in dividends; or by reducing high salaries and spreading the money thus saved over the wage earning portion of the industry. And the same result may be attained by reducing prices, so that the money earned really produces more in goods when spent.

This brings us to the second method of increasing wages, that of fixing prices. For it is plain that wages are of little value if, whilst they remain fixed, the cost of necessary goods increases out of all proportion to the normal level. The man who to-day earns two pounds per week, might have been a rich man, some five hundred years ago, had he been earning the same amount of money. And in given conditions, as when scarcity prevails, such as is known in Russia to-day, this income may mean little more than starvation for the wage earner and his family. But can prices be fixed? Only within certain limits. Those limits are defined by the general conditions of a given country, or the world at a particular period. If there is upheaval, insecurity, such as is produced by war, or famine, or any of the major disasters to which men are liable, then prices will vary in spite of all that governments can do. For those who have goods will only part with them at what seems to them their value, and they are more precious in times of scarcity than in periods of plenty. And even a government cannot compel the world to put all its goods into a common market so that the level may be fixed and prices decreed. Yet there is evidently a tendency, perhaps not more, to the fixation of some values. The times of peace, the use of a free world market, rapid and easy transport by road and water, do tend to make the price of necessary goods more or less stable. And as prices tend to become fixed at a low level, the value of the given wage increases because it commands more of these goods in the market.

The third method of raising wages is by increasing the labourers, margin of free income. Now, whatever tends to enlarge this increases there by the actual wage. Thus sanitation and public hygiene and Insurance, by decreasing the chances of disease may enlarge the free income. The worker writes off the doctor's bill from his probable liabilities. Then with the provision of light and heat at moderate prices through socialised service, the offer of easy transport through trams and railways at a cheap rate, access to libraries, concert halls and art galleries at a low price, the standard of life for the community is raised, and a still larger portion of free income is obtained by the wage earner. And it is to be understood that these things are really part of the wage offered by society to the worker. They are not so much gifts as elements of the wage or salary earned by the labourer, and paid by the society to which he contributes through his work. And, of course, to these may be added the additions which come through the exercise of prudence, through temperate habits of body, through those various forms of abstinence which may be practised in moderation without injury and indeed with advantage, to the individual.

All these, however, the nominal wage, the partial fixing of prices, the increase of free income, are dependent on certain conditions. The first is that there should be no diminution in the energy of the worker. For there can be no permanent improvement in the wage of a class, either at the expense of another class or at the expense of society, if th advantage gained is nullified by a slackening of toil or reduction of hours beyond a fixed limit. Every schem which supposes a state of society in which the masses of me are not working hard for most of the day is founded o illusion. Then it must be understood that only where th population is kept within reasonable limits can there be any

permanent advance in the wage of the worker. When we have allowed for the wealth signified by the appearance of a new pair of hands; for all that can be accomplished by further advance in science; it remains true, as men are once more coming to see, that there is a limit, to be determined by many motives, but certainly to be determined, beyond which excessive increase of population will tend to depress the standard of life. And such depression will certainly show itself in low wages with all the accompaniments of degradation and misery to which we have become accustomed in the fecund lands of the East. Hard work and prudence in all the vital matters of existence are the abiding conditions of any elevation of the standard of life, any improvement of the wages of the worlds worker's.

There is another point on which there must be general agreement before anything substantial can be wrought out for the betterment of social conditions. There must be a more frank acknowledgment by democracy of the relation of master and man. The theory that Jack is as good as his master with all its implications will have to give way before the pressure of facts.

For amidst the many changes, deep and wide, which have taken place in life, in the circumstances of existence, there are some things which stand fast and one of them is the relation existing between men, defined by the words master and servant. The distinctions of gift, of talent, the large and varied inequalities which persist, through all our efforts at equalising conditions, make and will continue to make some such relation inevitable. We speak much of freedom, less perhaps than in former years, but even yet there exists in our minds a belief more or less vague that the ideal state for man is one in which no compulsion can be exercised upon him from without, where he is at liberty to please himself in

all things. No such condition is possible. Freedom there is, and we do well to hope that it will be an increasing quantity with the passage of time. But it will be a freedom regulated by law, law speaking from without, through pressure of the common will, from within by the enlarged area over which intelligence and conscience rule.

These differences, then, in human endowment seem to mean that the pupil must obey the teacher, the less gifted, must submit to guidance from those more happily endowed or more fortunately situated. And, change the pieces of the game as we may, the central problem remains of inducing the servants to obey their masters. Equality certainly there is, the equality which makes us all equally valuable or equally worthless in the presence of God. But when we look closely at the masses of men, we see that the inequalities are such as to preclude all hope, even if it were desirable, of reducing these distinctions to a level and uniform equality.

Then there are many men, the greater number according to some shrewd observers, who are incapable of ordering their own lives, managing their affairs independently, with profit to themselves and society. They are men like the rest of us, but either through lack of intelligence or the absence of those strong desires which give driving force to the will, they are satisfied with the ordinarily level of existence or seem incapable of rising above it and must needs be dependent, to some extent, on those more energetic characters which demand a larger outlet for their force, than is afforded by the common routine of service. And this multitude of men will always be dependent on some form of mastership, on those who are able and willing to deal with large issues, to attack difficult problems and to attempt the control of large bodies of their fellows.

What then are the obligations of a competent masterhood ?

There is the duty of control. Where a man undertakes to rule, though it be over a kitchen or over a kingdom, it is expected that he shall rule in reality. He takes responsibility for the major decisions made. It is to him that other people must look for judgment as to the best means to bring about a desired end. He must decide when advances may be made, when it is time to retreat, when ordinary methods will avail and when extraordinary means must be used. In this sense he is exactly like the general of an army. There may be a multitude of officers under him, he may have a staff which will aid him with information and counsel. But the man who wins a battle is he who takes the onus of deciding when, where and how the battle shall be fought. And history has been perfectly right in assuming that it was Hannibal and Cæsar and Napoleon who won or lost the wars in which they were engaged. To them the glory or the shame.

Now the master of any business, or as we say, the employer, is in precisely the same position. And since he is pledging his reputation, his wealth, his standing in the world, as part of his stake, since it is his business which is to improve or worsen under his control, and the profit and the penalty of success or failure will fall chiefly on him, it is only fair that in the management of industry there should be a distinct understanding that his position as master carries with it the right to control. Every system which negates this primary right of the competent person to exercise authority within his own chosen domain of action is likely to break on the rock of fact. For it is not to be expected that men will risk what they have, of wealth or talent, in an adventure, small or great, over which they have no means of exercising rule. And mastership, if it is to be other than a name, must carry with it this right to control, as it implies the punishment of failure.

Another obligation of the master is to provide for, to foresee on behalf of, those who serve him. In terms of business this means that he is to obtain employment for those who look to him for wages. By production of goods which fit existing markets, by discovery and development of new markets, the market being any place where his goods can be exchanged by the attraction of fresh customers who are prepared to pay for his wares, the master has to do what the servant is not expected to do, to provide the means whereby the servant may earn his wages. And I do not see how he can shelve this responsibility, put it on the shoulders of others, blame others when he himself has failed to fulfil this, one of his special tasks. The difficulties may be great. He will have problems to solve which perhaps are beyond the comprehension of those who serve him. He must decide on questions which admit of no certain knowledge, that is, he must take risks of which his own judgment is the only ultimate arbiter. And he may often meet circumstances which seem to defy all his efforts, to make it impossible to carry on his business with any profit or success. These are the accidents of the metier he has chosen. They do not absolve him from his obligation to endeavour to provide for those who serve him. There are many schemes which have as their end the evading of this responsibility, the putting of the burden on several or many shoulders. Kropotkin had the idea that men could be induced to work efficiently by voluntary co-operation, without rule. Various modes of producing this result have been suggested, guilds, clubs, societie of all kinds have been described. But they all seem to ignore the need of masses of men for a leader, a master, and the obligations which rest upon him when he assumes the position.

The other function of the master is to protect those who serve him. This has always been understood to be one of

his duties. Even in times of slavery it would be agreed that, though the master might be cruel to his own slave, viewing him merely as property, he would not allow that cruelty to be exercised by another. The slave was his chattel, his goods, and he must protect his own goods from injury, just as he would guard his horse or ox from damage by an aggressor. Nor is it possible to sever that notion from the present relation between master and servant. Because of his mastership it is his duty to see that, so far as he can control fact and circumstance, no harm comes to those who serve him. And it will be admitted that in the older forms of modern society, or in those circles where ancient ideas still have some sway, this obligation is frankly recognised. The master stands between his servant and the world. The coachman or nurse, having served long and faithfully is to be watched over in the days when there is little profit from their work. And the modern employer is in just the same situation, though it may be more difficult to trace the exact outlines of the scheme by which his servants are dependent on him for protection. Injury to body or mind through excessive labour, through insufficient food and clothing, through misfortune and accident, are or should be, as much a concern of the master to-day as ever they were, if the theory of mastership is to be maintained in any intelligible sense.

Now about all these elements of mastership the complaint is made that they have been imperfectly revealed in the conduct of the employing classes during the last hundred years. They should control, provide, protect. And the judgment seems to be that they have failed to do efficiently any one of these, certainly that they have not done these things in such a way as to win the esteem and respect of those who while ruling, they were nevertheless expected to serve. That they have failed to control the vast human energies brought under

their surveillance is plain to all. Notable and laudable exceptions there have been and are, but the general indictment holds good. That they have been unable to provide is evidenced in recent years in lamentable fashion. That they have for a long time ceased to protect is one of the gravest charges brought against those who are responsible for the management of the massed workers of our time. And it is this failure on their part which has led to the creation of a movement, always latent in every society, but in modern society, visible and audible, intended to alter the condition under which men have hitherto served.

It need not be doubted that there is another side to this picture. The master class has its own statement of the position, which has so much of truth in it, that it commands respect. They disclaim all responsibility for the present conditions of industry on perfectly definite grounds, which may be thus stated.

Lord Weir, whose knowledge of industrial facts gives weight to all his judgments, has said that "all social reforms must be effected within the bounds of economic law." That statement is true. But it indicates a mentality which, predominant amongst the master class of to-day, will certainly need to be modified if mastership is to be maintained. Economic laws do exist. They operate with enormous force over human life. Their existence justifies those who laugh scornfully at the dreams of the socialist. But they can be modified within a limited area. The force of their impact can be diminished. And the master of men must stand between them and this pressure of economic law. He can only mitigate its pressure, not remove it, but his worth as master is decided by his ability to do this. For there is a difference between natural laws operating on inanimate bodies and laws which regulate the conduct of men. The

law which regulates the velocity of falling bodies in space is a fact which cannot be altered though its applications may be used. The laws which regulate the relations between master and men are capable of modification according to the judgment of those who deal with them. The modification is limited, true. Commerce is guided by self-interest. But that self-interest will lead competent men to realise that they cannot treat their employes as though they were merely counters in the game of trade. This does not mean that the individual workman can always be guarded from the pinch and pressure of life. Bad times will make their mark upon him. But then there is no government under heaven, nor ever will be, which can prevent this happening in some degree. The only alternative to this liability to economic pressure is the sacrifice of citizenship and the return to slavery, under which the worker is fed as the horse is fed, and used at the will of his owner. In a free land the citizen must pay the price of his freedom. But the master can and should exercise all his ingenuity and skill to defend his servant from the pressure of economic law. It is his duty to guard those who trust him and serve him, when he can.

Unhappily, there has been too frequent an abdication of this primary duty on the part of the employing class. They have their answer. They will say that the movement of the age, the rebellious or independent temper of the workman makes mastership in this sense impossible. But they must realise that either they must accept their obligations, ruling and protecting their servants, or make way for those who will. And this choice is being forced upon them now. For the very men who have revolted from the older type of mastership, for whatever reason, are now seeking some new leadership, or are, in many instances proving themselves to be the masters, the leaders of their less rebellious brethren.

We are seeing in these days a transfer of allegiance and a new distribution of authority. Once it was the baron who led his servants to battle, then the employer who undertook to provide for his servants work and wages. Now a new class is willing to assume responsibility. Their courage may be greater than their wisdom. But their existence is a fact and their promises are so large and generous that it will be hard for the untrained mind to resist them. We are seeing the transference of power from the class of employers to that of the political leaders. And these latter are rapidly assuming the authority once possessed by the adventurous trader.

Perchance it will be said that there can be little real authority with these men since they depend upon election. We shall see again the tail wagging the dog. But the commander elected by the soldiers is not to be despised because his authority comes from below. The leadership of democracy is open on the same terms as made Napoleon a master soldier, that he shall win battles for those he leads. And democracy being naturally ungrateful and suspicious, will sack its leaders with all the indifference of the employer dismissing an unprofitable servant, to choose another who will lead them to better purpose and bring them to the country where the loot is plentiful and the living easy. The employing class is certainly on its trial, for the reason that it has often forgotten its peculiar task.

What we are witnessing at this time, this rising of new men into positions of political authority, is but the repetition in a fresh form of an everlasting desire on the part of multitudes of men, the desire for competent leaders and guides, masters. And one can see plainly how that process unfolds itself before our eyes. The great masses of men may wish for power as the child wishes for the moon, but they do not desire it with the intensity of the born leader.

What they want is food and shelter, and clothing, a measure of ease and leisure, and amusements suitable to their taste. But in order to find these and to enjoy them two things are requisite, as they see well, first, employment of some kind, well within their compass as men, and then some security against the withdrawal of all their privileges and enjoyments under the threat of unemployment. And since their former masters have not found it feasible to guarantee these, they have turned to their political leaders, believing that where Industrialism organised on economic lines has failed, the Community organised for use as well as for profit may succeed. This is the explanation of that transference of influence which we are watching at the present time. And the end of it is not yet.

Now I can sympathise with those employers who say that to expect this of them, that they should secure to the multitudes of men these elementary privileges, is to ask too much.

If the employer is to prove himself master in this comprehensive sense is he not more of a slave than the man who works for a wage, than the politician who must watch the movements of the popular mind? Certainly he is. But is not that the rule throughout all life? The higher your position, the greater your responsibility, the heavier your burden, the more limited your freedom. Difficult certainly it is, this task of managing men, of foreseeing the movements of price, the alterations of the market, the new needs of the world. But for what are you an employer, my friend, if not, because you believe that this sort of task is within your grasp that you are more capable than others of accomplishing this very piece of work? Master or man you shall be. Either you lead or are led. You wish to be neither? Your one desire is also to lead a quiet life, to make some provision for your children to have a moderately pleasant time? Then

why are you in the front ranks of the army? The spoils are to the victors. And in the strife for leadership, of which industrial mastership is the most obvious and most continuous example, it is those who do the work who have the right to claim the rewards.

Is then the battle lost? Are you to count yourselves, you masters, as out-generalled by superior forces or talent? That may be. But it need not necessarily be so. There is a fund of loyalty in human nature which is one of humanity's most precious assets. For the king, the general, the flag, men who believe in these, who trust them, will make almost any sacrifice, if they can but hope that their sacrifice is not utterly in vain. And even yet the "superior" classes may prove themselves, if they will, more than equal to the exigencies of the hour. The great mass of people in these islands have no desire to see everything managed by the State. They know that the servant of the State is no more likely to be generous and capable than his compeer in private business. And they have a sufficient knowledge of our common nature to know that all of us are likely to be spoiled by power, enfeebled by luxury, ruined by abundant ease. But they are tired of being told that the present system of commerce is fixed by immutable decree and that misery and insecurity are the result of this same system. And they say now audibly that either the men who work the system must work it better or the system itself must be changed.

There is yet a great opportunity offered to those who are prepared to undertake the responsibilities of mastership in the industrial world of to-day. Under whatever system work is to be done there will be ample room for the capable master of men. But that mastership will not depend on the possession of wealth alone. The mastership which depends on services rendered, on talents proved by experience, this

mastership will never cease to have its place amongst men. Why then not recognise that your work is just this, of showing yourselves really masters of men for their good? By all the skill in management which belongs to you, by the using of brains for the greater purposes of the race, by those arts of persuasion, which are truly noble when directed to persuading men to accept the truth, why not find here your function and your high reward?

THE GREAT MAN

Napoleon believed that the era of the great personalities in Europe had passed. In the East, where there are six hundred millions of men, there might still be room for men of his calibre. It is a famous saying and deserves reflection. It expresses an idea much in favour with philosophers of the Hegelian type for two generations. They believe that the growth of society, the tightening of the bonds by which the community is held together, must have this effect, that the proud man who would lead nations in the pursuit of honour and glory, is bound to disappear. And this means that ambition in the popular sense, the desire to rise above one's fellows and to claim distinction as being different from the mass, must also be relegated to the garret or cellar of defunct virtues.

Admittedly there is at present a dearth of great characters in the world. Whatever the cause it would seem that the massed multitudes of a mankind have succeeded in swamping the notable figures, reducing them to such proportions that they no longer occupy sufficient space to command attention. Explanations of this are freely forthcoming. We are assured that the general level of mankind is now so high, the advance of democracy so swift, and assured that any effort to obtain predominance over the majority is frowned upon and checked. The time when men will acknowledge that they need leaders, or that any person is competent to lead them, has gone by. And now we must be content with the assurance

that all men have some elements of greatness and that true superiority must be sought in the mass, the group, not in the individual.

So far has this tendency been carried that one of the most cultivated minds of the age wandering the world over in search of ideas, concludes that probably all the religions have served their day, that man in future will be his own saviour.

With all this, I find myself in complete disagreement. But that the tendency is there is beyond denial. On the other hand it may be pointed out that there are now five or six Dictators ruling in Europe. In the midst of the universal deluge, which is modern democracy, where all molehills and mountains are ground down to the general level there are still to be noted, even by so shrewd an observer as Punch, the existence of movements which have as their spearhead one man, who to that extent is differentiated from the mass of his fellows. How long Mussolini or Primo di Rivera may be able to hold themselves in authority time alone can say. But it is at least arguable that there still remain in the world men capable of being thrilled by personal leadership and some few of those who seek, and prove that they rightly seek, to be personal leaders.

It would help us to clarify our own minds if we were to confront squarely the truth that men will always need masters. The prospect of a world in which there is no mastership of any kind, seems to fill some of our contemporaries with delight. It would fill me with horror if I believed it to be anything better than a bad dream. For I know that it is not true. In commerce, as long as trade is trade, someone will have to take risks, to forecast possibilities, to ensure a sufficiency of capital to carry on the business, pay wages, meet bills and however we may shift the figures on the board, the men who do this will be and must be the

masters. Change them to-morrow into servants of a communalised government and they will still be the masters, having similar power of control over their subordinates, working or not working according as they can be persuaded by the offer of rewards which will tempt them to the exercise of their genius and accomplishments. And so long as there are such positions there will always be the opportunity offered to the individual worker to enter that higher grade, to become one of them. To that extent there will always be the chance of greatness, of distinction, open to men.

Does not politics offer the same challenge on a larger scale? There is the pleasing notion, current now in many circles where politics is the one theme, that the mass can chain the individual mind by treating him as a delegate rather than as a representative. He is to be brought back to heel every now and then by the citizens of Slumpingon, who will remind him that they sent him to Westminster to vote for or against horse racing, or the manufacture of ginger beer, or the decoration of the village pump and that they expect him to do as he is told or they will know the reason why. Well, the delegate of Slumpingon, who knows his world, will doubtless listen deferentially to the worthy persons who thus chasten his self-esteem, so long as it may be necessary. But do the modern managers of the village caucus really suppose that the Lassalles and Bismarcks, Briands and Poincarès, Georges and Churchills, of the future are going to be whipped to their kennels by greengrocers and ice cream vendors all the time? The politician of the future will know that the important thing is to arrive. And then whether you call him representative or delegate, matters little. He will rule. And the impassioned equalitarian will develop the spurs of the autocrat as easily as the duck grows feathers.

The meaning of all this is that the equalitarianism of which we boast, which we think is going to submerge the world, is a lie. The institutions founded on it are founded on a lie. And at the first breath of reality those institutions will fall like so many paper castles. When the mountains have been levelled to the ground, when Everest is flat as the dunes of Holland, and Switzerland is good hunting ground as Leicestershire for foxes, the world in which all men are the same in gift and consequently in station, may come into being. Not till then. I know that we are supposed to believe there can be no more distinguished figures. The soldiers, artists, musicians, writers, whose names have become common in the trump of fame are to have no successors. Group artists, collective soldiers, communal writers, these are to be the products of the present which will illustrate the immediate future of the world. Mechanism and the physical sciences may be patient of this collective treatment. But the arts in which the genius of humanity attains its peak, where the human spirit flames into perfection, will for ever laugh to scorn the prevision, the cowardice, the jealousy of man. Great men have been. Great men will be again.

Yet all men would agree, if they think at all, that we must have excellence. The best exists, or if it does not yet exist it can be imagined. Without falling foul of Plato's dream of a heavenly archetype for all earthly forms, it needs no deep thought to realise that in humanity there already exists, in idea, an excellence which is far superior to the ordinary production of the common man's brain and hands. There is a boot which is in itself a work of art. It fits the foot like a glove, being made for it by a skilled workman, and is at once a thing of beauty and utility. No amount of mass production of boots, each of which is tolerably good but none of which are perfect, can compensate for the absence

of the perfect boot. And so it is with all the things that men use. Clothing, food, houses, implements of husbandry, tools, mechanisms, in each of these there can be imagined, and sometimes, though but rarely, there can be seen the thing that touches perfection, that satisfies the eye of the artist and yet is completely adapted for the work it has to do.

In the arts this principle is of first importance. There the second best is merely a failure. Nothing but perfection will satisfy the artist's conception. His picture may be a tolerable landscape, but if the painter is an artist he knows that the difference between his own work and that of a Corot or a Turner is so great in degree as to become almost a difference in kind. The gigantic figures of Michael Angelo, are not merely well drawn according to their creator's idea, they belong to a region of art which is definitely beyond any but a master mind. As sculptor and painter, Angelo stands in the class of the giants. Beethoven in music is not merely a good composer, he has the quality of greatness and represents the search for and the attainment of the best in his selected field. These men tell us by their works that there is an excellence which is as much above the ordinary achievement of the average as Everest is higher than Snowdon. And by common consent of all competent persons this excellence, or the approach to it, is worthy of being sought for. The rewards that come to him who attains it are in the long run great. But though there should be no reward at all, yet it would be necessary for the well-being of men that this excellence should be pursued. For its existence is one of the proofs of man's own dignity. He is great because, though he may not be able to carve like Angelo or compose like Beethoven, yet he is capable of recognising the grandeur of mind from which these creations proceed.

Much of our present-day teaching discredits the pursuit

of excellence. The theory of life which leads a man to throw all the emphasis on circumstance, the power of the mass and the milieu as the formative factors in destiny is hostile to the ambition to excel. And when this form of thought is clad in the raiment of an economic fatality, there is nothing less calculated to stir the emotions or harden the will for conflict. It is the creed of those who have lost the battle before they have drawn the sword.

Yet much of our modern thinking, especially of that kind which passes muster amongst our intelligent youth is but another name for this kind of confessed cowardice. There are too many human beings in the world for anyone individual to be of the least importance. The single life must merge itself gladly in the life of the group. All effort at personal distinction, where it is not immoral, being motived by vanity and love of praise, is futile, since it seeks to rise above a level which is decreed for it by external conditions. Has the young business man no capital? The probability is very high that he has little or none. Let him, therefore, understand that he never can have any. Let him seek at the hands of the State or the Corporation to which he belongs for the nucleus of that fortune he hopes to make. Tell him that large capitals in all ages have been produced from small beginnings, and he smiles despondently, seeing himself but as a poor urchin in a world of millionaires. Does the man wish to be an artist or a scholar? Then again he is to look to the group, the superior classes, or the Government of the day for the counsel and help necessary to his beginnings. The struggles of the early artists, the impassioned search of the scholars of other times for learning, leave him cold. We live in other times. And to hear these young fellows one would imagine that never until to-day had talent starved in garrets, begged its bread from door to door, stood shivering

at the gate of the opulent whilst insolent lackeys looked on and smiled. The truth is that this deadly virus of dependence on others, this poison which saps the very heart's blood from a man, instilling into his brain the notion that everybody in this world is responsible for him and his condition except himself, all this has become so much a part of ourselves that we are unconscious of it. We are like a race of men which is being slowly asphyxiated by deadly gases which do their work almost painlessly but not the less effectively.

Yet we must have excellence and mankind must be stirred to the pursuit of this higher achievement by powerful motives. Difficult enterprises are not entered upon by meu without some chance of success. And if occasionally there is born one of those men for whom the task is everything, the reward nothing, the majority of men need some encouragement if they are to live laborious days in the search for a fineness, a completeness, which is beyond the reach of every day accomplishment. Indeed, there is a disposition to sink below the normal grade which, but for these exceptional men, would soon reduce the arts and trades to a level beneath contempt. Do we sufficiently realise what we owe to the men who will be content with nothing less than best? Their influence, the result of the activity of a comparatively small number of people, keeps the labour of men near to a standard which but for them would fall immeasurably. The housewife who will have her maids or daughters make a bed, clean the windows, cook the joint and pudding, as these things ought to be done, and not as the careless girl thinks they might as well be done, is holding up a standard of excellence which but for her would soon cease to exist. The foreman in the shipyard who watches his workmen and brings them back to their task, to undo, to do over again, to alter and amend until at last the job will

satisfy even his critical eye, is not only a useful servant to his employer, he is one of the benefactors of the human race. For he compels careless and thoughtless workmen to realise that in the yard over which he has control there is an idea of the good, of the best, which is as sacred in the eyes of one or two superior minds as the sanctuary is to the mind of the priest.

Now there must be a motive or a number of motives sufficiently strong to induce these few chosen persons to seek for and to maintain this ideal of the excellent. It may be the motive of sheer fear, the need to retain one's own post in the mob of workers, to escape the threat of hunger for oneself and one's dependents. Such motives will only be despised by those who have had little acquaintance with the practical working of human affairs. Men who deal with the gross realities of life will know that there are many men who must be driven to make an effort for worthy achievement by motives which are not far from fear or hunger. Like the samphire gatherer who had lost the rope, but jumped for it at the risk of his life and caught it, such men do more than they had thought possible because urged by emotions which conquer their natural timidity or laziness. Or the motive may be that of doing justice to the idea, the dream of some strong spirit who has seen for himself that the good exists and is worth seeking. Then the executant becomes a co-operator with the artist, and may indeed, become an artist himself, under the urge of this affectionate admiration. Madame Schuman was accustomed to read her husband's letters before she played his works, that she might recapture the emotions felt in first hearing about the ideals and dreams by which her husband was moved. There must be a sufficiently strong impulse acting upon the ordinary man to move him to do justice to himself and his work, or he will fall below the level fixed by the masters in his chosen task.

This is the proper sphere for the exercise of ambition. Let there be any amount of the levelling process in society, let it be generally agreed that in the management of great empires and states the will of each person, illiterate or learned, judicial or hysterical, is of as much importance as the will of any other. Let equality reign throughout the whole political and social world. There can yet be no worthy work done, no standard of value maintained for long, unless there is kept before the young aspirant this ideal of an excellence which will task all his powers. We may dislike as much as the maddest communist the notion of those conquering superiorities which make the rest of men seem but pygmies. But we cannot afford to see the work of men reduced to a mere uniformity of production, sinking ever lower to a meanness of conception and execution which at last becomes contemptible, simply because we do not like to believe in the worth of personal ambition.

The motives which operate on the worker may be different. There is the love of the game. The sportsman knows this, of course. He takes his stand in the field and works with his team, not only because of the cups, the ribbons, the eclat, which comes to him, but because he enjoys the play itself. And the man of science may know it equally well. For him also, the chief thing which spurs him on may be the desire to know, the possible discovery of some new fact or theory which will be to him as a personal possession, since it is the fruit of his own labour. In the Retreat from Moscow, when men were dropping by scores and hundreds on the way, dying of cold and hunger, there were officers of the army who spent the night by the miserable fires, discussing the scientific reasons why the wind should always blow from the same quarter at that time of the year. In their debates, they could forget the wretchedness of their lot, the ruin of their fortunes, the imminence of death.

Or the motive may be the passion of the member for his group, the love of the doctor for his profession, of the priest for his church and creed. No man understood this better than Napoleon. It was the idea which inspired his Legion of Honour. He desired to create a body of men who would be regarded as something apart from the crowd, who would know that each one of their members must have done some desperate and heroic deed, that the ribbon they wore was a sufficient proof of courage the world over. Now this desire to belong to the company of the best, to be one of the aristocrats of valour, is a part of the common sentiment of ambition.

The statesman who would seek to eradicate this motive from the soul of man might win the admiration of the recluse, frantic in his belief in equality, or the theorist who maintains that acquisition is the chief end of man, but he would earn for himself a well merited obloquy amongst those who know the real constitution of human nature.

Or the motive may be that of the good of others. And this is the true end of all worthy ambition. To contribute something more to the common stock than he had taken from it, to bring the level of humanity a little nearer to the ideal of what men should be, this is an impulse which can only die in the soul of man when the race has forgotten the primal impulses by which life is generated and maintained. And it accords well with the truest individualism. It is not to be confounded for a moment with that viscous thinking which cannot appreciate the solitariness of the individual, never seeing him save as the momentary utterance, the flying form, of the group, the collective soul. Precisely because a man feels himself to be an individual, separate in thought and feeling from his kind, having a life of sentiments and ideas, which is not bound to be in accord at all points with the common life of his time and place, he may strongly desire

to make his own contribution to the welfare of the community. Bees do not know whether they will eat the honey they hive. A man may not know whether he will enjoy all the goods that he earns or acquires. But in acquiring them he has contributed something to the generality of men and has also fulfilled his own conception of what an active man should be and do in the world. The ambition to help, to serve, to bless, is the high flight of the spirit conscious of itself. Tourgenieff met a beggar who asked for alms. But the writer had no money with him. Clasping the hand of the beggar, he said, "Don't be vexed brother, I have nothing to give you." "This also is a gift," said the beggar, "and I thank you for it." To give oneself, that is the programme of the ambitious man, who has realised his place in the world.

Here is the difference between the vulgar desire to shine, to win the applause of the gallery, and the will to make oneself worthy of the esteem of one's fellows. It implies a belief in the value of plain humanity which effectually destroys the puerile conceits and vanities by which smaller men are moved. The ambitious man who has succeeded in this high emprise of life does not feel for those he has known and has passed in the road of life, anything but friendly and fraternal feelings. They are not simply the defeated ones. They are his brothers, a little less fortunate than himself, weaker in lung, shorter in limb, but men who have worthily raced with him for the prizes of life. And their respect is something worth winning. For they, too, are men. They are not simply waves of the ocean of life, taken back, like himself, into the vast sea after they have moved for a moment upon its surface. The highly ambitious spirit will see himself and his fellow men as engaged in something the result of which is to endure. Such men prefer to believe that not in the visible world alone, will be found the last fruits of their labour, but that victors

and defeated alike have contributed to create something which will outlast the corrosion of years, and find its home in the eternal.