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LAST ESSAYS

LAST ESSAYS

BY

THE EARL OF BIRKENHEAD
P.C., D.L.

WITH

INTRODUCTION BY LORD MACMILLAN



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INTRODUCTION

LORD BIRKENHEAD never stood in need of the services of an usher to cry "Oyez, Oyez" before him. Whatever he had to say on any topic was always assured of a hearing. It is therefore superfluous to introduce these further gleanings from the varied fields of his intellectual activities with any commendation of them to the attention of the reader. Whatever subject engaged his interest Lord Birkenhead contrived to make attractive by the freshness and the courage of his approach to it, and not the least merit of his views has always been their provocativeness. He never left a topic where he found it. But if he delighted in controversy, it was in controversy not as a means of obstruction to thought, but as a means of progress in thought. The papers here collected will be found to be eminently characteristic of his method and his mind, and many will be glad to have them thus preserved.

But if introduction is superfluous, it is fitting that a few words of valediction should preface this volume. It seems strange, almost incredible, that one should have to write of Lord Birkenhead in the past tense. We cannot easily realize that the vivid flame of his spirit has been quenched in death. His was so living, so commanding, a personality that it seemed superior to the fate of ordinary mortals. There was in truth something dæmonic about him which marked him out from all the men of his time. When he joined any gathering it was not merely, as with most of us, that there was one more person in the room; his advent seemed

to affect the whole spirit of the meeting as the addition of a single element may alter the nature of a chemical composition. But no one can yet attempt to estimate adequately the place which Lord Birkenhead held in the life of his country or to compute the sum of his many-sided activities. To complete the record many hands would require to collaborate. For to some he was best known as a politician and a statesman, to others as a consummate advocate and brilliant Lord Chancellor, to others again as a lover of books and literature, and to yet others as a man of the world, devoted to sport and good fellowship, while to the intimate circle of his friends he revealed qualities of loyalty and generous affection of which the public were little aware. For how true it is, as Maurois says in his Life of that other great statesman with whom Lord Birkenhead has been so often compared: "La face éclairée des hommes reste presque toujours cachée à ceux qui ne les connaissent que dans la vie publique."

To each of us according to our bent one or other facet of his career presents itself as of specially attractive lustre. It is natural that I should think of him first and foremost as a servant of the law. He showed that devotion to the law was no narrowing thing. The dingy view of law as an affair of musty precedents and disingenuous wranglings was never his. He found in the pursuit of the law a liberalizing and a fascinating profession. The intellectual training which it affords, its readiness to question all things without fear or favour, the opportunities of public service to which it opens the way, the good fellowship of its fraternity—all these he realized and enjoyed, and by all these he profited. To him law was never a mere technical art. He saw it as the supreme regulator of human relationships, and he never forgot, as many do in these days, that justice above all other matters is the prime concern of government. He would have agreed that "the final cause of law is the welfare of society."

The qualities which go to make up a great lawyer are diverse, and there are corresponding diversities of greatness among the names which adorn our legal roll of honour. Of Lord Birkenhead's excellence it may be said that it lay not so much in mere learning as in his attitude of mind. His triumphs in the forensic arena have often been recounted and even already are assuming that legendary character which invests so soon the tales of men of law. The fame of a great advocate, like that of an actor, seldom long survives and by the nature of things soon becomes a mere tradition. It is in judicial work alone that the lawyer can hope to secure for himself a permanent reputation. In the Law Reports which enshrine his judgments he may secure a measure of immortality. But the Law Reports, however monumental, fail in one respect. Of the men who delivered the decisions they record, nothing is told us beyond the bare dates of their tenure of office. How often we should like to have not only the decision, but also some knowledge of what manner of man the judge was who pronounced it! Judges have not only to decide cases; they have to conduct the business of their courts, and the method of the administration of justice is scarcely less important than its products.

If I were to select one attribute of Lord Birkenhead's genius in the judicial sphere as his especial virtue it would be his method of dealing with the cases which came before him as Lord Chancellor. It is no secret that his appointment to the Woolsack was viewed with some apprehension by many who knew only of his achievements in other and very dissimilar spheres. But from the very first he established himself as a master of the business of judging in the estimation of that critical body, the bar, and in the no less critical estimation of his colleagues. I may be allowed to quote from an article which I had the temerity to write in *The Empire Review* some years ago, when Lord Birkenhead's judgments as Lord Chancellor were collected and published:

> The new occupant of the Woolsack was not long in converting his critics into enthusiastic admirers. Plainly, a Daniel had come to judgment. It was not so much a case of the office making the man as of the office affording the opportunity for the exhibition by its holder of qualities hitherto unsuspected, or, at least, imperfectly appreciated. . . . It was a searching ordeal to be called upon to preside over the deliberations of the Supreme Courts of Appeal for the United Kingdom and the Empire, composed as these Courts were of the ablest and most experienced judicial minds of the day, including an unusual array of ex-Lord Chancellors, but, alike in the House of Lords and in the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, Lord Birkenhead acquired from the outset an easy supremacy. The transition from addressing a tribunal as counsel to presiding over it as chairman is apt to be an embarrassing one, but he compassed it without a perceptible jolt. Though in years far younger than any of his colleagues, he was accepted by them as their president with immediate loyalty. There was no trace of the assertiveness of the new broom in his attitude. He seemed to take his place on the Woolsack as though to the manner born. His relations with his judicial brethren and with the Bar were irreproachable, and won from both instant recognition.

To the advocate arguing before him Lord Birkenhead imparted some of his own inspiration. He was so obviously attracted by the matter in hand. On any topic which you could persuade him was worthy of his attention he wanted to know all that could be said, and to be satisfied in proceeding to judgment that he had everything he should know. In the art of advocacy the first essential is to interest the judge in the problem presented. It is not always easy to do so, for the long routine of judicial work is apt to dull the receptiveness of the mind. Lord Birkenhead was always responsive. He gave the advocate the impression that he was really interested and found intellectual pleasure in the development of the case. No one left his bar without feeling that every one of the points in the case which merited attention had been understood and appreciated and

would receive its due consideration. He never resisted or obstructed argument, but he always controlled it. It is no part of a judge's business to suffer fools gladly—or perhaps at all. But it is his business to see that the advocate gets every chance to state his client's case and not to let the imperfections of the advocate prejudice a just cause. It is often the judge's own fault if he does not get the assistance which he should have from the bar. Lord Birkenhead got the very best out of those who were privileged to plead before him, and he did so because he knew how to manage debate. Counsel before him felt as I should imagine a well-trained horse feels when it knows that a master is handling the ribbons. Irrelevance was checked and tediousness dispelled, but all that tended to advance the progress of the case was encouraged. He had his reward from the bar, as every great judge has, for those who were asked for their best gave of their best. And he won also by his consideration and courtesy that other reward from the bar which does not always fall to the lot of great judges, the genuine and respectful affection of all its members. Truly, as a great authority has said, "There is no guaranty of justice except the personality of the judge."

Lord Birkenhead's Chancellorship was all too brief. Appointed on 14th January, 1919, he delivered up the seals on 25th October, 1922. A second term of office subsequently offered to him was not accepted. Yet within the compass of less than four years he securely established his position as one of the greatest and most distinguished of those who have occupied his historic office.

Of his achievements in other spheres I am not competent to speak. He had in these other spheres his successes and his failures, but if his failures as well as his successes are recalled let it also be remembered that it is only at the tree loaded with fruit that people throw stones. In the sphere of law there are no failures to

record, and surely one may say, with Kipling, that "recognition by one's equals and betters in one's own craft is a reward of which a man may be unashamedly proud." And if it is doubtful whether he had any equals and certain that he had no betters in his own craft, let us substitute the recognition of his brethren as the tribute which he earned so surely and valued best of all.

MACMILLAN.

19*th October*, 1930.

LAST ESSAYS

I

MR. LLOYD GEORGE

"*QUI de nous*," said Amiel, "*n'a eu sa terre promise, son jour d'extase, et sa fin en exil?*"

The public career of David Lloyd George certainly appears at this moment to fulfil all three of these conditions. He has known the vision of a promised land; the glory and ecstasy of surpassing power; the bitterness of political exile.

Of the early period, when his promised land was bounded by an emotional and not too carefully considered Radicalism, we have traces right up to the outbreak of the War. His day of ecstasy dawned when he was returned to Parliament in 1890 as a youth of twenty-seven—a fact which makes him to-day the Father of the House of Commons.

The dawn broadened into daylight in 1905, when Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman gave him Cabinet rank as President of the Board of Trade, a distinction soon followed by the Chancellorship. Eleven years later it reached noontide with the Premiership. For six years of War and Armistice Lloyd George was not merely the leading statesman of this country; he was a figure who, with only Clemenceau as an equal and President Wilson as a foil, dominated the history of our time. The collapse of the Coalition in 1922 proved that victorious democracies are no less vindictive towards their leaders than their defeated enemies. The Carlton

Club meeting destroyed the Coalition, and Lloyd George was hurled into exile.

There, sometimes like Lucifer in Hell, sometimes like Father Neptune in a genial mood, he still languishes, illuminating his immediate neighbourhood with the rays of his countenance; uttering with more than ordinary eloquence his defiance of all rivals; but on the whole, perhaps, feeling himself in mighty uncongenial surroundings. One may picture him greeting his band of re-united Liberals, and especially Mr. Runciman, with the Miltonic quotation:

> " ' Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,'
> Said then the lost Archangel, ' this the seat
> That we must change for Heav'n ? this mournful gloom
> For that celestial light ?
> . . . Farewell, happy fields,
> Where joy for ever dwells ! hail, horrors ; hail.' "

Let us not forget that to Milton the exiled Archangel was the true hero of the conflict. I have never concealed my view that, in the struggle inside the Coalition which led to its breakdown, my sympathies were and remain with Mr. Lloyd George. I thought then, and I am justified in this judgment to-day, that only a powerful anti-Socialist Coalition could stand between our country and a Socialist misgovernment. The bulk of my party disagreed with me; we have had, as a result, two Socialist Administrations in eight years.

And Mr. Lloyd George, who might have held off this unfortunate event, has been thrown into the abyss of eternal and subordinate opposition, with Labour's jaws opening to receive the more personally ambitious of his few followers:

> " ' Me miserable ! which way shall I fly
> Infinite wrath, and infinite despair ?
> Which way I fly is Hell ; myself am Hell ;
> And in the lowest deep a lower deep
> Still threat'ning to devour me opens wide ;
> To which the Hell I suffer seems a Heav'n.' "

Few statesmen in history have been tried so high by Fortune. From utter obscurity in a little Welsh village, he rose to be his country's leader through the most critical days of its history; to-day, though his vigour is undiminished and his qualities, both for good and for evil, unimpaired, if not enlarged, he has become the fifth wheel of the Parliamentary coach, where his survival is tolerated because the coach is so rickety that, at any moment, the fifth wheel may be needed on one side or the other as a temporary support.

I say "temporary" advisedly; for even in his most sanguine moments Mr. Lloyd George cannot imagine that a Liberal Party will ever rule the country again. But so great is his skill in political manœuvre; so enormous the glamour of his name in the country, where men will do everything for him but vote for his nominees; so alive still the memory of his great War leadership; that those would be rash prophets who ruled out as impossible the chance that he may once again become a national leader.

A series, for example, of Governmental failures; or the continued inability of either of the main parties to attain an independent majority: such events as these—if we may judge from the experience of foreign nations where the multiple party system is in force—could still bring back Mr. Lloyd George to power as the one man capable of reviving and leading a successful coalition.

To his future I shall return; I must deal first with his past—the periods of his promised land and blazing noon.

Like many great patriots, Mr. Lloyd George was not born in the country whose paternity he so proudly claims. He was born at Manchester on the 17th January, 1863; but he was Welsh, and Celtic Welsh at that, on both sides. His father, William George, had married Elizabeth Lloyd, a daughter of a Baptist minister of Criccieth; David was given the names of both parents. William George was a schoolmaster

who had worn himself out in his profession in various parts of the country—in Pwllheli, Haverfordwest, London, Liverpool, and Manchester. A few months after the boy's birth he abandoned teaching and took a farm near Haverfordwest, but died before his son was two years old. This catastrophe, perhaps more than any other event, was responsible for the course of the child's life; for he and his mother were taken under the care of her brother, Richard Lloyd, a bootmaker at Llanystumdwy, in the mountains near Criccieth.

Richard Lloyd was a most remarkable man, one of those village philosophers on whom are founded the strength of every democratic country. Besides giving an example in his daily work of integrity, industry, and kindliness, he was a minister of the Gospel, belonging to the Campbellite Baptists—in Wales they are called "Disciples of Christ"—of whom it is not the least important belief that no man should receive pay for preaching. He not only came to the assistance of the young widow and her children after his brother-in-law's death, and, carrying them back to his village home, cared for them there; but it was he who, soon taking the measure of his nephew's capacity, bent all his forces to furthering in every way the boy's education and progress.

He showed him how, even for a poor boy without wealth, high lineage, or influence, entrance into a profession might be attained; he acquiesced in his sister's wish that David should be a solicitor, though he would have preferred him to be a doctor; he sought out the necessary information about examinations, and taught himself some measure of French and Latin after his day's work in order to aid David in these studies; he took the boy to Liverpool for the preliminary Law examination, and stood beside him when the successful result was announced; he articled him to the junior partner of the most prominent solicitors in Portmadoc, a small town of some importance near Criccieth.

In every way he assisted, and advised, the boy in his early apprenticeship to life. That Mr. Lloyd George owes a debt beyond all possible repayment to his uncle he himself has often admitted. Yet Richard Lloyd had his reward; before death called him, the old man was able to visit Downing Street as the guest of the powerful Cabinet Minister whose boyhood he had fostered and whose career he had forged. This reunion and the episodes which preceded it have always seemed to me some of the most romantic episodes of the age, not lacking in such, amid which our lives have been lived.

The young solicitor's clerk was quick to interest himself in the multifarious tasks of his profession. Among other duties, his firm were the Liberal agents for the constituency of Carnarvon Boroughs; young Lloyd George thoroughly acquainted himself with the local political field. A keen Radical, he began to write articles in *The North Wales Express* over the time-honoured signature of "Brutus," and he led the more extreme group of Radicals in the Portmadoc Debating Society.

In 1881 he went to London for the first time, and visited the House of Commons, upon which occasion, if I may trust a eulogistic biographer, he wrote, with quaint prescience, the following note in his diary: "I will not say but that I eyed the assembly in a spirit similar to that in which William the Conqueror eyed England on his visit to Edward the Confessor—as the region of his future domain. Oh, vanity!" He was then not quite eighteen years old.

It is not always remembered that the driving force in Mr. Lloyd George's earlier political life was the cause of Welsh Home Rule. The political struggle in Ireland, intensified by Gladstone's interested support of the Nationalists, encouraged ultra-patriotic Welshmen to claim a similar partition for their own country. The movement was sentimental rather than practical; literary rather than political. But it was a cry which,

in the mouth of this eager, eloquent, persuasive young solicitor, tugged at many hearts and, as the event proved, could sway many votes.

In the spring of 1888 he founded a paper called *The Trumpet of Freedom*, and was adopted as Liberal candidate for Carnarvon Boroughs. In the following year he was chosen as Alderman for Carnarvonshire. In 1890, soon after a widely reported speech on Welsh Home Rule at a meeting of the South Wales Liberal Federation, he fought his first Parliamentary election.

The sitting Conservative member for Carnarvon Boroughs had died; Lloyd George was opposed by a local landowner of considerable influence and popularity. He did not fail to emphasize the difference in their position. "The day of the cottage-bred man has dawned at last," he told his supporters. Not for the first or last time he raised the standard of the "people" against "privilege." He was returned by eighteen votes in a poll of four thousand. In Welsh he told his supporters in the Castle Square of Carnarvon: "My dear fellow-countrymen, the County of Carnarvon to-day is free. The banner of Wales is borne aloft, and the boroughs have wiped away the stain." Dawn, we may be sure (and we surmise that he mentioned the fact), was rising figuratively over his native hills.

The Parliamentary events in his career until the Mad Parliament of 1906 are not of outstanding interest to present-day readers. The gradual decline of the Conservative Party and the rising tide of Liberalism swept Lloyd George into office.

It was a surprise to the ignorant, but not to judicious Parliamentary observers, when he was appointed President of the Board of Trade in the first Liberal Cabinet of this century. Any doubt as to his diplomatic ability was dissipated when, a few months later, he prevented a railway strike by which England was threatened. For the first time then the country learned how extraordinarily persuasive Mr. Lloyd George could be; and

realized the amazing reserve of charm, courage, intuition, sympathy, and understanding which he has used to the national advantage in a thousand conferences since.

His Welsh colleagues in the Commons had shown no anxiety to form a Welsh Nationalist Party, on the Irish model, with himself as leader. This check combined with his success at the Board of Trade to eliminate the somewhat parochial limits which he had hitherto been inclined to set to his ambitions. Two years later he became Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Compared with our modern visitations, the 1909 Budget seems an almost harmless measure, hardly more than a gentle flick of the whip over the back of the now raw-flayed taxpayer. But it changed the political face of England. The leaders of the Conservative Party threw away every trump they held by the stupidity with which they played their cards. And they finished off with a revoke.

Three and a half years of the Mad Government had wearied the country with its half-baked follies. Only a desperate issue could stop the pendulum from swinging back towards the traditional creed of the majority of the British people. Such an issue Mr. Lloyd George, with the lively aid of Mr. Churchill, found in the cry of " The Peers against the People." Instead of accepting the Budget and allowing it to collapse, as it would inevitably have done, under the weight of its own faults, the Peers threw it out.

Lloyd George seized the cue. His speeches at Newcastle and Limehouse struck out a new vein in vituperation, and indeed in vulgar indecorum, on the lips of a responsible Cabinet Minister. Without doubt they lowered the tone of British politics, and cleared the way for the almost incredible abuse with which many Socialist candidates bespatter the hustings at election meetings to-day, and the echoes of which they import to the back benches of the present House of Commons.

But Lloyd George was on the winning side; no one, however, could lose who fought the Conservatives at their stupidest. The Lords capped their first folly, the rejection of the Budget, by allowing the Parliament Act to pass. When they should have yielded, they had been obstinate; when they should have been firm, they surrendered. Even so, it was only at the price of promising the Nationalists Home Rule for Ireland—a promise resolutely required and cynically given—that the Liberals remained in power.

We know now that Lloyd George was one of the few Liberal leaders who understood that Ulster could not be coerced into separation from England; yet he was unable—perhaps he did not try—to hold back his colleagues from their corrupt attempt to throw Ulster to her hereditary enemies. We may perhaps be grateful that, if the War was in any event to come, it should have opened when it did and not a few months later; otherwise the Liberal Government would certainly have precipitated civil war in Ireland.

In other respects, too, one notes the disharmony, masked by outward conformity, between Mr. Lloyd George and, perhaps, the bulk of his party in the country. He shocked the Radicals by his firm attitude towards Germany over Agadir; as a member of the "Inner Circle" of the Cabinet, in conjunction with Mr. Asquith, Mr. Churchill, Sir Edward Grey, and Lord Haldane, he realized the necessity for precautions against the German threat to European peace. Yet, as late as the New Year of 1914, he gave a pacifist interview to *The Daily Chronicle*, proposing a reduction of armaments on account of the marked improvement in our relations with Germany. This was a futile and inexplicable speech.

At the outbreak of the War he had at last to choose between the two streams which divided his party, and no less himself. After a short period of indecision, he chose the better course. From that moment he threw

all his monumental energy, his boisterous industry, his amazing intuition and flair, into the conduct of the War. I am no excessive admirer of the late Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson, but I am satisfied that he spoke the truth when, after the Armistice, he wrote to Mr. Lloyd George that "You have done more than any one man in the world to win this war."

No one who did not work with him in that terrible and tragic period can realize how much this nation owes to him. A war leader in a democracy is faced by more difficult problems than occur under any other system of government or at any other time. He has to meet, and keep within reasonable proportions, the demands of the soldiers; he has to co-ordinate and manage the activities and needs of the population at home; moreover, he has to retain the confidence of every important section of the country in his administration and the justice of the cause to which he is pledged.

Never must it be forgotten that Mr. Lloyd George sustained the spirits of this country at the darkest moments of the War, when no other living man could have hoped for equal success. We hear incessantly of Danton's appeal for audacity and more audacity; it would be well if the world were as familiar with some of Mr. Lloyd George's most inspired utterances during the War.

Proud as I am of the ancient traditions of Gray's Inn Hall, with its record of stirring events revered even in Elizabethan times, I do not think that any of its claims to historical fame will in a future analysis stand above the fact that it was there that Mr. Lloyd George uttered one of his most stirring appeals to the British people to fight to the bitter end. And this speech was made in a dark and dangerous moment, in reply to a most unexpected letter from Lord Lansdowne in *The Daily Telegraph* advocating, not obscurely, a negotiated peace.

And there are two other moments in the War which

I very distinctly remember, when he put fresh courage into his associates, and into the nation which he led.

The first was at the height of the submarine menace, a menace which even to-day is not always appreciated by the public at its true seriousness, and the lessons of which are now completely forgotten. Every week the toll of merchantmen was rising; the new and dreadful weapon of warfare was seriously imperilling those food supplies without which these islands could not have survived for more than a few weeks; counter measures, however efficient, seemed unable for a space to catch up with the ever-increasing depredations. Germany, balked of success on land, hopeless of victory on the sea, was rapidly achieving victory under it. Then Mr. Lloyd George said, "I will never haul down the flag of this country so long as one British steamer sails the sea." This hyperbole must rank as one of the greatest utterances of history.

The second occasion which springs to my memory was when, in the view of men who should have known, outbreaks of rebellion were simultaneously to be expected in Egypt, Ireland, and India. Forewarned, the Cabinet had taken every possible counter-measure. But the prospect was dark beyond description. Mr. Lloyd George, presiding over our deliberations, showed no trace of perturbation. As in every crisis of the War period, he transmuted all the Celtic fervour of his nature, all his restless energy, all his insight into men and events, into a cool and steely decisiveness. As he rose from his chair at the end of that fateful Cabinet meeting, he uttered this simple remark: "So once again this old Empire must fight for its life."

That his appeals were answered and justified; that the War was won; that at Versailles and a dozen other places he re-made the map of Europe—not always without slips and errors, into which, as we know, newspaper writers never fall; that he and his Ministers carried the country through a period of post-War

unsettlements and discontents hardly less difficult than the War itself; that, in the end, the Coalition was destroyed and he was thrown out of office—all this is too recent history to need recapitulation.

> " From morn
> To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,
> A summer's day; and with the setting sun
> Dropt from the zenith like a falling star."

Abandoning office—for the first time in seventeen years—Mr. Lloyd George was out of his element. The position was both tragic and ludicrous; he, who had dominated half the world, found himself the unwelcome leader of the pitiful remnant of the declining Liberal Party. One may, to some extent, ascribe to the dispiriting nature of this environment many of the faults into which Mr. Lloyd George has since fallen. It would otherwise seem incredible that the Prime Minister of the War period could take the strangely unreal and most uncharacteristic line which Mr. Lloyd George followed in the General Strike and during the troubles in China.

Only irresponsibility, too, and the certitude that he would never be called upon to prove his claim, can have permitted him, at the last General Election, to declare that he could cure Unemployment in a year without the expenditure of public money. I blame the dull, sour jealousies of contemporary Liberalism for driving him into his luncheon-hour alliance with the Cobdenitish Mr. and Mrs. Snowden. Mr. Lloyd George is much too wise a statesman to believe that a sacred union of Liberalism and Socialism can be built upon the old platform of Free Imports.

As the result, however, of these opportunist manœuvres, Mr. Lloyd George has once more raised himself into a position of strategic prominence in the House of Commons. Personal supremacy, of course, he never lost; he is incomparably the most magnetic and eloquent

tactician in any section of the House. But the country, I imagine, remains unimpressed. The Liberal Party, already moribund, is still splitting and sub-splitting. There are those who set the ideals and traditions of their party—especially in regard to individual freedom —above the lures of its greatest enemy, Socialism, and who, therefore, like Mr. Churchill and Lord Melchett, and many other prominent men, have thrown in their lot with a Conservative Party which is to-day far more "Liberal" than any Gladstonian Party ever was. On the other hand, the more unsocial Radicals, ever in rebellion against tradition and authority, have gone over in a block to the Socialists. At the present moment the Liberal Party consists, for all practical purposes, of leaders only.

We have the evidence of every recent by-election and of the local elections to show that the decline in Liberalism still proceeds. I cannot see, and I do not wish to see, Mr. Lloyd George left to perish on the bridge of that unseaworthy ship. We are not so blessed in great men to-day as to be able to dispense with his services.

It is clear, to my mind, that he will never find a welcome among the Socialists, whose two most prominent leaders were the bitterest Pacifist enemies of the War policy which he carried to a successful conclusion. I do not know how long the effects of the lemonade-feast at Downing Street may be expected to last, but I believe that their influence on Mr. Lloyd George will be only transitory.

He led the Empire to victory in the greatest War of its history. There remains a great rôle for him to fill in the near future in consolidating the Empire for peace and prosperity. I do not observe his equal among the men who deposed him.

II

THE EARLY LIFE OF PRESIDENT WILSON

STRANGE and tortuous as is the path to the White House, no President's early career is more astonishing than that of Woodrow Wilson. Until he was fifty, until six years before his election to the highest office in the United States, his name was associated with no political party, and he had never made a political speech. Because of this, it has become customary to suppose that his entry into politics was an accident, almost as surprising to him as to the general body of opinion in the country. Mr. Ray Stannard Baker's account of the early life of President Wilson* shows, however, that this common conception is wrong. Wilson, all his life, was a politician in the sense that he undertook every portion of his career with a view to an eventual political career.

Thomas Woodrow Wilson was born on December 28th, 1856, in the old frontier town of Staunton Virginia. His paternal grandfather had migrated to America from Ulster in 1807, at the age of twenty. In the same ship was a Miss Anne Adams, also from the north of Ireland. They married, and their son, James Wilson, became a journalist in Ohio in the days when American journalism was at its most savage and disreputable. Not untypical, indeed, is his retort to a partisan of a rival politician, Samuel Medary, who had sneered at Wilson's foreign birth: "Sammedary's

* "Woodrow Wilson, Life and Letters," by Ray Stannard Baker.

friends claim for him the merit of having been born in Ohio. So was my dog Towser."

James Wilson's youngest son, however, Joseph Ruggles Wilson, was a scholar and a distinguished Presbyterian minister. He married Jessie Woodrow, the daughter of a fellow-minister who came from a Scottish family long distinguished in scholarship. The Woodrows had spent only thirteen years in America at the time of this marriage, so that, with the exception of Andrew Jackson, Wilson has the slightest American background of all Presidents. Dr. Wilson became pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Staunton, living in the adjoining manse. Here Thomas Woodrow Wilson was born, on the eve of the Civil War. The family moved to Augusta, Georgia, and the future President saw the Southern troops march out, and heard his father's announcement one Sunday in the pulpit that, as the Southern army desperately needed ammunition, he would dismiss his congregation at once to the munition factories. Little "Tommy," as he was called, watched the inhabitants pile their cotton in the main street of the town so that the invading Sherman might burn it without destroying their houses; he saw Jefferson Davis carried away prisoner through Augusta; and, for an unforgettable moment, he stood beside the hero of the South, General Robert E. Lee.

Although his father, as an ardent partisan of the South, set himself against the Abolitionists, he was no strong supporter of negro slavery. Dr. Wilson opposed general opinion in the South so far as to found a Sunday school for negroes and maintain it during the war.

In the painful reconstruction period, he played a large part in restoring the self-respect of the defeated South, and became pastor of the principal church in Columbia, South Carolina, the city which had suffered less than most from the war. There "Tommy" went to school. He was far from a precocious child. He could not read until he was eleven; but he learned

from his father the careful use of words. As a boy of fifteen, he was already "extremely dignified"; even in those days "he was not like the other boys. He had a queer way of going off by himself." When he was eighteen, the family moved to Wilmington, and he saw the sea for the first time. He entered Davidson College in North Carolina, with the understanding that, like his father and grandfather, he would later enter the ministry. Mr. Baker states, by the way, that the devastation of the war had so impaired communication with Davidson that a guard once shot a man on a mule who was out-distancing the train.

Two years later young Wilson entered Princeton. There he made lifelong friendships and laid the foundation of his fame as an orator, although he was not eminent in pure scholarship. Graduating in 1879, he disappointed his family by rejecting a career in the church and entering the law. "The profession I chose was politics," he afterwards wrote, "the profession I entered was the law. I entered the one because I thought it would lead to the other."

He took law at the University of Virginia, where he was preceded by the fame of an article on "Cabinet Government in the United States," published in *The International Review*. It is characteristic of him that almost his first occupation was to rewrite the constitution of the debating society which he joined. Then and later, he had a passion for writing and rewriting constitutions.

> From the time when he was a lad of twelve or thirteen in Augusta, organizing the Lightfoots and writing out the rules of order, we find him making or remaking constitutions —at Davidson, at Princeton for the little debating club he himself organized, as well as for the Whig Society— and now, having been elected president of the Jefferson Society, the first thing he did was to give "notice that he would at some future time introduce a resolution to appoint a committee for revising our constitution." We shall find him later doing the same thing at Johns Hopkins and

> at Wesleyan; we shall find him deeply interested in seeing what can be done with the antiquated constitution of the State of New Jersey; and, finally, at Paris, we shall discover him working out a new covenant under which the nations of the earth may dwell together in harmony.

In every case, of course, Wilson was to make the plan, and all the other participants were to endeavour to fit themselves into it.

His health broke down before he took a degree; and, after a year and a half of private study, he sought a partner and set up in Atlanta, Georgia, as an attorney. His political ambition led him to practise elocution systematically every day, even to hanging a chart on his wall with diagrams of appropriate gestures. He followed English politics, exulted in Gladstone's triumph and Disraeli's death, and took the considered step of dropping his first name and signing himself "Woodrow Wilson."

So poor was the young lawyer that he was unable to pay in one instalment the fee for admission to the Federal Courts. Nor was his practice profitable. He never had a case of his own, though on one occasion he was appointed by the court to represent a poor negro. His only client was his mother, who gave him power of attorney to administer her affairs. This failure did not prevent his becoming engaged to the lady who was later the first Mrs. Wilson, but his disillusion with his prospects soon decided him to leave Georgia and enter the young Johns Hopkins University at Baltimore to pursue special studies in political science. He applied for a Fellowship, which was refused him, and entered as an ordinary student.

His character was already formed. He was genial in private, as he shows in a letter which he wrote to his fiancée:

> It may shock you—it ought to—but I'm afraid it will not, to learn that I have a reputation (?) amongst most of my kin and certain of my friends (the Boylston family in

> Atlanta, for instance) for being irrepressible, in select circles, as a maker of grotesque addresses from the precarious elevation of chair seats, as a wearer of all varieties of comic grimaces, as a simulator of sundry unnatural, burlesque styles of voice and speech, as a lover of farces —even as a dancer of the "can-can"!

On the other hand, his new acquaintances commented upon the "hard and brilliant shell" in which he encased himself in the presence of strangers. It was already characteristic of him that a broken friendship "cut so deep that the gulf could never be bridged." We know that Colonel House rediscovered this fifty years later.

As usual, Wilson set to work at once to write a new constitution for the "Hopkins House of Commons," noting at the time that:

> I have a sense of power in dealing with men collectively which I do not feel always in dealing with them singly. In the former case the pride of reserve does not stand so much in my way as it does in the latter. One feels no sacrifice of pride necessary in courting the favour of an assembly of men such as one would have to make in seeking to please one man.

He began to read verse, with a special liking for Shelley, Wordsworth, and Keats, and a detestation for Byron. To humour his fiancée, he visited a collection of Whistler etchings, which disgusted him.

> As compared with these unsatisfactory dashes of helter-skelter lines and irresponsible patches of shade, recommend me to the staring *chromo* with its honest ugliness!

While at Johns Hopkins he wrote his first book, "Congressional Government," which received many favourable reviews—the first notice being written by one Walter Page in a Carolina newspaper. It is again characteristic of the man that, on his own confession, despite the success of the book, "a sneering review in a small local sheet of no circulation" offended him so

bitterly that he had to tramp the streets to work off his emotion. Even in those days, as later at the White House, he could not bear opposition.

His ambition remained political.

> My disappointment [he wrote to a friend], is in the fact that there is no room for such a career in this country for *anybody*, rather than in the fact that there is no chance for *me*. Had I had independent means of support, even of the most modest proportions, I should, doubtless, have sought an entrance into politics *anyhow*, and have tried to fight my way to predominant influence even amidst the hurly-burly and helter-skelter of Congress. I have a strong instinct of leadership, an unmistakably oratorical temperament, and the keenest possible delight in affairs; and it has required very constant and stringent schooling to content me with the sober methods of the scholar and the man of letters. I have no patience for the tedious toil of what is known as "research"; *I have a passion for interpreting great thoughts to the world;* I should be complete if I could inspire a great movement of opinion, if I could read the experiences of the past into the practical life of the men of to-day.

The success of his book brought him offers of posts from several Universities. He accepted an invitation to become Associate Professor in History at the newly founded Quaker woman's college, Bryn Mawr, for two years at $1,500. On the strength of this he married.

His salary was small for the support of his household, which soon included a daughter. It is one of the most pleasing lights on his nature that, from the beginning of his professional career, he and his wife invited poor members of their families to live and study with them. "It was so like those two to think as soon as they had anything of sharing it," wrote one of those he befriended. He turned to writing articles and books to supplement his income.

The long-awaited opportunity came to display his talents as a speaker to a critical audience when he was invited to address a gathering of old Princeton men in

New York, in 1886. He prepared an elaborate speech upon "The Relations of Universities to Government," but it lasted an hour and bored everybody. Chauncey Depew, who followed, poked fun at his solemnity. Despondent at his failure, Wilson vainly endeavoured to secure a minor post in the State Department, and renewed the attempt, with equal lack of success, later in the year.

Soon, however, his prospects brightened. He received a call to Wesleyan University in Connecticut, at a high salary. He spent two years there. As usual, he began by reorganizing the debating society. Another side of his temperament was revealed by his keenness for the athletic success of the University. During the principal football match of the year, against Lehigh, his side was faced with defeat.

> Suddenly, from the Wesleyan bleachers a man walked out in front, clad in heavy rubber boots and a raincoat. He shouted to the Wesleyan contingent, reproaching them for not cheering for their team; and at once began to lead them in the Wesleyan yell, beating time for them with his umbrella. This he continued violently until . . . the tide of the game turned. The team made two touchdowns and tied the Lehigh score. After the game, the Lehigh players, inquiring about the magnetic cheer leader, were informed that he was Wesleyan's professor of history, Dr. Woodrow Wilson. "He's all right," they returned, "he saved you."

In 1890, he returned to Princeton as Professor of Jurisprudence and Political Economy. Brilliant and popular, he led the reformers in the Faculty against the hide-bound methods of the older men. The repute of his lectures and writings brought him offers within a few years of the presidency of no fewer than seven Universities. He refused the most tempting, the University of Illinois, because the post would have subjected him to the control of a political board; for

all his ambition, he was now unwilling to become the tool of a local caucus.

His greatest public success at this period was an address which he delivered at the Princeton Sesquicentennial Celebration. Of this Mrs. Wilson wrote to a friend that:

> It was the most brilliant—*dazzling*—success from first to last. And *such* an ovation as Woodrow received! I never imagined anything like it. And think of *so* delighting *such* an audience, the most distinguished, everyone says, that has ever been assembled in America—famous men from all parts of Europe. . . . As for the Princeton men, some of them simply fell on his neck and wept for joy.

The speech, published in the *Forum* and quoted in many newspapers, introduced Wilson to America as a public figure. The very title of the address, "Princeton in the Nation's Service," explained his understanding of the possible relation between his professional career and his political ambition.

Two breakdowns in health in the closing years of the century sent him abroad. He suffered from neuritis in his right arm, and learned to write with his left hand. On each journey he recuperated in the Lake District, endeared to him by its association with Wordsworth. Visits to Oxford and Cambridge filled him with admiration for the English University system, and he returned to Princeton eager to model it after their pattern.

In 1902, a crisis occurred in the affairs of Princeton. Dr. Patton, whom Wilson himself accused of "paralysis of the will," resigned the presidency and Wilson was unanimously appointed in his place—the first time that such an appointment had been made without a succession of ballots. Mrs. Wilson wrote to her cousin that:

> One of the trustees told me that "those twenty-six men had never agreed on *any*thing in their lives before, yet in this they were *perfectly* unanimous from the *first*, no other name was ever proposed."

Wilson at once began to reorganize the college, embarking upon ambitious and expensive schemes. He instituted a tutorial system on English lines, appointing fifty new dons. To secure the funds for this enterprise he wrote innumerable letters on his own typewriter to all whom he thought likely to subscribe. Among these was Andrew Carnegie, who, with more generosity than sense of the appropriate, presented the College with a lake.

Wilson's next endeavour was the one which eventually helped to lead to his failure and resignation. As in all American Universities, the club system was undermining the educational strength of Princeton. Undergraduates thought more of the social dignity of being elected to the "high-class clubs" than of their intellectual development. The various clubs had their own "inns," luxuriously furnished and endowed. To be refused election to a club was an intolerable blow to any undergraduate with social ambitions; it was by no means unusual for the disappointed young man to leave the University in disgust. The evil was notorious, the remedy not so clear. Entirely to suppress the clubs was out of the question; they were too popular. Even professors in the Faculty were proud of their connexion with them.

Wilson proposed that the clubs should be transformed into the nucleus of colleges on the Oxford and Cambridge pattern; the members were to leave the inns and move into buildings to be erected round the Princeton Campus. The Board of Trustees, although already dubious of Wilson's dictatorial manner, approved his proposal. Protests were made by clubmen against "the doctrines of the confiscation of property." An indignant correspondent declared that, "if there is one thing which makes Princeton strong with her *alumni*, it is the class spirit. Any action that puts the class spirit in peril is alarming to graduates." "No one can make a gentleman associate with a mucker," was another argument, and the question was asked how a graduate

accustomed on ceremonial occasions to the easy conviviality of the "Tiger Inn," could think of returning to a mere quadrangle.

His opponents declared that Wilson "recommended common counsel but did not practise it," and that he was not conciliatory in manner. There must have been foundation for this last complaint, for, when the matter was raised at a meeting of the Faculty, Wilson found a hostile resolution seconded by his closest friend, Professor Hibben. This opposition seemed to Wilson, of course, to be treachery. In the words of his brother-in-law:

> It is the firm belief of those of us who knew all about that friendship, its origin, its growth, and its cessation, that the final breach left a permanent scar on Mr. Wilson's spirit. Mr. Wilson remained afraid of that kind of a friendship until the end of his days.

The adverse resolution was lost, and Wilson seemed to have triumphed. But lack of money made the scheme temporarily impracticable, the Board reconsidering its support, and Wilson was forced to withdraw his plan. He did not abandon it. Instead, he made journeys to Baltimore, Chicago, and Wisconsin to address meetings of Princeton graduates in support of it. At one meeting he declared that:

> I believe more and more as the months go by in the necessity of that change; moreover, I am a good fighter, gentlemen—on the whole, I would rather fight than not.

Such pronouncements were hardly calculated to ease the situation.

The rift between Wilson and his opponents was widened by a further dispute over the site of a proposed resident college for post-graduate students. This was the rock upon which Wilson's Princeton career finally foundered. In itself the dispute was trivial, but Wilson characteristically emphasized the personal issue with

his chief opponent, Professor West, who had long been associated in the scheme.

Before the struggle came to a head, Wilson's political ambitions revived. Colonel Harvey, the proprietor of *Harper's Weekly*, had already in 1906 half-seriously suggested Wilson as Democratic candidate for the Presidency. Now, two years later, the Democratic convention was about to meet, and Wilson waited with some interest to see if he would be nominated.

> There is evidently not a ghost of a chance of defeating Bryan—but since Colonel Harvey *is* there, I might as well be here,

he wrote. He refused, however, to be nominated for Vice-President.

The key to the graduate college controversy was the question of control. Wilson would not share his power with West. Month after month the Board and the Faculty, divided into pro-Wilson and anti-Wilson parties, wrangled over sites and the acceptance of gifts conditional on a certain site. Wilson, however, betrayed himself very damagingly at a meeting at which a compromise proposal of his own—that two colleges be built, one on each site—was unexpectedly accepted by the opposition. Losing control of himself, Wilson cried that the college would be a success wherever it was built, and that " the whole trouble is that Dean West's ideas and ideals are not the ideas and ideals of Princeton ! " The personal issue was too plainly revealed, and the revelation helped to destroy Wilson's credit.

Another storm broke over the publication in *The New York Times* of an editorial article on the dispute, which, his opponents asserted, Wilson had inspired. He refused to repudiate the article, but, except for confirming the facts in it prior to publication, he had no hand in its appearance. He pushed his case by passionate addresses to graduates in various towns,

and for some months victory swayed from one side to the other. Then one evening Mrs. Wilson heard her husband laughing in his study. "We have beaten the living," he told her, "but we cannot fight the dead. The game is up." A rich graduate had left in his will two million dollars for the erection of a graduate college, and had named as his trustee—Dean West!

Wilson was beaten at all points. He resigned his Presidency of Princeton and before the summer was out he was nominated by the Democratics for Governor of New Jersey. The professor was dead; the politician was born.

Mr. Baker seeks to justify Wilson by pointing out that, after his resignation, the control of the graduate college was taken from Dean West and transferred to the President of Princeton and the Board of Trustees. But, surely, this goes to prove that it was Wilson's personality, rather than his views, which had so embittered the controversy. We are told, too, that Wilson indignantly resented the choice of his former friend and later opponent, Professor Hibben, as his successor. This, again, shows the weaker side of Wilson's character.

Mr. Baker's book is an industrious, if admittedly not impartial, story of the earlier portion of Wilson's life. Many of his judgments are disputable, as when, for example, he quotes, as an example of Wilson's "apt characterization," the latter's epigram:

> William Pitt was a noble statesman; the Earl of Chatham was a noble ruin.

This is hardly worthy of the talents which Wilson, the historian and professor of law, undoubtedly possessed in high degree.

The important feature of these volumes, however, is their revelation of the continuity and, in every sense, the fixity of its hero's character. If ever the child was father of the man, "Tommy" Wilson was the father of President Woodrow Wilson

III

NO REFERENDUM!

I HAVE, up to the present, not taken any part in the fiscal discussions which have agitated the Conservative Party in the course of the last few months.

Such silence as I have observed has, it will be imagined, not been due to lack of interest in the situation. I have all my life been a Protectionist, so declared before Mr. Chamberlain's campaign; and I still think that Arthur Balfour's little book "Some Notes on Insular Free Trade" is the most masterly statement that has been made in this or any other country on the effects of free imports on a commercial community contending with protectionist rivals.

Of the two campaigns which were placed before the country with masterly force, and almost simultaneously, those of Lord Beaverbrook and Lord Rothermere, I must confess that as an experienced politician I greatly preferred the plan of the latter.

It had, indeed, less idealism than that of his great newspaper contemporary. It did not so much lay stress upon the co-ordination of Imperial resources. It was rather an economic English Sinn Fein creed. Lord Rothermere proposed a high protective duty on foreign manufactured goods, to be combined with a subsidy to agriculture and not embarrassed by the prejudice of food taxation.

In my opinion this was a winning policy, and the plain horse that can win the Derby is evidently a more desirable animal than a beautiful competitor who cannot stay the course. I do not naturally predict that the campaign

until recently jointly fathered by Mr. Baldwin and Lord Beaverbrook may not one day succeed. The purpose of my short observations is rather to make it plain that we have made it as hard as it possibly can be made to win; that we have secured the worst of both worlds; and that if we do attain the success in the campaign as originally agreed upon between Mr. Baldwin and Lord Beaverbrook, it will be the most astonishing electioneering victory in the history of English politics.

Let no one suppose that I am dealing with, still less blaming, individuals. Mr. Baldwin's duty in the matter differed from that of the two great newspaper proprietors. Each of these could from day to day say and write what he himself judged to be proper to any emergency of that day. Mr. Baldwin, on the other hand, was charged with fiduciary responsibility for the interests of the party as a whole and more particularly, in the dangerous days, with preserving the unity of the only instrument which may still stand—if it be not already too late—between this Empire and its complete economic and political collapse. Mr. Baldwin, therefore, was evidently not his own master in the matter.

In this dilemma, and as Lord Beaverbrook has informed us, at his suggestion, Mr. Baldwin turned to the Referendum. And now within a very short period disagreement has sprung up even upon a matter so recently composed.

And here, while I make it plain that I approve entirely of Lord Beaverbrook's present estimate of the impracticability of the Referendum, I do not think that his grievance upon this particular point against the managers of the Conservative Party can be sustained. He says that they have construed the arrangement in a manner contrary to its spirit. But it was precisely because members of the Unionist Party notoriously differed among themselves as to the possibility of carrying food taxes that the clumsy and dangerous expedient of the Referendum was adopted.

Who, for instance, would ever have dreamed of the

Referendum if all members of the Unionist Party had been free traders; or if they had all been in favour of a limited taxation of food? And when the Referendum was adopted it became immediately certain that while all men would fall down and worship the Referendum as an abstraction each would continue to hold and to inculcate his own particular economic doctrine in the hope that this new graven image would incline its head.

For this reason Lord Beaverbrook has no grievance in my opinion; but he can on merit (and this is more important) make out a very strong case for the revision of an agreement reached, it seemed to us outsiders, so swiftly and so heedlessly.

Have those who subscribed so readily to this device really not studied its history? Do they not remember that in the years 1909-10 the incomparable mind and immense subtlety of Arthur Balfour were directed to this very problem? That he was forced to accept it, I imagine, with an ironical smile, because he too saw that only so, for a fugitive moment, could he preserve the apparent unity of the party in an exactly analogous crisis? And have they forgotten, too, the complete failure of the attempt; the death roll exacted in equal proportions from Free Traders and Protectionists; the penalty alike terrible and inexorable which waits upon, and one day overwhelms, the statesman who hesitates and balances between courses irreconcilably divergent?

I myself remember the great Tariff Reform Banquet held at the White City after the failure of this unhappy experiment, at which the principal speakers were my oldest and best political friend, Sir Austen Chamberlain, the late Bonar Law, and myself. There still linger in my mind the echoes of the eloquent speech, cheered to the echo, in which Sir Austen Chamberlain declared that never again should the Tariff Reform Party be entangled in the meshes of this constitutional novelty.

If a Referendum was difficult when the proposal came from the lips of the late Lord Balfour, surely it has not

become easier to-day. The Committee of Trade Unions which has examined the economic situation has recently produced a report as refreshing as it was unexpected.

I have not a high opinion either of the intellect or of the experience of the second Labour Government, but I cannot believe that they will altogether neglect an indication so plain. Is it not, on the contrary, clear that unless they have taken leave completely of their senses they will exhaust the whole subject at the next Imperial Conference, not in any spirit of hostility, but in the honeyed tones of men who know that another possible buyer is in the market ?

I forget, though I was a member of it, how long the last Imperial Conference lasted; but I know that its deliberations endured over many weeks. Does anyone really suppose that if the present Government have with frankness and deliberation reviewed the whole inter-imperial trade situation, we can expect the Prime Ministers to reassemble from the ends of the world on an invitation issuing a month or two later from a party which is unlikely, in the circumstances supposed, to have an overwhelming majority, and many of whose members are in very imperfect sympathy with the views of Lord Beaverbrook ?

And how are we to deal with the situation in the case of purely bilateral arrangements, involving the taxation of some article of food ? Are we to have little Referenda upon these separately ? And is the major Referendum to be taken upon the Budget as a whole, or upon a general issue attempted (hopeless task !) to be stated in the terms of a formula ?

If the former, as must surely be the case, is it genuinely supposed that we can deny to a future Socialist Government the claim in their turn to submit a whole Budget to the decision of the electorate ?

Will this help us ? Or is it seriously supposed that one party in the State, and one party alone, can for its own purposes claim to graft a principle so novel upon

our constitution? The novelty, of course, lies in this fact—that it has heretofore been supposed, both prudently and conservatively, that the electorate discharged its duties when it registered its vote; and that thereafter responsibility passed to the Government of the day, which could in case of grave error be corrected or dismissed.

The difficulty with which, to make the matter short, we are confronted is that we have become advocates of a policy on the face of it logical enough, but unhappily incapable of execution, and carrying within its womb the seed of horrible dangers.

I am well enough aware that it is easier far to call attention to a difficulty than to elucidate it. "A fool," it was well said, "can ask more questions in five minutes than a wise man can answer in an hour," but this reflection, obvious as it is, does little to help us in the situation in which we find ourselves. To many of us it seems that extrication must at any price be found; otherwise, that we perish, and with us the cause to which Lord Beaverbrook has devoted so much zeal and energy; Lord Rothermere such pertinacious combatism; and Mr. Baldwin so much patient conciliation.

The writer, though taking little part in active politics, may be permitted one observation of a general kind. Sherlock Holmes commanded years ago our admiration by pointing out that when you had exhausted the impossible, that which remained, however improbable, must be accepted. Even to my youthful mind the logic seemed faulty, for there might be three impossible solutions and three which were improbable. Avoiding this fallacy, it is certainly our duty, if we wish the Unionist Party to succeed, to confess error, as greater men have done before us. Let us at least adopt a policy which *may* succeed and not seal our own death warrants by clinging obstinately to one which history and contemporary reflection alike teach us can never in any foreseeable circumstances lead to the goal of achievement.

IV

THE PERIL TO INDIA.—I

IT would be the duty of anyone who has held responsible office in the Government of India in the last few years to remain silent, if silence could be justified in relation to the situation which is developing before our eyes in India to-day.

I was for nearly five years Secretary of State for India during a period in which many grave causes for anxiety presented themselves and required decision. With the aid of the Viceroys with whom I was successively associated it proved possible to govern India without either formidable disorder or insupportable political crises.

The situation with which we are suddenly confronted is of a wholly different character. I could, if I chose to do so, take the easier path of silence. But I consider that the situation is too grave to justify any man who studied Indian politics for four and a half years with constant industry, and with exceptional sources of information, in remaining silent.

It is proper that I should explain the causes which have led me to this conclusion.

The Montagu-Chelmsford Act provided for a statutory reconsideration, after a determined period, of the political situation in India. The Commission to be appointed pursuantly to the provisions of that Act was invited to report upon the progress of the qualified self-government accorded under its provisions to India and to recommend either an extension of those powers or a restriction of them.

It is extremely important to observe that these reforms themselves contemplated that the experience of the years which were to intervene before the re-decision might not only fail to justify an increase in the powers of self-government but might positively require an inroad upon those powers.

Indian politicians, mostly educated in the school of that Western learning which they pretend so much to despise, may forget these hard facts. They cannot be too plainly or too frequently reminded of them. If they proved themselves able to justify the Montagu-Chelmsford experiment they might reasonably expect a more generous addition to the powers conceded to them.

If they proved themselves unworthy, or, through political adolescence, incompetent, they were equally by the terms of the same Act warned that the powers already conceded might be curtailed.

What happened when these reforms, generously if too optimistically conceded, became operative? The concessions, made widely in advance of anything hitherto dreamed of as possible, were treated with contempt. The Prince of Wales, son of the King-Emperor, was insulted when he visited India. The nature of this organized insult may be measured by the observation of a Calcutta tradesman who was compelled to close his shop on a busy day by placing in front of it the placard, "Go back, Simon!" and was heard to observe: "It is a day very promising for business and I never heard of Simon. But I do not want my shop wrecked."

Co-incidentally with these discourtesies, so utterly out of harmony with Eastern traditions of hospitality, there arose a political campaign so stupid, so insensate, and so hysterical that it was almost impossible for any Minister to keep in touch with the fashionable follies of the moment.

When I first became Secretary of State I was assailed by complaints because I would not accelerate the Statutory Commission. I steadfastly refused to accelerate it so long as violent and seditional disorder existed in

India. For eighteen months I was violently, ignorantly, and libellously abused by the most illiterate Press in the world—that is to say, the Indian vernacular Press. But after nine months firm measures imposed reasonable behaviour upon the most superficial hotheads in the world.

Thereupon, consistently with my promise, I accelerated the appointment of the Simon Commission. How was this received by the intelligentsia of India, who lashed themselves into a fury because I would not accelerate its appointment? Did they say, "Well, the Commission ought to have been appointed sooner, but, at least, it has been appointed now; we will attempt to co-operate with it, as we logically must, because we insisted upon its appointment a year ago?"

On the contrary, before Sir John Simon, incomparably a greater lawyer than the subtlety of Indian brains has ever produced, had landed in India, those who had blackguarded me in the vernacular Press for not appointing the Commission earlier, immediately began to assail the Commission in terms of "Go back, Simon."

The Simon Commission was appointed with the unanimous assent of all parties in the State, and without one discordant vote in either the House of Commons or the House of Lords.

Those rash advisers of the Indian people, ignorant of the military helplessness of the populations on whose behalf they presumed to speak, utterly incapable of defending either their sea coast from attack without English aid, or securing their internal domestic polity from anarchy without English arms, have chosen to defy the Commission for which every party in the State is responsible.

To judge by the speeches which are made by old Harrow boys and members of the Inns of Court, who ought to despise Western civilization so much that they would not condescend to speak its language, but who owe their own capacity for mischief to the education

which they have derived from the West, they have reached the conclusion that if the despised English left India to-morrow, a happy and united country would acclaim the political rebirth of a great sub-continent and its leaders in the noisy malcontents of the moment.

The greatest proof of the incompetence of those leaders of the politically-minded Indian, who owe their language, their science, and their sophisticated commercial system to the West, is that they have completely failed to realize what would happen to India if the British Raj was withdrawn.

They are a collection, in fact, of very inferior Kerenskis. Supposing that we disappeared to-morrow, what would happen to the Hindus? Do they think they could succeed by perorations with the Moslems? The Moslems belong to a harder stock. They never argued, they had other means of convincing, until peace was imposed by that great Western dominating force which imposed alike the Pax Romana, the toleration of creeds, and the sacredness of individual freedom.

It is a commonplace that if Great Britain left India to-morrow India would dissolve into an anarchy comparable to that which exists in China to-day. It would be a poor compensation that we should hear the English-educated lawyers (or those who survived) eloquently explaining the excellency of their intentions and the soundness of their law.

The truth is that from the moment the Simon Commission was constituted, by the majestic authority of the State, to report to Parliament upon that which ought to be done, it was madness to interfere with or to attempt to anticipate its decisions.

After all, the history of the intervention of England in India has been very decisive. It has never been very much impeded (or, it may be added, assisted) by neurotic and eloquent lawyers, most of whom, it may be repeated, owe their education to the Inns of Court. If any sanity prevailed in those who are conducting Indian affairs

to-day they would at least realize some contact of theory with power.

India may be indulged with a great deal of sentiment from the Socialist Government, and a little more even than the average from Mr. Wedgwood Benn. But there is not the slightest chance under any British Government that there will be such an abandonment of the English position in India as will expose these glib theoretical revolutionaries to the risks which they undoubtedly deserve.

They are so incapable of any reasoning that has relation to reality that they entirely ignore the Indian Princes and their dominions. The March Hare never had so serious a rival as the modern Indian left-winger. You may tell him that the peasants are entirely ignorant of his existence; you may tell him that the Moslems, who are a stronger race, would crush him and his friends to death if our forces were withdrawn; you may tell him that the cruel wrongs of the untouchable classes must for ever estrange their oppressors from the civilization of the world; and you leave them cold.

If they are prepared to challenge these issues, ignorantly and rashly, invoking the methods of civil disobedience, then I say plainly, as I should have said when I was Secretary of State, we must either make this a plain trial of strength or we must abdicate our duties in the East.

To me it was incredible that the so-called Police of the Congress should have been allowed at Lahore to assume the capacity, quite incompetently discharged, as I understand, of maintaining order.

No police should be allowed to maintain any order in India who are not commissioned by the British Raj. And any callow youths who usurp functions not permitted to them should be immediately chastised.

And even more, those who dare to invade the great principles upon which British authority depends in India must be immediately challenged and arraigned. Nor

must you deal with inferiors; you must correct those who control and inspire these insane movements.

I was myself very interested in the speech recently made by Earl Russell, the Under-Secretary for India. It has created quite an uproar both in England and in India. Honest speeches often do. And yet this is the first honest utterance which has been made by any British Minister since the present crisis developed.

I warned the Government, while there was still time to correct this folly, of the madness of authorizing the Viceroy to put forward in ambiguous language Dominion Home Rule as a goal.

The arguments used in my letter have never been answered because they happen to be unanswerable. Yet the Government in its folly, and ignoring the warning of myself, for nearly five years Secretary of State; of Lord Reading, for many years Viceroy; of Sir John Simon, chairman of the Commission, authorized this foolish and deceiving declaration.

And now at last Lord Russell has spoken the truth. He has said what is indisputably true, that Dominion Status is inconceivable in any application to existing conditions in India. The fuller exposition of Lord Russell's speech has increased my admiration for his judgment. For it does not lessen its effect but increases it. He has had the courage to remind us of the long and painful years in which the conception of Dominion Status has been worked out in those communities which share our language, our tradition, and our civilization. He gave a deep and very necessary warning to the sentimentalists to whose folly the Government has so weakly pandered.

If anyone thinks that Earl Russell can be swept aside I should think that they misconceived both the situation and the man. He is a lawyer of ability; he is incomparably the ablest speaker on the Government benches in the House of Lords; in fact, in my opinion, he is among the first four speakers in the House of Lords.

In ability and experience, in the general philosophy of life, he is so much superior to the world's best-known political featherweight, Mr. Wedgwood Benn, that I can imagine Lord Russell desires nothing better than that his so-called chief should challenge an utterance which for sincerity and force will command the support of every political party in this country. If it came to a debate between Mr. Wedgwood Benn and Lord Russell, I have little doubt where the weight of ability, sincerity, and argument would rest.

It was indeed a misfortune of almost inconceivable dimensions that the Viceroy should have persuaded the Government, or that the Government should have persuaded the Viceroy, to acquiesce in this most unconvincing and dangerous statement.

No one, of course, ought to have been allowed to say a word until the Simon Commission had reported. Every word that was said authoritatively before the Report of the Simon Commission, was said, intentionally or not, in treachery to the authority of the Commission. Its members had the authority to decide whether or no events in India in the last few years have moved for or against an advance.

England and Parliament were awaiting to hear their recommendations and to treat them as of the highest authority. Until they had reported, nobody—not the Government itself—was entitled to say a word. They were ignorantly and sentimentally short-circuited. The result could have easily been foreseen by anyone who had studied the mentality of the East.

Nobody knew whether the Simon Commission was prepared to recommend Dominion Status. But everyone who believed reasonably in their sanity knew that that could not be. The moment "Dominion Status" was used by the Viceroy, his Indian negotiators put the matter a step higher. They asked at once whether he would assign a date to the establishment of Dominion Status. He naturally replied that he could not. They

thereupon abandoned Dominion Status altogether, and concentrated upon independence. We are to-day confronted by the situation that the independence of India, in relation to British Government and all that it involves, is the claim of the politically-articulate elements in India. Well, before that issue is settled a great deal will happen.

But before it arises, it may be assumed that, unnecessarily and inadvisedly as the issue of Dominion Status has been raised, some important discussions upon that subject may take place. I shall, therefore, hope in a further article to point out that the present political development in India makes the application of Dominion Status a ludicrous idea. As far as the root of the matter extends you might just as well make India independent as concede Dominion Status, for she is as fit for the one as for the other. And the result of conceding one would be identical with the results of conceding the other.

The one certain thing which emerges from any discussion of " Dominion Status " is the uncertain meaning of this term. I cannot within reasonable limits of space consider all the various conditions which lie between " modified Dominion Status " and " complete Dominion Status." A distinguished authority on constitutional government, I remember, described the representation of India in the Imperial War Cabinet in 1917 and her inclusion as an original member of the League of Nations as " the admission of India to Dominion Status." This was a superficial and a thoughtless claim.

A more popular understanding of the term, however, would appear to approximate it to an even looser phrase, Autonomy. It was, in my opinion, an error on Lord Irwin's part to use the expression at a moment when this opinion is generally held by those to whom he addressed his statement. Undoubtedly " Dominion Status " is to-day regarded, in India and elsewhere, as practically synonymous with Autonomy.

Some extreme Indian politicians assure us that even Autonomy would not meet with their approval; they demand complete independence. If it can be shown that India is not yet ripe for Autonomy, and is not likely to become so in any but a very remote future, the case for independence is, of course, ridiculous. I argue upon the assumption (though it is extremely dubious) that one can draw any real distinction between Autonomy and independence.

I will preface my consideration of the practicability of Dominion Status by quoting an English and an Indian opinion.

Lord Hardinge, in his farewell speech as Viceroy to the Imperial Legislative Council at Delhi in 1916, said: "During the past few months I have seen mention made in speeches at meetings in the country, and in the Press, of Self-Government, Colonial Self-Government, and Home Rule for India. I have often wondered whether these speakers and writers fully realize the conditions prevailing in Dominions, such as Canada or Australia, which render self-government possible. I wish that some of them could visit the Dominions and see for themselves. A study of the history of these Dominions would show that the development of their present self-governing institutions has been achieved, not by any sudden stroke of statesmanship, but by a process of steady and patient evolution which has gradually united and raised all classes of the community to the level of their enhanced responsibilities."

Lord Hardinge might have added that the Dominions of the British Empire were nations which had enjoyed for many years all the constructive advantages of internal peace, federation, literacy, and democracy. Incidentally, Earl Russell, who said nothing else, may well have had this speech in mind.

And the Aga Khan, at a somewhat earlier date, made a statement which is even more demonstrably true to-day than when it was made. "In India no such

union as is essential to the creation of a strong, independent, homogeneous State is possible without centuries of consolidation. Even if we assume that the forces tending to unification are quickened by the machinery of modern civilization, generations must pass before India is a nation." It is worth notice in this connexion that no vernacular tongue in the lingual Babel which is India contains a word for either "India" or "Indian."

Dominion Status, as commonly understood, may probably be taken to imply three main degrees of autonomy: the control by the Dominion of its internal administration, especially the maintenance of order; the control of its fiscal arrangements; and, within certain limits, the conduct of its own foreign affairs, and of its defences against foreign Powers. Dominion Status does not mean, by the way, that the only bond with the Mother Country is the Crown, for, as Mr. Hughes has pointed out in regard to Australia, his Majesty's Ministers in London are at present generally assumed to remain the supreme constitutional authority.

Let me examine to what extent India is, or can shortly become, capable of undertaking the various duties mentioned above.

I begin with the question of internal administration. Contrary to the belief of many legal agitators, there is nothing whatever in the idea of Dominion Status which makes it necessary to include a democratic system of Parliamentary government on Western lines. No more dangerous experiment could be attempted in India.

There are in India, out of a total of some 319,000,000 inhabitants, about 217,000,000 of Hindus, 69,000,000 of Mohammedans, chiefly in the North and North-West, but represented in every part of the peninsula; 11,000,000 of Buddhists, chiefly in Burma; 10,000,000 of Animists, chiefly in the wilder places; 5,000,000 of Christians; and 3,250,000 of Sikhs.

But even these divisions give too simple a picture of

the situation. India is roughly of the same size and it contains the same number of people as Europe. Just as Europe has never become a single nation, and is divided into many separate and often antagonistic peoples, so India comprises, in a far greater degree, a heterogeneous population, riddled by differences of race, religion, caste, interest, and sect.

The Hindu ranks are divided, first, into many races, and again into castes; many millions of them belong to the "untouchables," whose very presence is anathema to the higher castes. The divisions of the Mohammedans into their two predominant sects is not so important, since one of these is in an overwhelming majority. The Christians include not merely the Europeans, but also the Anglo-Indians and the native Christians.

Then there are the Indian States, under their hereditary rulers, who enjoy very large measures of administrative independence, secured to them by treaties with the British Government which are inviolate and inviolable.

Is there the slightest possibility that any "Indian" Government could possibly maintain peace and order among these various peoples? We know that hardly a month passes now without an outbreak of sectarian disorder in some or other part of India. Raising the age of consent from ten to twelve provoked bitter outbreaks. In one place the slaughter of cows for food by Mohammedans will rouse their Hindu neighbours to hysterical demonstrations of violence. Or Hindus arrange a procession which bitterly offends Mohammedan prejudice by interfering with worship in their mosques. Or accusations of kidnapping rouse the bazaars against Pathans and Sikhs.

No matter how glibly a few seditionists on political platforms may declare the unanimity of Hindu and Mohammedan aspirations, the vast bulk of the people of India knows nothing of such unity. These populations live in a state of perpetual hostility, the manifestations

of which are, and can only be, suppressed by the firm action of the British authorities.

The terrible incidents of the recent Mopla outbreak on the Malabar coast prove how high religious passion can rise between Hindu and Mohammedan, even in that sheltered portion of the peninsula. While the Hindus outnumber the Mohammedans by three to one, the latter are decidedly the more effective in arms. The only time in history prior to British rule when India could even by a severe stretch of the imagination be regarded as a nation was when the Mogul emperors ruled at Delhi, and the Hindus were subjugated to them. British rule alone stands between the Hindus and a Mopla rising on a Continental scale. The savage countries which lie about the North-West frontier are peopled by Mohammedan tribesmen, who regard a raid into India as a pleasant, profitable, and safe form of activity. We have to inquire whether an autonomous India could conceivably protect its inhabitants from these and analagous perils.

The first line of authority is, of course, the police. It is known to everyone, English and Indian alike, that the whole strength of the present police force in India rests on its English chiefs. The Indian police officer is bitterly abused by his compatriots on the platform and in the Press; his native subordinates are, perhaps, sometimes corruptible and subject to religious and caste pressure. Moreover, the anti-British politicians are doing their best to weaken the force.

An official Behar and Orissa report complains that, since local administration has fallen more into Indian hands, " the expenditure in the Police Budget every year is vigorously attacked." To avoid swelling the total, funds for necessary reforms have been obtained by reducing existing expenditure rather than by asking the Council to vote new money; and it is to be noted that, though the number of police is lower in proportion to the population than in any Province in India, the

total force has been reduced since 1921 by nearly 800 officers and men, in order to provide a living wage for the remainder.

"The institution of a detective school and the employment of a detective staff, measures which are urgently required to-day to cope with organized crime, have been held up. The housing of the police in suitable barracks and stations is still of vital importance, but the amount of money assigned for the purpose annually is insufficient." A purely Indian police would, as the whole world knows, be unfitted for and incapable of discharging the onerous tasks committed to it.

The second line would be the army, officered and manned, we must suppose, wholly by Indians. It is true that many advocates of Dominion Status imagine that English officers would continue to serve in an Indianized army, but this is, of course, an absurd dream. What is more to the point is that no Indian troops of any military value would long consent to serve under officers except those of their own particular race. In this way the army would break up into its territorial units, which would inevitably—at the best—fall back upon their own territories.

The armed forces of India, bereft of the English military hierarchy, would become little armies concentrated in the north and north-west of the peninsula and in the Indian States. Not one regiment would respect or obey the commands of the glib legal politicians who to-day claim the capacity to rule the whole country. Why should they?

The position of the Indian States may be noticed in this connexion. What do the politicians and lawyers propose to do with those territories, which embrace so many millions of their fellow-countrymen? The general impression in Swarajist circles is, I understand, that the princes are to be overthrown and their States joined up with the rest of India. But the princes are men of courage and experience. They have

their armies. Their subjects are in the main devoted to them.

This second fact, often disputed, is made clear by the fact that at the last census only 125,000 of their subjects were shown to have crossed into British India, despite the attractions provided by the development of industries in the latter territory and the undoubtedly greater degree of toleration there for minorities. And not merely will the princes resist—it must be supposed, effectively resist, and with our support—attempts to undermine their authority, but they, too, have their differences. Is it conceivable that any autonomous Indian authority will be able to prevent a prince or a league of princes taking arms against a rival when a sufficient cause, territorial or sectarian, presents itself?

For many years now, and with a rapid recent increase, Indians have held positions of responsibility in local administrations. It is germane to my subject to examine what impression their work has made upon skilled observers. I will quote from some 1927 reports upon the effects of local self-government under the Montagu reforms of 1919.

The Bengal Government observed of the Swarajist control of the Calcutta Corporation, that "Until the administration is conducted in the interests of the inhabitants of Calcutta and not of a political party, the chances of an improved administration are small."

The Government of Behar and Orissa observed that "The electors are too apathetic to combine, and their votes are generally secured by appeals to pecuniary, religious and other motives. Meanwhile the misappropriation of public funds is generally regarded more as a subject for mirth or envy than for reprobation."

From the Central Provinces came this statement: "The state of accounts of local bodies has, generally speaking, deteriorated. . . . The affairs of local bodies are in a state of confusion."

And the Bombay Government printed an illuminating

table with regard to 155 municipalities. The first column of figures, after the date, enumerates cases of the embezzlement of municipal funds; the second, arrears of revenue (in rupees) in municipal towns; the third, the municipalities with a bad record of collection. It should be noted that the first three years came before the Reforms:

1916-17 ..	3 ..	296,555 ..	7
1917-18 ..	5 ..	430,000 ..	6
1918-19 ..	15 ..	406,000 ..	7
1919-20 ..	19 ..	373,000 ..	16
1920-21 ..	30 ..	504,741 ..	19
1921-22 ..	16 ..	872,575 ..	34
1922-23 ..	38 ..	1,089,825 ..	36
1923-24 ..	40 ..	1,058,068 ..	37
1924-25 ..	51 ..	1,137,500 ..	64

Such is the distressing record of incompetence and corruption which already accompany the increased responsibility of Indians in their own affairs.

Since Indian officialdom has shown itself so insufficient in the minor economic affairs of the country, it is senseless to argue that it should be permitted to control the finances of the whole nation. It must not be forgotten that at least £100,000,000 of European capital is invested in India; the trusteeship of this vast wealth cannot be abandoned to the incompetence of the eloquent perorationmonger.

Sir Basil Blackett has told us of the Legislative Assembly, the supreme "Parliamentary" body of India, that "Every opportunity that is given to it of showing that it has a responsibility, and can use it, is taken to prove that it is irresponsible." Yet the elected members of the Assembly represent the cream of Indian democracy. One hundred and four of them are elected by less than 1,000,000 voters. It must be remembered that, despite all the educational efforts of the Government, only about

22,500,000 out of nearly 300,000,000 in British India are literate, and of these perhaps only 1,250,000 could pass an elementary educational test. Yet the Swarajists think that they can build a democratic Dominion upon this scanty foundation, further dissipated as it is by racial, religious and caste differences.

I turn finally to the question of foreign policy and national defence. We have already considered the impossibility of an efficient Indianized army. This in itself removes any hope that an autonomous Dominion of India could manage its own foreign affairs; a policy which depends, as the Swarajist must, on a rotten prop will be rotten from the outset. How long would the Bengalis last if once a virile invasion swept down upon their rich country? Not one day. And we should not be there to save them.

"Complete Dominion Status"—entailing the complete control by nationals of the internal administration of their country, the conduct of its fiscal policy, the development of its resources, and its defence against foreign Powers—requires a united and an experienced people, trained in the art of government. India is not such a nation. It is not a nation at all—it is a continent of separate and mutually hostile fragments.

The self-appointed apostles of Swaraj have already shown themselves incapable of exercising such limited administrative rights as have been granted them. No one but a madman or a Lansbury can imagine, after a consideration of the facts which I have briefly outlined here, that "Dominion Status" in a form involving autonomy can safely be conceded to India within any assignable or predictable period.

No honest English statesman can, in my judgment, be found who will say that Dominion Status for India is attainable in the near future. Why, then, lie about it?

V

THE PERIL TO INDIA.—II

SOME months have elapsed between the publication of the previous article and the writing of this one. The former was based upon carefully considered information that it was the intention of the Viceroy to hold out to the peoples of India, while the Simon Commission was still sitting, the prospect of Dominion Self-Government. The step so indicated was attended by so many inconveniences and dangers that I should have hesitated to accept it as conceivable if the sources of my information had afforded the slightest material for uncertainty.

The Viceroy published his speech with the consent of the Government, and we have been in the position day by day to witness in operation the dangers which I foresaw.

Among the peoples of India a phrase instantaneously becomes a fact, so that everyone naturally assumed that the words to which I and others so strongly objected as coming from the lips of the Viceroy meant the supercession of the Simon Commission. They were construed exactly as I had foreseen. The mischiefs against which I and others had raised our voices in vain have mostly followed, although many assuredly lie still in front of us.

But nevertheless, for all these months I have taken no further part in the Indian discussion. I chose rather to adopt the course which I had urged upon the Government and the Viceroy, of waiting until the Simon Commission had presented its Report; and of deciding, after

its careful study, whether it should or should not receive the approval of Parliament.

I would, indeed, myself have preferred that the matter had been dealt with without the intervention—not originally contemplated by Parliament—of the Round Table Conference. But it was understood that Sir John Simon himself took a different view, and I was not, and am not, prepared to express any public difference from his conclusion upon a matter to which he has devoted so much thought and attention.

My purpose in writing the present article is to express the deep alarm which I and others have felt at hearing that another Vice-Regal Proclamation, or Explanation, is contemplated. Who needs it? Who has asked for it? Who will benefit by it? Who will be injured by it? The only purpose of making a statement at this moment, immediately on the appearance of the Simon Report, must be either to explain it to modify it, to support it or to disparage it.

It needs at this stage neither explanation nor modification. Still less is this the appropriate moment for the Viceroy either to support it or to disparage it. It is, on the contrary, entirely unconstitutional that the Viceroy should express any opinion whatever, with or without the approval of the Government, until the report has been carefully considered, either by Parliament or by some delegated body.

If it be true that it is the intention of the Viceroy to repeat his most unfortunate recurrence into the topic of Dominion Self-Government for India at the very moment when the report, rejecting on its every page such a recommendation, is about to be debated in Parliament, he will on the whole commit one of the gravest errors of judgment which the recent history of India affords.

It is even indicated that in order to create a suitable atmosphere for amicable debate a general amnesty should be proclaimed in favour of those who have so

recently and grossly violated the law. It is almost difficult to believe that such imbecility can be contemplated, but the evidence upon which the statement rests is furnished by very high authority. If it be well founded we are to empty the gaols of law-breakers in order to equip the Round Table with witnesses, replacing, it is to be supposed, our prisons by new law-breakers, who will be immediately released for the same specific purpose.

If such an attempt should be in contemplation, Parliament, one may happily reflect, is still not without a means of dealing with the matter.

The course properly to be adopted is so apparent that it cannot be stated without recourse to platitude. The Commission Report is a masterly piece of work. This does not mean that it is to be accepted as verbally inspired, and verbally unalterable throughout. But it does mean that it should be given a chance. It does mean that it should be accepted prima facie as an honest and able attempt made by men of all parties to give honest advice to the Monarch who appointed them and the Houses of Parliament, which, without a dissentient vote, concurred in their appointment.

Since we are to have a Round Table Conference, let us at least see that the opinions of this Commission play the part which they alone can play, by affording the substance of the very protracted and confused discussions which are likely to take place among the variegated representatives, some of whom do, and some of whom apparently do not, intend to accept the invitation to attend.

Within a very short period we shall be aware of the Viceroy's recommendations. If I am asked why I do not wait until we have them in front of us, I shall reply that the information as to their proposed purpose is already definite and daily increases.

Generations of conquest and centuries of statecraft have been spent in the task of bringing order and civilization to India. Nearly every discovery, which is greedily

employed but ignorantly assailed and abused, has been borrowed from the inventive genius of the inhabitants of these islands. It has never been disputed that the process of destruction is at once simpler and more rapid than that of upbuilding.

I do not for a moment believe that Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and his associates are any more desirous of losing India than their Conservative predecessors. But I am deeply alarmed lest a great lack of experience, operated upon by heedlessness, coming from those alike in India and this country, whose primary duty it is to offer them advice, may not be preparing for us and for the Empire a tragedy of inconceivable magnitude.

The moment has certainly arrived in which it is the clear duty of those who have had occasion to study those subjects to influence opinion by such warnings and criticisms as seem most likely to effect their purpose.

When I wrote the above I expressed grave apprehension at the rumours which were prevalent in regard to the forthcoming speech of the Viceroy. I regret that I must make it plain that a study of the actual words of the statement strongly confirms the views to which I gave expression. The whole speech is so ambiguous that it is almost impossible to select from it any clear and unambiguous proposal.

But the Viceroy does make use of an expression which is the complete justification of the protest that some of us found it necessary to make six months ago.

He says: "It seems to me utter tragedy that the hand of friendship extended by Britain last November had not been grasped in the same spirit by those who could speak for India. The party of Congress has thrown aside the finest opportunity that India has ever had. I shall hope, however, that it may not yet be too late for wise counsels to prevail."

It is plainly admitted in the passage just set forth that the policy then adopted by the Viceroy has completely failed.

We have witnessed the degradation of an Indian Congress, policed by Congress police, assembling for the purpose of preaching sedition against this country. We have witnessed a postponed farce of the arrest of Gandhi, after all or nearly all the preliminary mischief contemplated by him had been attained. We have witnessed, too, all over India, insults and outrages to those who, with a loyalty impossible to overpraise, have sustained amid growing discouragement the cause of fidelity to the country in whose service they have pledged themselves.

And it is undoubtedly the most significant circumstance of all that, almost without exception, the Viceroy has found it necessary to incarcerate the very leaders who were selected by him as fellow-negotiators and counsellors before he made this most unhappy speech, now flagrantly and even more dangerously repeated.

Indeed, this part of the case deserves a short summary of its own. The Viceroy formulates a statement certain to mislead, and certain to disparage the authority of the Simon Commission. Against almost every conceivable warning, he persists in this course.

The result, after a few months, has been that almost all those recommended to us as holding authoritative views have since been placed in gaol by him who vouched for them, on the ground of seditious practices against the country which Lord Irwin represents in India.

Most responsible persons, if confronted by a falsification so complete of the assurances which they had given, and by disasters so grave as their direct consequences, would, it seems to me, have thought it necessary to re-examine the whole situation with a view to discovering whether it was not perhaps the case that they themselves, and their advisers in India, had been guilty of these ghastly errors, rather than those whose advice they so evidently resented at the time.

To most of us it seemed that the exhumation of the phrase, "Dominion Self-Government," in such a

connexion, would be treated as insulting by any intelligent person unless something was intended by it. But within a few days of the Viceroy's speech we find the Prime Minister in the House of Commons declaring that that speech had contributed nothing fresh to the existing situation. We are, therefore, left bewildered by a policy

1. Which is certain to be misunderstood;
2. Which in the only relevant sense is misunderstood; and
3. Which possesses the singularity that it, and it alone, could place both us, and incidentally the Viceroy, in the wrong in this matter.

In order to appreciate the extent of the mischief which has probably already been done, it is perhaps permissible for one who had no small part in the nomination of the Commissioners, and who had preliminary conversations with all of them before they undertook their labours, to recount the task which they were invited to discharge. They were to report to Parliament upon certain well-known and specified matters.

Upon their report, almost it might have been presumed an exclusive document, except in so far as it was reinforced by evidence, Parliament was to reach a conclusion.

The Commissioners, men of the highest position and reinforced by the unchallenged authority of both Houses and of all three parties, addressed themselves to their task. They have produced a document which is everywhere acclaimed as a masterly State paper. With its production, indeed, one would have assumed that, except where specially consulted, Lord Irwin's intervention in the matter would have come to an end.

Sir John Simon, however, came to the conclusion that it would be an advantage, presumably founding himself upon the hope of a settlement, to assent to a Round Table Conference not contemplated by the Act, and

only, indeed, to be brought about by the consent of himself and his colleagues.

I am sorry to set myself against the authority of the Commissioners upon this point, though I did so at the time. Very likely they were right and I was wrong. But I none the less was clearly of opinion that the moment we tampered with the machinery so clearly provided and so generally understood, we were involving ourselves in a series of doubts and difficulties.

Such, however, was the situation when the Viceroy made his speech. With every desire to be just, I must allow myself to express the view that his tribute to the Simon Commission is both perfunctory and inadequate. It is no doubt to be gravely considered by everyone, but, after all, it is binding upon no one. Your salt extractors and your Congress police and your police assassins may, through their representatives, re-examine the whole matter *de novo*.

Certain evilly disposed persons, on the arrival of Sir John Simon and his friends, received them with banners hospitably inscribed, "Go back, Simon!" The Viceroy has barely escaped the atmosphere of this reception.

And apparently matters are to be still further clarified by the enlargement of the Commission with an Indian Secretariat, and with a relationship wholly undefined, in relation alike to the Simon Commission and the Simon Commission Round Table.

Who is to be the chairman of this Commission? Is the way to be made smooth by an amnesty? Who is to determine the procedure and the agenda? How far, if at all, are any of the topics dealt with in the Simon Report to be excluded? Or are we once again to plough this exhausted soil?

> "I see no reason," we are told, "why from a frank discussion on all sides a scheme might not emerge for submission to Parliament which would

confound the pessimism of those who say it is impossible for Great Britain and India, or for various interests in India, to reach agreement."

It is interesting to know that Lord Irwin and his advisers hold these views, for it is quite certain that no other instructed person does. And how disastrously sorry Lord Irwin has already been is already admitted by himself.

The language of the speech, as I have already indicated, is so vague that I or any other man accustomed to read public documents may have completely misunderstood the purpose of the Viceroy. But in the main I do not think that we have done so. And if this view be well founded, observe into what morasses we have been projected. The only bribe offered to the new Commissioners is that the Simon Commission findings do not fetter them.

It is in addition thrown out, and, indeed, very plainly suggested, that such a Commission might hopefully adopt the suggestion, "Dominion Status."

Now it cannot be too plainly stated, or too often repeated, that there is not the slightest prospect of any Government conceding to India in our lifetimes what is known to constitutional lawyers and statesmen all the world over as Dominion Status. Once again, then, we shall be accused, and justly accused, of having brought into existence the whole of this futile paraphernalia in order to delude those who are upheld by the view that there is some prospect of its adoption if recommended.

Six months ago I said that it had become known to me that the Viceroy intended making his November statement. I pointed out that it would fail, and why it would fail. I take leave to claim in the retrospect that every prediction I made has been supported by subsequent events; and that the anticipations of the Viceroy have been at least as gravely falsified.

How long the present Government intends to

encourage him in the view that he can go on hopefully repeating his grotesque panacea I do not know. But of this I am assured, that its employment should not be further encouraged upon his lips until he and those with whom he co-operates are prepared to accompany it by a clear and logical, even if a brief, statement of that which they have in mind when they speak of Dominion Status.

VI

THE DESPISED POLITICIAN

IT is a curious sidelight on contemporary psychology that no phrase has survived from the War period which corresponds in its censure or soldiers with the ubiquitous sneer of "damned politicians." The reason must certainly not be looked for in any superfluity of general respect for the professional soldier; no joke was more heartily appreciated during the War than the suggestion that German units were censured if they killed any British officer above the rank of colonel. The lack of a conventional term of contumely for the professional soldier may, perhaps, be due to an instinctive desire to keep the right side of men who may in certain eventualities hold one's life in their hands. The old lady who bowed in church whenever the Devil was mentioned—because, she explained, "One never knows what may happen, and politeness costs nothing"—has her counterpart in the multitude who rejected the soldier's claim to infallibility in the War but choose nowadays to echo his complaints of the "damned politicians."

The popular contempt in which politicians (and lawyers, who so often make the best politicians) are supposed to be held in this country—it is, of course, much more apparent than real—may, on the other hand, be explained by the fact that most men are jealous of those who surpass them in their own province. Every voter is, to some extent, a politician; every man who can argue is a lawyer in embryo. We cannot forgive

our superiors, though we may permit success in other spheres.

It is the privilege of democracies to cast down their own idols. Until human nature changes, politicians will for ever remain damned by the populace. They must be, they usually are, content to accept this thorn with the roses of their power. Fame is their spur; they aspire to throw off the chrysalis of the politician for the radiant wings of a statesman; when they succeed, they can well afford to despise the squeaking of the human ladder up which they tread the path to glory.

Nor indeed are they defenceless. Even a "damned politician" will turn. Not long ago I happened to touch in a public speech on the theme of the "damned politician." Possibly some of the arguments which I adduced in his defence are worth recalling to the reader's attention. First, I pointed out that no capable member of any modern government but makes immense personal sacrifices in order to remain in office. The nominal salary of a Cabinet Minister is £5,000 a year, but there are few members of modern Cabinets who could not make thrice that amount if they devoted themselves with equal energy to private enterprise. There is no sense, except the sense of duty, which keeps the ablest brains in the public service.

I reminded my audience that it was the despised politicians who forced on unconvinced generals the power and resources of mechanical warfare. Against the whole force of the General Staff, it was the politicians who insisted upon the employment of tanks. The only request we made to the Army was that they would not employ this weapon prematurely. They derided and in every way disparaged it. But having done so, as soon as the tanks were delivered they prematurely and uselessly exposed this supreme weapon, which, if safeguarded and husbanded, might have won the final battle of the War. Sir William Robertson, in his memoirs, makes barely more than a reference to the tanks which

revolutionized the whole of warfare. Yet he was, at the most critical moment of the war, Chief of the Imperial General Staff.

Sir William Robertson is a soldier from whom it is impossible to withhold respect and admiration. A man who, without personal or family influence, can rise from a trooper to a field-marshal in the British army is clearly one of superlative qualities. And I feel for him a more particular sympathy in that my own father, running away from his Birkenhead home as a boy of sixteen, enlisted as a private soldier; I have lately re-read with keen appreciation the recollections of his early army experiences in his book, "From Private to Field-Marshal." But it is not with the early part of this book that I am concerned here; but with such portions of the rest as define the writer's outlook upon what I may call the philosophy of war. It does not seem to me that he fully appreciates the changing values of a changing world.

He is concerned, for example, to emphasize—what no one, except perhaps writers of grossly false "War novels," would think of denying—the valour and endurance of the British soldier in the field. But he does so in a manner which implies a depreciation of the other forces which contributed to our victory in the Great War. He says, "Since the War ended we have been asked to believe that the Allies owe their victory to the foresight and energy of some political leader or other, to the employment of certain mechanical contrivances, to the enormous output of munitions, to unity of command, to the rottenness of autocratic government, and so on, according to the taste or interest of those who expressed or inspired these statements. Perhaps the statements were not meant to be taken literally, for no man of sense would attribute our victory to any one cause, especially as all classes combined so loyally to secure it. Still, they were rather frequently made, and therefore it is well to remind ourselves occasionally of the

endurance and heroism displayed by the fighting men, notably in the retreat from Mons, in the three battles of Ypres, on the Somme, and in the desperate struggles of 1918. I sometimes think that the French set us an example in this respect, for they invariably award chief credit for success to their armies alone, and are careful not to detract from it by the advancement of other claims."

The point at issue is surely whether our heroic and patient troops were used to the best advantage, or whether they were flung away in a cruel and wasteful manner.

For General Robertson is a devotee of what I may call the " decisive point " theory. That is to say, he accepts as the cardinal principle of generalship, that all available resources shall be concentrated at a " decisive point," which he defines as " the place where the main decision of the war is to be fought out." In his memoirs, the Field-Marshal tells us that " There may be a difference of opinion as to where that point should be, but there should never be more than one such point at a time, and once the selection is made, no departure from the principle just mentioned is admissible except (*a*) when it becomes necessary to detach troops for the protection of interests vital to oneself, for example the Suez Canal ; or (*b*) when by detaching them the enemy will be compelled as a counter-measure to send a still larger detachment in order to protect interests which are vital to him. This principle, as old as the hills, had been inexcusably violated in 1914-15, and however much we might afterwards try to mitigate the evils resulting therefrom they could never be entirely removed."

The decisive point then in the late War, in his as in so many other soldiers' opinion, was the Somme front. He elaborates this view in other passages. Quoting Ludendorff's statement that, by the end of 1916 the German army was completely exhausted on the Western front, " had been fought to a standstill and was utterly worn

out," he goes on to comment that "the far-reaching effects of the year's fighting on this front were not in all cases appreciated by Ministers, some of whom asserted that the battle of the Somme had been a ghastly failure, and persisted in measuring the amount of our success by the kilometres of ground gained, with little or no regard to the moral ascendancy our troops had established." It was uphill work, he adds, trying to convince civilian statesmen that a continuation of the same methods of warfare would make victory inevitable: "Although the attacker might at first be the heavier loser he might hope to make a good bag later, and that there were other things to be taken into account besides figures. Armies, like boxers, I would observe, could not possibly win battles, and certainly not wars, if they restricted their efforts to self-defence and never led off to damage their opponents; the preliminary step to victory was, as always, the wearing-down of the enemy's power of resistance, and this was not to be achieved without loss." And always he returns to the same formula that, although war is not an exact science, there is one sound working principle—the concentration of superior force at the "decisive point."

It seems to me that General Robertson, like many of his distinguished colleagues, is hypnotized by a phrase. Where, after all, is the "decisive point" in modern warfare? Must it necessarily lie along the enemy's front line, when this line consists of hundreds of miles of trenches stretching from Switzerland to the sea, manned by a million well-armed men? May not the lines of communication, or another front, provide an opportunity for a decisive attack? Or the moral of the civilians behind the line, without whose unremitting efforts these vast armies will be left without equipment, or without food? I am not concerned to argue the question here; but I emphatically deny that the "decisive point" must necessarily be where the greatest military strength of the enemy is massed. Moreover,

it is clear that no democracy will ever allow a succession of Somme massacres to take place; while no autocracy could support them without revolution.

Not to anticipate the considerations to which I now turn, I gladly express my agreement with General Robertson when he tells us, in considering the relationship of statesmen and soldiers in wartime that "the statesman should never attempt to frame a plan of campaign for himself—that way lies disaster, as was proved in the Great War; he should never try unduly to influence the professional, whose function it is to frame the plan, to go back on his considered judgment; once he has approved of a plan he should not interfere with its execution, or limit the number of troops to be employed; and, in general, he should recognize the line beyond which his interference in the domain of the naval and military leader becomes an impediment rather than an aid to success." This is true enough, although it must surely be left for the civil government in the last resort to set aside a soldier whose plans do not achieve the success anticipated for them, or in other ways make impossible in their absolute discretion the successful prosecution of the war. But while the generals may be left within these limits to conduct military operations in their own way, it is certainly not for them alone to decide where and on what scale the main operations of any war shall be conducted. In other words, the choice and definition of the "decisive point" are not to be determined by soldiers nursed on military textbooks which are based upon the campaigns of Napoleon and Julius Cæsar.

I will supplement these prefatory arguments by the evidence of a scientific study of the inter-relations of politicians and soldiers which came from the skilful pen of General Sir Frederick Maurice.

It should be said at the outset that General Maurice does not belong to the "damn-the-politician" school of soldiers. Throughout his book, "Governments and

War," he insists that fighting is only twenty-five per cent. of modern warfare; the remaining seventy-five per cent. is the politicians' sphere. (Tell it not in Bath, publish it not in the streets of Cheltenham!) His object is to discover how best a Government may be organized for war; how far politicians may legitimately interfere with and control soldiers; and to what extent soldiers should reveal their plans to politicians and place themselves under their direction.

His inquiry, he tells us, had its origin in a conversation with the late Lord Kitchener at Sir John French's headquarters at St. Omer in 1915. Lord Kitchener wished to see how the General Staff office was run.

"Well, sir," replied our author, "we try to make it as little like the War Office as possible."

"An admirable ideal," rejoined Lord Kitchener. "How do you do it?"

"The practice in the War Office used to be, when a question came up, to collect the largest possible number of opinions about it from everyone who had even the remotest concern with the question, before any attempt was made to arrive at a decision. Here we try to get the question straight to the man who can decide and to get him to do so."

"Ah," was the answer, "if only we had thought of organizing our Government for war!"

General Maurice would seem to have accepted the Field-Marshal's last remark as approving his argument, although the reader may not find in it warrant for such a conclusion. And I pass over the obvious comment that a large number of the questions which arise for decision in any office are likely intimately to involve at least two Departments and, therefore, need at least two views before a proper decision can be given.

The General pondered on this conversation, and, ten years later, took the opportunity of an invitation to give the Lees Knowles Lectures at Trinity College, Cambridge, to set out his views on the proper organization

of Governments for war, making his text the American Civil War. His book is a reprint of these lectures.

The first chapters deal with Jefferson Davis, the President of the Southern States, and General J. E. Johnston. Davis, like Mr. Winston Churchill, was a cavalry subaltern who had left the army to enter politics. When the South entered the Civil War under his Presidency, he found himself, like Abraham Lincoln in the North, automatically the Commander-in-Chief of his forces. He selected four generals to lead his army—all good choices—and took upon himself the task of providing them with men, munitions, and financial support. Unfortunately, says General Maurice, he could not forget that he had once been a soldier, and himself hastened to the battlefield. He ordered a pursuit of the Northern troops, temporarily defeated; but he failed to provide the men for such an advance, which for this reason was not undertaken. He thereupon yielded to political demands for the defence of certain exposed points in the South and insisted upon the adoption of a policy of "offensive defensiveness." He did not hide his distrust of General Johnston. "He should either not have given Johnston the most important command in the Confederate Army," comments General Maurice, "or, having placed him in it, have trusted him. To retain a general in command and bicker with him is not the act of a statesman."

Johnston, on the other hand, refused to disclose his plans to the President. Davis consulted General Robert E. Lee, who said, "General Johnston should, of course, advise you of what he expects or proposes to do. Let me go and see him, and defer this discussion till I return." Lee saw Johnston, gleaned his plans, and was able to reassure Davis. It would clearly have been better had Lee proposed himself to Davis as the Commander-in-Chief of all the Confederate forces, so that he and Davis in consultation could have decided upon all military problems. But Lee, unusually modest for a soldier,

hesitated to press for his own advancement, and thus Davis was confronted with the dual task of controlling both policy and strategy, a task far beyond his strength.

Almost simultaneously, President Lincoln in the North was faced with a similar difficulty in his relations with General McClellan. After the defeat of the North's forces at Bull Run, Lincoln summoned McClellan from Western Virginia, where he had won a victory, and placed him in command of the troops guarding Washington, the capital. The President was then indiscreet enough, in General Maurice's view, to issue three orders: (1) A general advance by land and sea on a certain future date (irrespective of what the enemy's dispositions would then be); (2) The formation of McClellan's force into an expedition to seize certain points; and (3) The retention of, at least, half the latter's army to defend Washington until its safety was assured. McClellan disregarded these instructions.

> Neither Johnston nor McClellan understood that the head of the State has the right to be assured when the State is in danger that everything possible is being done for its protection. The "damned politician" is often a nuisance to the soldier, particularly when he pretends to military knowledge which he does not possess, but the statesman is, even from the purely military point of view, the indispensable ally of the soldier, and should be treated as such. . . . Johnston was clearly wrong in not letting Davis know how he proposed to protect Richmond, and Lee was clearly right in saying that Johnston should, of course, have advised the President of what he proposed to do.

Provoked by McClellan's obstinacy and secrecy, Lincoln recalled 35,000 of his troops to defend Washington, and before long replaced him, although previously he had expressed his admiration for McClellan's military skill, and seemed to share the newspaper view that the General was "a young Napoleon." The root of the trouble, it

is clear, lay not in the men, but in their official relationship. McClellan, says General Maurice,

> never could free himself from the obsession that he and he alone was capable of conducting the war in all its aspects, and the many intrigues against him in Washington, of which it would appear from his correspondence that he had very complete information, tended to harden him in his opinion that all the politicians in Washington were dishonest schemers and all the administrators incompetent. This was due in a great part to McClellan's character and mentality, but a little study on his part of how to deal with a statesman in war, and on Lincoln's part of the principles of statecraft in the conduct of war, would almost certainly have overcome such difficulties as existed and have enabled McClellan to be a very valuable servant of the State.

Matters did not right themselves until Ulysses Grant became Commander-in-Chief of the Northern forces.

> The story of Lincoln's early relations with Grant is evidence that it was no eagerness on the President's part to do the work of his General, nor any dislike of soldiers in general, which brought about the friction between himself and McClellan.

The fault lay, as ever, in the organization. But this was soon changed. General Halleck became the liaison officer at Washington between Grant and the President. Direct correspondence between Lincoln and Grant almost ceased ; each man undertook the duties of his own sphere and corresponded with the other through Halleck, who became an efficient clearing-house and buffer between them. Lincoln gave Grant all the support of which he was capable ; he upheld him even when he made obvious mistakes ; and Grant took occasion to express his gratitude for the President's unswerving loyalty and assistance. Lincoln read every line of Grant's reports and followed all his movements with the closest attention. The President by no means relinquished the right to

make suggestions; he inspired and initiated Sheridan's valley campaign, but "he no longer intervened as he had done in May, 1862; he had learned how to intervene wisely and opportunely."

The new organization worked; and this is the moral to be drawn from the happy co-operation of Lincoln and Grant and the failure of Davis and his generals.

General Maurice goes on to deduce from these episodes the system by which wars should be conducted in democratic countries. There must, he says, be some one to direct the struggle—of which the soldier's share is only one quarter. It is not sufficient for the politician to choose leaders for the armies, navies, and air forces and to leave these to their own devices.

> There must be direction and constant direction of strategy, but, if direction is not to become mischievous interference, the director must know how to direct.

England has entered all her great wars of the last hundred years without any systematized relationship between her statesmen and her generals; she has, in every case, had to face early failure and to build up, under circumstances of difficulty and depression, a working arrangement between the two main partners in the enterprise. Until 1914 we did not know the meaning of a "nation in arms"; earlier wars were not fought on the same scale as the last; Napoleon himself could not have controlled and directed the resources of a modern great Power and at the same time have commanded its armies in the field.

It is only since 1895 that the control of the Army has been definitely vested in its civilian chief; until then, the Secretary of State was no more than the mouthpiece of the Commander-in-Chief. At the same time, there can be no question of giving this civilian administrator authority to prepare plans of campaign or to direct the detailed disposition of troops and ships in warfare. When the Great War broke out, England was

fortunate in having at the War Office and the Admiralty men of the calibre and courage of Lord Kitchener and Mr. Churchill; nevertheless, a system was lacking, and both these men were loaded with responsibilities which, under a better dispensation, should not have been thrust upon their shoulders.

Only after sixteen months of war was the inevitable change made. Sir William Robertson was offered the post of Chief of the Imperial General Staff at home, and wrote a memorandum to Lord Kitchener making three definite suggestions:

> 1. There should be a supreme authority to formulate policy, decide on the theatres in which military operations were to be conducted, and to determine the relative importance of these spheres. This authority must also exercise general supervision over the conduct of the war, and select the various commanders to execute its policy.
>
> Its constitution must be such that it is able to come to quick decisions, and, therefore, as regards the conduct of the War, it must be absolute. The War Council should be capable of performing the functions of this supreme authority, provided it is relieved of responsibility to the Cabinet as a whole as regards the conduct of military operations, and that it has real executive power, and is not merely an advisory committee.
>
> 2. In order that the War Council may make timely decisions, it must receive all military advice through one channel only—the Chief of the Imperial General Staff. His function is to give the War Council his opinion of the military effects of the policy they propose. Any advice, either from members of the Cabinet individually or from any other individual, must be examined and judged by the Chief of the Imperial General Staff before it is accepted by the War Council.

3. All military operations required to execute the policy approved by the War Council must be issued by the Chief of the Imperial General Staff under the authority of the Secretary for War and not under that of the Army Council. Similarly, communications from commanders about military operations must be addressed to him.

These conditions were accepted. They had the immediate results of defining the respective spheres of the politicians and the soldiers, and of bringing into order Departments which had hitherto been in a state of confusion. A further improvement took place a year later when Mr. Lloyd George substituted a small War Cabinet of five or six members for the larger existing Cabinet. This change was certainly sometimes more apparent than real; it often happened that Ministers who were not members of the reconstituted War Cabinet had to be called in for consultation; moreover, the meetings of this body necessitated the daily attendance of its chief military and naval advisers, who were thus prevented from attending to their other duties.

General Maurice points out that Sir William Robertson's proposals are essentially similar to the methods by which Lincoln, also after bitter experience, at last simplified and strengthened his communications with Grant. The main difference is that, by the Constitution of the United States, the President is his own War Cabinet. Is there, he asks, anything in our Constitution which prevents us from adopting a similar procedure? Why should not the Prime Minister in time of war receive from the State full authority to nominate and remove his military advisers and his commanders, and to conduct, in consultation with these advisers, the operations of the war? The advantages of having a single man, and not a committee, vested with this supreme authority are obvious.

Such is the main thesis of General Maurice's admirable

volume. It is marked, as I have already pointed out, by a much wider understanding than is usual among military writers of the supreme authority of the politician in time of war. The author is at pains to point out that, however overwhelming may be the obligation upon statesmen to do their utmost to prevent the outbreak of war, it is their most elementary duty to ensure that, should a catastrophe break upon their country, there shall be already in existence a proper system by which the war shall most efficiently be waged.

Whether, however, the system he suggests as a panacea for the problems of leadership is altogether adequate is open to dispute. Any system which places an individual in a position of dictator is open to obvious objection. A Lincoln may well exhibit the highest qualities of statesmanship under such circumstances; a Davis may, and probably will, fail. In our own day a Mussolini would doubtless be a spear-point of energy and understanding where a Wilson exhibited obstinacy and hesitation. General Maurice's suggestion reopens the whole controversy about Dictators; we may agree with him that twenty is too large a number of Ministers to share control of a nation's policy in war-time, without necessarily agreeing with him that one is enough. Perhaps practice may prove better than theory; and in Mr. Lloyd George's reconstituted Cabinet of five or six men, we may have come nearest to perfection. Six damned politicians may, after all, be better than one damned dictator.

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A great deal of nonsense is talked about the alleged control of the Press by plutocratic individuals. Without doubt, modern newspaper proprietors, in this country as elsewhere, are able to superimpose their own idiosyncrasies upon the general views of their readers, often in defiance of the habitual policy of their own newspapers. But there are limits they cannot transgress. The

Socialist gibe that news is habitually falsified by "the Press gang" is ridiculous.

If there is one thing more than another that the popular newspaper fears, it is to publish a demonstrably false account of any event. With the worst intentions in the world, no newspaper can habitually misrepresent news and hope to remain successful. And to the publication of news all other features of newspaper production are subordinate. It might be an exaggeration to say that the views (as opposed to news) contained in a newspaper are wholly unimportant; but it is quite certain that men and women of all shades of opinion will read a newspaper which gives them the best survey (though not always in the best proportion) of the world's doings, irrespective of the particular political opinions and Party that it upholds.

To take one example, *The Daily Mail* is read by hundreds of thousands of people who habitually vote Socialist. Conversely, *The Daily Herald* had—until it recently came into the hands of an enterprising capitalist firm—a negligible circulation, although it was the recognized organ of the powerful Socialist Party. Out of every score of people who buy a daily newspaper probably not more than one so much as glances at the leading article in which is embodied the policy of the proprietor. And, in regard to those who do read the leading article, the proprietor is far more anxious to propitiate them than to arouse antagonism, among even a majority, by the expression of unpopular views. Just as a jockey, no matter how brilliant, cannot win without his horse, so a newspaper proprietor, no matter how opinionative, cannot press his views too far without the concurrence of his readers. The power of the Press is thus not nearly as great as is generally supposed. It may influence opinion to a certain small extent by emphasizing or suppressing facts, though, with the fierce competition between newspapers, suppression is highly unprofitable. Otherwise and for the main part,

a popular newspaper is concerned to reflect the opinions of the greatest possible circulation, and thus becomes a mirror of its readers' desires rather than its proprietor's.

The journalist's revenge, and his opportunity to throw off the tyranny of his own readers, lie chiefly in his longer memory. Whereas his readers, or most of them, manage to forget almost overnight the events of the previous day, the journalist has his files and his library of press-cuttings to set before him all the past actions and sayings of prominent or notorious people. Hence the unceasing cries of inconsistency levelled against every public man who has allowed the progress of events to modify his attitude in any degree. Dog very rarely eats dog in the newspaper world. It is exceptional for even the bitterest Fleet Street rivals to point out errors and contradictions, to say nothing of inconsistencies, in each other's editorial columns. When occasionally, however, the veil is raised, the startled public (of the rival paper) learns how easily a newspaper can contrive to swallow its own words, and this not without the ever-present likelihood of returning, like the Psalmist's dog, to its earlier views.

The journalist's second opportunity lies in the future. The rawest reporter feels competent, not merely to criticize responsible statesmen for what they have done, but to tell them what they ought to do next. If his suggestion happens to coincide with the Minister's policy, and that policy is successful, the newspaper takes credit for the success. If the policy fails, the journalist can always wriggle out of the situation, first, by taking the precaution to word his original proclamation with decent ambiguity, and, secondly, by proving (which is never difficult) that the statesman has not in every respect followed the instructions of Fleet Street. Or, thirdly and more usually, by simply suppressing his own share. But a journalist himself can never be wrong.

It being understood that every journalist is worth a dozen Cabinet Ministers, and is infinitely more practical,

sagacious, and disinterested, it follows that a successful publicist is superior even to a newspaper proprietor. The latter has to bow to the demands, implicit or expressed, of his readers; the successful free-lance publicist has no such limits set to his omniscience. A good specimen of this superior breed is Mr. A. G. Gardiner, formerly editor of *The Daily News* and now a free-lance contributor to an infinity of papers.

His book, "Certain People of Importance," was a remarkable specimen of the work of our journalist supermen. Past, present, and future are unrolled before his masterful eyes. He knows; he knows. Says Mr. Gardiner in his essay on Mr. Baldwin:

> To-day, Mr. Chamberlain, Lord Birkenhead, and Mr. Churchill sit obediently round the Cabinet table presided over by Mr. Baldwin's second-class brains. The mystery of the rise of this inferior orb to dominion over them is still dark and unfathomable, but office is sweet, humility is a Christian virtue, and the service of one's country is a duty that transcends all private feelings.

This sarcasm might possibly lead the unsophisticated reader to inquire whether it is not an offence against good taste to suggest that the three public men mentioned have sacrificed their convictions to their lust for office. But this would be unjust to Mr. Gardiner. He, who contributes to papers so different as *The Daily News*, *The Sunday Express*, *John Bull* and *The Passing Show*, knows better than anyone the large profits attaching to indiscriminate associations.

Mr. Baldwin, adds Mr. Gardiner, has a mind which

> works with extraordinary freedom and candour, but is apt to be loose and unstitched. . . . He thinks hard, but he thinks in patches and does not connect up the immediate theme with the large circumference of things.

To take an example:

> His handling of the tragic conflict in the coal trade leaves us without the assurance that behind the revivalist and the

> preacher of social reconciliation there is the constructive statesmanship that can turn fine dreams to enduring realities.

Mr. Gardiner, it is obvious, could have settled the coal strike in five minutes. But he forgets, even after the event, to say how.

If Mr. Baldwin comes off poorly at the hands of Mr. Gardiner, what can we expect for Mr. Churchill? To paint his picture, the responsible words of that great public servant, Mr. H. G. Wells, are called in, and Mr. Gardiner quotes the novelist's view of the Conservative Chancellor:

> "There are times when the evil spirit comes upon him, and then I can only think of him as an intractable little boy, a mischievous, dangerous little boy, a knee-worthy little boy. Only by thinking of him in that way can I go on liking him."

Mr. Gardiner improves on this superior observation with the comment that Mr. Churchill "is uneducated in the school sense" and "rudimentary in the moral sense." Yet, Mr. Gardiner can see the better points of even Mr. Churchill, and tells us that:

> It is bare justice to him to say that, though he has few principles and few scruples, he has the courage always to be himself and to carry his political life in his hand.

Sir Austen Chamberlain, we discover, is "commonplace, uninspired, and uninspiring." Against his "panoplied self-complacency the lance of criticism breaks in vain." But—the implication is that this quality is rare in public men—"he is not a self-seeker," though "if he were, his mental operations are too slow and his political strategy too negligible to enable him to succeed." Mr. Gardiner assures us that Sir Austen "has publicly recanted by word and deed" his opposition to Home Rule. "He was one of the Cabinet that gave Home Rule to Ireland." Surely Mr. Gardiner,

being omniscient, might have been expected to know (and, perhaps, even to suggest to his readers) that the measure which Sir Austen and the Coalition Government passed into law was vitally different from the measure which Mr. Gardiner himself advocated before the War. Ulster was always the bone of contention; the Free State settlement after the War definitely excluded Ulster.

It was not to be expected that I myself would escape Mr. Gardiner's lash. We read:

> His disagreements are never about policies, but only about place, and when he lashes the "Dolly Sisters"—Lord Selborne [whose name Mr. Gardiner misspells] and Lord Salisbury—in the House of Lords, it is not because any grave issue is at stake, but because they are in office and he is out. . . . Ideals are to him irrelevant moonshine. . . . Lord Birkenhead has no creed, not even the creed of force. If self-interest, in its most local application, dictates another creed, he will adopt it without hesitation. . . . In politics, an enduring career can only be built up on a certain loyalty to ideas and a certain constancy of aim. The note of Lord Birkenhead's political life is the note of an easy flippancy.

Of course, if Mr. Gardiner says so, it must be so. To suggest, as the ungodly might, that all these contemptuous references are the mere dross of Mr. Gardiner's obsolescent Liberalism would clearly be irreverent. The reader, may, nevertheless, wonder what evidence Mr. Gardiner offers to support his biting words. Unfortunately, in all his long diatribe only one single example of my alleged immorality is offered, and it is an extremely ludicrous one. Speaking at the height of the civil war in Ireland, says Mr. Gardiner, I told the House of Lords that only force could "cure the mischief by which we are assailed to-day." Yet, four months later, he exclaims, I was defending the Irish Treaty. Omniscient Mr. Gardiner seems unaware that circumstances changed very considerably in Ireland during those vital four months. My statement, applied to "the

mischief by which we are assailed in Ireland to-day," was not in the least inconsistent with the advocacy of the Free State Treaty. In the interval, those who were carrying out war in Ireland had come offering peace. While the fight lasted, of course, force on our side was indispensable. When it ended, the appropriateness of force just as obviously ended also. Mr. Gardiner has, not for the first time in his pontifical career, foundèd a house of spiteful abuse upon the sands of misrepresentation.

After this, the proclamation of Mr. Amery's " infantile conception of what constitutes the greatness of a nation " and " his infatuated belief in the nostrum of Protection " seems tame. Lord Brentford has also, we learn, " a childish and romantic vision. . . . He does not belong to the serious drama of affairs, but to the comedy stage." Mr. Gardiner says so. He ought to know.

When the gods quarrel, it is wise for mere humans to look the other way. It is, nevertheless, not without interest to find that Mr. Gardiner disagrees with his divine bed-fellow, Mr. H. G. Wells, in his estimate of President Wilson. Mr. Wells is no admirer of Wilson, but Mr. Gardiner says of the late President that :

> It is reasonable to hope that time will say that he did the greatest service to this distracted Europe of any man in history. If he had not been deserted by his own country, it is not unreasonable to think that the fruits of that service would have been more visible to-day than they are.

It is equally pleasant to know, on Mr. Gardiner's authority, that, while most of our own statesmen are inconsistent and stupid place-hunters,

> if any man in the public life of Europe in these great years has given proof of his disinterested passion for the common good, as he conceives the common good, it is Chicherin. He is of the stuff of martyrs and heroes.

Even Monsieur Caillaux is, presumably, superior to most of our public men in that " if he had been a mere

adventurer he would have adopted another cause, or he would have deserted his own cause when the opportunity offered." However, "without putting an excessive valuation upon Monsieur Caillaux's moral standards, I am disposed to think they are not below the average of his class."

Mr. Gardiner's book contains also a chapter on Earl Haig and the War. We are told that:

> He saw the mighty struggle through from the first day to the last, and he emerged from it with as unequivocal a triumph as ever fell to any British commander.

Mr. Gardiner is, indeed, as much at home in military as in cricketing and political affairs. This is really rather remarkable because, although we know that any scribbler is qualified to asperse our public men, it is a little odd to find praise for the conduct of the War coming from the Mr. A. G. Gardiner who was the editor of *The Daily News* in August, 1914, and printed a leading article, on August 4, containing the following words:

> Sir Edward Grey is not well versed in economics, and we fear he has greatly misapprehended this matter. If we remain neutral we should be, from the commercial point of view, in precisely the same position as the United States. We should be able to trade with all the belligerents (so far as the War allows of trade with them); we should be able to capture the bulk of their trade in neutral markets; we should keep our expenditure down; we should keep out of debt; we should have healthy finances. . . . [Sir Edward Grey] drew a picture of all the neutral States of Northern Europe—Belgium, Holland, Denmark—being absorbed by Germany. The picture does not persuade because we see no probability of its ever representing the facts, and while Sir Edward asserted our vital interest in Belgian neutrality he did not prove it, and with infinite regret we must confess ourselves unconvinced.

It might be claimed by Mr. Gardiner that these astounding lines represent a reply to Sir Edward Grey's argument rather than the point of view of *The Daily*

News and Mr. Gardiner himself. The answer to this claim, which has, indeed, been put forward, is that, both in leading articles and in his own signed contributions in those decisive days for the future of our country and of the world, Mr. Gardiner pleaded the same loathsome, cowardly, and treacherous course. On July 31, 1914, for example, his leading article announced:

> Honour, principle, interest all alike dictate one course —to maintain an absolute neutrality should this lamentable dispute, in which we have neither lot nor part, bring war to the great Continental Powers.

No wonder Mr. Gardiner was one of the warmest eulogists of those procrastinating super-neutrals, President Wilson and Colonel House.

On the following day, Mr. Gardiner's leading article stated that:

> Within a few days of England launching into this struggle the streets of every English town will be filled with starving men, women and children, who either have no money because there is no work, or whose wages under the blast of famine can no longer keep body and soul together.

And in a signed article on the same page entitled "Why We Must Not Fight," Mr. Gardiner said:

> Can we doubt where our interest lies? For years . . . this country has been preached into an anti-German frame of mind that takes no account of facts. Where in the wide world do our interests clash with those of Germany? Nowhere.

On the following day, again, Mr. Gardiner, in his leading article, said:

> Neutrality would leave us practically the one strong Power unshattered by war, free from the sin of it, and available at any moment for mediating in the cause of peace. Neutrality is imposed on us by our honour and our interests.

War broke out, however, despite Mr. Gardiner, who hastened, on August 5, to state that:

> We place on record our conviction that neutrality was possible and that it would have been just and prudent and statesmanlike for England to have remained neutral.

Then came Mr. Gardiner's *volte-face*. On August 7 his leading article had come to the conclusion that:

> It would have been a crime to have surrendered to terms which contemplated stripping France of her colonies, humbling her to a position of nominal independence, reducing Belgium's freedom to a name, possibly extinguishing Holland's altogether, and leaving Germany supreme over all Western Europe. We say this in full consciousness of all that we have written in the past.

To crown all, Mr. Gardiner unctuously announced in a signed article on August 8 that:

> The spirit of our people is splendid. . . . There are exceptions, of course, for there are dogs everywhere.

Who would suspect that this particular dog had been barking about honour a few days ago? And he went on to say:

> Not the least gratifying feature is the cheerfulness with which financial and business disasters, which in normal times would seem so overwhelming, are being borne. . . . The nation is sounding the great waters and learning very unusual lessons—lessons of mutual dependence, of self-sacrifice, of helpfulness and tolerance and good will. We are not so petty as we were yesterday. . . . We are concerned for once with something bigger than the safety of our own skins and the fullness of our own pockets.

Such is the public record, at the greatest crisis of modern times, of the Mr. A. G. Gardiner who insults our public men with gibes at their inconsistency, lack of vision, self-seeking, flippancy, and infatuation. Has a

quick-change journalist ever before shown so little consistency ?

* * * * * *

It is a safe surmise that, had Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson escaped the hand of the assassin, he would not have published his diaries in the form in which they were presented to us under the editorship of General Sir C. E. Callwell. That Wilson, however, intended a book is certain. His editor specifically states that Wilson "had contemplated compiling his memoirs himself so soon as he should find the requisite leisure for embarking on such a task, and he had looked forward to making a commencement in the autumn of the year in which he was struck down by the assassin's hand. That, as he methodically filled in the events and experiences of each succeeding day during all the later years of his life, he had such an undertaking constantly in mind is made evident by the elaboration which distinguishes the numerous entries that are concerned with events of public consequence of which he makes mention."

General Callwell, who was himself intimately associated with portions of Wilson's career, has incorporated with some skill innumerable passages from his dead chief's diary in the running narrative of his biography. The compiler's admiration and affection for Sir Henry Wilson are evident on every page, yet it is to be feared that the results of his labours are in many ways exactly opposite from his intentions. Instead of adding to the Field-Marshal's fame, he has very greatly diminished it. Sir Henry Wilson was always competent to fight his enemies and to criticize those with whom he disagreed ; but, now he is dead, there is no one to defend him from his friends. And his biographer, all unwittingly, has served him very ill in these two volumes of mingled biography and diary.

General Callwell states, with a rather irritating innuendo, that he has found it expedient to omit certain

outspoken passages and expressions in the diaries concerning individuals. If we may judge by what he has left in, these comments must have been extremely piquant. One must regret that he did not omit more. Colonel House has not done the other Wilson a greater disservice by over-zealous publicity than General Callwell the Field-Marshal. These pages illuminate, it is true, his great public and private qualities; but simultaneously they display, only too clearly, those flaws and weaknesses in the composition of a great figure of our time which a more discreet disciple would have been glad to allow to remain unknown to the vast public.

Sir Henry Wilson's career was a distinguished one. He was born in May, 1864, the second son of a gentleman descended from an ancient Ulster family of landowners. His parents had the foresight to provide him with French governesses, so that in later years he was able to speak French with fluency, if not with accuracy (for he makes the elementary mistake of writing *le 25me février* for *le 25 février*). The boy was sent to Marlborough, but, as has been the case with many who later rose to a high position, his school career was unremarkable. He failed twice for Woolwich and three times for Sandhurst between the ages of sixteen and eighteen, but succeeded in entering the Army by what was then called the "back-door," namely, by taking a commission in the Militia. After a few weeks in Algiers, to improve his French, and a couple of months at Darmstadt, where he played tennis with a girl who afterwards became the ill-fated Empress of Russia, he returned to England to cram for a commission in the regular army. He came out fifty-eighth on the list of successful candidates in October, 1884, and was duly gazetted to the 18th Royal Irish, whence he at once transferred to the Rifle Brigade.

Early in the next year he joined his regiment in India. Three years' service in the East, enlivened by the command of a detachment in Burma rounding up

dacoits—in the course of one engagement Wilson was badly cut over the eye—brought him back on sick-leave to England. He did not return to India, but claimed, on account of his wound, a transfer to the Woolwich battalion of the Brigade. There, and in Ulster, he addressed himself to preparing for the Staff College examination. He passed fifteenth in 1891, married on the strength of this success, and took his two years' course at Camberley.

From the Staff College he entered the Intelligence Department, working in the French section. His failure to pass a German language test did not seriously interfere with his career. In 1897 he became Brigade-Major of the 3rd Brigade at Aldershot; he was disappointed in his hopes of seeing active service on the Nile, but went out to South Africa with General Lyttelton. He distinguished himself at Spion Kop by suggesting the sending of reinforcements at a very critical moment, his presence of mind, according to the commander principally concerned, averting a serious disaster at that point. Wilson's skill as a Staff Officer was recognized; only his youth stood in the way of rapid promotion. Yet entries in his diary at this time already contain the germ of his later violent and often ill-founded criticisms. "What Buller can be thinking of, it's impossible to imagine," is one; and another, "It annoys me beyond measure the way Buller sends the Brigade about." He was spared further annoyance by being appointed Assistant Military Secretary to Lord Roberts, with whom and with whose family he became from this time on terms of intimate friendship.

Back in England, he received the D.S.O., and, with promotion to Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel, worked for some time at the War Office. The last entry in his diary for 1901 is as follows:

> During this year I have got a wonderful insight into the inner working of the War Office, and, to my mind, it is exceedingly unsatisfactory. The whole idea of governing

> the Army by a civilian, whose whole training has been political expediency, and who knows less about the Army than I do about the Navy, is vicious in theory and hopeless in practice. Nor shall we ever do any good until it is the custom, and the right, of the C.-in-C. to state his case once or twice a year in the House of Lords. The country would then be in possession of the expert's view of the case and would judge as to its proper course of action.

He was given command of a provisional battalion at Colchester early in 1902. There he remained for a year, before being appointed to a post in the new Training Branch at the War Office. Lord Roberts was his sponsor, and this fact, coupled with Wilson's talents and enthusiasm, kept him before the minds of his superiors. In his own words, " In the last eighteen months I have been Private Secretary to the C.-in-C., then A.G.I., then C.O. 9th P.B., then D.A.A.G. Auxiliary Forces, and now A.A.G. for Education."

The Report of the Royal Commission on Militia and Volunteers appeared in the autumn of 1903. " The report of this Commission must surely show up our rotten system of having our Army run by politicians," Wilson wrote. " I am going to draft a scheme trying to combine the Hartington proposals for Chief of Staff with the Commission's proposals to turn us into an office like the Admiralty." And, by way of illustrating his nascent contempt for his civilian chiefs, he noted that :

> Bromley-Davenport, who only came in as Financial Secretary on Friday, opened his tenure of office by writing : " I don't agree " across the completed and approved papers of the War Office Journal scheme. How can good work be done with such fools ?

But a week-end spent at Lord Roberts's house in the company of Mr. Arnold-Forster, the new Secretary for War, brought him into personal contact with one of the despised class. There is no evidence that Wilson openly displayed his contempt for the Minister, upon

whom he urged the reformation of the General Staff, and he was shortly afterwards invited to act temporarily as Director of Staff Duties and then to preside over the Staff College at Camberley.

He entered upon his new duties, with the rank of Brigadier-General, in 1907, and remained at Camberley for three and a half years, during which time he paid visits to the future battlefields of Flanders, and initiated his long friendship with General Foch. He contrived, on the other hand, to fall out with Lord Kitchener, who disapproved of some of his activity:

> He attacked me about trying to form a "school of thought," but he got no change out of me, and he really talked a great deal of nonsense and imputed all sorts of things to us here which simply are not so.

This meeting, remarks General Callwell, "would not appear to have conduced towards establishing cordial relations between them, and may even have contributed towards bringing about that mutual distrust, amounting almost to antipathy, which prevailed between the two men at the outset of the Great War."

Wilson now became Director of Military Operations and devoted himself to facilitating the prompt dispatch of troops to the Continent in the event of war, on the assumption that we should side with the French against the Germans. His contempt for the members of the Government grew daily, and we find him, in 1911, saying:

> It is difficult to imagine Asquith taking a strong straight line; and yet, if someone does not catch hold of us, I think the Empire will go before long.
>
> We spent most of to-day continuing our discussions on the Imperial Conference, and my general feeling at the end of the day is this. The task of welding this Empire into one is the most difficult that any man was ever called upon to perform. Obvious, therefore, that we must get a great man such as Pitt, Bismarck, etc. I confess I see no sign of such a man in this country.

After a lunch a few months later with Lord Haldane, Sir Edward Grey, and Sir Eyre Crowe, he commented that " I was profoundly dissatisfied with the grasp of the situation shown by Grey and Haldane." Then comes an illuminating passage. Wilson wrote, " Winston had put in a ridiculous and fantastic paper on the war on the French and German frontier, which I was able to demolish."

It is interesting to note that Mr. Winston Churchill's " ridiculous and fantastic paper " was an almost exactly accurate forecast of the events at the beginning of the Great War. General Callwell is discreetly silent on the point, but we know from other sources that Wilson's view was that a French counter-attack in the second week of hostilities would overthrow the German advance. We shall see later that he blindly persisted in this optimistic view. Mr. Churchill, on the other hand, predicted in this paper that the German advance would not be checked until the fortieth day, a conclusion which was demonstrated, three years later, to be only a few hours out. And the premises on which Wilson based his argument were then shown to be as false as those in Mr. Churchill's despised memorandum were accurate.

It is typical, too, of Wilson's shortsightedness and fundamental superficiality that he considered, " Our Navy was not worth five hundred bayonets. Castelnau and Joffre did not value it at one bayonet! Except from the moral point." And his feeling of superiority over those whom he was afterwards to label the " Frocks " is evidenced by such schoolboyish comments as, " Old Haldane nearly had a fit and was terrified out of his life. What a funny old thing it is! " " You should have seen old Balfour's face," and " I tell you, I had Bonar Law in fits." If one compared " Old Balfour's " brain with Wilson's one might have fits oneself.

Our subject became seriously involved in the Ulster controversy. It is unnecessary to discuss here the references to the Curragh crisis in Wilson's diary, for

these have since been stated, on the indisputable authority of Sir Hubert Gough, to be inaccurate in several important particulars. Nor is there any need to recapitulate the course of events in Ulster and on the Continent in the early half of 1914. When the war came, Wilson was taken by surprise. We find in his diary on July 27: "I think there will not be any war.;" while on the following day he wrote:

> The Russians have ordered the mobilization of 16 Corps. The Austrians are mobilizing 12 Corps. The Germans and French remain quiet. At 3 p.m. a note came to Douglas [Haig] from Asquith ordering the "Precautionary Period." This we did. I don't know why we are doing it, because there is nothing moving in Germany. We shall see.

To which he added the supercilious comment, "Anyhow, it is more like business than I expected of this Government."

When the Government proved right, and he, as usual, wrong, he fell into a much more serious and almost incredible error. He still believed (as he had believed in 1911, against Mr. Churchill's "ridiculous and fantastic" view) that the war would end very swiftly with the defeat of Germany. General Callwell tells us that on August 5 Wilson

> spent an hour and a half in consultation with Sir John [French] and Haig, when the latter made the suggestion that troops ought not to cross the water for two or three months, during which period "the immense resources of the Empire" could be developed. But Wilson pointed out that there were no resources for a long war, the view being very generally entertained in military, as in other, circles, at this time, that the contest upon which the nation was embarking would be a brief one.

With unconscious humour and infinite conceit, Wilson described the meeting of the War Council that afternoon as "an historic meeting of men, mostly entirely ignorant of their subject."

He was contemptuously hostile to Lord Kitchener, the new Secretary for War. When the latter complained that Wilson had sent back to France a French officer dispatched to consult the War Office and had, without consulting his chief, told the French what he considered to be the British plans, Wilson adopted a tone by no means becoming to a subordinate: "I answered back as I had no intention of being bullied by him, especially when he talks such nonsense as he did to-day." Surely an admirable example of discipline.

Moreover, this accusation of nonsense must be turned against its cock-sure maker, for Kitchener was as right in preparing for a long war as Wilson was wrong in dismissing it. As General Callwell admits:

> There is no longer question but that Lord Kitchener formed a far more correct opinion of the situation as between the Entente and the Central Powers as a whole than did Wilson or, apparently, anybody else on the staff of G.H.Q. From the moment of his assuming office in Whitehall he realized that the United Kingdom must accomplish a prodigious effort of military expansion, and he based his entire policy on this conviction. He entertained no illusions as to the potentialities of the British Expeditionary Force, as constituted, in a struggle in which the whole manhood of the other belligerents could be thrown into the scale. He perceived that, even when supported by divisions of regulars to be formed of troops called home from India and elsewhere, Sir John French's little army would be totally incapable of exercising a decisive influence in the contest about to commence—and he perceived it, moreover, before that little army had quitted the shores of the United Kingdom. His methods may in some respects have been open to criticism, his failure to insist upon the application of compulsory service at a moment when he had the whole country at his back was most unfortunate, his strategical conceptions may have been imperfect, but his grasp of the problem in its widest sense assuredly was little at fault. The views—narrow and erroneous, as they were—which prevailed at G.H.Q. during the first six months of the War on the subject of Lord Kitchener's plans for multiplying the British fighting forces would, perhaps, have been

formed in any case. But Wilson's influence with Sir J. French's *entourage* was strong. A believer in compulsion, he consistently and effectively ridiculed the Secretary of State's designs and intentions. G.H.Q. followed his lead. It is conceivable that his attitude with regard to those designs and intentions might have been less outspokenly hostile had he felt less out of tune with their author.

Nor was this broad question the only one on which Kitchener was right and Wilson hopelessly wrong. Sir John French, Sir Archibald Murray, Wilson, and three French military representatives went to Lord Kitchener to discuss where the British Army was to concentrate. Wrote Wilson:

> We wrangled with K. for three hours. K. wanted to go to Amiens, and he was incapable of understanding the delays and difficulty of making such a change, nor the cowardice of it, nor the fact that either in French victory or defeat we would be equally useless. He still thinks the Germans are coming north of the Meuse in great force, and will swamp us before we concentrate. In the end he agreed to a small and perfectly useless alteration, just enough to give trouble and add confusion. Then Kitchener and Sir John went to Asquith, who also agreed, not knowing anything at all about it.

Not only was Wilson wholly mistaken, and Kitchener wholly right, in his estimate of the German plans, but even this account of the interview (much to Kitchener's credit as it is) is distorted. There was, in fact, no "small and perfectly useless alteration." Kitchener gave way to the representations of the French officers, backed by Sir John French, who did not seem to be very clear as to the plan, and by Wilson, who was clear enough but entirely wrong. Kitchener stated that he had understood and accepted that the concentration of British troops was to be at Amiens, and had drafted the instructions to Sir John accordingly. He protested strongly against concentration so far forward as Maubeuge, and urged, among other considerations, that

nothing could be worse for the *morale* of our troops than that the result of their first meeting for over fifty years with a European enemy should be a compulsory retirement. And this he regarded as the far too likely sequel to detraining so far forward. He emphasized the dangers of a great German enveloping movement against the Allied left flank, the brunt of which, he shrewdly suspected, would fall upon the British Army. His theory was met by counter-theory and by an assurance that our troops would be in no danger. He was unconvinced, but he felt that he could not oppose such a combination of experts, or force his opinion on men who had devoted themselves to a study of the West while his own attention had been so largely absorbed in the East. He yielded, with the sole reservation that he must secure the consent of the Prime Minister.

Another frequent complaint from Wilson at this time was that Kitchener was responsible for foolish delay in not dispatching all the six British Divisions overseas at once. In point of fact, Kitchener's influence was powerful and successful for the dispatch of the 4th and 6th Divisions at a much earlier date than the Cabinet intended. The 4th Division arrived in France at the precise moment to strengthen the 2nd Corps at the Battle of Le Cateau. As regards the 6th Division, even Lord Grey, the original apostle of British intervention, wrote to the Prime Minister on August 26: "I am strongly of opinion that there ought to be no question of sending another Division out of the country, and if it can be stopped going to Dover it will be a good thing." A few days later, Lord Kitchener, on his return from Paris, positively insisted on this Division being sent out without twenty-four hours' delay, and it reached Sir John French, fresh and complete, to take its part at the Battle of the Aisne, the Commander-in-Chief having meanwhile been able to calculate on it to make good his losses on the Marne.

The 7th Division Lord Kitchener, perhaps a little

naïvely, begged the Cabinet to send out as a temporary measure, and it was for this reason that it was made for the first few days part of Rawlinson's Corps. As soon as it had gone overseas, he persuaded his colleagues to sanction the addition of this Division with the Cavalry Division to Sir John's command—a reinforcement which just turned the scale in our favour at the First Battle of Ypres.

It is curious that facts could teach Wilson nothing. Instance after instance occurs in these diaries during and after August, 1914, where Wilson, vehement in his self-confidence and intolerance, is demonstrably wrong. As we shall see, it is the occasions when he was right that are incredibly few.

He madly persisted in his error of supposing that the War would end in an early victory. On August 21 he writes: "I am full of confidence." On the same day he mentions reports that Namur was about to fall. "I can't believe this," is his comment. And on the next day he writes again, "Reports to-day said that Namur would fall to-morrow, but I can't believe it." It is only on the 26th that light at last begins to break on him and he writes home that "I am afraid we are in for a disaster."

At this point General Callwell, somewhat tactlessly, inserts a disingenuous footnote to the effect that "the French General Staff had under-estimated the numbers with which the Germans would start the war." He appears to have overlooked the fact that Wilson, too, misread the future at that momentous meeting of the Committee of National Defence in August, 1911.

The fulfilment of his foreboding of disaster, however, did not long shake Wilson's confidence. On September 13 this entry appeared in the diary:

> Berthelot asked me when I thought we should cross into Germany, and I replied that unless we made some serious blunder we ought to be at Elsenborn in four weeks.

This was not a bad effort for a future Chief of the Imperial General Staff! And people criticized Mr. Belloc.

Two days later he wrote home that, "If we drive in the force in front of us, we won't have any more trouble till we get to the Meuse." But this was written, General Callwell explains, under the impression that the British forces were only opposed by a strong German rear-guard!

Not content with being completely wrong about the military situation, Wilson proceeded to make himself ridiculous by abuse of the New Armies. Thus, on September 15, he writes:

> K.'s "shadow armies," for shadow campaigns, at unknown and distant dates, prevent a lot of good officers, N.C.O.'s, and men from coming out. It is a scandalous thing. Under no circumstances can these mobs now being raised, without officers and N.C.O.'s, without guns, rifles, or uniforms, without rifle-ranges or training grounds, without supply or transport services, without *moral* or tradition, knowledge or experience—under no circumstances could these mobs take the field for two years. Then, what is the use of them? What we want, and *what we must have*, is for our little force out here to be kept to full strength with the very best of everything. Nothing else is any good.

Two days later he adds:

> His (Kitchener's) ridiculous and preposterous army of twenty-five Corps is the laughing-stock of every soldier in Europe. It took the Germans forty years of incessant work to make an army of twenty-five Corps with the aid of conscription; it will take us to all eternity to do the same by voluntary effort.

Now, the truth of the matter is this. On the day Kitchener entered the War Office he made up his mind that England could, and should, put at least seventy Divisions of Infantry in the field. In January, 1916, he was able to say that sixty-seven were afoot and three were in the mould. His "ridiculous and preposterous

army," therefore, materialized precisely according to plan, both as to date and dimensions.

The French may at first have shared Wilson's short-sighted views as to the unlikelihood of so large an army being prepared while war was actually in progress, but on November 1, 1914, at a conference between Joffre, Foch, and Kitchener, the Secretary of State disclosed his scheme to their entire satisfaction. The President of the Republic, who was also present, wrote: "Every one of his interrogators was obliged to admit that Lord Kitchener had, from the outset of hostilities, the true vision of the future." And Marshal Joffre has put on record: "From the first day Lord Kitchener set himself —without losing an hour—to make a new army without being turned aside by those who said he would be too late; thus, at the decisive hour of Verdun, he was able to place in the field those Divisions which, by freeing our men north of the Oise, enabled us to reinforce and hold our fortress."

On September 27, 1914, Wilson expressed nervousness at Mr. Churchill's arrival at G.H.Q., adding:

> Saw Winston for five minutes, but he talked such nonsense about the "shadow" forces that I got to grips at once.

And to emphasize his folly, "I still think," he writes on October 3, "that the War will be over in February or March."

His contempt for the Antwerp campaign—which, as is now known, held up the German advance and probably saved the Channel ports—is unstinted:

> So K. and Winston have so arranged their childish strategy that they have lost 2,000 Marines and some guns, and have not saved Antwerp.

Even in the middle of October Wilson shows no sign of wavering in his confidence.

> Our news to-night is not so good, though there is nothing to be anxious about. . . . We shall know more to-morrow.

> I still think the campaign will be over in the spring, that is to say if the Russians do moderately well, and I know of no reason why they shouldn't.

And, again, in a letter dated October 26, he explains that "the Russian news is good, and I think we shall finish in the spring."

At the end of 1914 the suggestion was mooted that Wilson should become Chief of the General Staff in succession to Sir Archibald Murray, whose health had broken down. But, if we may believe the account in these volumes, the appointment was vetoed by Mr. Asquith and Lord Kitchener. It is certain that, although Wilson made light of the matter, he was bitterly disappointed in his ambition.

It may or may not be true that Kitchener disfavoured Wilson's appointment. He knew Wilson to be a "political General," and no worse appointment than a political General could have been made to the Staff of a Commander-in-Chief of Sir John French's eager temperament. It is more than possible also that Kitchener knew or suspected that Wilson, at a critical moment of the War, was sending home accounts of operations—many of which, addressed to his wife, are quoted in these books—an offence for which any officer whose letter was censored would have been court-martialled and himself sent home.

Even apart from this, General Callwell admits that "Lord Kitchener's attitude was not unnatural." As he says:

> From the date of his taking up his appointment as War Minister, Kitchener had decided to make the multiplying of our military forces the basis of his policy. He had satisfied himself that the estimates formed by the foremost British soldiers, other than himself, as to the nature of the conflict which had broken out, and as to its duration, were utterly at fault. The experiences of the first four and a half months of warfare had not only served to confirm him in his views, but had made manifest that those views had been substantially correct. . . . He was creating

> the "New Armies," and—in so far as personnel was concerned—those armies were actually in being. But the attitude of G.H.Q. towards this great creative effort of the War Minister's had from the outset been undisguisedly hostile, and no member of G.H.Q. had been more declamatory in his condemnation of the project than had Wilson—as everybody in the War Office well knew. Wilson had, as he himself noted in his diary at the time, scoffed at the "shadow armies" to Churchill at Fère-en-Tardenois; and, if the First Lord informed Lord Kitchener of the views entertained by Sir J. French's Sub-Chief of Staff on returning to England, no one had right to complain. Taking all the circumstances into consideration, it does seem that the Secretary of State for War was not without a certain military justification for hesitating to magnify the power at the front of so influential and so outspoken an opponent of his plans.

Thus General Callwell is more generous than his hero, who ascribed his disappointment to other causes:

> Neither Kitchener nor Asquith will have me. I feel highly complimented, and told Sir John so. I care not a rush for the opinion of either of these men. . . . I analysed the objections to myself as C. of S., and pointed out that, whereas Kitchener's objections were a matter of opinion, viz., personal dislike and a belief that I was rather a mischievous fellow, Asquith's objections were political, because of Ulster and this War, and that here was a matter of principle.

Wilson, however, consoled himself by opening his diary for 1915 with a sneering reference to "Kitchener with his ridiculous armies," and to the War Council as "demented fools."

On January 26 General Robertson succeeded Sir Archibald Murray as Chief of the General Staff, while Wilson was given the post of Chief Liaison Officer between the British and French Headquarters. He was well fitted for this new position by his sympathy with the French, his fluency in their language, his *bonhomie* and his adaptability. He was responsible to no small extent for maintaining good relations with the French during a very trying period.

So far as the conduct of the War was concerned, however, he remained incorrigibly wrong. When the suggestion was mooted for British troops to be sent to the Balkans, he expressed himself " in favour of sticking to the old principle of decisive force in decisive theatre." And on another occasion he wrote :

> The way to end this War is to kill Germans and not Turks. The place where we can kill most Germans is here, and therefore every man and every round of ammunition we have got in the world ought to come here. All history shows that operations in a secondary and ineffectual theatre have no bearing on major operations—except to weaken the force there engaged. History, no doubt, will repeat her lesson once more for our benefit.

He remained hopeful of early success in the " decisive theatre " and held to his faith in Russia, whence had come disquieting news :

> Saw Sir John again in the afternoon, he is fussy about Russia, but I can't say I am. The Russians have a habit of piling up as they go back, till they become immovable.

When Lord Northcliffe visited G.H.Q. early in April, 1915, Wilson wrote home self-complacently that :

> Northcliffe made me laugh last night ; he was so fearfully pessimistic. Nothing was right, either here, or in Egypt, or India, or Russia, or at the Dardanelles, or in the U.S., or at home with the labour troubles. He was quite upset at my laughing so much.

Nearly three years of war and all the ghastly slaughter of the Somme were needed to show Wilson the folly of his views.

His caustic comments at this time, by the way, on the shortage of high explosive shell expose him to another criticism by his biographer, who points out that

> the reason why the output of high explosive shell for the field-guns proved such a difficulty during the early stages of the War was that this form of ammunition had not been adopted in our artillery before the outbreak of hostilities,

whereas it was in use in practically all foreign field artilleries. That was largely the fault of the General Staff, who ought to have insisted upon its being introduced after its value had been proved in the Balkan war of 1912.

Wilson's name did not appear in the list of new K.C.B.'s in the Spring honours list, at which he was again much disappointed. A certain consolation was afforded by his promotion to Lieutenant-General, and he went home to England in the middle of April to discover, to his "agreeable surprise," that the New Armies disproved all his insolent and ill-informed sarcasms about them.

Not the least of Wilson's qualities as Liaison Officer, we may suppose, was his frank indiscretion. No insular British reserve for him! On the contrary, we find him explaining in June, 1915, to General Joffre, in the presence of another French officer, that the new British Coalition Cabinet, though "anxious to do what is right," was "grossly ignorant," and had "no military advice except Kitchener's, which is distrusted." Then, he writes, he explained to them the "difference in my position with the arrival of Bonar Law and his men"; and adds in his diary, "This talk was *good*." Disloyalty could go no further.

By the end of the month Wilson was awarded the K.C.B. he coveted, and, what also pleased him, was called over to London by Lord Kitchener to acquaint the Government with the French view of the situation. He gives a précis of his conversation with Lord Kitchener, the accuracy of which may well be questioned by anyone acquainted with the latter. For we are told that Kitchener "talked incessantly," though it is conceded that "he was most civil and allowed me to contradict him as much as I liked."

General Callwell adds that Wilson was pleased "at having established such friendly relations with Kitchener, and finding him so ready to listen. Although Wilson makes no reference," he adds, "to the matter in his

diary or in letters home, there can be no doubt that his views had undergone a transformation as regards the merits of the New Army scheme to which he had a few months before been so strongly opposed."

General Callwell states also the not insignificant fact that Wilson " was already in close touch with most of the Unionists who had recently joined the Cabinet." It may at first strike the reader as peculiar that Wilson, with his unceasing expressions of contempt for politicians in his diary, should thus demean himself by contact with them. But the diaries disclose that Wilson not merely tolerated the acquaintance of " Frocks," but sought them out (where they could help him) with remarkable and even sycophantic assiduity. He appears, on his own showing, to have spent most of his leisure for several years calling on " Frocks," dining with them, telephoning to them, impressing his merits on them, and generally pursuing them.

One day, for example, after being knighted by the King at Buckingham Palace, Wilson visited in turn Lord Kitchener, Mr. Asquith—who " listened very attentively, and in the end was very civil "—Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Lord Milner and Lord Lansdowne. The truth is that Wilson was by no means averse from making himself agreeable to the despised " Frocks," in order to forward the designs he had at heart, to which perhaps he thought his own advancement of prime necessity.

Next day he had a long conversation with Mr. Lloyd George, who, he said, " thinks we are going to be beaten." Mr. Lloyd George, however, in publishing two of Wilson's letters to him (to which later reference will be made) has publicly stated that, " I never uttered many of the observations, some of them extremely foolish, attributed to me in these diaries." In face of this statement it is impossible to accept Wilson's account of the conversation, which, to be sure, is by no means in Mr. Lloyd George's vein. Nor probably is credence

to be attached to most of Wilson's reproductions of conversations; he was too egotistical to care much what the other men said, and his memory, therefore, was probably never safe. He formed an impression according to his prejudice, and set it down as fact. For example, on this visit to London he concluded that:

> The Cabinet is frightened. Kitchener is frightened. The Cabinet is ignorant, Kitchener is ignorant. No one knows what to do.

Comment on this impertinence would be superfluous.

Wilson ceased to be Liaison Officer in December, 1915, when Sir John French handed over his command to Sir Douglas Haig. In the last three months of his appointment he found numerous opportunities, in diary and letters, to express his views about the members of the Cabinet. For example:

> The whole of the Salonika business is political, and, as usual, the fools at home, Asquith, Grey, K., have been taken in. If they have a very modest modicum of brains they will jump at the chance of transferring our troops from Gallipoli to Salonika.
>
> The whole thing is in a muddle, and these old men—Kitchener, Joffre, Delcassé, Grey, etc.—have made a proper pie.
>
> Joffre said our strategists were fools. I told him I cordially agreed with him.
>
> It is time we stopped paying any attention to Grey, Kitchener, Asquith, etc., as they have *always* been wrong.

(The suggestion that Kitchener had always been wrong comes strangely from the man who had so bitterly and so ignorantly criticized his views about the duration of the War and the creation of the New Armies.)

> By Jove, our Cabinet is the limit!
>
> This "Cabinet of all the Indecisions," as I call it, will lose the War. They will certainly do their best.
>
> All these worthy old gentlemen—Kitchener, Briand, Galliéni—are equal fools in this respect.

And to maintain his record of ineptitude, Wilson writes in July, 1915, "I confess that I could not understand why Rumania should join" the Allies.

When Lord Kitchener went out to Gallipoli to report on the maintenance or withdrawal of the British forces there, Wilson was convinced that he was going to report in favour of remaining. The diarist went so far as to warn General Monro that, if the latter reported in favour of evacuation, "he would be up against Kitchener." As ever, of course, Wilson was wrong, for Lord Kitchener decided upon withdrawal.

The question of Salonika arose at this time, and Wilson found, to his surprise, that Foch was in favour of staying there. "He does not seem able to visualize the position, which is curious," is Wilson's comment. General Murray "said we could defend Salonika. I think we cannot. . . . My opinion is that we can't remain without the active assistance of Greece." Wilson was again wrong. The Allies could and did remain at Salonika without serious Greek assistance. Wilson criticizing Foch is like Paddington criticizing London.

He took over command of the 4th Army Corps from General Rawlinson on December 22, 1915. His troops were holding ground near the Hohenzollern redoubt and Loos.

"I part from 1915 with no regret," he wrote in his diary. "To me personally it has been an unkind year, commencing with the offer by Sir John of C.G.S. and Asquith's refusal to allow, finishing with Robertson getting C.I.G.S., which at one time it looked as though I was certain to get, either when Murray got it or, later, before Robertson got it. On the other hand, the command of a Corps of four divisions is a fine command and I shall enjoy it immensely." Time was to show that he was rather too sanguine.

By now he had changed his vacillating mind about the duration of the War and, he notes on January 1, 1916, "I don't think the War will be over during this year."

In April he went to London and—so he says—was asked by Mr. Bonar Law to take command of the Canadian Corps; but nothing came of it.

On May 21 the Germans attacked and his line was driven back three or four hundred yards. His counter-attack miscarried; the enemy was left with the advantage they had gained. This failure was the only engagement of the War in which Wilson held a fighting command.

He continued to pay visits to London and maintain his connexion with the politicians whom, undeterred by his failure in the field and by the invariable falseness of his forecasts, he still so much despised. He remained vigorously opposed to action in any sphere except the "decisive theatres." For example, on October 26:

> If the Russians engage in serious operations against the Bulgars they will forget the Boches, and if they succeed against the Bulgars the temptation to go to Constantinople will be irresistible. The only thing worth talking about is killing Boches.

And again:

> If we go on walking from one cess-pit into another we shall get drowned. I dread a Russian campaign against Bulgaria *now*. If we beat the Boches all else follows. If we beat the Turks and Bulgars and Greeks we shall be beaten by the Boches. And serve us right.

He met General Maxwell, who had commanded in Ireland during the rebellion. Wilson urged on him one of the themes which he advocated from the beginning of the War until even after the Armistice, namely, conscription in Ireland. General Maxwell "says he thinks there would be serious trouble in North and South if conscription were put on—in this I don't agree." But there can be no doubt to-day that General Maxwell was right and Wilson, as usual, wrong.

On December 1 the latter went to Russia as the chief military member of a joint civil and military mission. He was cheered on his journey by the fall of Mr. Asquith.

In Russia he conferred with the Emperor and Empress, whom he had known as a girl, and with various senior officers. Wilson inspected a couple of regiments on the Baltic Front to whose greetings he replied, as he states in his diary, in Russian. He noted in his diary that " the Emperor and Empress are riding for a fall," but took a more optimistic and falser view than his French colleagues of the military situation :

> I find Milner in depression, tired and worried and listless. I got to work on him at once. Castelnau had depressed him beyond words. I told him that Castelnau had no reason to be depressed; he had seen nothing and so had got the wrong point of view. He had been put on a siding for half a day. These things had depressed him. I, on the contrary, was far from being depressed. I related some of my experiences and I did Milner good.

And so back to England, where he was appointed by the War Office as Liaison Officer between General Haig and Nivelle. Before taking up the appointment he made certain conditions with the War Office; and, without undue modesty, he records his delight with the result :

> And so to-night my conditions are all fulfilled, and I really believe I could impose any others I like as regards pay, rank, staff, etc. For I am clear that they are all frightened and that they all *really* believe that I am the only man who can save the situation. The more I look at it the less I like it, and yet I must not refuse to try. So it is settled.

He took up his new appointment in March, 1917, and again seems to have given the French satisfaction. It is possible to question whether his frank display of contempt for his own chiefs was proper or decent, such as :

> I hope that Nivelle thinks, as I do, that the [British] Admiralty and the War Office are a set of d—— fools.

A very remarkable entry occurs on May 30. Mr.

Churchill—" It always amuses me to talk to Winston " —and Wilson were in conversation. Wilson

> earnestly begged him not to bother his head about mechanical details as to the best form of Tank, and rubbish of that sort, but to fix his eyes on a long view, and on the vital issues, and he would find that, owing to Russian action, or inaction, the old war was over. We were starting a new war, and it was essential that we should realize this and should cut out (diplomatically) Turkey and Bulgaria, which we could do, and which at one blow would destroy all the German Eastern dream.

That Wilson was wholly indifferent to the possibilities of the Tanks is not surprising. Other prominent soldiers displayed the same obtuseness, though they were not so supercilious in their stupidity. The second point that emerges from this entry is that Wilson at last, after nearly three years of fruitless slaughter, sees a faint light from the East. It is true that he is still opposed to military operations in the " minor " theatres, but he appears to be beginning to realize that his simple slogan that " the only thing that matters is killing Boches," was inadequate, and that an attempt should be made to cut off Germany's Eastern allies. This hesitating and tardy inoculation with " Eastern " policy had, indeed, the amusing effect of persuading him that he had initiated it, and, five days after his conversation with Mr. Churchill, we find him asking Joffre in Paris his views of " my " plan " of buying out Turkey and Bulgaria."

For two months in the summer of 1917 Wilson was unemployed. He spent his leisure in calls upon soldiers and politicians, incidentally informing General Smuts " of the rottenness of our Foreign Office, and the vital need of the War Committee taking it by the throat. I think that I impressed him." He presumably vouchsafed these views to General Smuts because, as General Callwell explains, he " had come to the conclusion that, with the honourable exception of Smuts, no member of the War Cabinet believed in the possibility of victory."

General Smuts, could we believe the diarist, returned the compliment. "He called me the Hindenburg and Ludendorff of this country, and was altogether friendly."

Then Wilson was given the Eastern Command. In conversation with Sir Eric Geddes, the First Lord of the Admiralty, he expressed an opinion which a few months before he would have heartily damned:

> I told him that I also want to take troops away from France during the mud months, not to grow cabbages here, but to beat the Turks, and I asked him if he could ferry over eight or ten divisions; and he said that he certainly could. He told me that the Sinai railway had a capacity of twelve divisions. I would improve this, and also land troops on the Palestine coast, and see if I could knock out the Turk this winter.

The Allied Governments now decided to set up a Supreme War Council, upon which Wilson was to be the British military member. In telling him this, Mr. Lloyd George is alleged by the modest diarist to have said, "The whole future of the War rests on your shoulders: you must get us out of the awful rut we are in." And, as if this was not enough, the Prime Minister is quoted as saying a few days later, on the way to Italy, "You are our Kellermann, and you must save us in our desperate situation. If you cannot, then no one can." We should like further authority for this conversation.

In Italy Wilson ventured another unfulfilled prophecy.

> The loss of Venice means the loss of the Adriatic, and a serious threat, therefore, to Salonika and Egypt, but I am afraid this is coming.

And, back in England, he wrote:

> Clemenceau talks about Unity of Command, but did not seem to know quite what he wanted. It is an impossible thing, in my opinion.

And he says in his diary, "Clemenceau wants to make one C. in C. from the North Sea to the Adriatic, and

this is to be a Frenchman, and in all others have English C. in C.'s. It is curious how unpractical a clever man can be."

Wilson's advice to the Supreme War Council was, in General Callwell's words, that "Until such time as the United States troops should have arrived in Europe in large numbers, the proper attitude for the Allies to maintain on the Western Front and in Italy was one of defence." He wrote in his diary, "Really we must change in 1918 our puerile, useless, costly strategy of 1916 and 1917." But no one had more vehemently upheld the puerile, useless and costly strategy than himself.

For example, in April, 1917, he had written in his diary:

> Esher came from Paris to lunch. I developed my thesis —that is, that there are three schools of thought:
>
> (1) Somme—i.e., wearing down the Boches.
>
> (2) Verdun—i.e., whirlwind attack.
>
> (3) Pétain—i.e., do nothing.
>
> We have tried (2) (Verdun), which has been a complete failure. There remain Somme and Pétain. To my mind the Pétain plan is one to be avoided, and a Somme, with intelligence, is our only chance. Esher says that Lloyd George has allowed things to go on both here and at Salonika for a fortnight, and then he and Ribot are to meet again. This does not please me. We must go on fighting, and not stop and wait for the Americans (!) So Esher is to see Painlevé to-morrow and then arrange for me to give him a dinner on Wednesday in Paris. If the civilians stop this fight and squat, then any chance we have of retaking Ostend and Zeebrugge is over, because if we can't get on while the French are all out to help us, how can we get on alone if the French cease fighting?

But it was the adoption of a defensive policy which saved the situation and made possible the winning of the War.

General Callwell adds that Wilson now "believed that it might prove practicable to cause the Turks very

serious trouble, and possibly even to detach them from Germany, without seriously prejudicing Allied prospects in the main theatre of war."

Wilson was groping his way to a fuller acceptance of the strategic methods he had formerly derided. We read in his diary:

> Much more talk again to-night about a drive against the Turk, and I told Smuts that my mind was travelling this way—that the Boche could not get a decision against us, that we could not get one against him in the West, and that therefore we ought to try and knock out the Turk.

Once again he had come full circle.

In February, 1918, he was appointed Chief of the Imperial General Staff.

Despite his hero's earlier disdain for the idea of a Generalissimo, General Callwell claims that he more than any other British soldier or civilian was responsible for bringing about unity of command. It is perfectly true that Wilson, in the end, changed his mind, and warmly advocated the proposal, but his editor's claim is excessive. Once again, the despised "Frocks" seem to have shown the greater and earlier wisdom. As late as April, 1918, Wilson, while agreeing that Foch's position should be strengthened, adds the definite clause: "But not up to C. in C."

As the end of the War drew near, an increasing number of references to Irish conscription appear in the Diary. The Cabinet is abused for not introducing this measure, the difficulties and dangers of which Wilson seems to have been intellectually incapable of realizing. As late as October 21, 1918, he drew up a memorandum showing (in General Callwell's words) "the absolute necessity of conscription in Ireland." And an entry in the Diary for the same day mentions a dinner with Lord French, Mr. Lloyd George, and Mr. Churchill:

> We discussed [Irish] conscription. . . . Lloyd George and Winston both of opinion that in the present state of

> uncertainty it would be suicidal to try it, but that if all hopes of Armistice disappeared then we should apply it at once. I strongly advocated application at once, both as a war measure and as a peace measure. As war measure to give us 150,000–200,000 more men, as peace measure because I cannot conceive Ireland uncompelled and garrisoned by English conscripts. There is no answer to this, and Lloyd George agreed that there was none, except practical expediency. I hope that my cousin [President Wilson] will send an uncompromising answer to the Boches, and that we can then bring in conscription for Ireland.

Wilson wished to conscript Ireland even after the Armistice. But this was because he was so mistaken in his views of what was going to happen in Europe. He was certain that the Germans would not sign the Peace Treaty; his comments on the "Frocks" were vitriolic. "I think the 'Frocks' have gone mad; they sit and talk all day," is a mild specimen of insolence. On March 27, 1919, he wrote:

> I said . . . that it followed that the Boches would, under cover, real or simulated, of Bolshevism, refuse to sign. And then what? No answer. I put on Lloyd George's silk hat, which delighted him, but gave no ideas.

(It should be mentioned that changing hats with a neighbour, and especially Foch, was one of Wilson's simple but favourite pleasures.)

On March 29th:

> The Boches are making fools of Paris.

On April 8th:

> I told Lloyd George that, in my opinion, America would soon make an alliance with La Bochie. I don't think he agreed, but I think I made him think."

On April 10th:

> Lloyd George told me he did not see why we should not be in a position to summon the Boches and Austrians to Paris on Wednesday week, 23rd of this month. Whew!

On May 1st:

Foch thinks that the Boches, seeing our irresolution and divisions, will play a bold game and we shall lose the peace. I agree.

On May 2nd:

Paris is going to crash, but I always thought it would because the fools built on the shifting sands of Small States and Leagues of Nations, without power of enforcing conditions.

On May 23rd:

I went to see Foch. He does not think the Boches will sign.

On May 29th:

The "Frocks" are in a beastly mess. The Boches have done exactly what I forecast—they have driven a coach and four through our terms, and then have submitted a complete set of their own, based on the fourteen points, which are more coherent than ours.

On June 9th:

Paris is very near a crash this week. If Orlando comes back with a refusal as regards Fiume, I think Paris will crash, and the Boches won't sign. What a business.

Dined with Lloyd George. During dinner we got Orlando's answer about Fiume. It is a flat refusal. This is a serious affair. It will go near to breaking up the Conference, and if the Boches hear of it—and they will—it will stiffen them against signing.

On June 19 he begins a cautious but very necessary hedge:

I don't think that the Boche signature, in the present discredited condition of Paris, is worth having. I am sure that, if he signs, he does so with no intention of carrying out his engagements.

When the Germans did agree to sign on June 23, our political prophet, no whit dismayed, noted:

So after five years of war, here comes peace at last. And yet I am as certain as I can be that the Boches have no

intention of carrying out our Peace Terms, and in my judgment this ending is a disaster.

And then again, after witnessing the signing of the Peace Treaty at Versailles on June 28th:

> The real bald truth is that the Boche signatures represent nobody and nothing, that no peace has been made even with Germany, that the rest of Europe is in chaos, that the "Frocks" have proved their collective incompetence, as I always was sure they must, seeing that they based themselves on Small States, i.e., the curse of Europe, and on a League of Nations without power to enforce decrees, i.e., a patent of impotency and incompetency.

The series of extracts set out above demonstrates the "incompetence" not of the "Frocks" but of their shallow and vainglorious critic.

It goes without saying that Wilson was contemptuous of the "Frocks'" handling of their Russian difficulties. But his own record in this respect, as displayed in these diaries, was neither consistent nor intelligent. His sympathies were naturally with the anti-Bolshevist White Armies, but General Callwell tells us that already in February, 1919, Wilson "had lost confidence in General Denikin and also in General Kolchak." This, however, was precisely the moment when the two White commanders were about to inaugurate a remarkable series of successes. By April 29, therefore, Wilson makes another *volte-face* and describes himself as "considering a message I am sending to Kolchak, advising him as to strategy of his summer campaign."

Simultaneously, however, Wilson, provoked by some demon of inconsistency, was urging upon Mr. Lloyd George that:

> Lemburg did not belong to Poland, and, therefore, it was very difficult to fight the Ukraine, who had at least an equal right to the town. At the same time something must be done to stop the Bolshevists, and I thought we ought to tell Poland to clear out of Lemburg, and at the same time tell them we could give them Dantzig.

He actively supported the operations of General Ironside's forces at Archangel. After the failure of that force at the end of July (due principally to bad Staff work), which synchronized with Kolchak's defeat, Wilson favoured assisting Denikin with munitions and war material. This may or may not have been a wise policy, but it was certainly curious in one who a year before had lost confidence in the man he was helping and had favoured the surrender to the increasingly Bolshevist Ukraine of an ancient Polish city. Wilson, of course, threw all the blame for Denikin's failure on his butts :

> We are nearing the end of this Russian tragedy, and the " Frocks " are terribly and criminally to blame.

And when Denikin evacuates the Caucasus, Wilson writes :

> So ends in practical disaster another of Winston's military attempts—Antwerp, Dardanelles, Denikin. I feel rather disgusted with the present Government, and I am beginning to think that I had better get out. They very rarely take my advice when I give it ; and now they seldom ask it, so I suppose they no longer value it. It is nearing time for me to go.

Can even the miserable " Frocks " be blamed for no longer valuing Wilson's advice ? He was the man who was always wrong.

He now urged upon the Cabinet the necessity of forcing the Poles to retire a hundred and twenty miles from the line they were holding against the Bolshevists. He claimed that their presence there was accentuating Russian hostility ! When Foch sensibly suggested that such a retirement would ruin the *morale* of the Polish Army, Wilson told him that this must be risked for the sake of withdrawing them from Russian territory. Shortly afterwards, however, we find entries in the Diary complaining of " the almost servile way in which Lloyd George looked after Russian interests and was

hostile to the Poles." And in the same day's entry we are told (what we cannot believe) that:

> It was quite clear to me. . . . that Lloyd George approved of the occupation of Warsaw by the Bolshevists. It was an amazing five hours' meeting. It left me with a clear sense that Lloyd George is in company with friends and kindred spirits when with the Bolshevists. All through the meeting, the Bolshevists, assisted by Lloyd George, were driving a wedge between the English and the French, and Lloyd George went so far as to say that if the French did not agree to the truce terms, then he would not support Poland nor make war on the Bolshevists. Whew!

By this time Wilson did not believe " that we can now keep the Bolshevists apart from the Boches. . . . And so the whole Versailles Treaty continues to crash, and even these idiotic and self-satisfied ' Frocks ' are beginning to see this." Wrong again!

As if satisfied with his Russian record, Wilson now restores his attention to Ireland. He never realized the seriousness of the position there. Just as all through the War, and even after it, he advocated the application of conscription to the island without ever realizing the difficulties and dangers of the proposal, so now he could not believe that the Sinn Feiners meant business. General Callwell tells us that in February, 1920, Wilson

> was watching the progress of events in Ireland closely, and was well satisfied with the plans which the local military authorities had elaborated, alike for meeting sporadic outbreaks and for dealing with a general rising. He anticipated an increase of outrages, but he did not believe that formidable rebellion would break out unless there should be a general strike in Great Britain.

Needless to say, by May 11, Wilson was telling Mr. Bonar Law, " as I have often told him before, that he had not begun his Irish troubles yet." By the 28th Wilson thinks that Mr. Lloyd George " has lost Ireland and the Empire." When the Treaty negotiations with the Sinn Fein leaders began, Wilson was convinced that

De Valera held the whip hand. As he wrote on August 8, 1921 :

> Lloyd George would obey any order of Valera's, right up to putting Ulster under Valera, but he [Valera] would be brought up with a round turn by Ulster. I said that, on that, Lloyd George would start a Press campaign against Ulster, and that I had absolute signs of this.

On September 11, he notes that " Valera now dictates terms—as I said he would." And two days later he tells Sir Laming Worthington-Evans that the Cabinet would come to terms with De Valera " no matter what terms Valera imposed." Going farther afield, Wilson hands on his views to an American colleague, General Pershing :

> I told him of our Irish situation, of the foul murders, and of Lloyd George's capitulation. He knew nothing of all this and was terribly upset. I thought it good that he, friendly and loyal comrade, should know the real truth.

When agreement was reached between the Cabinet and the Sinn Feiners on December 6, Wilson wrote :

> The agreement is a complete surrender. (1) A farcical oath of allegiance ; (2) Withdrawal of our troops ; (3) A rebel army, etc., etc. The British Empire is doomed.

He was incapable of realizing the situation or seeing into the future. It may, however, be some solace to his admirers to learn from this Diary that he always opposed the great advance in Anatolia. Not even he could be wrong every time. But whether the Greeks would have suffered disaster, if the civilian Government of M. Venizelos had not been exchanged for that of King Constantine's soldiery, can never be known.

I turn now to a specially damning error of calculation. There was strong public feeling in England in 1921 about the colossal expenditure on our Mesopotamia forces. At the Cairo Conference early in that year, Mr. Churchill, then Minister for the Colonies, arranged

to replace most of these forces by aeroplanes. Wilson was convinced that this substitution (which has proved amazingly successful) was preposterous. He ran to Foch with his complaints:

> I told him of Winston's medicine for Mesopotamia, of hot air, aeroplanes, and Arabs, and for Palestine of hot air, aeroplanes, and Jews—and he simply threw up his hands.

And later in the year he wrote again:

> The real fact is that Winston is between a cheap and fatal tenure of Mesopotamia and a real occupation with security and peace which he can't pay for. In short, his "hot air, aeroplanes, and Arabs" is leading him to disaster, and he is beginning to realize it.

Wilson's term as Chief of the Imperial General Staff was due to end in February, 1922. His thoughts now turned openly towards a Parliamentary career. In January we find this piquant entry in the diary:

> I lunched at Londonderry House, only Lord and Lady Londonderry there, and we discussed the possibility, necessity, and probability of forming a real Conservative Party. Lady Londonderry is working hard to this end with Salisbury, Northumberland, Carson, Ronald McNeill, and I am sure this is the right thing to aim for. And I believe if they could get a fine leader it is a real possibility.

That, modest as always, he saw himself as the "fine leader" will be obvious from the next quotation. He was invited to stand for the vacant constituency of North Down and agreed on condition that there was no opposition. Another candidate, it is true, appeared; but Wilson decided to stand after all. The rival withdrew at last, and Wilson's way was clear. And so we find him, two days before his retirement, writing:

> To lunch with Leo Maxse, where were also Northumberland and Esher. It is clear that they have no plan and no leader, and that they rather look to me.

He took his seat in the House of Commons on February 23, 1922, and at once, as befitted one destined for leadership, associated himself with those Conservatives who wished to overthrow the Coalition. The change, however, from military to civilian status does not seem to have clarified his judgment, for he wrote in March that "I think within three months we shall have a republic declared in Ireland." He went over to Paris, and called upon the President, M. Millerand, and the Premier, M. Poincaré:

> I found him [M. Millerand], as always, not only charming to me but also shrewd, logical, clear-headed. Then I paid a long visit to Poincaré at the Quai d'Orsay, who was also delightful and very sensible, and neither he nor Millerand are under any illusions about Lloyd George or his total inability to govern.

Wilson made his maiden speech on the Army Estimates on March 15; "All the evening members kept congratulating me," he noted. He crossed to Ulster, where with ready tact he asked members of the local Government, "Who is governing Ulster, you or Collins?" and declared at a public meeting that Mr. Lloyd George had proved himself utterly unfit to govern. General Callwell tells us that Wilson was then approached to assume definite leadership of the malcontent Conservatives.

But he was not destined to realize this ambition and to see the downfall of Mr. Lloyd George's Government, for, on June 22, 1922, he was vilely assassinated on the steps of his house in London.

His death cast horror over the whole world. His services to the Empire and the Allied cause were remembered; his fame as a great soldier and a great personality seemed secure. So, indeed, it would have been, but for the appearance of his diaries. For here we find, beyond the possibility of doubt, that this man who claimed to hate the "Frocks" was himself a supple adept in every branch of what he conceived

to be the political game. He loved to pull strings; to play off one man against another; to rely on his rhetoric to fascinate his hearers. He who so bitterly complained of the stupidity and vanity of the "Frocks" is shown to have possessed far less foresight and far more conceit than most of those whom he pilloried. We have already seen that (with very rare exceptions) he was grossly mistaken in his everlasting and dogmatic prophecies. And there can be no doubt of his vanity. Entry after entry in his Diary during the years of his manhood displays the babyish egotism of which he was a victim. Here are some of them:

At a meeting of the Committee of Imperial Defence in 1911, "Every one very nice."

In 1912, Mr. Bonar Law "was more than nice and flattering."

On the same page, Mr. Balfour and Mr. Bonar Law were "most nice and flattering."

A few pages later, Mr. Asquith "and the others soon saw that I was not going to stand any nonsense, and later on Asquith was as nice as he could be, and at the end was most complimentary."

At Joffre's headquarters in the war, "they were all perfectly charming to me, and far too complimentary."

"Stamfordham said, amongst other things, that I was more responsible for England joining the War than any other man. I think this is true."

Sir John French "was as charming as he could be."

"Sir John was charming and grateful."

"I dined with the French Mission; they were all so nice."

"Castelnau very open (though he said he would not speak to any Englishman alive like that except me)."

"Kitchener very civil."

Mr. Asquith "asked me to come again soon, and was most cordial and appreciative."

"Kitchener was more than nice to me."

"Asquith was quite charming. . . . He was evidently anxious to please me."

"Foch let fly about me, about my work before the War and during the War, and said all sorts of ridiculous and charming things."

"Castelnau was perfectly charming to me, and in front of everyone at dinner said that, only for me, England would never, could never, have gone to war, and, therefore, it was the literal truth that I had saved France. A proud moment."

Lord Milner "said that, in his judgment, I was 'by far the ablest soldier in our army,' but that I had two faults —I was too pro-French and I was too clever and summed up people too quickly."

Sir Douglas Haig "was most nice to me, begged me to do something with my 'great brains.' . . . He said that he trusted me absolutely, and that I had been invaluable to him and so on."

Mr. Bonar Law "told me that all the members of the War Committee were very fond of me and had an intense admiration for me."

At Belfast "I was very much struck by the number of people who knew me; and when Sir Robert Liddell introduced me at the Club as 'General Sir Henry Wilson' and then added 'our General Wilson,' the reception was instantaneous."

"Clemenceau was charming to me. . . . Altogether I was satisfied with Clemenceau."

Joffre "was as nice as ever to me."

Nivelle "also was as nice as ever."

"Nivelle was loud in his praises."

"Orlando this morning paid me a charming compliment. He reminded me of a meeting I had with him at Padua in his bedroom, and he said he had always since called me '*le Rothschild des bons espoirs.*'"

Clemenceau "was as nice as ever to me."

Sir Douglas Haig "personally was very nice to me."

Clemenceau "patted me on the head and said I was *un bon garçon.*"

Sir Douglas Haig "was as nice as could be."

At the Imperial Cabinet, "I was much congratulated."

Sir Douglas Haig "was most nice."

"Foch delighted to see me and as nice as ever."

Clemenceau "said our politicians were fools but I was a good boy."

Clemenceau "very nice to me."

The King "sent for me, and both the Queen and he were charming to me. He said he knew the part I had played and thanked me."

"After lunch the King again came to me and had a long talk. He recalled our many meetings, and again the part I had played, and was most flattering."

Foch "was as nice as ever."

"Milner and Douglas Haig both made nice speeches, the latter giving me great praise."

"Clemenceau very nice to me. . . . The old man was struck with my argument and way of putting my case."

M. Millet of the *Temps*, speaking of the Peace Treaty, "said I was the only person who could pull the whole thing together, and would I undertake it? I told him such a proposal was not practical."

Clemenceau "was as nice as ever to me, but feels he is in a tight place and so turns to the soldiers, as 'Frocks' always do."

Foch and Weygand "were niceness itself."

Lord Riddell "repeated that no one he had ever met had 'so clear a grasp of essentials, so wide an outlook, so far-seeing a gaze into the future.' I asked him for a cigarette!"

The King of Spain "took me aside into a big window in the dining-room, with no one else in the room, and he spoke with the utmost frankness about the situation. A very interesting conversation. He credits me with more power than I have, perhaps not more than I may have."

Sir Maurice Hankey "was very nice."

Foch "was very flattering, but obviously he meant every word."

M. Millerand was "charming to me."

"I got much praise for my short speech last night, and the general opinion seems to be that I hit Austen very hard—which, indeed, was easy to do."

There is another characteristic, too, in Wilson which is not altogether consistent with the soldierly psychology he ascribes to himself. From the evidence afforded by his own Diary, it seems clear that he was not averse from the more insinuating arts of diplomacy. In August, 1919, he wrote a sycophantically phrased letter to Mr. Lloyd George after the latter's recommendation of him for a baronetcy and a grant of £10,000:

MY DEAR P.M.,

I really think you have gone cracked about Henry Wilson, but I am sure you know how deeply grateful I am, not so much for all the rewards you have showered on me as for your constant kindness. I can't tell you *how* pleased I am about your O.M. Of course, it in no way represents your services in this war, for, let me tell you, in case you don't know it, you more than any man living or dead, you almost alone, won this war. That is the bare truth and the whole truth.

How pleased I am about Hankey Pankey (Sir Maurice Hankey) and your tribute to him.

Take care of yourself, P.M., dear.

HENRY WILSON.

It may or may not be true—it very likely is—that Mr. Lloyd George, more than any other individual, was responsible for winning the war. But no one could infer this from Wilson's Diary. It is true that, in his irritation at Mr. Asquith (whom he supposed to be hostile to himself) he told Mr. Lloyd George (who was friendly) that the latter "alone could save us from the defeat which must follow" on the general depression in high places at home. It should, however, be noted that in this same conversation Wilson told Mr. Lloyd George that he was willing to go to Russia, instead of Lord French, "if he thought I was the best man, and he said most emphatically I was."

In a later entry Wilson declares that the real credit for deposing Mr. Asquith is due to Mr. Lloyd George, but, except for these two remarks, there is no suggestion in the Diaries that Wilson believed that the new Premier, more than any other man, was responsible for victory. On the contrary, there are references to "amazing documents" put forward by Mr. Lloyd George and to his "mad schemes." In the summer of 1917 Wilson insisted that "with the exception of General Smuts, none of the War Cabinet believes in victory," and in February, 1918, we find this curious entry:

> At last I found Lloyd George in real fighting trim. He sees now and fully admits his weakness up to now and how, instead of leading, he has balanced one interest against another.

I should like to have heard this talk.

The improvement seems not to have been for long, for in the following month Wilson reproaches Mr. Lloyd George in these words: "I am not sure that he sees the gravity of the situation yet." And a day or two later a War Cabinet is described as "a lamentable exhibition of ignorance and weakness." When Lord Reading suggests from Washington that the imposing of conscription in Ireland might make difficulties in America, Wilson wrote, "Of course, Lloyd George fastened on this as a sort of excuse for leaving Ireland out of the Bill." Then a few days later:

> Lloyd George was full of abuse of Ireland, and said he wished my d——d country was out at the bottom of the sea; but I said this was simply that he would not, or could not, govern the country. Altogether, Lloyd George's Government is in rather a rocky condition.

In June, 1918, Wilson presses for Japanese intervention in Siberia, "but Lloyd George hangs back for some unaccountable reason." Two months later he writes that:

> All the Prime Ministers, i.e., Lloyd George, Borden, Hughes (but not so much), Smuts, Massey, and Milner,

> are of opinion that we cannot beat the Boches on the Western Front, and so they go wandering about looking for laurels.

In October, too, Wilson found that Mr. Lloyd George thought his Armistice terms too severe. "It is curious how nervous these politicians are." And when the War is over he accuses the Prime Minister of bribing soldiers to obtain their votes: "The bribing of Lloyd George at this election is simply disgusting," is a typical entry. From this point the entries grow more and more uncomplimentary until, as we approach the dates of Wilson's speech and letter praising the Prime Minister, the references to him in the Diary form a strange contrast with them. For example:

> "I can't understand Lloyd George being such a fool."

Think of his "P.M., dear!"

> "I have not seen a trace of statesmanship in any of Lloyd George's work."

Need much more be said of this political general?

Wilson's acid comments on the folly of the Allied Premiers, including Mr. Lloyd George, in connexion with the Peace Treaty, have already been mentioned. Yet, on July 24, 1919, at the House of Commons, he said of Mr. Lloyd George, after a mess of compliments, that "we could not have got the victory we got, nor the peace we got, without the Prime Minister."

There is no need to labour further this revelation of his sloppy inconsistency.

But we may all observe the folly of publishing such sensational documents as these Diaries without realizing that their contents must recoil on those who are glorified in them. It is seen that, although a professional soldier in the highest position and provided with every source of information, Wilson was more than any living general mistaken in his forecasts of the military events of the

War ; that he was equally mistaken in most of his political prophecies ; that, although he showered sarcasm on the alleged stupidity, failure, vanity, and self-seeking of the " Frocks," he was himself extremely foolish, by no means successful in the field, childishly susceptible to the least breath of praise or flattery ; avid to praise men to their faces, when he thought his own career might so be advanced, and simultaneously to write bitter, sneering things about them in secret.

Better, far better, for Wilson's fame that his Diaries had been buried deep in his grave.

* * * * * *

Mr. H. G. Wells is a very different type ; indeed, it would be hard to picture two men more likely to be out of sympathy on most topics than he and Wilson. Yet, strangely enough, Mr. Wells, as I shall show, has lately put forward certain criticisms of politicians which supplement, if they approach from a completely different angle, the sneers in Wilson's diary.

Mr. Wells's career as a popular writer is well known. From a lecturer on biology—and, I understand, an extremely cogent lecturer—he passed, by way of journalism on the old *Pall Mall Gazette*, into the realms of imaginative writing, where he at once showed himself the undisputed successor of Jules Verne. I am not likely to forget the impression made upon me in my younger days by the plausible skill of his " Time Machine," the weird and intense horror of " The Island of Dr. Moreau," the brilliant uncommon-sense of " The Invisible Man," the vision of " The First Men in the Moon," and, as his narrative touch came closer to our daily life, the vivid and fresh light which he threw upon contemporary problems in " Kipps," " Tono Bungay," " Ann Veronica " and three or four others of that period of his writing. Nor do I forget the charm of " Mr. Polly "—perhaps his best book of

all—or the admirable study of the outbreak of the War in "Mr. Britling."

It is, however, of the later, the more didactic, Mr. Wells that I have occasion to write here. So many people have written favourably of, and continued to buy, his most recent books that they evidently must contain some meritorious element which I confess myself unable to discern. I am quite willing to admit that the fault herein is my own. But, nevertheless, I am bound to express my opinion. Since I read the first book which Mr. Wells wrote, I have had a standing order at my booksellers', still enduring, for each new work which he produces. I shall not, therefore, be accused of a tendency to underrate the real talents, amounting in some respects to genius, which he possesses. But I must make plain my estimate of some of his later works.

He once, for example, seems to have thought that the world was ready to accept him as a political critic of the highest order, and he wrote the least successful of all his books, that on the Washington Conference. Warned by its failure, he has since returned to the form, if not to the substance, of the novel. Such volumes as the "Clissold" trilogy and "Meanwhile" are an attempt to incorporate turgid political essays into the mould of fiction. Fragments of incident are inserted to give substance to the publishers' claims that these works are novels. Few experienced readers will be of the same opinion.

I take "Meanwhile" as the most outstanding of this class. Its publishers announced that this book was to be based on the General Strike of 1926; and that its criticism of Mr. Baldwin and Mr. Churchill was to be "ruthless." Actually, however, the General Strike enters the book only, first, as a distant rumble in the background and, later, as the text for a few tiresome letters written by one of the characters to his wife. The "story" is set in a villa near Ventimiglia, just over

the Italian border. The house party consists of Peter Rylands, a young English coalowner; his wife, who is enceinte ("I've got to be three parts vegetable for a bit now—and then a sort of cow," is her delicately Wellsian description of her condition); Mr. Plantagenet-Buchan, a Europeanized American; Lady Catherine, an aristocrat of easy virtue; Mr. Sempack, an author-philosopher; and a few nondescripts or supers.

Mr. Sempack is another Mr. Clissold, which is bad; that is, another incarnation of the didactic side of Mr. Wells, which is worse. It is, perhaps, open to Mr. Wells to say that Mr. Sempack does not represent him; but the defence, if attempted, is absurd. One does not thus centre a novel round a man's conversation without taking responsibility for it, unless criticism is implied in the text. But the point need not be argued, for Mr. Sempack only repeats in so many words—so *many!* —what Mr. Wells has incessantly offered us over his own signature during the last few years. Mr. Sempack, therefore, joins Mr. Clissold in that group of bores who loud-speak Mr. Wells's "ideas."

Newspaper reviewers, though they never fail to allot space to Mr. Wells's books—for these are still, in a technical sense, news—no longer pretend to be as impressed as formerly by them. Except for one or two politically biased appreciations, "Meanwhile" received a thoroughly bad Press, though hardly as bad as it deserved. Doubtless foreseeing this, the hero cautiously provides his own claque. Mr. Sempack has only to open his mouth for all the other characters in the book to express admiration, as nauseating as it it difficult to understand, for his brilliance. For example:

> "I've heard of the great Mr. Sempack, yes."
>
> "He writes books," she supplied helpfully.
>
> "*Real* books, dear lady. Not books you read. Not novels. Not memoirs. Books that are just books. Like Santayana. Or Lowes Dickinson. Or Bertrand Russell."

"You've read some?"

"No. I've always hoped to meet him and save myself that duty. It *is* a duty. They say—they say he talks better than he writes."

And again:

They did it between them and there was wonderful talking that night, a talk that delighted Mrs. Rylands altogether. It was like the talks her mother used to tell of in the great days of Clouds and Stanway, in the happy 'eighties when Lady Elcho and all the "Souls" were young and Lord Balfour was "Mr. Arthur," and people used to read Robert Louis Stevenson's *Talk and Talkers* in the hope of improving their style. Mr. Plantagenet-Buchan was bright and skilful and Lady Catherine was characteristically generous in giving away a vintage that might have been reserved for her alone, and Philip most unexpectedly helped with one intelligent question and Lord Tamar with two. Mr. Sempack, once started, proved to be as great a talker as his reputation demanded; he could interest and inform and let in contributors while keeping them in order, and the evening was tremendously entertaining and quite different from any other evening over which Mrs. Rylands had presided at Casa Terragena.

Again:

Mr. Sempack made the schools and colleges of to-day seem more provisional and evanescent even than our railways and factories. Beyond their translucent and fading forms, he evoked a vision of a wide, free, and active life for all mankind. In the foreground, confusions, conflicts, wastes, follies, possible wars and destructions; on the slopes beyond, the promise and a little gathering band of the illuminated, who questioned, who analysed, who would presently plan and set new methods and teaching going.

Again:

Large phrases stuck out in Mrs. Rylands' memories of this talk, like big crystals in a rock.

"The immense inattentions of mankind. . . ."

"Subconscious evasions and avoidances. . . ."

"Our alacrity for distractions. . . ."

"The disposition of the human mind to apprehend, to assent and then to disregard, to understand and yet flag and fail, before the bare thought of a translation into action. . . ."

"The terror of isolation because of our insecure gregariousness. We try to catch every epidemic of error for fear of singularity. . . ."

"Minds as wild as rabbits and as ready to go underground."

"The disposition of everything human to inflame and make a sore about a minor issue, that will presently kill all the wider interests concerned. . . ."

Again:

Next morning Mrs. Rylands could better grasp the *great talk* and its implications. She lay in bed and contemplated it as she sipped her morning tea, and it looked just as it had looked before she gave way to her fatigue, a very fine talk, indeed, and immensely interesting—to Philip and everyone.

Again:

She approved of the *great talk* and blessed it and felt that it had added very much to her life.

Again:

This morning it was clearly apparent to her that so spacious and free a life as hers and Philip's here in Casa Terragena had no right to exist without a steady flow of lucid and thorough talking.

Again:

The irruption and effect of Mr. Sempack had set her inquiring whether there were not, perhaps, quite a lot of other stimulating people to be found.

Again:

I wish old Sempack hadn't trotted off in the way he did. I'd have liked to have had a lot of this out with him. That old boy has a kind of grip of things. I'm getting his books.

Again:

Everyone seems to look up to him and respect him. Everyone, that is, who's heard of him. Why? He's

tremendously big and I suppose there's something big about the way he looks at the world and talks about progress and treats all we are doing as something that will be all over in no time and that cannot matter in the least.

Again :

"It was just there that the importance of Mr. Sempack came in. He did take longer views and larger views and help other people to take them. He presented progress as large and easy, swift and yet leisurely, sweeping forward by and through and in spite of all the disputations and hasty settlements and patchings up and running to and fro. He conveyed his conviction of a vast forward drive, carrying the ordinary scurryings of life upon its surface, great and worth while, that comprehended a larger human life, a finer individual life, a happier life than at present we permitted ourselves to realize. His vision of mankind working its way, albeit still blindly and with tragic blunderings, to a world civilization and the attainment of ever increasing creative power, gave a standard by which all the happenings of to-day, that swirled us about so confusedly and filled the newspapers so blindingly, could be judged and measured. He must come back to Casa Terragena and he must talk some more."

Again :

I just can't make the stuff I have to tell you flow off my pen as trained chaps like old Sempack seem able to do. Whatever he has to say seems to begin at one place and go right through to an end, missing nothing by the way. I've been reading in some of his books. In fact, I've been reading him no end. People talk about "writing" and I've always thought before it meant purple patches and lovely words, but this sort of thing also is writing ; driving ten topics in a team together—and getting somewhere, getting through doors and narrow places and home to where you want to go.

Again :

This ultimate reasonableness of Sempack's is a rare thing, a hothouse plant. It's the last fine distillation of human hope. It lives in just a few happy corners of the world, in libraries and liberal households. If you smash

the greenhouse glass or turn off the hot water it will die. How is it ever coming into the open air, to face crowds and sway millions ?

Again :

> You have your great public men, respected, influential, no matter the Government. Your Shaw, your Gilbert Murray, your Sempack; Americans like Nicholas Murray Butler, Upton Sinclair, Arthur Brisbane. Free to speak plainly. Bold as lions. Free—above the State.

And Mr. Wells himself seems just as much impressed, for he tells us with carefully conditioned modesty that :

> To many hearers the *great talk* that was set going in Casa Terragena by Mr. Sempack would have seemed far less wonderful and original than it did to Mrs. Rylands and the group of young people with her that listened to him. For, after all, it was little more than a gathering together and a fitting together of the main creative suggestions for the regulation of human affairs that have accumulated so richly in the last few score years.

In correction of this it may be well to give specimens of Mr. Sempack's *great talk*. Here is one, typical of the rest :

> Lots of us are bored almost to violence by things as they are. More will be. Progress has always been a battle of the bored against the contented and the hopeless. If you like this world with its diseases and frustrations, its toil and blind cravings and unsatisfied wants, its endless quarrellings and its pointless tyrannies and cruelties, the pettiness of its present occupations in such grotesque contrast with the hard and frightful violence to which it is so plainly heading, if you like this world, I say, defend it. But I want to push it into the past as completely as I can and as fast as I can before it turns to horror. So I shall be against you. I am for progress. I believe in progress. Work for progress is the reallest thing in life to me. If some messenger came to me and said with absolute conviction to me, "This is all. It can never be any better," I would not go on living in it for another four and twenty hours.

One can only comment that one longs for the messenger. And here is a more practical contribution to our social problems:

> People have to realize that winning coal is a public need and service, like the high road and the Post Office. A service that has to be paid for and taken care of. Everybody profits by cheap accessible coal. A coal-owner's royalties are as antiquated as a toll gate. Some day it will be clear to everyone as it is clear to any properly informed person now, that if the State paid all the costs of exploiting coal in the country and handed the stuff out at prices like—say ten shillings a ton, the stimulation of every sort of production would be so great as to yield a profit, a quite big profit, to the whole community. The miners would become a public force like the coastguards or the firemen.
>
> "You think that is possible?" asked Philip.
>
> "I know. It's plain. But it's not plain to everyone. Facts and possibilities have to be realized. Imaginations have to be lit and kept lit. Certain obstructive wickednesses in all of us——"
>
> Mr. Sempack stopped. He never finished a sentence needlessly.
>
> "But coal winning isn't confined to its country of origin," said Philip. "There is the export trade."
>
> "Which twists the question round completely," said Lord Tamar.
>
> "When you subsidize coal-getting in England you subsidize industrial competition abroad," said Philip.
>
> "Exactly. While we still carry on the economic life of the world in these compartments and pigeon holes we call sovereign states," said Mr. Sempack, "we cannot handle any of these other issues. Nothing for it but makeshift and piecemeal."
>
> "Till the Millennium," said Philip.
>
> "Till the light grows brighter," said Sempack and added meditatively: "It does grow brighter. Perhaps not from day to day, but from year to year."

A doubt seems to have insinuated itself into Mr. Wells's mind that these drear maunderings may not, in cold print, seem altogether worthy of the generous

compliments which they elicit from the supers; so he provides Mr. Sempack with a fantastic foil, Colonel Bullace.

> The latter had pricked up his ears at the word Utopia and coughed and turned a rather deeper pink; and, after the third repetition and apropos of nothing in particular, he had addressed Mr. Sempack in an abrupt, caustic, and aggressive manner. He cut across an unfinished sentence to do so.
>
> "I suppose, sir," he had said, "*you* find your Utopia in Moscow?"
>
> Mr. Sempack had regarded him as a landscape might regard a puppy. "What makes you suppose that?" he asked.
>
> "Well! isn't it so, sir? Isn't it so?"
>
> Mr. Sempack had turned away his face again. "No," he said over his shoulder and resumed his interrupted sentence."

This shows you what a great man Mr. Sempack is. How swift; how decisive the repartee! Who dares to say that Mr. Sempack-Clissold is a bore?

It is hardly necessary to say, this being a novel by Mr. Wells, that his great philosopher is tempted and falls into the embrace of Lady Catherine. Why not? He no doubt overlays her with his *great talk*. But even under this emotional stimulus he runs away from facts and departs on a tour of the Savoy Alps. We would ourselves back him against the Alps if he really began to talk. Because, again, it is a novel by this world-reforming author, the young husband of the expectant lady has an intrigue with a girl in the house party. None of Mr. Wells's heroes has ever been able to resist the nearest woman. They all like these "great talks" and care very little what woman laps them up.

When Mr. Sempack returns, the General Strike has broken out in England and Lady Catherine, always anxious to oblige, has returned to her British Fascist lover. Mr. Rylands—who has previously invited Mr. Sempack to "see how everything at home waits for a

decisive voice and a firm hand. It wants a man who is sure as you are sure to grip all this sedition and discontent and feeble-mindedness"—discovers that Mr. Sempack-Wells regards the Strike as "nothing at all, just political nonsense; you see I don't attach any great importance to this General Strike in England." However, he decides to return to England, "if only to see why people can struggle with such courage and passion for ends that do not seem to me to have any relation to the Civilization of the World at all."

At this point the yawning reader begins to wonder how Mr. Sempack, subtlest and surely most loquacious of living philosophers, will settle the Strike. Mr. Wells must have wondered, too, and he neatly avoids the difficulty by having Mr. Sempack run over by a motor-bus on arrival. This casualty, it must be conceded, greatly abates my prejudice against this particular instrument of locomotion. In his life of distinguished achievement, I am inclined to think this one of Lord Ashfield's greatest services to the community.

We have, therefore, to receive our author's views on the Strike through the letters of frail, fallible, but philosophic Mr. Rylands, the coal-owner. He it is who provides us with the "ruthless criticism" of the Government, about which so much low-class puffery appeared in the Press.

He begins by telling his wife that the General Strike is "the Silliest Thing in the History of England. . . . One is left gibbering helplessly as the silly affair unrolls itself." Here is a specimen of the helpless gibbering:

> "Imagine a procession of armoured cars and tanks going through the dear old East End of London to protect vans of food-stuffs nobody has the least idea of touching. *After the strikers have guaranteed a food supply!*"

Mr. Rylands-Wells does not appear to have witnessed, less still participated in, the scenes at the docks in May, 1926. He was, no doubt, arranging future contracts

in the expectation that others would preserve the existing system.

Mr. Churchill is subjected to much "ruthless" criticism. For example:

> "As might be expected Winston has gone clean off his head. He hasn't been as happy since he crawled on his belly and helped snipe in Sidney Street. Whatever anyone else may think, Winston believes he is fighting a tremendous revolution and holding it down, fist and jaw. He careers about staring, inactive, gaping, crowded London, looking for barricades."

Mr. Wells seems to know as little of the Sidney Street incident as he does of the Strike. He adds, later, "Winston is probably certifiable but no doctors can get near him to do it." Once more:

> "What chance has ultimate reasonableness when some atavism like Winston collars all the paper for his gibberings and leaves you with nothing to print your appeals to the ultimate reasonableness on?"

After this criticism of Mr. Churchill, illustrated with a childish—almost a second-childish—pen and ink drawing of "Winston doing everything" (this in Mr. Wells's handwriting), we come to the pompous disparagement of Mr. Baldwin. This, too, is adorned by a drawing depicting "Trusty old Baldwin keeps on doing nuffin." It seems that Mr. Baldwin is "a bit of a coal-owner himself," and Mr. Wells insinuates that this has a connexion with the granting of the coal subsidy. As, however, Mr. Wells does not see fit to make a direct accusation against Mr. Baldwin, there is no need to pursue the insinuation farther.

On the other hand:

> "I don't think Baldwin and his Government have played a straight game. I don't think the miners and the rank and file of the workers are getting a square deal. I think that Baldwin and Co. are consciously or subconsciously on the side of the coal-owner and the profit extractor, and that

they mean to let the workers down. They are making an asset of Cook and his not listening to reason. I've had that smell in my nose for some time. Churchill's first number of *The British Gazette* stank of it. Gave the whole thing away. They didn't want to prevent a General Strike. They wanted it to happen. They wanted it to happen so as to distract attention from the plain justice of the case as between miners and coal-owners. And between workers generally and employers and business speculators generally, in a world of relative shrinkage. They wanted the chance of a false issue, to readjust with labour nearer the poverty line.

"You may say that is a serious charge to make against any Government. But consider the facts. Consider what happened last Sunday night. Probably you haven't got the facts of Sunday night over there yet. It's the ugliest, most inexplicable night in the record of our quiet little Baldwin."

And Mr. Rylands-Wells goes on to explain that *The Daily Mail* incident which precipitated the end of the pre-strike negotiations was prepared. "It was too clumsy, too out of proportion, to be a genuine thing."

Unfortunately for Mr. Wells, the facts are known and provable.

No wonder that Mrs. Rylands, reading this letter, finds that the writer "had told his story well. It sounded—credible. For the first time she seemed to be realizing what this queer business in England meant." We can only admit that a man like Mr. Wells deserves an audience like Mrs. Rylands. We wish them many more *great talks*—on condition that they are not published.

It is then explained to her that the Government, having provoked the Strike, will seek a chance of firing on the strikers:

"If they can have an Amritsar in Trafalgar Square they will. They want to beat the Reds and then tie up the trade unions hand and foot—and trample. And that, my dear, is the dangerous side of the present situation."

In this part of the letter, the writer's

> lucidity struck her as extraordinary. . . . To her his vision of affairs seemed fresh and powerful and broad. How much he knew that he had never spoken of before! His implicit knowledge of the sequence and meaning of strikes and Royal Commissions made her feel not only ignorant but unobservant.

Such were the receptive impressions of this parasitic female half-wit.

Other letters from this lucid and knowledgeable correspondent tell her indignantly of " the Government control of broadcasting and the general suppression of opinion in this country." A discussion in the House of Commons between Mr. Baldwin and Mr. Thomas has " more than confirmed his suspicions that the petty *Daily Mail* strike and the consequent break was a foreseen excuse, meanly and eagerly snatched at by the Government." And Lord Edensoke, his uncle and a leading coal-owner, is pictured as a selfish and utterly unpatriotic seducer of young girls; " The portrait of the contemporary successful man, for all the jerkiness of its strokes, struck her as devastatingly true." With a deft reference to Mr. Herbert Samuel as " that Kosher Liberal," the penetrating criticism of the General Strike comes to an end.

The reader is now indulged with a few small items of uninteresting incident to round off the book. A young convert to Rome appears at Mrs. Rylands' house, solely to afford the latter an opportunity of demonstrating her own almost Sempackian brilliance of thought and expression. She is not indeed the Rose; but she has lived near It.

> It has to be recorded that the matured and final verdict of Mrs. Rylands upon Roman Catholic Christianity, its orders and subjugations, its gifts and consolations, its saints and mysteries and marvels and the enduring miracle of its existence, was delivered in one single word: Rubbish.

Then an Italian politician (naturally a great admirer of Mr. Sempack-Wells) is chased into her garden by a mob of Fascisti. With his rescue and the birth of Mrs. Rylands' child, "Meanwhile" comes to an end. For ourselves, we are left wishing that the Fascisti had caught Mr. Wells's friend.

This summary of "Meanwhile" cannot fully make plain its devastating weariness. Mr. Wells's bitterest critic could wish nothing better than that it might be widely distributed, as, I understand, it has been. It must be read if it is to be adequately condemned. The whole incredible conceit of Mr. Sempack; the feeble-forcible attacks on public men who accept responsibility in times of crisis, while he dithers and blathers about a better world; the stupidity and falseness of the picture of the General Strike—in which the author achieved no more than Mr. Sempack, without the excuse of a motor-bus; these can hardly be appreciated without a perusal of "Meanwhile." Mr. Wells has ceased in this series of books to be a novelist. He has ceased to show his imaginative powers, except for the distortion of known facts. He has almost ceased to be readable.

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To force the Dardanelles was a task which appeared easy, but was found insuperably difficult. Similarly, with the apportionment of the blame and responsibility for the failure. The politician has in many circles been found guilty in respect of it; let us see how much foundation this judgment has in fact.

Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett's book, "The Uncensored Dardanelles," is, however, a valuable contribution to our knowledge of the campaign. It is not a history; it is certainly not polemical; it professes to be no more than a record of the personal observation of an eye-witness whose experience of warfare and intimacy with the chief actors gave him an exceptional opportunity to form conclusions about the conduct of the campaign.

Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett was one of two correspondents officially attached to the Dardanelles expedition at the beginning of 1915. He represented the Newspaper Proprietors' Association. Leaving London on March 25, a week after the first naval attack on the Straits, he was held up by transport difficulties in Rome. There he met an old friend, a Turkish Prince, through whom he had the peculiar privilege of reading the secret Turkish report of the naval action :

> It was an extremely interesting document, very soberly written, and as it was only intended for their own representatives, and not for the world at large, it could be considered accurate. It served to confirm the opinion held by many that we had under-estimated our task, and that the attack of March 18th had never stood any chance of succeeding.

A week later Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett reached Mudros and saw there the greatest armada of war ships and transport ever assembled :

> . . . the mighty *Queen Elizabeth*, our latest and greatest battleship, carrying eight of the new 15-inch guns, shepherding a long line of pre-dreadnought battleships, beginning with the *Lord Nelson*, *Agamemnon*, *Swiftsure*, *Triumph*, and followed down the tide of times by the *London*, *Prince of Wales*, *Canopus*, *Cornwallis*, *Majestic*, *Goliath*, and many others. Cruisers, destroyers, and countless transports packed this great sheet of land-locked water almost to overflowing.

This was the force which was to convey and assist the military expedition to rush the Peninsula, capture Constantinople, and outflank the enemy. As all the world knows, the expedition ended in what was probably the greatest individual disaster which had ever befallen this country in war.

The landing was to take place in the dark nights at the end of April. Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett spent the intervening period watching the Anzac troops rehearsing, and making the acquaintance of Sir Ian Hamilton, the

Commander-in-Chief. He found him in high spirits and full of a confidence which Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett could not share. Both the General and he retained their respective states of mind until the very end of the expedition; the General was wrong and the correspondent was right.

Apologists of the expedition may properly point out that Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett's book is published long after the events. At the same time, there is no doubt whatever that he saw from the very beginning what was apparently hidden from the Commander-in-Chief and his Staff. His own diagnosis of the difficulties which the troops would face was justified by every later event:

> We are about to attempt to land an army on an unknown shore, of which no accurate maps are available; no general staff has patiently worked out every detail of the expedition, nor measured its demands on our resources in relation to our deep commitments in other theatres of the War. The Commander-in-Chief has exercised no previous command in the World War; his staff are equally inexperienced. Yet this is no ordinary campaign. No more precarious operation can be undertaken than to land an army from boats in the face of an enemy entrenched up to his neck and armed with modern weapons of precision. All the lessons of the War have shown the advantage which a defending army enjoys, unless the assault is made in overwhelming force, regardless of losses, and supported by an adequate artillery preparation. Experiments have shown that days must elapse before the whole army, with its artillery and material, can be put ashore at the various points selected.
>
> Hopes of successful landings are based on the optimistic estimates of the effect of the tremendous volumes of fire which the warships' guns will bring to bear on the enemy's defences. But, however much this fire may assist the disembarkation, once the troops move inland from the coast, this support will steadily diminish, and the infantry will have to rely on the rifle and bayonet until field artillery can be brought ashore to assist them. The intelligence department has little accurate information as to the disposition of the enemy's forces, the number of men he can

concentrate on the Peninsula, which they put at 35,000, or even where his main defences are located.

We are about to make a leap in the dark, lacking information on the following vital questions: What number of Turkish troops are available for the defence of the Peninsula; have they had the necessary time to prepare all vulnerable points against a surprise attack from the lines of Bulair to Cape Helles; have both coasts—European and Asiatic—been fortified; is the expeditionary force of sufficient strength to drive the enemy from his positions on the seashore, then advance inland, establish itself astride the Peninsula, and maintain its grip on the vitals of the Ottoman Empire; will the guns of the Fleet be able to support the attack and protect the flanks of the Army, as has been calculated; can the guns of the fort be brought to bear against the selected landing points, and against the troops once they have established themselves ashore? The General is about to launch his troops on a mere blind attack, leaving the answers to so many all-important considerations, on which accurate information is essential, to be discovered, not by the researches of the intelligence staff, but by the infantry at the bayonet's point.

On April 24 the Fleet set sail from Mudros, and in the small hours of the next morning the Australians were landed at Anzac Cove. The result was to maroon the troops on shore, unable to advance, unable to retreat.

The Turks, under their German commanders, occupied strong positions dominating the landing-stage. As the day went on, they beat off the brave attempts of the Colonial troops to improve their positions; and a constant stream of wounded to the beach demonstrated that success was not to be expected.

As usual (writes Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett), the medical arrangements were totally inadequate to meet the requirements. Optimism had minimized our casualties to the finest possible margin, but the Turks multiplied them at an alarming rate. Apparently there was no one in authority to direct the streams of wounded to other ships where accommodation could be found for them.

This lack of provision for the wounded was to be one

of the outstanding horrors of the whole expedition, and an appalling proof of the inefficiency of the staff.

Simultaneously, the 29th Division was landed at Cape Helles, and exactly the same disastrous circumstances prevailed. So long as the Fleet, with its heavy artillery, was able to support the land forces and keep down the enemy's artillery, there was hope that success might somehow be attained. But soon this last hope disappeared. German submarines arrived, and the battleships dared no longer lie in the open sea.

One by one the great ships were withdrawn to safety, and only a few obsolete vessels were left to support the marooned troops. The submarines soon disposed of them. Everybody knew that this was inevitable, and one of the officers in the *Majestic*, the evening before disaster came to her, said to his soldier friends, " Mind you're up early to-morrow morning, and you will see a sight you have never seen before—a battleship sunk by a submarine." The *Majestic* was torpedoed just before seven o'clock and quickly sank.

Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett was on board, and his account of the final moments is a good example of his descriptive power :

> The *Majestic* presented an extraordinary spectacle. She was lying over on her side, having such a list that it was no longer possible to stand on her deck. About one-third of the crew still seemed to be hanging on to the rails, or clinging to her side, as if hesitating to jump into the water. All around the sea was full of men, some swimming towards neighbouring ships, others apparently having their work cut out to keep themselves afloat. All the vessels in the neighbourhood were lowering boats, and steam-launches were hastening to pick up survivors, but they did not dare stand in too close for fear of being dragged under in the final plunge. I was just thinking what a magnificent photograph the scene would make, when someone called out, " If you don't loose that rope, you will be dragged under." I am told it was Captain Talbot, who was still hanging on to the quarter-deck, who saw the danger we

were in, and gave the warning just in time. For, in the general confusion, we had not noticed that the boat was attached by a rope to the end of the torpedo boom. In fact, she belonged to the *Majestic* and had been lying out all night.

This discovery caused great excitement on board, and many, to escape imminent disaster, preferred to entrust themselves once more to the sea, jumping overboard with oars in their hands. I was hesitating whether to follow suit, when someone in the bows managed to clear, or cut, the rope, and we were free. A very few seconds later the *Majestic* rolled right over to port and sank bottom upwards like a great stone, without any further warning. There came a dull, rumbling sound, a swirl of water and steam, for a moment her green bottom was exposed to view, and then the old flagship disappeared for ever, except for a small piece of her ram, which remained above water as her bows were lying on a shallow sand-bank. As she turned over and sank, a sailor ran the whole length of her keel and finally sat astride the ram, where he was subsequently taken off without even getting a wetting. The final plunge was so inspiring that for a few seconds I forgot about the large numbers of officers and men who were still clinging to her like limpets when she went down.

Some were dragged down by the fatal nets before they could get clear, others were probably killed inside by the explosion. Nevertheless, the loss of life was small, numbering only fifty. This was due to the fact that most of the men had lifebelts, and the majority had time to clear the ship before she turned over. We were anchored in shallow water, so the suction was small, and assistance was promptly forthcoming from the numerous ships, boats, and launches, which hastened to pick up those struggling in the water. The final plunge was watched by thousands of troops on shore, and by thousands of men afloat, and I am told that the Turks in their trenches were loud in their applause. Captain Talbot, when the ship was struck, rushed forward with his yeoman of signals to save or destroy the confidential signal book. This was accomplished, and then, when the ship went down, he was thrown into the water, but was picked up by a launch. Then, seeing two of his men in danger of drowning, he plunged into the sea again and saved them both.

Just as in France the professional soldiers clung to the murderous and hopeless methods of frontal attack on the enemy's main lines, and disparaged attempts to outflank the enemy; so, when at last an outflanking expedition had been decided upon and a force sent to the Dardanelles, the same fantastic folly was there persisted in. General Hamilton and his staff sought to push their troops forward from the beaches where they had landed into the enemy's lines; yet all the time it would have been possible to outflank the Turks at the Isthmus of Bulair. We have since learned from the memoirs of the German Commander, General Liman von Sanders, that the Bulair lines were so weakly held that they could easily have been forced.

But the stupid strategy of the professional soldiers prevailed, and Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett watched magnificent English regiments and the flower of the Anzac forces pitilessly slaughtered in the impossible attempt to break the enemy's lines:

> Thus we carry on at this hopeless game, ignoring all the strategical possibilities in the situation by persisting in these murderous frontal attacks on impregnable positions, losing tens of thousands of our best and bravest men without achieving any result or carrying us any nearer to our goal, while only a few miles away at Bulair lies the key to Gallipoli, to the Narrows, and to Constantinople.

The horror of this fighting, the wasted valour of the troops, the culpable lack of foresight on the part of the staff, and the defects in the character of General Hamilton and his subordinates are all brought out in these pages. The last fiasco was the landing at Suvla Bay. It would seem incredible to anyone reading Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett's account that a British force could be led so badly; yet the facts are not in dispute. General Stopford—"with orders all over his breast, with disorders all over his command"—and other subordinate commanders were made the scapegoat for the disaster. They richly

deserved their fate, but General Hamilton and his staff were surely more to blame.

Not merely was success in the field now impossible, but our troops suffered enormous casualties by being thrown at the strongly entrenched Turks; the wounded were left to die between the lines; and the survivors suffered torture from lack of water, from the heat, from improper food, inadequate clothing, and the plague of the corpse-fed flies. Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett remarked of himself when, twice in one day, he escaped by a hair's-breadth, that "a kind Providence seems to look after me out here, but nevertheless, I wish it would not run things so close." The same might be said of the whole expedition.

After the August offensive had completely failed—only General Hamilton thought that it had almost succeeded—Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett became desperate. His dispatches and letters were so censored that he despaired of persuading people at home that the expedition was in danger of extinction by the Turks or an epidemic. He took the desperate step of sending an uncensored letter to the Prime Minister through an Australian who was travelling to England. An eavesdropper betrayed him to the staff; the Australian was searched at Marseilles and the letter taken from him; Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, to his joy and relief, was sent home. There he hastened to interview members of the Cabinet, urging upon them the necessity of withdrawing the remnants of the forces. There were still long delays, but at last, after the winter had set in, the survivors were withdrawn and the Dardanelles expedition, which had begun with such high hopes, ended in ignominious failure.

Who was to blame? To decide this question it is foolish to consider all the operations as a single exploit. One must first examine the feasibility of the original idea of outflanking the Central Powers in the Dardanelles. Was this right or wrong?

There can be no doubt that it was a brilliantly right idea, the credit of which belongs primarily to Mr. Churchill. Had it succeeded, it must have shortened the war by at least two years and saved a million lives.

Why did it not succeed? Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett insists that we prematurely exposed our plan by the original naval attack upon the Straits. When this failed, the Turks were able to reinforce their troops in the Peninsula and prepare to meet our landing forces. He appears inclined to blame Mr. Churchill for this mischance, but he thus overlooks the all-important fact that Mr. Churchill was told by the Cabinet that no troops could be spared for such an expedition, and that the Navy must try to break through by itself. Comes this further point. The Fleet having failed, was a combined military and naval expedition certain to fail? As it was conducted by General Hamilton, undoubtedly. But Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett himself declares—and he is right—that an attempt to outflank the Turks and seize the Bulair lines would have succeeded. The blame, then, for the final failure must fall on General Hamilton and his complacent, pompous, inefficient staff.

Once again the professional soldier is demonstrated to be as incompetent in his own tasks as he is eager to criticize and condemn the work of others. The lesson of the Dardanelles might have taught the Generals on the Somme the wicked futility of the old method of warfare. But even this was wasted.

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All men make mistakes—"damned politicians" like the rest. But the preceding pages demonstrate—sufficiently, I hope, to convince any reasonable observer—that the politician cannot compete in folly and self-conceit with his critics, whether military or literary. Damned, politicans may be. But they are not often damned fools.

VII

THE FUTURE OF THE BOLSHEVISTS

PRO-BOLSHEVIST commentators in various English periodicals are always eager to declare the increasing strength and well-being of the Soviet State. Writers who have always been favourably impressed by Bolshevist Russia, either at first or second hand, are straining their superlatives to the limit. Not merely is Soviet Russia more paradisaical than ever, but the dreams of half a dozen years ago are to-day magnificent reality—or very nearly so. The old programme for the electrification of the whole countryside, the completion of which has been annually anticipated by these writers for at least ten years, is now, we are again assured, practically complete. What is more, the old rivalry between town and village, between workers and peasants, between bread-eaters and bread-growers, between producers and consumers of manufactured articles, is now definitely superseded by a glorious resurgence of Socialist co-operation. All reports, on the other hand, no matter how well substantiated, of peasant uprisings and factory strikes are the inventions of counter-revolutionaries. Bolshevist Russia, it is suggested, relieved of the irritation of White intervention, is tramping merrily along the highway of ever-increasing comfort and prosperity.

Such is the legend. But it is not the truth. It is nothing like the truth. No one—not even the most fervent pro-Bolshevist journalist in *The Manchester Guardian* or *The Observer*—can wholly ignore the signi-

ficance of the splits in the Bolshevist Party. Stalin and his "Government" were, at one time, in undisguised strife with Trotsky and his "Opposition." After months of wrangling, the Stalinists won the victory. Trotsky and his friends have been, and are still being, expelled from the Communist Party, not merely in Moscow but all through the country. By way, too, of completing the picture of disunity, town and country are again at each other's throats, and Bolshevist Russia is faced by an economic crisis more serious than any she had known since the famine of 1921.

It may be well to consider the political question before the economic. Anyone who tries to discover a fundamental conflict of principle between the Government (i.e., the Stalinists) and the Opposition (i.e., the Trotskyists) soon finds himself lost in a maze of obscurity. It is not very difficult to select certain questions on which the two groups are divided; but the divisions are clearly unreal, and would not justify so drastic a split unless the participants had more serious, though concealed, grounds for a quarrel.

On the surface, then, a basic issue was the question of the official Bolshevist attitude towards the outside world.

Was the Soviet Government to redouble its efforts to accomplish the world revolution? Was it to repeat such vigorous, if unsuccessful, moves as the dispatch of the Zinoviev letter to England, and of the Borodin mission to China? Or was it to call a halt in this international mischief-making, and concentrate rather on carrying through its grandiose "five-year" schemes of Socialism in Russia herself? Stalin and his friends appeared to have inclined to the latter alternative; whereas Zinoviev, very naturally, and Trotsky and the other Opposition leaders could not so easily relinquish their fanatical dreams of a universal social conflagration.

But the Opposition was not even satisfied that the Government was sufficiently energetic at home. "It

is all very fine," said the Opposition in effect, " to talk about concentrating on the Bolshevization of Russia, but your official programme is far too weak to be effective." Trotsky and the others complained that the Government, in which they were an increasingly powerless minority, was not using sufficient energy to prevent the rebirth of the private capitalism and the rise of a new peasants' and speculators' *bourgeoisie*, based upon the concessions to individual enterprise. From the Opposition's outcry one might have supposed that private trade and commerce were flourishing in Russia. In point of fact, a certain amount of private trading takes place; a small class of peasants has grown rich at the expense of their fellows; a few business men have survived the periodical harvesting by the Communists of all who show signs of newly acquired wealth. But the Opposition cannot genuinely have been alarmed. Neither the " Kulaks " (the wealthy peasants) nor the " Nepmen " (speculators under the " New Economic Policy ") represent a serious danger to the Soviets. They are too few, too frightened, too insignificant.

The Opposition had clearly no serious case to raise against the Stalinist majority among their colleagues. Indeed, there have been moments in the quarrel when, to a literally-minded observer, the two groups seemed to change sides: when Stalin and his friends appeared as the extremists, while Trotsky and Co. could be regarded as a possible nucleus for the counter-revolutionary restoration of Russia to decent society. But in this the observer would have been misled. It is quite true that many non-Bolshevist Russians, surviving the ten lean years of the Revolution, looked towards Trotsky with a certain sympathy. The reason, however, was rather discouraging. First, one always welcomes the rise of a powerful Opposition among one's enemies. Secondly, the Stalin faction includes men who, judged even by Bolshevist standpoints, are deplorable, and beside whom such murderous scoundrels as Trotsky

and Zinoviev could claim to possess a few redeeming features. To the decent Russian, the Opposition was only the less of two evils; its virtues were wholly negative.

One wastes time to search for a philosophical distinction between the Stalinists and Trotskyists, between the Government and the Opposition. The roots of the quarrel lay in personal rivalries, in temperamental rather than political differences. The Old Guard of Bolshevism —Trotsky, Zinoviev, Radek, Kamenev, Rakovsky, Bieloborodov, etc., and the rest found themselves, to their dismay, confronted with a new bureaucracy of little men. They had to realize that Stalin and his clique represent the *Cheka*, the secret political police, which, ever since the first Bolshevik Government was formed, has terrorized the whole nation with its espionage, its executions, its admirably armed and equipped forces of privileged mercenaries.

The *Cheka*—now transformed in name to the "Ogpu," but unaltered in its nature—was always more powerful than its masters. While Djerjinski lived, it was still possible for the Bolshevist Government to keep some control over the *Cheka's* activities. Since that sinister Pole perished the *Cheka* grew in power and independence until the whole structure of the Soviet Government is merely a screen behind which it works and plans and directs. Although its controllers have little Russian blood in them, they are imbued with the Russian spirit of bureaucracy. A machine to them, especially a political machine, is a glorious thing, whereas an individual, especially a political individual, is regarded with suspicion. Useless for Trotsky's friends to acclaim him co-founder with Lenin of the Bolshevist fortunes; Trotsky was an individualist, not to be trusted by the *Cheka*. Useless, again, for Zinoviev's cynical supporters to point to his untiring attempts to sow revolution in every continent; the *Cheka* looked sideways at him. When other members of Trotsky's suite were named—

such, for example, as Radek—the *Cheka* replied that Radek never scrupled to assert his right to an individual standpoint, that he was, in fact, the *enfant terrible* of the Bolshevist Party. The *Cheka* certainly had reason on its side in these recriminations.

Trotsky, for example, was not a Bolshevist at all when the Russian revolution ended in Lenin's triumph. Neither a Bolshevist nor a Menshevist, he stood somewhere between the two Parties, prepared to throw in his lot with the winner, so long as its aims were directed to the ruin of his country and his country's allies. Zinoviev and Kamenev were then already notorious for their pusillanimity; each of them, at a crisis of his revolutionary career, had publicly revealed his cowardice. The *Cheka*, then, had a good case when it assumed that the Opposition, of whom these men were typical, was not to be trusted; and that the Opposition members might at any favourable moment turn against the Soviet machine and seek to play Talleyrand to a resurgent Russian Nationalism.

Stalin, on the other hand, is a very different type. His name is, of course, a pseudonym. Practically all the Bolshevist leaders use pseudonyms, but whereas "Trotsky," "Zinoviev," and "Kamenev" mask the Jewish names of Bronstein, Apfelbaum, and Rosenfeld, "Stalin" is really named Djugashvili. That is to say, Stalin is a Georgian, while his Opposition rivals are Jews. Some day, when Bolshevism has vanished like an evil dream, it may be possible definitely to show to what extent racial clannishness affected its history. Already it is pretty clear that the *Cheka* has fallen more and more into Caucasian hands, those of Georgians and Armenians, especially the former. This explains much.

The Georgians are a semi-civilized people, whose national characteristics are not dissimilar from those of the Pathans. Cruelty and a disregard for human life must be numbered among their traits, and they have never shown any special sympathy or capacity for trade

and commerce. Clannish to a degree, they have from the first held a considerable place in the administration of the *Cheka*, equalled perhaps only, at first, by the Letts and the Jews. But Latvia, the Letts' native country, has for some years been independent of Russia, so that this source of supply dried up and the Lett element decreased in the *Cheka*. The Jews, not imprudently, transferred their activities to more profitable offices in the Soviet State. Twelve years ago, they might be found in large numbers in all Bolshevist administrative offices; their tendency lately, however, has been to concentrate on the control and supervision of the Government Commissariat—with its unrivalled opportunities for graft—and to creep back into the profitable if precarious market for private trade under the New Economic Policy. Thus the Georgians were left with a clear field in the *Cheka*; there is no doubt that they took advantage of it.

The Caucasus once restored to unity with Soviet Russia, every ambitious young Georgian to-day, as in pre-war days, looks to Moscow as his Eldorado. Small wonder that, when he finds so many of his compatriots there occupying positions of power in the *Cheka*, he throws in his lot with them.

Djugashvili-Stalin is the outstanding Georgian among the Bolshevist political leaders. He is allied by race and tongue—and, it is said, also by family ties—to the most powerful men in the *Cheka*. To them he owes his position, for he is their tool. His prominence would otherwise be inexplicable. He has never enjoyed the smallest repute among his fellows as possessing either personal or administrative abilities of the first class; even among the Bolshevists he is a second-rate man. Yet, during these last few years, he has pushed aside men of world-wide revolutionary reputation, men of demoniac energy, of experience, of extraordinary rhetorical skill. He is the marionette of the *Cheka*. His fellow-Georgians in that all-powerful organization have

wearied at last of the dominance of the old leaders, the Jewish idealogues. The *Cheka* has hurled them into exile. Henceforth, it intends to rule without their interference.

This is not Trotsky's first exile. The Tsar's police sent him to Siberia, years ago. He escaped then without difficulty, and took refuge in Switzerland and New York. Some of his satellites may escape complete extinction. Zinoviev and Kamenev have tried to play their leader false and creep back to the fold; such double traitors need never fear prolonged disfavour in Bolshevist Russia. Radek, however, is more likely to remain unpardoned; his vein of impish humour has always exasperated the single-minded murderers in the *Cheka*.

Let us turn now to the economic position in Soviet Russia to-day. We have seen that an ostensible reason for the split in the Party is the growing rift between the towns and the country. The peasants will not grow corn, or, if they grow it, they hoard it rather than hand it over to the Government for distribution in the cities. The towns starve; the peasants go in rags.

Russia, one of the granaries of the world, was swiftly reduced by Bolshevism to abject poverty. Not merely was no corn exported, but famine menaced every province at home. There is no need here to recapitulate the methods of alternate coercion and cajolery by which the Soviet "persuaded" the peasant to deliver up a portion of his crops. If corn were not exported, the Government, with its foreign trade monopoly, could not buy abroad. Four years ago two and a half million tons of grain were exported, as against five millions budgeted for, and against ten to twelve millions before the war. In 1927 an increase of half a million tons was shown, at the expense of the domestic consumer. It is stated that only five and a half million tons of corn and fats were set aside during the winter of 1927-28 for the town and the army, as against seven and a half million

tons in the previous half-year. Thus, home consumption was cut down by a quarter. So far as accurate figures are obtainable, the difficulties are increasing.

It is not yet clear how the Government proposes to get in their corn. The Bolshevists during their eleven years' reign have tried force. They have sent punitive expeditions into the villages, but, though much blood was spilt on both sides, it was not found that this made the peasants more eager to be of service. A subtler means of approach was the introduction of the "New Economic Policy," whereby the peasant was, in theory, permitted to sell his crops in open market. The fundamental defect in this was that no market existed. The peasants, badly bitten by the worthless paper roubles issued by the Bolshevists in their first years, had no wish to be bitten again, even by a renamed currency. Moreover, since the price of manufactured goods is appallingly high, thanks to the precarious state of Bolshevist industry and foreign trade and the incompetence and corruption of those responsible for them, the peasants have still found themselves unable to obtain an adequate exchange for their surplus crops. They continue, therefore, to maintain the acreage under cultivation at its lowest limits, seeing no reason to sacrifice themselves to please the Bolshevists. With the failure of the "New Economic Policy," the Government has reasserted its monopoly in the purchase of grain. But the same primary factors will make the change ineffective.

Having tried both kindness and cruelty, the Bolshevist Government would appear to have exhausted its powers of argument with the peasants. What it will do next only Stalin and his fellow-Georgians in the *Cheka* know. The enforced absence of the persuasive accents of the Opposition orators will certainly not make the task easier.

The whole outlook is as dark and gloomy as ever. This vast country, potentially among the richest in the world, must continue to suffer until, at long last, the Stalins and the Trotskys, the Georgians and the Jews,

are strung up on opposite rows of lamp-posts. Then, perhaps, the Russians will come into their own again.

Reams are written every month about the latest aspects of Bolshevist policy, the latest conflicts between various wings of the Communist Party in Russia, and the latest shuffle of power inside that Party. Unless one central fact, however, is borne in mind, no one can hope to understand what is happening inside the Soviet dominions. This fact is one upon which every important development in Russia for the last twelve years, and possibly for the next twelve years, hinges. It may be expressed in four simple words: *The Bolshevists are murderers.*

The reference is not merely to the murder of the Tsar and his family. Cowardly and horrible as was this dastardly tragedy in the cellar of a remote Siberian villa, it is not this crime alone which dogs the footsteps of the Bolshevists. The murder of the Tsar was only one item in the endless list of Bolshevist atrocities. Every home, every family, in the whole of Russia has to mourn the murder of innocent victims of the blood-lust of the Bolshevists. Men, women, and children of all ages and of all classes, innocent and guilty alike of hostile political sentiments, have been slaughtered during the last twelve years by the executioners of Moscow. "And it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me." The Bolshevists know that, the moment their autocratic power is relaxed, their lives must answer for the countless victims of their ferocity.

The effect of this knowledge is that, whatever the Bolshevists may do, whatever they may seek to do, and whatever they may fail to do, they cannot, under any circumstances, relax for one instant the autocratic nature of their rule. All their energies are directed towards two things—the maintenance of their supreme power in Russia and the elimination of all possible political competition.

Their overthrow might come in one of two ways—

revolutionary or evolutionary. Ever since they seized power nearly thirteen years ago their chief anxiety has been the possible defection of the army. Their rule has been based on force of arms. By force of arms they still suppress every public manifestation of the Russian people's loathing for them. By force of arms their fiat runs in the principal cities of the vast republic. By force of arms only dare they walk the streets of their own capital. But all these years they have jealously watched the formation of what they call "counter-revolutionary nuclei" among their regiments. Every century of soldiers has had its spy, officially styled its "political commissary," responsible with his life for the detection of unrest and conspiracy. Every officers' mess has contained at least one secret agent of the Communist Party prepared, if necessary, to act as a provocative agent and lure disaffected commanders to their ruin. The moment any member of the forces, officer or soldier, attains the least measure of influence among his companions he is removed to some other station where he is regarded with suspicion. If the Bolshevists have manifestly failed in every other direction, they must be given the credit, if the word may be used in such a connexion, of having established the most effective machine of espionage and provocative action that the world has ever known. It has been used, of course, among civilians as much as in the army, but the army has been at once the mainstay of the Bolshevists and the chief menace to their survival. Despite all their precautions, there have been innumerable mutinies in the Soviet forces which have been suppressed with merciless severity. The army is for the time being politically quiescent, but the Bolshevists know that only a small proportion of it entertains loyal sentiments towards them. Should any other political power arise, not merely cannot the loyalty of the army be depended upon, but there is every probability that it will join forces with the opposition.

It is essential, therefore, for the maintenance of the Bolshevists' regime and for the safety of its leaders' lives that there should be no political opposition in the country. The relatives of the Bolshevists' victims will not sit in council with the murderers. They may serve them unwillingly, as hundreds of thousands are to-day forced to do by the threat of starvation hanging over them, but they will never become their willing colleagues. Either the Bolshevists must rule alone or they must pay with their lives for the blood of the slaughtered millions. That is why there can never be democratic elections in Soviet Russia, and why there can never be a coalition of parties to rule the State. Politically-minded civilians have to be watched, like the army, with never ceasing vigilance. The Bolshevists' lives depend on it.

So much for the revolutionary—or, rather, counter-revolutionary—menace to the Soviet regime. The evolutionary danger remains to be considered. We come back to the quarrels inside the Communist Party. Two of Lenin's principal lieutenants, Zinoviev and Kamenev, have fallen into disgrace and have followed Trotsky, the dead leader's chief colleague, into retirement. Yet their motives and those of the men who have secured their disgrace were precisely the same: to secure the survival of their regime. They differed from the other leaders of the Party only in regard to the methods they thought best directed towards this end.

Zinoviev, alias Apfelbaum, is a character so despicable as even to have aroused the contempt of Lenin. His cowardice, his ferocity, and his peculation have marked him out even among the Bolshevists, who are, in general, a set of contemptible scoundrels. Kamenev, alias Rosenfeld, rivals Zinoviev in cowardice and greed; if he has not the demagogic fury of the other, he makes up for this by certain qualities of education and persuasion. Neither of these men could conceivably have attained prominence in any country or under any regime except those of the Bolshevists. Of the two, Zinoviev

was the leader of the opposition and Kamenev merely his hanger-on. Zinoviev was for long the head of the Third International—the Communist propagandist body *in partibus*. The aims of this body are well known. It seeks to foment revolution in every part of the globe; disgruntled "rebels" from every country are assembled in Russia to aid it in this task; the fruits of its work have been visible everywhere. The famous Zinoviev letter to the English Communists in 1924 was a fair specimen of the instructions it sends to Communists in other countries. The whole of Europe, the whole of Asia, the whole of Africa have been penetrated by its agents. In Europe it has failed hopelessly. Germany, inoculated with its virus after the Armistice, has now shaken off the disease and is a bulwark of civilization against Bolshevism. Even the Balkans are no longer as susceptible to its overtures as was the case four or five years ago. In England the Communists are an unimportant minority. In Asia the position is more serious; except in China, however, the Third International has achieved little success.

The position, then, as Zinoviev sees it, is that Soviet Russia, instead of becoming the pioneer of world revolution, as Lenin in the hey-day of his power had hoped to see it, is now isolated among the nations. How long can this last? Sooner or later, Zinoviev fears, the waters of civilization will overflow the Soviet barriers, and Russia and the Russian people, recovering their social health, will rise up and destroy him and his colleagues. It is true that the Soviet Government places every possible obstacle in the way of the infiltration of civilized ideas into Russia. Every channel of trading communication passes through a Soviet department. Individual foreigners seeking to enter the country are carefully scrutinized, and only those are permitted inside who are considered incapable of assisting, consciously or unconsciously, to throw off the Russian people's slavery. There is no free Press inside Russia to print books or

newspapers which might contain foreign opinions not in accordance with Bolshevist dogma. The Bolshevists and their friends complained of the blockade with which the Allies surrounded their country a few years ago, but M. Clemenceau's *cordon sanitaire* was ineffective compared with the blockade the Soviets have themselves established against foreign civilization. A nation, however, cannot indefinitely remain isolated from the rest of the world. Zinoviev foresees that, unless Russia renews its efforts to poison the rest of the world, the rest of the world will restore Russia to health. And his life will be forfeit.

In his attacks on the official Moscow policy Zinoviev pointed to the attempts of the moderate group in the Soviet Government, led by Stalin, Rykov, and others less well known, to lure back foreign capital into the Soviet dominions. He was not satisfied with the obvious excuse that the invitation was a sly trick and that, as Moscow would put it, the Gentiles were to provide the means for the economic recovery of Lenin's chosen people. To his mind, foreign capital, with its necessary concomitants of high wages, settled employment, and renewed prosperity in such parts as it penetrated, would of necessity destroy the prestige of the Soviet regime throughout the country. The Stalins and Rykovs would be hoist with their own petard, and, having triumphantly drawn the wooden horse of foreign capital into their country, would be overwhelmed with the perils concealed in it.

These were the motives, apart from his natural ambition and love of power as the head of the Third International, which led Zinoviev to urge upon his colleagues in the Government a return to more extreme doctrines. Kamenev, although by nature the mildest-mannered man who ever cut a throat, was impressed by his arguments and joined forces with him. They failed to impress the others, and the majority, discovering that this new opposition had employed the ancient

conspirative methods of secret meetings, codes, and other time-honoured devices of the Russian revolutionary, deprived them of their offices.

Observers have pointed out as a curious phenomenon that the New Opposition, as it is called, contains two incompatible groups—extreme revolutionaries (the left wing of the Communist Party) and men so moderate in opinion as not to be members of the Communist Party at all. This latter section consists of financial and industrial experts whose sympathies are naturally wholly against the Soviet regime and whose ambition is to see Russia restored to civilization. How is their participation to be explained? For anyone acquainted with Russian conditions the answer is not difficult. In their opinion there can be no recovery in Russia without the disruption of the Bolshevist power. They chose, therefore, to support the stupider party against the more cautious section. They hoped that the clash of these two parties would dissipate the unity of the Bolshevists in which has resided the strength of the regime. Theirs was admittedly a counsel of despair, but all Russians are desperate to-day.

Had their hopes been fulfilled, the Bolshevists might have gone down in a swirl of conflicting opinions. Then whatever political sense is latent in the country, basing itself upon the vast peasant class which comprises nine-tenths of the population, might have come to the surface and, backed by the army, have overthrown the last vestiges of Lenin's tyranny. The plot miscarried, however, and the Bolshevists' rule remains where it was —the weaker for this latest proof of its weakness, but possibly the stronger for the loss of such disreputable leaders as Zinoviev and Kamenev.

Another factor must be taken into account by anyone wishing to obtain a clear picture of the Russian situation. Russian affairs take place in slow motion, to use a phrase made familiar to us by the cinematograph. Mr. H. G. Wells, in the days before a somewhat ill-tailored mantle

of prophecy fell upon him, wrote a story about a man whose time-ratio was different from other people's. To him, normal action performed by anybody else seemed to take an age, whereas, when he moved, it was to common eyes with the speed of lightning. Europe and Russia stand in a not dissimilar relation. Those who tell us that the Soviet regime is secure and permanent because it has lasted for twelve years do not understand how short a time this is under present circumstances in Russia. "Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay."

Apart from a national temperament too sentimental to bother about wasted time, there are, of course, sound physical reasons for the slowness with which events move in Russia. The country is so vast as to comprise nearly a quarter of the inhabited world. Its population —enormous in numbers, although meagre in proportion to its area—is scattered over this huge surface not, as in most countries, like a human film spread more or less evenly over its face, but in drops of humanity collected into innumerable towns and villages, each isolated from the others. Communication between them is discontinuous. Slow as action is in Moscow or Petrograd —is it really necessary that we should play the game of the Bolshevist propagandists by calling this city Leningrad, a name which assuredly will not last?— by the time it seeks to extend to the distant cities and hamlets of the provinces its slowness is exaggerated.

It has been said that some villages in Russia have not even now heard of the 1917 revolutions. This is certainly an exaggeration, unless the reference is to such barbarous spots as the fishing villages of Northern Siberia, but even the exaggeration contains a modicum of truth. Although the Bolshevists have "ruled" for ten years, Russia is still living on the momentum of the late Tsarist regime.

Ivan Ivanich, the peasant, leads his life in the manner to which Tsarist rule accustomed him. He pays no

attention to Bolshevist decrees, except when these are enforced by armed marauders styling themselves commissaries and Red Guards. These he evades or ambushes, and then forgets. Pavel Pavlovich the scavenger, goes to his daily work in the streets of the city, unimpressed by the statement that he is a member of a triumphant and dictatory proletariat. If he can read, which is doubtful, he notices that the store where he queues up for his weekly rations has been changed from a private firm to a Soviet office and now perhaps back to a private firm. This makes no difference to him. Food is scarce and appallingly dear; his clothes are rags; his wages, already months in arrears, are withheld. The head of the local Communist branch could tell him that the Government has confiscated a part of his wages to help a miners' strike in England, but Pavel Pavlovich does not know where England is and has no interest in the matter, beyond the acquisition of another grievance.

In Moscow, meanwhile, a few hundred adventurers incessantly dispute points of policy. "Marx said this;" "Lenin said this;" "Stalin says this;" "Bukharin says the opposite." Foreign journalists cable the dull deliberations of these inexpert councillors, and the Western world reads at its breakfast table that "The Bolshevist Government have now decided . . ." and "The Bolshevist Government has now officially abandoned the policy of . . ." We in England know far more of the theoretical developments of the official Soviet policy than the enormous majority of the people in Russia.

In considering the latest developments of Bolshevist policy, we must clear our minds of the illusion that they present any immediate interest to the Russian people.

The time-ratio shows that Russia is still in the throes of the 1917 revolutions. What has happened so far? The Bolshevists seized power on the crest of a wave of

disorder. Whatever the demoralized mob did, the Bolshevists declared to be part of their policy. When the mob had worn itself out and was hungry and tired, the Bolshevists collected an armed force and took control of the country, to the extent, at least, of being able to prevent anyone else taking control. The saturnalia of 1918-1921 followed, in which lives and treasures were poured out like water. Money was "abolished" and the people starved in the richest granary of Europe; money has now been restored, but the people continue to starve. Trade was "communalized," and the people walked in rags; trade has been restored, and the rags have become more tattered. Despite the almost incredible gullibility of foreign sympathizers, who from the beginning announced that Soviet Russia was a prosperous country and then, forced to admit that it was not, cast the blame on everybody but the Bolshevists, it has at last become clear to the world that Russia is slowly, surely dying.

The Bolshevists have failed so utterly that, if Russia is ever again to live on equal terms with the rest of Europe, one of two things must happen: either the rest of the world must be reduced to Communist misery, or Russia must set aside her anarchy and adopt a normal type of government.

Lenin's "new economic policy" of 1921 was an attempt to bring about the second alternative without destroying his Party's power. The more fanatical Bolshevists proclaimed the new policy a betrayal of Communism and a danger to themselves. The Leninists were the more powerful force, however, and the others knew that the Party could not afford an open split. Dissension meant death, and no Bolshevist leader has ever risked death for his principles.

Lenin died, and the Communist Party was left without an acknowledged leader. Trotsky, the companion of Lenin's triumph, was suspect. He was known not to be a Communist at heart, but a man who had

set aside doctrinal differences for the sake of the authority with which his energy invested him in that languid shambles. He wished to succeed Lenin as dictator, but the other leaders were powerful enough to prevent this. He was then suspected of harbouring visions of a Napoleonic overthrow of the Government with the aid of the army. He was, in consequence, relegated to obscurity.

A decade has passed since Lenin put the economic gears of Communism into reverse, but the opposition of the extremists to his policy, as we have seen, remains essentially unchanged. The disappearance of Zinoviev and Trotsky from the centre of the political arena will not solve the one vital problem with which the Bolshevists are faced—how to survive. Only a miracle can save them. The Bolshevist leaders are playing against time; every day that passes makes their position more precarious. They have few friends left, in their own country or elsewhere. In Russia the traders, the bankers, the whole mass of the intelligentsia and even the new profiteering *bourgeoisie*, their own economic children, are against them. The constant nightmare hangs over them of a military revolt and the cutting of their throats overnight. The lot of a mediæval tyrant was restful compared with that of the Bolshevist dictators to-day.

Men who regard murder with abhorrence must, of necessity, have deplored the assassination of Voikov, the Bolshevist representative in Poland. All who hold respect for law will regret that the nineteen-year old Russian refugee, Boris Koverda, should have taken matters into his own hands and slain on Polish territory this diplomatic agent of a neighbouring Power. Koverda was tried by a Polish court and sentenced to penal servitude for life, with a recommendation to mercy. As a reprisal for the death of Voikov the Bolshevists slaughtered a number of Russians and a Finn whom they held as hostages, even though their fantastic allegations

that Koverda acted as the tool of a Monarchist-Capitalist-British plot were shown to be ridiculous.

However much we deplore assassination, the slaying of Voikov was neither very surprising nor unjust. In all that has since been written about the act nobody has thought it necessary to pretend to regret the passing of the man. For he was a self-confessed murderer not merely of men, but of women and little children. It was he who signed the order for the massacre of the Imperial family at Ekaterinburg twelve years ago, gladly carrying out the desires of his fellow-scoundrels in Moscow. Before the ink was dry on the decree, he was sending his secretary to buy sulphuric acid with which to mutilate and destroy the bodies of his victims. Nor was this his only crime: he was one of the traitors who entered Russia with Lenin through Germany in 1917 and sold and hacked his country into disaster. It is not in the least surprising, therefore, that a monster with such a record should be killed. This callous murderer of children died at the hand of one who is even now barely more than a child; only hypocrisy will not rejoice that he has been sent out of the world.

He is not the first prominent Bolshevist to go by violence to the everlasting bonfire. Several others, better known to the outside world, have perished at an assassin's hands. Even Lenin's death may be traced to the bullet which was fired at him by a desperate avenger. Nor is it certain will Voikov be the last. The Red Terror slew, perhaps, nearly three million men, women and children, of whom only a very small proportion indeed received the slightest pretence of a trial. Their only "crime" was that they were not Bolshevists. They have not been forgotten. Is it conceivable that Chicherin, Trotsky, Zinoviev, Stalin, Menjinsky, Unschlicht, and the other principal patrons of the Red Terror—nine-tenths of them Jews, Letts, and Georgians—will be suffered to die in their beds? It seems extraordinarily unlikely.

Nor do the Bolshevists themselves appear to harbour any illusions about their popularity. Their guilty knowledge that their lives are forfeit for the misery, disaster, and torture which they have caused to millions is the determining factor of all their programme during the last eight years, and will remain so until each one of them has faced a firing squad or met his Koverda.

Bolshevism failed in 1919. By that time the fanatics who, taking advantage of the spineless stupidity of the Kerensky Government, had seized power in the cities by inciting the mob against its betters, realized that the world revolution on which they had banked was not going to take place. Ever since that realization dawned on them the whole of their efforts have been directed to one cardinal purpose—*the attempt to save their own wretched lives.* This is the key to all that has passed in Moscow during recent years, to all their attempts to embroil the world outside, and to all that they will do in the future. Everything else is but a mask for their panic-stricken frenzy of self-preservation. They are desperate criminals at bay, with the forces of reckoning closing in on their Moscow Sidney Street.

Bolshevism failed when hopes of world revolution vanished. Lenin and his creatures never regarded Russia herself as more than a magazine from which to extract bombs which should blow up the outside world. They sought to spread their influence in two directions, East and West. Europe, exhausted by prolonged war, was to overthrow her traditions of civilized government and set up murderous proletarian Soviets in its place. And the swarming peoples of Asia, too, were to be incited to slaughter and to drive out the Europeans who had brought them peace and the beginnings of prosperity.

Lenin's eastern front collapsed first. Poland spued out his armies. Germany, after a brief experience of Soviets, reasserted the fundamental stability of her people. Hungary and Bulgaria suffered civil war, but

won through to victory over Bolshevism. Italy suppressed its Reds. Even the little border States of the Baltic Provinces confronted their mighty neighbour and held their own against Lenin's threats and guile. Europe refused to explode at Lenin's command.

In Asia the struggle was naturally a longer process. But it has ended there, too, in a decisive defeat of the Bolshevists. They had thought India an easy prey. There were, they knew, powerful elements in the peninsula ready to co-operate with them in the attempt to destroy British rule. But the British officials in India, aided by the more enlightened classes of the Indian community, smashed their hopes. Still hungry for results, Moscow turned its attention to China. For a moment it seemed to be successful. But not for long: Asia, too, rejected Bolshevism.

No attempt is made to-day to reintroduce Communism into Russia. On the contrary, the programme of the Bolshevists would appear to be to try to forget that such a thing as Communism ever existed. Perhaps in this, too, we may see signs of the fear in which their leaders live. If only Russia can be restored to her former prosperity; if only the workmen can be induced to accept a new but typical class of employers; if only the peasants can be induced to cultivate the land again and take a pride in owning it, may not then some of Moscow's crimes be forgotten? Besides, it all helps to pass the time and, if only enough years go by (the Bolshevists hope), a new generation will arise which will not remember the Terror, which will treat the betrayal of the Front to Germany as a mere historical episode, and which will know the famine, the torture-chambers of the *Cheka*, and the blood-lust of the Lett and the Chinese executioners only as legends from the past.

From these dreams, if they were ever entertained by the Bolshevists—and I think they were—there came a rude awakening. Koverda's pistol-shot cleared the air.

It proved to the Bolshevists that the new generation will show them no mercy, and that there is no hope for salvation for them in a regenerated Russia.

Some years ago a party of Australian outlaws, bushrangers, took to the bush to escape justice. They reached an isolated clearing, where they terrorized the settlers. They disarmed their unwilling victims, and by unceasing vigilance, managed for some time to live there in safety. This episode presents an almost exact parallel with the present position of the Bolshevists. Spurned back from Europe, beaten in Asia, the Bolshevists have terrorized Russia. They have disarmed the Russian people and frightened them so effectively that a civilian revolt is unthinkable. Their spy system is as drastic as their executions. Every spy is spied upon by other spies; no man knows with whom he is talking—a friend or a spy. And every now and then a shocking official crime is perpetrated to remind Russia of the penalty for nonconformity, not to say disobedience.

Just as the party of bushrangers overawed a considerably larger number of settlers, so the Bolshevists terrorize the rest of the Russian people. There has never been a time when the Bolshevists were numerically strong. But they are united, they are well armed, and they are bound together by the guilt of their crimes. If one group could sell the rest, and so purchase its own lives, the Soviet regime might long since have disappeared. But such a bargain cannot be struck; the Bolshevists must hang together.

Of moral strength they have none. They are loathed equally in town, village, workshop and church. But their physical strength is overwhelming by comparison with that of the rest of the nation. They hold the Army, concentrated in forces which can be swiftly thrown against recalcitrant opponents. As an international force it is almost worthless, but as a militia it is a terrible weapon. Its most formidable sections are the special *Cheka* battalions, attached to the secret

police (now called the Ogpu). These are provided with the best weapons and all the latest devices of warfare.

The Army is at once the strength of the Bolshevist regime and its weakness. If the Army refused for a moment to serve the murderers of Moscow, their lives would not be worth a moment's purchase. It would not even be necessary for the troops to turn against them; the mere hesitation to obey commands, which destroyed the Empire in 1917, would even more effectively bring down the Soviet regime in ruin.

How, then, do the Bolshevists protect themselves from such a danger, the one outstanding peril to their continued existence? By the same means as they maintain their power in the country. As below, so above; as in the countryside, so in the barracks.

Espionage is as rampant in the Army as in the factories. Independence of thought is as severely punished; and any officer who seems to be acquiring a popularity among his men is swiftly removed to a district where he is unknown. *Agents provocateurs* are busy luring hotheads to their fate, and as a supreme argument, all officers are forced, on taking commission, to give hostages among their family for their good behaviour. Thus, by holding the lives of their wives, parents, and children over them, the Bolshevists can rely on the continued support of the officers.

The whole Soviet system is a card house, built of hostages and cemented with espionage. It cannot last—and yet it does last. Nor is any immediate change to be expected. Russia is naturally so rich a country that even famine is not a constant concomitant of the Bolshevist regime. Semi-starvation is indeed always the rule in the towns, just as a lack of manufactures is always evident in the villages; but, unless there comes another cataclysm, like the 1921 drought, the Bolshevists have no reason to fear a widespread revolution of a desperate people.

Yet somewhere or other in this gloomy expanse, with its ruined industries, untilled fields, and miserable people,

there must be a few bold hearts who will not even permit this horror to continue. Koverda's bullet may have found an echo in the hearts of others. Certainly I should not care at the present moment to issue a life insurance to any of the Bolshevist leaders.

Perhaps, too, the Army will be stirred. The spies—otherwise "political commissars"—with the regiments must be nervous at Voikov's fate. Can the Government any longer rely implicitly upon them? In the last resort, everything depends on the *Cheka* troops. Will they continue to shoot down innocent hostages at the behest of the frightened foreigners in the Kremlin?

The Letts and Chinamen who were the mainstay of the torture gangs in the worst days of the Terror must be growing weary of their ghastly employment. Where will the Kremlin recruit others to take their place? The Letts were found in the first instance among such as were unable to return to their own country on account of their association with the outbreak of Bolshevism. The Chinamen were labourers who had been brought to Russia to build railways in the War. In the first days of Bolshevism, they were easily captured by the promise of provisions and privileges in a starving land. But to-day this inducement is not so keen.

The Bolshevists, it seems to me, are caught like rats in a trap. Some have already tried to run away. The Argentine houses a few men who hastened to leave Russia with their loot as soon as the world revolution came to nothing. But it is too late now for the others to follow their example. No civilized country of Western Europe, I should imagine, would be willing to give refuge to such a man as Zinoviev. Trotsky found reluctant shelter in Turkey only in token of his persecution by his former associates. He must fear the very shadows on the walls. All the Bolshevist leaders and ex-leaders will have to face the vengeance of the Russian people when, at last, that sleeping, slow-witted giant awakens.

VIII

THE GENERAL STRIKE

DOCTORS tell us that the highest function of the human brain is its capacity, not to remember, but to forget. Otherwise, they say, the burden of civilized life would be intolerable for the individual.

The same appears in some measure to be true of the community: it is astounding how swiftly men can forget, in their normal life, the lessons and experiences of such cataclysmic events of our own time as the War and, in a less bloody sphere, the General Strike. Only four and a half years have passed since the General Strike threatened the whole structure of our social and political life. It was defeated, to the overwhelming satisfaction of the great bulk of the nation; and to the admiration of the outside world.

Yet already its lesson is being forgotten. Already mischievous influences are at work to force a reluctant but weak Socialist Government to reverse the Trades Disputes Bill, which was enacted as a natural sequel to the Strike. It seems to me essential, therefore, to remind my readers of some of the chief issues raised by the General Strike and, since this is of real significance in any examination of a practical problem, to draw their attention to the type of man who, in our day and our circumstances, can make possible and precipitate such an attack upon our national life and livelihood.

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Trade unions in this country have gone through many vicissitudes. So much loose talk was uttered

at the period of the General Strike that it is essential to revert to a point of view which can easily be made disputable, but which is, nevertheless, beyond argument. Let it, then, be plainly realized—and this is axiomatic—that the fundamental interests of capitalism require, and are sustained by, the existence of powerful trade unions. The Die-hards will always say: "Here is an opportunity for smashing them; let us take it." But along this road lies neither sanity nor the slightest prospect of that period of tranquillization which the interests of the country imperatively require.

It cannot be too plainly stated that the only alternative to anarchy in our general industrial arrangements is the existence of a sane and sober trade unionist system which is capable not only of agreeing to but of enforcing a stable bargain. It sounds very attractive to a people justly exasperated by trade unionist pretensions to say: "Smash the Unions." But in this advice madness lies. Capital and Labour must co-exist in this country. If a definite and irretrievable breach be established between them both alike will perish, and with them the nation, too, will perish. No one who has the slightest understanding of the subtleties and ramifications of British trade can even conceive of its healthy resurrection except upon the basis that there are principals upon both sides who can speak for those who have given them authority. It would indeed be a dark day for British enterprise if no great industry could deal upon a broad and general scale with those who, equally with themselves, are concerned with that industry. In other words, collective bargaining has not only come to stay, but without it, industrial peace is inconceivable.

The stupid Cobdenite mind of the moribund Liberal Party never perceived this truth. That Party was always pleased to brand the Conservatives as the stupid Party, and yet in all the fundamentals of life, alike in foreign and domestic policy, Liberals have been wrong. They committed themselves to the policy of *laissez*

faire and of "the devil take the hindmost." The experience of the last thirty years has shown how profoundly wrong they were. No government, in the sophisticated correlations of modern industry, can divorce itself from the task imposed upon intelligent government: of intervening when it is plain that the parties to a great trade dispute are incapable of adjusting their own differences, and that an immense national disaster must follow if an adjustment is not attained by someone.

The old and healthy activities of trade unions were on the whole appreciated and welcomed by the nation until the year 1906. The trade unions up to that date generally concerned themselves with their own affairs. Their duty was to obtain the best terms which in the market were attainable for the working men who were their clients. Modern Moscow, with its poisonous doctrines, had not come into the world; and the great figures of trade unionism were of opinion that it was possible to be friends of the working man without being enemies of the British Empire.

The Taff Vale decision in the House of Lords was founded upon good law, but its enunciation coincided with a period of great weakness for the Unionist Party. It was evident for many months that the Party was destined to a great defeat at the polls. It would not be useful at this moment to attempt an analysis of the various contributory causes of that downfall. The bogey of dear food, the scream about education, the dishonesty of the Chinese labour agitation, the Taff Vale judgment—all played their part. The result was the overwhelming majority which placed in power what must, on the whole, be pronounced the most hysterical and ill-formed Parliament which has ever, at a critical moment, determined the fortunes of the nation. The late Lords Oxford and Haldane were very influential members of that Party. Each of them was known to be opposed to the fundamental provisions

which afterwards became law under the ægis of the Trades Disputes Act. The whole Government, indeed, were fully aware of the dishonesty and impracticability of their proposals. So clear was the view of the Government that the Attorney-General introduced a Bill which was not irreconcilable either with fundamental principles of law or with the legitimate claims either of Labour or of Capital.

But the Parliament elected in 1906 had no conception of the immensely important quarrel to which their decision must inevitably give rise. Its members had ignorantly pledged themselves to a reversal of the Taff Vale judgment. It mattered nothing that the hysterical Liberals whom that Parliament contained had never read the judgment, and, if they had read it, would have been incapable of understanding it. The moderate and inoffensive Bill which the Cabinet recommended was swept to one side and the Labour Bill in substitution took its place. That Bill made law proposals wholly subversive of the general conception of jurisprudence and irreconcilable in their ultimate implications with any reasonable prognosis of industrial peace.

Later generations will marvel at the folly and the cowardice of the Liberal leaders who sinned, through lack of courage, against the light. They made themselves responsible for legislation which provided that no action should lie against the funds of a trade union even if that trade union had officially ordered illegal acts which involved His Majesty's subjects in admitted loss. For the first time, a body was placed by Parliament above the law. It was placed in such a position that if it deliberately committed a tortious act, occasioning hundreds of thousands of pounds of damages to those who, but for that act, would have been entitled to put forward their claim successfully, such an action, nevertheless, should not lie. Of all the weak acts of which Lord Oxford was guilty—for he could have stopped it had he been resolute—this must be accounted

the weakest. Nor must we forget, in his recently recovered sanity, that Sir John Simon, though then a junior member of the House of Commons, was as responsible as his leaders for this act of folly and treachery. The Act still standing in the Statute Book actually authorized what with a gleam of humour it was pleased to describe as peaceful picketing to take place at the very houses of those who, by the pressure of that picketing, were to be bullied out of the slightest chance of a free decision.

The events which led up to the General Strike are neither obscure nor difficult to relate with brevity. A periodical crisis had emerged in the coal industry. That industry has suffered for more than thirty years from the circumstance that neither the men nor the owners have produced a man with the slightest claim to be considered a statesman. The controversy would undoubtedly, in 1925, have produced a strike in the industry which would almost inevitably have been followed by a General Strike. The mine owners had acted with crude abruptness, as they very often do; and it is not an exaggeration to say that, had the quarrel become acute nine months earlier than it did, the great majority of the people of this country would have been with the miners and against the owners.

To avert a crisis of this magnitude, until it became certain that it must in any event occur, Mr. Baldwin's Government set up a Commission. That Commission reported. The Government, though it felt great difficulty about many of the recommendations, indicated its readiness to accept the Report and make it the basis for legislation provided the other parties did the same. The real truth is, of course, that both parties, owners and men alike, imagined that they could bleed the nation of a further subsidy. Neither party approached the problem with sincerity or honesty. The owners thought that there was a heaven-sent opportunity for getting back an eight hours' day. Hoping this, they were

not particularly ingenuous in the wages which they represented as the maximum available for a seven hours' day. Nor did neurotic firebrands, like Mr. Cook, on the men's side do much to help.

But it must be carefully borne in mind that the Government only came into this controversy most unwillingly as mediators, on an assurance made by both sides that they were incapable of arranging their difficulties for themselves. At the critical moment, therefore, which preceded the declaration of the General Strike, the Government was very unwillingly involved in the immensely complicated task of settling the coal dispute. At the most critical moment of all, the men's representatives put their affairs in the hands of the Committee of the Trades Unionists as a whole. This body, therefore, invited His Majesty's Government to enter upon negotiations with them. These negotiations began. But it soon became evident that the Trades Unionist Committee had no authority whatever to reach a conclusion on behalf of the miners, but only met the Government *ad referendum*. And it is absolutely true at this moment that the representatives of the men had never wavered from their contention that they are entitled to receive higher wages than the industry in which they are engaged can economically pay.

The controversy, therefore, developed upon the line that the Government, in effect, proposed, alike to owners and men, that they should accept the Report of the Commission. The owners made some, though not a very serious, advance; the men made none. And there never was a moment at which these matters were under discussion between the trades unionist leaders who took over the negotiations and the Government in which the slightest prospect of accommodation presented itself. The trades unionist representatives had no real authority, and, in fact, the men, who were their clients in the negotiations, did not intend to give way either upon wages or upon hours.

A great deal of nonsense has been talked about the negotiations of the Saturday and Sunday which immediately preceded the General Strike. We were told originally that negotiations of great promise were determined by the violent folly of the Government. The best answer, on the whole, is that, when the General Strike had been smashed, those negotiations were resumed and completely broke down.

The General Strike was not, in fact, directed at the owners. It was directed against the Government because the Government was determined to pay no further subsidy to the coal industry. It was, therefore, an attempt by a body of men who had no representative capacity to dictate to Parliament. It was not even pretended that intervention was based upon any democratic communication with the very limited trade union *clientèle* in the country. About twenty gentlemen meeting in London, who could easily, if things had gone well, have been persuaded to become members of the first English Soviet, gave orders in breach of the law. Their purpose was to choke the arteries of the nation, and, by doing so, to bring the constitutional Government of this country to its knees. If it had not been for the infamous Liberal legislation to which reference has already been made, the instigators of this movement would have been liable to millions of pounds in damages. In such a quarrel the leaders are, of course, men of straw. But had it not been for the folly and the weakness of the Liberal Party in 1906 the funds of the unions would have been responsible, and the realization that they were so responsible would have been a corrective of this flagrant act of illegality.

In fact, an attempt was made to call out the great industries of the country in order to paralyse and disarm society and place it at the mercy of the Trades Unionist Committee. The nominal total of trades union members is only five million. It would, indeed, be a sanguine estimate that half this number would have

gone into the strike if they had been consulted. But they were not consulted. The little junto of weak, cowardly, and embarrassed men who met at Eccleston Square to make this decision, and who were to meet ten days later in abject humiliation to withdraw it, consulted no one. They decided upon this prodigious step, and it was immediately taken. They could do it with immunity because Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Lord Oxford and Sir John Simon had protected their funds from any action for breach of contract.

The great victory which was won over them by the Government affords convenient opportunity for examining the ultimate contingent risk involved by a General Strike to constituted society. In this valuation it is important to notice that every moderate leader of trade unionism has been careful to make it plain that he does not believe in the employment of the General Strike. Such moderate leaders, from their own point of view, are absolutely right in disclaiming this weapon. For it is a weapon which could never win success in the hands of a Kerensky; it needs the desperate statecraft of a Lenin. And even then it can never succeed unless England is as bankrupt of resolute men prepared to resist anarchy as Russia was. England is not so bankrupt. In England, on the contrary, there is a population of thirty million—men, women and children—who have nothing to do with trade unions. There is not the slightest possibility that a majority so overwhelming of the inhabitants of these islands will be swept off their feet by an insolent and revolutionary minority which does not represent, upon a liberal computation, more than 500,000 of the population of these islands. There are some countries in which a violent minority might, by sheer daring, attain to a definitive victory. England does not happen to be one of them. That is all there is to be said about it. No General Strike can attain any result which is controlled and guided by moderate men. There is no use placing an "automatic" in the hands

of a man who has neither the skill nor the intention to employ it. A General Strike could only succeed if it were guided by definitely revolutionary forces: if it had obtained control over the Army and the Navy; and if, in addition, its claims and pretensions appealed to the majority of the population.

The issue was never carried to such a point in 1926. But it may, nevertheless, be a subject of useful speculation to inquire what would have happened if considerable elements in the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force, and the Police, had proved disloyal. All proved most admirably loyal. But in a matter so grave it is not unimportant to re-examine the resources of the Government if they had been confronted by the worst, instead of meeting the best. What, in such an event, would have been the resources which would have rallied round an ancient Parliamentary institution?

It is hardly necessary to point out that the officers in all three fighting services would, to a man, have been loyal. In other words, the same superb training agents which created an army of 5,000,000 men in the Great War would have been available, if necessary, to train an equal army in what might have proved to be the greater war. In the next place, the whole wealth and credit of the nation would have been upon our side, and not upon the side of those who challenged the Constitution. Nor is it immaterial to notice that no one but ourselves would have possessed either aeroplanes or artillery, unless we were fools enough (as we should not have been) to allow them to be filched from us.

We should, therefore, have faced a struggle, had it been forced on us upon revolutionary lines, with the knowledge that five-sixths of the fighting strength of the country would rise at once to support the cause of King and Parliament; and that all the men in the country who could convert these willing and gallant volunteers into soldiers were upon the Constitutional side. In such a quarrel there could but be one result.

Had an issue been forced in that quarrel, it would have been as necessary to fight it to a conclusion as it was necessary to force a conclusion in the world war. Everyone will rejoice that we avoided these grave necessities. But every enemy of England will do well to realize that no Government will hesitate to confront them wherever and whenever the Red Flag openly displays itself in antagonism to the Union Jack.

Much nonsense has been talked about the discussions which took place upon the eve of the General Strike. It is no doubt perfectly true that Mr. Baldwin, Sir Arthur Steel-Maitland and myself made a great effort to arrive at an accommodation which would have divorced the trade unionists in general from the miners' struggle. In making this attempt we were undoubtedly right. I myself prepared a formula to which the trade unionist leaders very nearly assented, which would have made it clear that the miners, if they refused to accept it, must fight their battle alone. But I am uncertain whether one ought to shed tears on the failure of the attempt; for it is probably true that, just as the German war was inevitable, so the General Strike was inevitable; and, if it was to come, it could not have been faced at a better moment or in a better cause.

Constitutional Government triumphed. The blank spectre which the cowardice of the Liberal Government in 1906—yielding to no real menace—created, has been met, discredited, defeated, and pronounced illegal.

Many psychological problems emerge from such a crisis as this strike. Not the least interesting personal question was raised by the part played by Mr. J. H. Thomas. His view of the General Strike is notorious. He is an adroit, if unconventional, statesman; he knew perfectly well that it was an insane and even criminal weapon which could only succeed if England were ripe for revolution. And yet he made himself responsible for it. Why? I take the view that in doing so he adopted a course which, though dark and dangerous,

was not, if you could penetrate to the recesses of his mind, unpatriotic. He could easily have left the movement, saying, "If the great trade union over which I am the head does not accept my advice, but takes a dangerous decision, I leave them." But, on the whole, we believe that he realized perfectly plainly that, with him or without him, the forces which made for a General Strike were certain, at a moment of feverish excitement, to triumph. Holding this view, I am of opinion that he decided to remain within the movement rather than without it, believing that, by doing so, he could guide it, could control it, and even, in the end, could defeat it. If my analysis of the attitude of Mr. Thomas is correct, he once again deserved well of the country at a great crisis.

Only one observation falls to be made. Since the Liberal Party, in a moment of incredible cowardice, which, with many others, justifies its extinction, hauled down the National Flag before the threats of trade unionist extremists a black spectre had stood in our path. Many who loved England in this and other lands have marvelled at the apparent indifference with which this great historic island confronted an extended suffrage, Socialist Sunday-schools, the vogue of the Red Flag, and the growing tyranny of the trade unions. But those who thought that this great England—so much greater than any of her citizens—was indifferent were wrong.

The country was waiting patiently—anxious not to reach a premature decision—as it waited for Philip of Spain, for Louis XIV, for Napoleon, and for the Kaiser. Such a country, with such a record, is not to be beaten down by Soviet juntos. It made up its mind very swiftly but very certainly; it decided quite definitely, when the challenge had emerged in such a form that it required a conclusion, founded upon every tradition of English life. Had our enemies been prepared to carry that challenge to its extreme and logical conclusion, they would have found authority prepared to take to

the trenches with five-sixths of the nation on their side; and a conclusion would have followed as decisive as that to which the genius and military qualities of this nation attained in the Great War. Let those men who thought that an obscure minority could dominate a great people take warning. The next warning which they receive, if they proceed in misguided courses, will be sterner.

* * * * * *

Three speeches made by Sir John Simon on the subject of the General Strike were published as a slim book, which proved once again that it is the importance and not the length of a work that gives it weight. It contained the two memorable speeches he made in the House of Commons during the course of this strike, and a third which he made to his constituents at Cleckheaton shortly after its close. He completed the volume with a diary of events and appendices relating to the specific legal issues raised in the speeches.

The chief interest of the book lies in the fact that the speaker raised at the opportune moment questions as to the legality of the strike, and, by his authoritative discussion of these issues, left no doubt that the strike leaders had not only made a hideous blunder but had also rendered themselves liable to consequences which they had unwisely failed to realize. There are other topics which suggest themselves. The speeches are typical examples of the methods by which Sir John Simon has attained his position as the foremost advocate of the day, and an analysis would afford an insight into his powers of logical arrangement and selection of the vital issues, and his faculty for a persuasive exposition carrying conviction to the hearers. They illustrate the tendency of a man of his political thought to seek to solve the changing problems of social existence by the application of fixed immutable principles. They were not without traces of an anxiety to garner all the

legitimate party advantage that can be drawn from the crisis. He rose to show, and did show, that the attitude of the Government was inevitably right if constitutional government was to remain, but he could not refrain from alleging that, in other hands, the crisis would, in his opinion, never have arisen.

Whether he was right or wrong (and I would at once state that he was demonstrably wrong in his estimate of the powers of his party), it is clear that his support of the Government's position was not dictated by any desire to strengthen their hands in dealing with the coal miners, and this adds impartiality to his support of their action regarding the strike. It is curious to note that, when addressing his constituents, he devoted some time to an academic discussion of the position of an M.P. as a representative, and not as a delegate, of his constituents. There is no danger in these days of an extremist regarding himself as a mere mouthpiece of his constituents. The real peril lies in the fact that he may regard himself as the instrument of organizations which have no sort of connexion with his constituents, their occupations, or even their interests.

The capital importance of these speeches lies in that they were pronouncements by the outstanding advocate of the day upon the legal aspects of the General Strike. It is the privilege and duty of M.P.s to contribute to the discussion of the political issues their special knowledge and experience, and on the vital legal issues no one could speak with more authority than Sir John Simon. His party, equally with the Labour Party, was in opposition. There was a temptation, to which some succumbed, to use the opportunity for mere party advantage. The fact that, in regard to those issues, Sir John Simon gave unhesitating adherence to the Government while betraying an evident desire to gather advantage for his party in other respects gave the public an assurance of impartiality which could not, by the nature of things, be given to any similar pronounce-

ment, though of equal authority, from the Government benches. The effect was instantaneous and, most of all, the leaders of the strikers should be grateful to him for his timely intervention which showed them, before it was too late, the abyss to which they were hastening.

Criticism to be effective must be directed to the correctness of his statement of the legal issues. Some have already succeeded in satisfying themselves that his exposition is unsound, but so far no jurist of eminence has challenged its substantial accuracy. Let us see, first, what principles he laid down, and then examine whether they will stand the test of criticism. In his first speech, we may find these canons:

> 1. The right to strike is the right of workmen in combination by prearrangement to give due notice to their employers to terminate their engagements and to withhold their labour when these notices have expired.
>
> 2. . . . the decision of the Council of the Trade Union Executive to call out everybody, regardless of the contracts which those workmen had made, was not a lawful act at all. Every workman who was bound by a contract to give notice before he left work, and who, in view of that decision, has either chosen of his free will or has felt compelled to come out by leaving his employment without proper notice has broken the law.
>
> 3. Every trade union leader who has advised and promoted this course of action is liable in damages to the uttermost farthing of his personal possessions.
>
> 4. Any rule laying down that a trade unionist forfeits his benefits if he does not obey the orders of his executive means, and only means, that he may so forfeit those benefits if the order is lawful.

It is obvious that the second proposition is the one of cardinal importance. But in the speech of May 6, 1926, Sir John Simon did not attempt to explain or justify it. A speaker in the House of Commons addressing himself to a state of facts as well known to his audience as himself must resist the temptation to deliver a lecture. A speech

is not a complete academic treatise and must not be overloaded with technical matter. Whether the omission was deliberate or not, it encouraged some critics to assume that the statement was a mere interpretation of the 1906 Act, and to make adverse comments based upon such part only of the law as in their opinion contained in that Act. A footnote added to the speech in the published volume effectively disposes of such criticism; but, when delivered, it was merely implied and not stated that the General Strike was not a " trade dispute." The second speech of May 11 takes up and explains this thesis :

> The central proposition . . . is this—that this so-called "general strike" . . . is not, properly understood, a trade dispute at all. I am quite willing to believe that it had its origin in a trade dispute. . . . Once you proclaim a general strike, you are, as a matter of fact, starting a movement of a perfectly different and of a wholly unconstitutional and unlawful character.

He emphasizes this statement :

> A strike is a strike against employers to compel employers to do something, but a general strike is a strike against the general public to make the public, Parliament, and the Government do something.

And he cited with crushing effect not only the judgment of Astbury J., delivered that day in *National Sailors' and Firemen's Union v. Reed*, but also the opinion expressed in his book by Sir Henry (now Lord) Slesser, who was Solicitor-General in the Labour Government. He summed up the whole point in these words :

> You may do what you think proper in the exercise of the right to strike against your employer, but you are not only breaking the law, but you are inflicting a most serious blow on the whole constitution of the country if you abuse that undoubted right with totally different effects, so that the result of what you do, whether you mean it or not, must be that you are putting pressure upon the community, the Government, the people as a whole.

Sir John Simon took as his starting point the law, not, indeed, as it was settled by the Acts of 1871 and 1875, but as the general opinion of lawyers thought it to be before the Taff Vale decision. The Act of 1906 was intended to make the law what it had been thought to be; and it is a matter for serious thought, most of all in Liberals, that an Act so designed could be used seriously in order to justify so outrageous a proceeding as the General Strike. It will, however, be more convenient for our purpose to commence with the law as it stood before the legislation of 1871 and 1875.

The great difficulty in stating the common law as distinct from statute law lies in the fact that Acts have existed upon this subject throughout the history of law. It was not until the early days of Queen Victoria that the repeal of the Combination Act, the Six Acts, and other similar Statutes gave the judiciary an adequate opportunity of expounding the common law. The late Sir James Fitzjames Stephen in his "History of the Criminal Law" indeed doubts if there were any common law rules upon this subject, but to do so he has to disregard the *Cambridge Journeymen Tailors' Case* (1721), 8 Mod. 11. It is, however, certain that, as soon as the law was freed from the repressive Statutes of the early nineteenth century, the judges laid down broad statements of the common law which may be rendered as follows:

> All combinations in restraint of trade were unenforceable, but not all were criminal. A combination of work-people to act jointly in raising wages was undoubtedly criminal. It followed that to belong to a trade union which had among its purposes the taking of joint action in the maintenance (probably) and raising (certainly) of wages was to be a party to a criminal conspiracy.

Two consequences followed, the first criminal and the other civil. The criminal consequence was that a prosecution would lie against the members of such a union whether any loss or damage was or not caused thereby. The civil consequence was that the members

were liable in an action for damages at the suit of any person who could show that he had thereby suffered loss or damage.

The course of legislation since the early days of Queen Victoria has been directed to removing (whether wholly or in part, and whether conditionally or not, are for this purpose immaterial) these two consequences of becoming a member of a trade union. No other amendment of the law relating to crime or civil liability in other respects has been intended or effected. The fundamental mistake of the T.U.C. and others of like mind has been that they failed to recognize this limitation of the legislative recognition of trade unionism.

It is impossible to deal with all the Acts in minute detail. The first Statute to consider is the Trade Union Act, 1871, which by Section 2 declares that:

> The purposes of any trade union shall not by reason *merely* that they are in restraint of trade be deemed to be unlawful so as to render any member of such trade union liable to criminal proceedings for conspiracy or otherwise.

The word "merely" shows that Parliament was careful to limit such immunity. If for other reasons the purposes be unlawful, then the trade union remains as before a criminal conspiracy.

The next stage is marked by the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act, 1875. A new rule of the criminal law is introduced by Section 3:

> An agreement or combination by two or more persons to do or procure to be done in contemplation or furtherance of a trade dispute . . . shall not be indictable as a criminal conspiracy if such act committed by one person would not be punished as a crime.

The word "crime" is used in the Section to denote an offence punishable by imprisonment. This Section is often cited as conferring upon strikers immunity from prosecution; but it does no such thing. It merely provides that strikers are not guilty of a criminal con-

spiracy unless they do something which if done by one would render him liable to be sent to gaol. It is a peculiarity of the crime of conspiracy that two or more persons by agreeing to do something which may be done by one person with impunity can render themselves liable to prosecution. In the case of strikes this peculiarity was no longer to apply. But no other alteration of the law was made, as is made clear by two paragraphs of the Section which are not so often quoted as the first paragraph, already set out above.

> Nothing in this Section shall exempt from punishment any persons guilty of a conspiracy for which a punishment is awarded by any Act of Parliament.

This paragraph covers, for example, treasonable and seditious conspiracies and conspiracies to murder, and so on.

> Nothing in this Section shall affect the law relating to riot, unlawful assembly, breach of the peace or sedition, *or any offence* against the State or Sovereign.

Neither of these paragraphs adds to the law. A practising lawyer would concede that without these paragraphs Section 3 would not afford a defence to any such charge is as contemplated by them. But Parliament deliberately added these paragraphs so that no one could possibly urge that he was misled as to the effect of the paragraph.

Nor does the phrase " in contemplation or furtherance of a trade dispute " permit, still less encourage, the fomenting of trade disputes where none exist. To receive the protection of the 1875 Act there must be a trade dispute, existing or imminent. To conspire to create a trade dispute where none is remains a criminal conspiracy. If any authority for this statement is needed, it will be found in *Conway v. Wade* (1909, A.C. 506).

The Act of 1875 was not concerned with civil liability. Trade unions, unless registered as friendly societies, had no legal existence and, indeed, being in restraint

of trade, were, for the most part, unlawful, though, since 1871, not criminal societies. Individually, it may be doubted whether at that date any trade unionist was worth sueing. There was, therefore, ample reason, both legal and practical, to discount the prospect of any action for damages against a union or its members. There was, it is true, the form of action known as a representative action which could be used against a mere society with numerous members, such as social clubs, but the unlawful character of trade unions was thought to render a representative action impossible in their case, whether claiming an injunction to prevent threatened action or claiming damages for loss caused by any action taken by the union. It is true that the trustees could sue and be sued, but only in respect of their rights and duties as such trustees. Consequently, the decision of the House of Lords in the Taff Vale case in 1903 excited considerable alarm. The use of civil remedies in the form of a representative action was now declared to be feasible and could be employed to paralyse the action of trade unions or, if not in time to do that, to ruin them afterwards. Naturally, a demand was at once made that the law should be altered to agree with what it had been thought to be. Whether the Trade Disputes Act, 1906, was wise or not is not a matter for present discussion. What is important is to see exactly how did it alter the law.

In the first place it enacted by Section 1 :

> An act done in pursuance of an agreement or combination by two or more persons shall if done in contemplation or furtherance of a trade dispute, not be actionable unless the act, if done without any such agreement or combination would be actionable.

The action of conspiracy alone is aimed at. If the act complained of constitutes a cause of action when done by a single individual, it still remains actionable when done by more than one, even if it is intended to assist one side to a trade dispute. But if parties agree to

foment a trade dispute they are not protected by the Section. If they do so stir up strife and any employer is thereby injured, the mischief-makers can be hit in damages. The Statute, however, goes on, in Section 3, to prevent certain acts done by a single individual from being actionable, though before it they were:

> An act done by a person in contemplation or furtherance of a trade dispute shall not be actionable *on the ground only* that it induces some other person to break a contract of employment, or that it is an interference with the trade, business, or employment of some other person or with the right of some other person to dispose of his capital or labour as he will.

And as such an act in such circumstances is not actionable when done by one person, it falls within the protection of Section 1 when done or induced by several in agreement. But in both cases the protection is only given where the sole ground for suggesting that the conduct in question is actionable is one of the three mentioned and where it is in contemplation or furtherance of a trade dispute. Section 4 having abolished actions of tort against trade unions, whether directly or by means of a representative action, Section 5 proceeds to define "trade dispute" for the purpose not only of this Act but also of the 1875 Act, which introduced without defining the phrase. Since 1906 it means:

> Any dispute between employers and workmen, or between workmen and workmen, which is connected with the employment or non-employment, or with the conditions of labour, of any person,

and the term "workmen" includes:

> all persons employed in trade or industry whether or not in the employment of the employer with whom a trade dispute arises.

The draftsmen obviously thought that a trade dispute would arise in a particular factory or works and might spread so as to involve others engaged in the same trade.

For the present purpose it is not necessary to deal with any further legislation. The position reached may be summed up in these propositions:

As To Criminal Law:

1. Membership of a trade union is no offence in itself, if the only reason for suggesting that it is an offence is that the trade union includes in its objects purposes which are in restraint of trade.

2. Two or more persons may, with the object of furthering the cause of one or other party to a trade dispute which is imminent or has actually occurred, agree to do, or to get others to do, any act which is not in itself a crime without thereby rendering themselves liable to prosecution for conspiracy. But if that act be a crime then the fact that they intend thereby to further either side to a trade dispute does not avail them; they are guilty of conspiracy and almost certainly of other offences as well.

3. Apart from the above and certain special provisions as to peaceful picketing, etc., no striker or labour leader encouraging him has any immunity from prosecution for any crime he may commit.

As To Civil Liability:

1. A person who does any act with the object of furthering the cause of either party to a trade dispute which is imminent or has actually occurred cannot be sued for damages resulting from that act if the only ground for claiming such damages is that such act either (*a*) induces some other person to break a contract of *employment;* or (*b*) interferes with some other person's trade business and employment; or (*c*) interferes with the right of some other person to dispose of his capital or labour as he wills. In any other case an action will lie whether the object or motive is to assist in a strike or not.

2. A person who does any act for the same purpose cannot be sued in an action of conspiracy

merely because the act was done by or in pursuance of some agreement with another or others. He can be so sued if the act would be actionable on other grounds.

3. No action for wrong independent of contract can be brought against a trade union either directly or by means of a representative action.

4. It would seem that an action for an injunction would not be allowed where an action for damages is not.

5. Apart from the cases above mentioned, no striker or labour leader encouraging him has any immunity from civil liability.

It is easy to construct the reasoning of those who imagined that they could participate in a general strike with impunity. The dispute as to hours and wages in coal mines is a trade dispute. All acts done to further the miners' claims are those done in furtherance of a trade dispute. Therefore, a person doing or procuring any such act is immune from prosecution or action. The General Strike is intended to further such claims, and, therefore, anyone calling or encouraging or taking part in it enjoys immunity. But the proposition is too crudely stated. No offence against the State is thereby excused. But beyond all doubt the General Strike was such an offence. The T.U.C. by their schemes and actions intended to put pressure upon the Government to compel it to change its counsels, not by any constitutional means by vote, argument, or persuasion, but by compulsion to overbear the Government whether it would or not. The very scheme they adopted manifests an open intention to arrogate to themselves administrative functions within the province of the Government, and to make sure that no obstacle imposed by law, by contract, or by regulation, of the trade unions themselves was to hinder their plan. The matter went far beyond a trade dispute; it involved the whole country and the very basis of government.

There is an old case, called *Dammaree's Case* (15 S.T.

521), which shows that an act done with a general purpose differs essentially from the same act done with a particular object. In that case the riotous demolition of meeting houses was rightly considered a riot and punishable as such, but, as the jury found that the acts were done, not with the intention of demolishing particular meeting houses or those in a particular area or areas, but with the intention of destroying all meeting houses throughout the country, the disturbance lost its character of a simple riot and became the much graver and more serious offence of treason. The reasoning of that case is unanswerable, though the particular application of it was probably harsh in the circumstances. In the General Strike a trade dispute was made the occasion or pretext for paralysing the life of the whole country and for challenging the Government in its very existence. It was a suicidal device to overcome by force the constituted authorities, and no sophistry based on a near-sighted view of the Trades Disputes Act can deprive it of its wholly illegal and unjustifiable nature.

The General Strike, and any similar strike of a political nature, cannot be justified by the rules relating to ordinary trade disputes. No person taking part in it is protected against the consequence of his crime. Nor is the protection against a civil action available for such as he. To force a man to break his contract is not protected. Nor can the breach of any contract other than one of employment he brought about with impunity.

When Sir John Simon's propositions are judged in the light of these principles, it may be that, if his first speech be taken alone and without its essential (but implied) assumption, his statement of the right to strike was too narrowly framed. No doubt if a workman leaves his work without due notice he is liable in damages, but if he is induced to do so by others in furtherance of a trade dispute they are exempt from the consequences. The abuse of the right to strike was not the reason why the General Strike was illegal. The second speech supplied

the deficiency if it be such, of the first, and his exposition of the difference between a trade dispute and the General Strike is unassailable. Reading the two speeches together and testing by reference to the Statutes and cases, there can be no doubt that Sir John Simon is right.

The accuracy and timeliness of his statements and the luminous clarity of his exposition rendered his book one of capital importance and served to enhance his reputation as a lawyer and as a statesman.

* * * * * *

Just before the General Strike many people wondered why all the patience and care which were lavished upon the attempt to procure a settlement of the coal dispute were unsuccessful. Much effort was spent in an attempt to discover who exactly was to blame. "Are the owners too grasping?" it was asked. "Are the men unreasonable?"

In attempting an answer to these questions, I do not claim that the policy of the owners was distinguished by any particular quality of statesmanship or imagination. It is, nevertheless, broadly true that they generally appreciated the economic issues involved and, under strong pressure from the Government, in the end they went to the uttermost limit in their power, unless they were to plunge half the pits of the country into bankruptcy. No one who understands the facts and has any knowledge of the long and patient negotiations can doubt that the Government did everything in its power. It gave a subsidy for a period of nine months, quite impossible to justify economically and extremely unfair in its incidence upon large sections of the population which were worse paid than the miners. It appointed a Commission. It did not particularly like the Report of that Commission, but it, nevertheless, professed itself ready to accept it *verbatim et literatim*, provided that the other parties to the dispute would do the same. When this proposal proved unacceptable, Ministers threw themselves

with the most laudable patience and industry into the attempt to reach a settlement by negotiation. It soon became evident to those who knew the realities that this attempt was foredoomed to failure.

It is my object here to explain the causes of this failure and to make it evident that no negotiators who ever lived could have succeeded in reaching a reasonable compromise as long as the miners were represented by Mr. Cook. This gentleman suffers from a somewhat neurotic and hysterical temperament. His capacity as a trade union leader has been disparaged in language of incredible contempt by all the responsible leaders of the other trade unions. He has a small, but not a very considerable, gift as a demagogue. Indeed, even in this direction, his foaming but ungrammatical periods not infrequently overtax his physical strength, so that he is occasionally assisted in collapse from the platform. The heady wine of Russia proved too strong for an intelligence both shallow and febrile. He once described himself as a humble apostle of Lenin. The name of his master will go down to posterity with the brand of Cain more plentifully stamped upon it than upon any man since the era of civilization began. But one can hardly call oneself a disciple of a foreign statesman unless one admires all his principal methods; and, therefore, it is not unreasonable to suppose that Mr. Cook would gladly have imitated, if he had the power—if, in other words, England were Russia—the methods by which Lenin established the Union of Soviet Republics. Indeed, in his wildest dreams there is every reason to suppose that Mr. Cook pictured himself sprawling about at Buckingham Palace carrying out the orders of his Russian masters, and translating into free England the principles of the most murderous autocracy which the world has ever seen.

That such a man—and I describe him, as he is, with no exaggeration—should be the accredited leader in Great Britain of an important trade union would be incredible if it had not, in fact, happened. Mr. Cook

thanked God for Russia. This frothy tribute was elicited by the Russian contribution to the miners' fund. Every instructed observer knows that this contribution could not have been made without the sanction and licence of the Russian Government. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald left on record, on behalf of the Labour Government, the conviction that the Soviet Government and the Third International were one and indivisible. Not less incontestable is the identity of the Soviet Council of Trades Unions with the Central Government. The idea, in itself, is ludicrous that men earning a quarter the wages of British miners and working two hours a day longer would voluntarily contribute a sum of £400,000 to British miners.

The actual facts of Russian life to-day made the impudence of the Soviet claim even more absurd. There were one million unemployed trade unionists in Russia in 1926. The standard of living among workers was, and is, low; the housing question was in an appalling state; the country was crawling with human vermin; and, after nine years of nationalization, the productive industries were unable to give a living wage to workers. Wages were everywhere in arrears. We were, in such circumstances which the Bolshevist system has produced, invited by Mr. Cook to believe that the wretched creatures raised a sum of nearly half a million pounds in order to manifest their sympathy for the prosperous miners of Great Britain. In fact, the spokesmen of the Red International openly admitted that the levy was compulsory. It was in the nature of a forced tax, which could not have been imposed without the sanction of the Government. Nor could the proceeds of the tax have been exported from the country if a licence had not been obtained from the Government. The precise probability that any body of trade unions would have been allowed to export £400,000 from the country without the concurrence of the Administration may be judged by those who are aware of the actual conditions

which then existed and still exist in Russia. And a striking illustration is afforded by the fact that, not many years ago, a special appeal was made to trade unions to subscribe to a fund for relieving hundreds of thousands of wretched children who infested the country like pariah dogs and for whose reclamation from the beatific conditions produced by the Revolution it was desired to make a serious effort. After months of sustained appeal, the magnificent sum of £11,000 was raised. And it is suggested that the men who subscribed such an amount for their own flesh and blood cheerfully produced a sum forty times as great in relief of Englishmen whose lot must have appeared to them, in comparison with their own, to be one of ideal and dazzling prosperity.

The question will naturally be asked: What was the motive which led the Russian Government to provide these great sums? Fortunately, we are left in no doubt as to the answer. We have been told by one authoritative spokesman of the Soviet Government after another that their principal object is to infect England with the virus of their own Revolution. They desire to create a world revolution; to make of the whole civilized world the kind of bloody shambles amid which they bring up their own unhappy population. No concealment whatever was made of the fact that the official motive in helping the British strikers was to develop any promising movement to a revolutionary conclusion. Mr. Cook, though an unusually foolish man, was well aware of the real character of the Russian Government and of its actual motives in making this financial contribution. He thanked God for Russia, because he sympathized with their object, and, so far as his abilities extend, is determined to carry out and forward their projects in this country.

The singularity of the circumstances make it worth while to give a little more attention to Mr. Cook's antecedents than I should in normal circumstances have thought myself entitled to request from my readers.

He first came into notice as a member of the Central

Labour College, now known as the Labour College, London. The college was established with the following, amongst other purposes:

> "Rule 1. The College to be based on the recognition of the antagonism of interests between Capital and Labour."

In his development of this promising programme, he became prominent at the end of 1916. He was closely connected with the so-called "unofficial Reform Committee" which published the well-known pamphlet entitled, "The Miners' Next Step." The purpose of this pamphlet was quite simple. "The old policy of identity of interest," it stated, "between employers and ourselves must be abolished, and a policy of open hostility installed." It then developed a proposal that, by diminishing the intensity of their work, the miners should bring all coal profits to a vanishing point, and, thereafter, that the State should purchase all the collieries of the country at a knock-out price and nationalize them. Such, at the beginning of 1917, was the temperament and the mentality of the man upon whose reasonableness the interests of Great Britain to-day depend.

In February, 1917, during the progress of the Travelling Army Medical Boards, our hero posted up a notice at the Lewis Merthyr (Porth) instructing the men not to obey the order of the Government that they should present themselves for examination.

From this time onwards, he was actively engaged in unpatriotic propaganda of every description. He opposed the combing out of the colliers; advocated a policy of "peace by Negotiation," and in his own words:

> Since the day of the declaration of war I have unflinchingly opposed the same. To hell with everybody bar my class. To me, the hand of the German and the Austrian is the same as the hand of my fellow-workman at home. I am an internationalist. Russia has taken the step, and it is due to Britain to second the same and secure peace and leave the war and its cost to the capitalist who made it for the profiteer.

In October, 1917, he made a speech attacking General Smuts, who, at that time, intended to visit the South Wales coalfield. Cook attempted to incite the people of Tonypandy not to give General Smuts a hearing on his visit there.

On January 20, 1918, he addressed a meeting at Ynyshir, relating to the Clyde workmen:

> Are we going to allow this war to go on? The Government wants a hundred thousand men. They demand fifty thousand immediately, and the Clyde workers would not allow the Government to take them. Let us stand by them, and show them that Wales will do the same. I have two brothers in the Army who were forced to join, but I say "No!" I will be shot before I go to fight. Are you going to allow us to be taken to the war? If so, I say there will not be a ton of coal for the Navy.

On January 27, 1918, he addressed a meeting at Maerdy on the day following riots at that place, and made an attack on the Government:

> All the available tonnage is taken for transport of troops and munitions, and we wake to the fact that there is a food shortage. The room is taken up to send men to the slaughter and for munitions.

On April 4, 1918, at Pontypridd Police Court, he was prosecuted for making statements likely to cause disaffection and was sentenced to three months' on each of two charges, both sentences to run concurrently.

In April, 1919, he was actively engaged in revolutionary propaganda in South Wales, and addressed meetings throughout the coalfields. In addition to holding several secret conferences for revolutionary purposes, he showed great interest in the Welsh Branch of the National Union of ex-Service Men, "the fighting Labour organization."

In January, 1919, he openly declared that he was a Bolshevist, and interested himself in Soermas, the Bolshevist violinist, who was afterwards repatriated to

Russia. He also stated that he was " out for " the overthrow of capitalism and suggested to his audience that, if they adopted revolutionary propaganda so as to cause trouble enough at home, the Government troops would be employed here instead of being sent to fight their comrades in Russia. He opposed during this same period the suggestion that a sum of money should be provided for decorations when the Prince of Wales visited the Rhondda Valley.

Early in 1919 he became very abusive of the police, openly stating that " the police are our deadly enemies." He also openly advocated a strike in order to abolish the payment of income-tax.

In June and August, 1920, he addressed numerous meetings and was engaged in the organization of an effective revolutionary movement. He was instrumental in the formation of the Rhondda Council of Action, which was constituted on Soviet lines with the object of making it a practical revolutionary instrument.

On September 18, 1920, he was present at Cardiff at a revolutionary conference to bring about the formation of the Communist Party of South Wales and the West of England.

In October, 1920, he addressed meetings in connexion with the strike, and said that some of the tradespeople in Porth had been saying that they intended to close their doors, and, if anybody was refused food in the shops, they should come to the Federation, and they would deal with the matter, and the shopkeepers refusing to supply food would be sent out of the place. He also stated that he was no lover of a policeman and never had been, and a policeman in the Rhondda was like a red rag to a bull.

On December 1, 1920, at a meeting held at Llwynypia, Cook supported Mrs. Annan Bryce, who spoke of her subject, " Ireland under British Rule." After her speech, Cook made an impassioned appeal to his audience to save Ireland from the hired assassins of Lloyd George.

He then shouted out, "Tim Connelly's murder must be avenged," and said that, if he was in Ireland, he would be a Sinn Feiner, and that, if he was an Irishman here, he would set every Welsh village and town in revolt, and would not stop until tyranny and oppression had ceased. He promised them, as the chairman of the Rhondda Council of Action, to do all in his power to assist the Sinn Fein movement.

On January 17, 1921, Cook was elected to the vacancy on the Executive of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, caused by the resignation of Mr. George Barker, M.P. During January, February, and the first months of 1921, he was very active in the South Wales coalfield. At one meeting he advocated that the safety men, composed of clerks and master hauliers, should be "inside the boilers and not outside."

On May 13, 1921, his premises were searched by the police, and a mass of papers connected with the Red Trade Union International, the Communist Party, etc., was found. Amongst the papers was also a letter addressed to A. J. Cook, Miners' Agent, Porth, from Comrade N. Watkyn, c/o Strom, 10 Torsgatan, Stockholm, Sweden. The letter was addressed from Moscow, and posted in Berlin, and stated that Cook's name had been given as a strong supporter of the Red International, and signed, "Yours for the Revolution." Other papers found proved conclusively that Cook was connected with the Red International of Labour Unions.

At the Sheffield Conference of the National Workers' Committee movement in April, 1924, a letter was read from A. J. Cook, an official of the South Wales Miners' Federation, expressing greetings to the conference and stating that all the men were out in South Wales, and that he was working for the revolution, in spite of the fact that he was an official of the Federation.

In February, 1921, the first manifesto of the British Bureau of the Red International appeared in the issue of *Solidarity* and *The Worker*, and bore the signature,

amongst others, of A. J. Cook, South Wales Miners, and concluded :

> Long Live the International Solidarity of Workers. Long Live the Red International of Trades Unions. Long Live the Communist International. Long Live Working Class Dictatorship.

On May 5, 1921, Cook made a speech at Ynyshir for which he was prosecuted. He was indicted at the Glamorgan Assizes, July 29, 1921, on the following charges :

> 1. Inciting to unlawful assembly—Two months' imprisonment.
> 2. Unlawful assembly—Two months' imprisonment.
> 3. Inciting to riot—No evidence offered.
>
> All concurrent.

After his release from prison, he was very quiet for a long time. In 1922 and 1923 he addressed several meetings, but was careful not to incriminate himself. But he wrote several articles in the Labour papers. On November, 9, 1923, for example, he wrote an article in the *Workers' Weekly*, of which the following is an extract :

> Let the rank and file move quickly ; we cannot wait for ordinary constitutional methods to end the agreement. That will take six months. It will need a conference of the M.F.G.C., then Herbert Smith will demand a ballot, then three months' notice. . . .

In August, 1923, his signature also appeared on a pamphlet issued by the Red International of Labour Unions, in which they issued an appeal to the South Wales miners, on the eve of a ballot then taking place.

In October, 1923, he was connected with members of the South Wales Minority Movement.

In May, 1924, he apparently vacated the post he held on the Council of the Red International of Labour Unions.

Since his appointment as Secretary of the Miners' Federation he has not been active in the South Wales

coalfield, and has only visited it on a few occasions in connexion with questions relating to the wages of colliers.

With one exception, his speeches have been free from suggestions of violence. In this speech he advocated that non-unionists should be thrown down the pits. (Porth, 1926.)

In March, 1926, he was elected chairman of the *Sunday Worker*, a newspaper issued weekly. In this paper, in an article printed soon after the calling off of the General Strike, he appealed to the railwaymen and transport workers not to handle coal, and followed this up by a speech at Porth advocating the same principle.

The disgraceful record which I have briefly summarized supplies all the explanation which is necessary of the failure of the coal negotiations.

IX

QUEEN HORTENSE

HORTENSE DE BEAUHARNAIS is generally remembered only as one of the many helpless creatures whose doom was shaped for them by the ambitions of Napoleon I. Most people know that a gaudy flower perpetuates her name and little beyond that.

Now, a century and more after she wrote it, her apologia* has been published, and reveals her as one of the most pathetic figures in modern history. Who was without ambition, was made the symbol of Bonapartist aspirations; who was guileless and amiable, was denounced as the author of labyrinthine conspiracies and the instigator of assassinations. Successively step-daughter of the First Consul, daughter-in-law of the Emperor, Queen of Holland, and Duchesse de Saint-Leu, she had greatness thrust upon her remorselessly, yet throughout her troubled life she longed only for the ingenuous amusements of drawing-room prattle and painting in water colours. She desired nothing but to be allowed to live among her friends, to bring up her children, and to dabble in the arts; yet the fact that she had acquired the name "Bonaparte" by marriage brought on her the suspicion and hatred of every petty prince in Europe.

Hortense composed her memoirs after the second fall of Napoleon. Mademoiselle Cochelet, her companion

* "The Memoirs of Queen Hortense." Edited by Prince Napoleon, with a foreword and notes by Jean Hanoteau. Translated by F. Mabel Robinson and Arthur K. Griggs. 2 vols.

and faithful friend, wrote:* "The Memoirs of the Queen, begun at Constance in 1816, will not see the light till after her death." This lady further states that the Queen wrote "to refute the untruths and slanders which had appeared. . . . It was for her a question of conscience that she should restate events as they really took place and refute the calumnies which have been brought against the Emperor [Napoleon]. . . . While as for the slanders of which she had been the subject, she felt so far above such baseness that she believed that all she need do to destroy them was to set forth the facts truthfully, and to confide a simple record of all her actions to her paper."

The memoirs, however, do not appear to have been written consecutively, but at intervals over a period of nearly fifteen years. It is true that one copy of the manuscript (in the hand of Mlle Elisa de Courtin, and signed by the Queen) is dated "Augsbourg, 1820"; but in 1830 Mlle Valérie Masuyer, who had recently joined the Queen's household in Rome, wrote: "She wishes to stay at home till three o'clock every day in order to revise the Memoirs she began in 1816 and abandoned in 1820."† And there is evidence that Hortense was still at work embellishing her pages as late as 1835.

Hortense's story, then, was written to justify herself and the Bonapartes; nor has it the value of a journal, recounting events still fresh and vivid in her mind when she noted them down. In these circumstances it is natural that questions may arise about both its accuracy and its truthfulness concerning a date or a name (details which her editors have been at pains to correct by notes); but though she is clearly partial, her story is a valuable and honest addition to our knowledge of her period.

After her death in 1837 the manuscripts of the Memoirs

* "Mémoires sur la Reine Hortense et la Famille Impériale," par Mlle Cochelet (Madame Parquin), Paris, 1836-1838. 4 vols.

† "La Reine Hortense et le Prince Louis." Extracts from Mlle Masuyer's diary, published in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, August 15, 1914. P. 834.

passed into the keeping of her son, Louis-Napoleon (afterwards the Emperor Napoleon III), whose marginal notes bear witness to his interested reading of them. When he too died at Chislehurst, his widow, the Empress Eugénie, preserved them among her papers, where they were found, after her death, by the late Prince Napoleon, who at once decided to publish them. In collaboration with M. Jean Hanoteau he began his editorial work, which, unluckily, was cut short by death in 1926, and has now been completed by M. Hanoteau with the aid of Her Imperial and Royal Highness Princess Napoleon, the widow of Prince Napoleon and formerly the Princess Clementine of Belgium.

Hortense's narrative is doubly interesting—for its own sake, as the melancholy story of a life ruined by the ruthless ambitions of others, and for the sidelights it throws on the history of the Empire. Concerning politics and policies the Queen is generally silent—Napoleon would not have his women meddle in affairs—but she gives us many pictures of the great man *en pantoufles*, and illuminates the characters of his family, his generals and his ministers with the intimate knowledge of an observer placed at the centre of events.

She was born in Paris on April 10, 1783, in the Rue Neuve Saint-Charles, at the house of her grandfather, the Marquis de Beauharnais, former Governor-General of the French colonies in the West Indies. Her father, born in Martinique in 1760, was his third and youngest son; her mother, formerly Josephine Tascher de la Pagerie, was a member of a rich and distinguished French family settled in the West Indies. Hortense was the second child of this marriage, her brother Eugène, later Prince of Venice, being born in 1781.

When the little girl was five, her mother Josephine sailed with her to Martinique to pay a visit to her family, and also to quiet the jealousy she felt for her handsome and unstable husband, whose susceptible nature led him into a variety of purposeless infidelities.

The echoes of the Revolution reached Martinique in 1790, and Josephine fled for safety with her child on board a frigate which lay in the harbour. This vessel at once sailed for France and, after an adventurous voyage, arrived at Toulon in November.

Josephine found that her husband had accepted the Revolution and become a prominent figure in it. For a period his good looks and open-handed manners won him high popularity. At the time of the flight to Varennes he was president of the Constituent Assembly, and Hortense and her brother Eugène were hailed in the streets of Fontainebleau with the cry, "Look at our Dauphin and Dauphine!"

But Beauharnais was too vain and silly to ride the storms of the Revolution. In March, 1794, he was arrested. A month later Josephine joined him in prison. He was implicated in the "Conspiracy of the Prisons," tried, found guilty, and guillotined with forty-four others condemned with him. He died on July 23rd, 1794; four days later Robespierre fell, and the executions ceased.

The memoirs contain a dramatic story of how Josephine was also to be executed with her husband, but "when she heard her name called, she fell in a swoon and, when she revived, was so weak that it was impossible to move her. 'We'll come and take her later on,' declared the men charged with collecting those to be taken to the scaffold."

This anecdote, the editors have decided, is apocryphal, for they append a note: "Josephine really never appeared before the Revolutionary Tribunal." But it is probable that Robespierre's fall saved her from indignity and punishment, while it is certain that his removal from power accelerated her release on August 6, 1794.

Thus Hortense in her childhood grew accustomed to crises, alarms and rapid changes of fortune. It was an apt preparation for her life.

Of Josephine's association with Barras, which soon

followed on her release from prison, Hortense is silent, though she mentions that she herself first met young General Bonaparte at the Director's dinner table. "I found myself placed between my mother and a general who, in order to talk to her, kept leaning forward so often and with so much vivacity that he . . . obliged me to lean back. Thus . . . I looked attentively at his face, which was handsome and very expressive, but remarkably pale. He spoke ardently and seemed to devote all his attention to my mother."

Napoleon seems at first to have impressed Hortense most unfavourably. When this child, barely thirteen years old, came from her school at Saint-Germain to see her mother in Paris, and learned that the young Corsican general was to be her stepfather, she was distraught. "I shed tears as I begged her not to marry again. But the General had already more influence than I."

Not even the victories of the Italian campaign could reconcile her to the match. Her schoolmistress said to her, "Do you realize that your mother has united her fate to that of a most remarkable man? What gifts! What valour! Fresh conquests at every moment!"

"Madame," replied Hortense, "I will give him credit for all his other conquests, but I will never forgive him for having conquered my mother."

But when Napoleon returned in triumph to Paris (December, 1797), and installed himself in his wife's house in the Rue Chantereine (promptly renamed, with characteristic enthusiasm, Rue de la Victoire), Hortense began to melt. She was too young to accompany her mother and stepfather into society, but she saw a deal of this odd creature who had startled all the world by his unconventional methods of winning battles; and she came to the conclusion that her first judgment was hasty. She began to trust him, to like him, to talk to him, and to find him a peculiarly good conversationalist—for a general.

Napoleon, for his part, was partial from the first

to his pretty, grave stepdaughter. In fact, he was too partial, for he held her up as a model to his sister Caroline, and thus laid the foundations of a life-long jealousy between Hortense and the women of the Bonaparte family. Further, he introduced the girl to his brothers, Louis and Joseph. She liked neither.

All this, however, was only an interlude in Hortense's school days. Napoleon departed on the Egyptian adventure; Josephine settled at Malmaison; Hortense continued her lessons at Saint-Germain, where she remained till her stepfather's return and the *coup d'état* by which he made himself First Consul of the Republic (October, 1799).

Even after her mother was established as mistress of the Tuileries and the first lady in France, Hortense wished to linger on at school. When she did appear in public, her natural manners and charming freshness won her instant applause. "My mother," she wrote, "enjoyed the sight of my social success, but I was mortified at being so much under observation, and I begged to be allowed to go back for another year to Saint-Germain. And at last she agreed. . . . As a matter of fact my real joys were to be found at Saint-Germain. There I was liked for myself, and the affection which inspired whatever praise I received made it dearer to me than the adulation so obviously prompted by self-interest that was showered on me in Paris."

Here is the clue to Hortense's character, and the reason from which sprung so much of her subsequent suffering. She was utterly unsuited to the great place which circumstances forced her to fill. All her life she looked back regretfully to her school days; she loathed the pomp and show among which her lot was cast. She was conspicuously, though unconsciously, the child of her age. Simplicity, sentiment and tranquillity in the manner of Rousseau was the ideal for which she pined. She was a romantic, desiring above all to

bestow and to receive affection. Small wonder that she felt her life wasted in the hard world of Napoleonic statesmanship! Her rôle demanded brain; she had only heart to give.

Soon after her idyll at Saint-Germain had ended, she was called on for her first sacrifice. Bourrienne, then Napoleon's secretary, came to her and asked her to marry Louis Bonaparte, urging that Josephine's happiness depended on the match; for, since her mother was childless, Hortense's children might be adopted as the First Consul's.

"How could I refuse?" wrote Hortense. ". . . My reason assured me that Louis Bonaparte did not displease me . . . that his kindness would make me love him . . . that I must forget my dreams and that my future would not be an unhappy one, since it was founded on the affection and esteem of my husband and on the accomplishment of my duty."

She gave her consent. Napoleon received it with characteristic disingenuousness. "Well!" he said to her, "so Louis is courting you, is he? That ought to suit you and your mother, too. There, I give my consent."

The marriage took place on January 4, 1802. Hortense's martyrdom had begun; her happiness was already of the past.

From the first, husband and wife disagreed. Louis Bonaparte remains an enigma. He was conscientious; thorough; not unskilful in all the tasks entrusted to him by his brother; he was kind and compassionate to all suffering which chance brought to his notice—not merely kind with the casual generosity of a rich man, but ready to give up his carriage to a sick child, while he tramped after it through mud and rain. Nevertheless he consistently treated his wife with a cold cruelty harder even to endure than physical violence, and subjected her to the persecutions of a jealousy amounting to mania.

A few days after her first confinement he had his bed moved to Hortense's room lest she used her illness as a cloak for infidelities; he bribed her servants to ransack her bureau and steal her letters; he insisted that each man in her household be either decrepit or repulsive; he employed detectives to watch her and every man with whom she danced at state balls; he caused a trusted footman of his own to sleep in her ante-room.

It has long been supposed that syphilis was the cause of this maniac suspiciousness and of Louis's pilgrimages from spa to spa. Recently, however, Dr. Cabanès's researches into the obscurities of medical history have diagnosed his complaint as chronic rheumatism. Whatever it may have been, it certainly embittered his once easy-going nature and turned him into a savage tyrant who ruined Hortense's life.

She reproaches him ceaselessly in her memoirs—the only individual whom she could bring herself thus publicly to censure. Once she attempts to analyse his character. "Brought up by him [Napoleon] perhaps with too much severity, Louis had kept a sort of fear which prevented him from opposing the Emperor to his face, and had contracted the habit of self-distrust, which made him unable to express his will, though this was very decided. So that his character, though strongly marked, lacked the openness that would have helped him to hold his ground. . . . His greatest handicap was that he took up each new thing reluctantly and had the preconceived idea that every man's hand was against him."

Napoleon summed up his brother thus: "Louis has his wits about him and is not such a bad fellow." He added this curiously inept judgment: "His mind is naturally odd and eccentric, and has been warped by the study of Jean-Jacques." But anyone less like a practical disciple of Rousseau than Louis is hard to imagine.

The truest estimate of Louis Bonaparte has been made by that acute historian M. Masson, who wrote: "This taciturn young man . . . hid under these appearances a suspicious vanity and a jealousy uneasy and ailing like everything about him. . . . Withal such a mania of persecution as to deprive him at all times of all sense of reality, and during the attacks, this inspired his otherwise perfectly honest, upright soul . . . to acts of amazing duplicity which . . . seemed irreproachable to his conscience."*

With such a man Napoleon's ambitions forced Hortense to live, and with such a man he dispatched her, in 1806, to rule in Holland as the consort of his puppet-king. She went obediently, already the mother of the Princes Napoléon-Charles and Napoléon-Louis—whom their uncle recognized as his heirs—and already in love with Comte Charles de Flahaut.

Hortense's affair with Flahaut is probably the most important episode in her private life, yet it finds but a small place in her memoirs. It was, of course, an illicit attachment, and as such its true nature did not accord with an apologia. She is bold enough to state definitely that she loved this handsome, dashing soldier, and loved him with all her heart; but she infers that her virtue always overcame her affection, that Flahaut was not her lover, in the worldly sense.

This is, of course, hypocrisy, for in 1811 she bore him a child, registered as the legitimate son of one Demorney. This boy later attained fame as the Duc de Morny, who aided Hortense's legitimate son, and his own half-brother, Louis-Napoléon, to achieve the *coup d'état* of 1851.

Hortense loathed Holland from the day she crossed its borders. Louis Bonaparte, conscientiously busy with his new kingdom, was more disagreeable than ever; her only consolation was her children. She saw to it that Napoleon learned how unhappy she was, and he

* "Napoléon et sa Famille." I, 365.

wrote to scold Louis: "I have heard of the way you treat your wife. All who surround you are scandalized by it. I wish you were like so many men in Paris. You would be betrayed and perhaps happier. But I gave you a virtuous woman and you do not know how to appreciate her." A typically Napoleonic but tactless letter. Louis redoubled his harshness.

Suddenly Hortense's eldest son fell ill and died. Her grief was absolute. "I felt I was about to die, and I waited impatiently for the hour to strike. Religion might have succoured me, but . . . I did not respond to religious sentiment; all these emotions seemed to have been stifled in my heart."

Her one desire was to escape—from her husband, from the place where her child had died, from this horrible flat land of fogs and damp. The doctors considered that only a change of scene could restore her normal balance, and she fled to the Pyrenees, the furthest corner of France from the Hague. Here she indulged that childlike pleasure which royalty enjoys in travelling incognito, and her spirits improved with her health. Soon, however, the jealous Louis followed her, and demanded a reconciliation. "I could no longer refuse," she wrote, "but I shrank from all the difficulties which I had not now the strength to endure. To give myself courage I said to myself over and over again, 'The more you suffer, the sooner you die; and at least you will have performed your duty to the end.'"

Husband and wife came together at Toulouse on August 12, 1807. The date is material, for on April 20, 1808, eight months and eight days later, Hortense gave birth to the child who grew to be the Emperor Napoleon III. Her own admission of this reconciliation finally silences the tales that Louis was not this child's father, especially as the accoucheurs, Baudeloque and Corvisart, declared that he was prematurely born, and that it was necessary, to preserve his life, to bathe him in wine and wrap him in cotton-wool. Napoleon him-

self, however, always pooh-poohed doubts as to the child's paternity, with the remark, "Queens have the right to be brought to bed sooner than other women; they never count like anybody else."

Hortense was confined in Paris. Louis had long since returned to his kingdom and, on her recovery, importuned her to rejoin him. She pleaded ill-health and a hundred other excuses to postpone her departure, more especially as she had learned of the manœuvres of Fouché to force Napoleon to divorce Josephine.

Josephine's beauty, her prodigal generosity, her indifference to politics, and her simple good-nature had earned her a vast popularity, especially with the humbler of her subjects. The lack of a direct heir to the Imperial throne, however, was a powerful argument for putting her away, and Fouché was zealous to bring his master reports of widespread dissatisfaction on this point. Ultimately he and his party convinced Napoleon that Josephine must be supplanted by a more fecund Empress.

When she knew of her stepfather's decision, Hortense's conduct was wholly admirable. "Only my brother and I have anything to lose," she reasoned. "He will be forced to resign the crown of Italy and my children that of France. But this sacrifice is worthy of us, and our mother will be happier. Her career is over. Let us hope that her life may not be shortened by her sorrow!"

The expression may read smugly to modern ears, but the feeling behind the words surely deserves praise. She made no attempt to reverse Napoleon's decision. Those who married into the Bonaparte family learned not to meddle in his matters.

A pious daughter, she glosses over the scenes which Josephine made before accepting her fate; she only records that she used all her influence with her mother to point out how futile was resistance. Both she and her brother wished to share their mother's exile from

court, but Napoleon would have none of it. "Stay with me," he implored them, "unless you wish it to be said that the Empress was repudiated and abandoned, and that perhaps she deserved it. Is not her part far nobler if she continues to live near me, to keep her rank and position?"

They remained, Eugène Beauharnais to fight the Emperor's battles, Hortense to endure the persecutions of her husband and the burden of high place. So she lived in drab unhappiness until 1814, her only consolation when she saw or heard of her beloved Flahaut. Yet even he was not wholly satisfactory; he protested that his heart was all hers, yet he philandered disgracefully, particularly with a Pole, Countess Anna Potocka. Hortense's position was somewhat improved when Napoleon quarrelled with Louis, turned him contemptuously off the throne of Holland, and occupied the country with a French army. Then, at least, she was not forced to see her husband, for he was in disgrace, although he still managed to make her miserable by threats of a divorce, or a reconciliation, or a legal separation, or a demand that his sons should be sent to him immediately.

After the first fall of Napoleon, Hortense entered a new phase of her existence. Suddenly she found herself a person of great political importance. The Emperor of Russia offered his protection to Josephine and herself. It was accepted. The two women met the idealist Tsar in the gardens at Malmaison. They were delighted; he was charmed. All three were creatures of sentiment; they soon found themselves as easy and familiar as old friends.

Indeed, the Tsar's attentions to Hortense became the subject of amused gossip in a Paris full of the armies and politicians of many nations. One day a solemn service was celebrated in Paris in honour of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette. All the allied sovereigns and their counsellors were to attend; but Alexander did

not appear. He was lunching with Hortense at her country house, Saint-Leu.

Her fascination for him soon bore fruit. Josephine retained an income of one million francs annually; Hortense received the title of Duchesse de Saint-Leu and an income of 400,000 francs for her children and herself. They were far better treated than any other member of the Bonaparte family; for they might live in France, nor had Louis XVIII and his government power to interfere with them.

Josephine, of course, did not long enjoy the dignified seclusion which the Tsar had obtained for her, and her death saddened Hortense. Otherwise, from her memoirs, one would judge that she thoroughly enjoyed the period of Napoleon's exile at Elba. She was a private person at last; she could spend her days sketching or composing little songs at Saint-Leu; she could dream of the next meeting with Flahaut; she could entertain her friends in Paris and hold a *salon*, whose amusements were parlour games, conundrums, and "artistic" conversation. What matter if the government and their police lowered and muttered, hinting darkly of Bonapartist conspiracies and all manner of wickedness? Hortense's conscience was clear, and she considered that an easy conscience was a woman's surest shield and protection.

Nevertheless she knew her position to be irregular. "I felt that people were looking at me with suspicion, and I thought the best way to prevent their having any pretext for adopting this attitude was to pay the King [Louis XVIII] a visit of courtesy. . . . If I received a cold reception the fault would not be mine. Moreover, I had decided to withdraw if anyone was in the least rude to me."

Louis rose when she entered his study. He "seemed rather embarrassed . . . and said nothing." His visitor ("with the self-confidence of a person who cannot forget who she is and what she is entitled to, in spite of

what anyone may do to make her forget it") informed him that she had come to express her gratitude. At this the King, who probably had expected awkward requests, became "agreeable and even courtly."

The talk turned on Josephine. Her daughter remarked that the King should be grateful to her memory, for she had shown many kindnesses to "persons attached to his family." "I am aware of that," replied the last of the Bourbons. "At Martinique she was an excellent Royalist!"

"An odd remark to make about the wife of the Emperor Napoleon!" comments Hortense in these memoirs.

This charming new-found happiness, however, was shattered at a stroke. As Hortense was driving in her carriage, an Englishman, Lord Kinnaird, rode up to her. "Have you heard the great news, madame?" he exclaimed. "The Emperor Napoleon has landed at Cannes." In an hour all Paris was convinced that Hortense was in the secret, that she had planned the escape, that she was a traitress. In vain the poor woman declared that she was "thunderstruck" by the tidings. Mutterings against her grew to denunciations; and, at her friends' advice, she resolved to hide.

Disguising herself in her secretary's hat and coat, she left her house on foot, arm in arm and sharing an umbrella with young M. Cochelet, the secretary's brother. "I think that I ought to have been extremely frightened," she records. "Well, the embarrassment of finding myself for the first time in my life walking through the streets alone with a young man and without any lady was more in my mind than any thought of danger." Such are the mental processes of a princess.

She lay hid at the house of her brother's old nurse while Napoleon marched towards Paris. Scraps of news reached her by curious channels. Of Louis XVIII's flight from his capital she learned from a man who heard it "from one of the floor polishers of his house, uncle

to a ballet girl named Virginie, the mistress of the Duc de Berri."

On the evening of Napoleon's triumphant re-entry into Paris, Hortense presented herself at the Tuileries. The Emperor received her brusquely. "I should never have thought you would forsake my cause," he reproached her when they were alone. He was furious that she had accepted the title and pension obtained for her by the Tsar. "You had no business to stay in France," he stormed. "A bit of black bread would have been better. . . . When one has shared in the elevation of a family, one must share in the misfortunes."

Hortense passed the Hundred Days in a fever of excitement and apprehension. She did not feel her old confidence in Napoleon. Victories had once bored her by their monotonous succession; now she was filled by forebodings of disaster. After Waterloo, however, her courage never deserted her; she received the broken Napoleon at Malmaison, fed and housed his household, and urged him ceaselessly to escape. He procrastinated and parleyed. The world knows the rest, the *Bellerophon*, St. Helena and the company of Sir Hudson Lowe.

Once again Hortense reviewed the wreck of the man who controlled her destiny. She was sad, immeasurably sad, but she remembered how the Emperor had comforted her in her girlhood when she had mourned the fate of Hannibal. "It is the end of almost all great men," he had remarked. She thought of his words in her desolation, and they gave her fresh courage.

She was in need of it, for the hardest trials of her career confronted her. The Tsar would not listen to her entreaties. She had deceived him once, he declared coldly but politely; she should not receive a second opportunity. Soon she discovered that, simply because she bore the name "Bonaparte," she was hated, feared, suspected.

Protesting but dignified, she was escorted by an

Austrian officer over the French frontier to Constance. Yet she was not allowed to find refuge there. She was moved on through the Grand Duchy of Baden, through the Cantons of Switzerland, until at last she received permission to make her home at Augsburg.

She was no longer young; her trials had marred her fresh good looks; even Flahaut, her lover, had forsaken her for England and marriage with Margaret Elphinstone, daughter and heiress of Admiral Lord Keith. Hortense had nothing left but her children and her memories. Music, painting, conversation, had all palled. She sat down and composed her apologia.

She wrote but once to Napoleon, a letter concerning a portrait of Josephine. Referring to her mother, she said, "If she were still alive, her one regret would have been to have shared only your Majesty's successes." When she penned these words, Napoleon already lay buried in the Valley of the Geraniums at St. Helena.

We leave her at Augsburg, able to say, "I face the future with serenity. Lonely though I am, exiled from my country, lamenting the dreary fate of the benefactor of my family, I often say to myself, 'My life is ended. I have no fear of passions: I have conquered them. Nor do I fear misfortune: I have endured it.'"

Napoleonic enthusiasts will find the artless pages of Hortense's memoirs of interest, if not of importance. On any major question she refuses to deliver an opinion. She writes, for example: "Was the Consul wise or unwise in establishing the Empire? That is a question which I do not feel myself qualified to discuss." Again she asks, "Was a serious attack on England ever really intended to take place [in 1805]? Or did the Emperor use these immense preparations to distract public attention from other things and concentrate it on that one point? I cannot say. This, again, is one of the questions which I will not attempt to answer."

Even when she ventures an opinion, it is frequently so biased in Napoleon's favour as to be valueless. She

attempts, for instance, to transfer as much as possible of the guilt for d'Enghien's execution to Talleyrand. Incidentally, it may be noted, that this choice is peculiar. Talleyrand has always been credited with the paternity of Flahaut, Hortense's lover, and one would have imagined her more likely to blame Savary, the other scapegoat in this affair.

Actually, of course, all attempts to remove the guilt from Napoleon are futile ; for, on the way to St. Helena, at Longwood, and in his will, he expressly declared that, faced with the same situation, he would again have ordered d'Enghien's death.

Her pictures of Napoleon in his domestic circle are quaint and entertaining. None of the stories of him, however, throw light on his private character. He emerges from these memoirs the same brusque, direct, indefatigable creature, play-acting a little to please the crowd and himself, spoiling children, gobbling his food, rigid for any moral virtue which served his policy, and a hundred times more entertaining and vital than the Duke who defeated him at Waterloo.

It remains to comment on the English publication of these memoirs.

There is absolutely no indication that the English edition does not reproduce all the matter contained in the French original.* Yet the three French volumes have been heavily, if skilfully, curtailed for compression into the two-volume translation.

Again, the notes are often inadequate, though this is the fault of the French edition. Without constant reference to other books, it is almost impossible for the ordinary reader to understand certain passages of the text. Further, they ignore facts of importance and interest. Since Hortense chose not to mention the fact that she bore Flahaut a child, afterwards the Duc de Morny, M. Hanoteau might at last have revealed

* "Les Memoirs de la Reine Hortense." Publiées par le Prince Napoleon Avec Notes de Jean Hanoteau. Three vols. (Paris.)

it. From her narrative as it stands, it appears that Louis Bonaparte had no cause for his later complaints against his wife; there is no hint in the book that she gave birth to a son in 1811, of which Louis Bonaparte could not even flatter himself that he was the father.

X

IF I WERE TWENTY-ONE

FEW men are so unimaginative that, at some time or other of their career, they have not looked back and reflected what they would have made of it, could they recapture their youth. For some this vision must be one of discontent—of opportunities missed, of wrong turnings taken, of hopes never to be fulfilled. Others again, more fortunate, must feel, when they look back upon their past life, that, had they the living of it all over again, they would be content to let it follow the same course. Not that it makes any difference to us whether we look back on the past with pleasure or regret: we cannot live our lives again. But what we can gain from such contemplation is a better understanding of the problems and difficulties which confront youth to-day. It is in this spirit that I answer a question which has been put to me: "What would I do if I were twenty-one again?"

Yet before I address myself explicitly to this question, it is necessary to consider what, in such a hypothetical case, would have come before. After all, though twenty-one is not an advanced age, a young man's character is already formed to a large extent, and even his choice of career must already be determined by the limits of his capacity and education. We must consider, therefore, the whole question of education.

It is absurd to suppose that in any society, no matter how primitive, how civilized, or how State-regulated, there can be complete equality of opportunity for all boys. The scales must inevitably, in every form of

society, be weighted on the side of rank, wealth and influence. But the more democratic the society is, the more chance there is for the boy of exceptional ability to achieve opportunity, no matter what his financial circumstances. I hope I shall not seem egotistic if I draw on my own early life for an example of what a young man from a provincial city, without any advantage of wealth or influence, can hope to attain by industry and perseverance.

When my father died, forty years ago, he had not gained the full reward of a career which he had begun later in life than most of us begin. He was in many ways the most remarkable man I have ever known. He left home to enlist as a private soldier in the army; in India he taught himself Latin and Greek and even Sanscrit. When at last, weakened by fevers contracted on active service and, I have no doubt, weary of the narrow circle of military interests, he left the army, it was with the intention of devoting himself to the law. I hold it no small merit in him that, not only did he soon fulfil his ambition to become a barrister, but quickly made his mark both in the Courts and on the political platform. His untimely death, the direct result of those Indian fevers, found him on the verge of great legal and, I am certain, parliamentary distinction. His widow was left with a small income to provide for a family of several children, of whom I, then aged sixteen, was the eldest. Before I leave my father, I venture to commend his example to all those who, though considerably older than twenty-one, feel that they have mistaken their career. He demonstrated that it is not only young men in this country who, faced with a decisive choice for the future, may retrace their steps and begin again, and in so doing achieve success and prominence.

To return to my own experience, here was I, a schoolboy left fatherless in a world which seemed to promise me very little. I could not hope for sufficient pocket-

money to enable me to finish my time at school and proceed to a University, unless I was able to win first scholarships and then fellowships. The greatest debt of the many which I owe to my mother is that she steadfastly encouraged me to attempt this hazardous path to a fuller education. Some women, more prudent perhaps but more short-sighted, would have warned me that it was my duty to leave school, to abandon all hopes of the University, and to enter a local firm as a clerk, with the possibility of rising some day to a managership or even a junior partnership.

But that was not her advice. With the aid of my schoolmaster and of one of my father's brothers, we mapped out the career of scholarships for which I should strive. It was hard work, but ambition made it worth while. I was fortunate enough to secure a scholarship at Oxford—had I failed at this examination, I could never have afforded to try again. By winning fellowships, by private tutoring and by accepting as inevitable a certain number of small debts with the Oxford tradesmen—which sums I knew I could soon repay if I kept my head and worked hard—I succeeded in taking my degree and in being called to the Bar.

Once again I was confronted with a problem similar to that of a few years before. Should I be content to scrape a living, or should I venture all on the hope of a larger success. Again I chose the higher aim, and again I saddled myself with the necessity of years of hard and anxious industry. I was fortunate; I succeeded. What young man of spirit would have done otherwise?

I have not indulged in these reminiscences except to show, from my personal experience, what opportunities a young man may create for himself even in this imperfect world. I hope that young men who read these words (and their parents too) will realize that there is no inherent reason why, given talent, courage and industry, they may not rise, no matter what their present financial or social standing, to the summit of their chosen profession.

If I were twenty-one again, what career would I choose? So far as I can answer this question in relation to myself, I have no doubt that I should do once more exactly what I did a third of a century ago. I should devote myself to the law, well aware that there is no better training for a political career.

But my purpose here is not so much to set out what I myself would do, as what I would advise young men in general to do. Clearly it would be absurd for me to suggest that to every young man the law and politics make an equal appeal, or that all of them should strive to enter these two spheres. There are some to whom business presents a greater attraction and greater opportunities; others will look to medicine, teaching, science, writing, art, and a hundred and one other alternatives for their future work. The crucial questions are, first, how is a choice to be made and, secondly, at what stage in a young man's life should he make it.

It is my considered judgment that no youth or his parents should attempt to settle his future career too soon. A successful business man, with perhaps a large factory and other industrial connexions, will always regard his son, from babyhood, as his successor in the firm. I know dozens of cases where boys have been educated with such an end in view, and where, to the dismay of the parents, they have, on reaching the age of discretion, refused point-blank to follow the appointed path. In several of these cases, the boy has been prepared so exclusively for a business career that he has become more or less incompetent to follow any other. Thus his parents' premature choice of a career for him has been unfortunate both for them and for him.

Far better had they allowed him a good general education, and left the choice of his career till later.

I maintain, therefore, that up to the age of twenty-one it should be the aim of every father to send his son to a good school and afterwards to one of our great Universities. The wisdom of many centuries has gone to

prove that there is no general education comparable to what is known as the "humanities" or the "classics." It is not that an acquaintance with Latin and Greek authors will in itself fit a boy for any career in the world (except, perhaps, that of schoolmastering), but without doubt there is no other form of education which so broadens and deepens his mind, and fits him at the proper age to regard the world with the sense of proportion that will show him, within a narrow possibility of error, which career most attracts him and what chance he has of making a success in it.

I realize that for some a good school and entrance into Oxford or Cambridge must seem an impossibility. But, as I have pointed out, a clever, hard-working boy may well hope nowadays to win a scholarship at a University. It is altogether an error to suppose that such scholarships are to be won only by boys whose parents can afford to send them to an expensive school. I do not for a moment deny that many of our well-known public schools provide the best preliminary education for the Universities. On the other hand there are thousands of men to-day who have made their way to the Universities from elementary schools. A boy of exceptional ability can undoubtedly rise superior to all the disadvantages of poverty. Our elementary schools, though great improvement is still necessary, do allow a brilliant youth the opportunity to make his way, at no expense to his parents, to the University. The way is steep and hard, but this very fact gives a successful elementary schoolboy a real advantage in experience and character over those by whom the University is regarded as merely the traditional continuation of their expensive preparatory and public school boyhood.

I have always advocated the opening of the Universities as widely as possible to young men possessed of character, but deficient in means. Such experiments as have been made in founding colleges at the Universities

exclusively for working-class youths have, however, always seemed to me the fruit of an inverted snobbishness. I believe that their narrow creed of class-consciousness and the inevitable dissociation of their members from the other undergraduates destroys what is one of the most fundamental merits of our University system—its bringing together of young men of every type and class into an association which must inevitably widen their outlook and give them an extraordinarily valuable survey of the world, both past and present.

My advice then to those parents who have at various times asked me what career they shall choose for their sons, is always the same: Wait. Do not attempt too early a choice. Do your best to ensure that your son shall obtain the best possible education in the humanities. If he has a taste for any special subject, encourage him to indulge it, though not to the prejudice of his general studies. If you can afford it, send him to a good public school and then to Oxford. If your means do not permit you to give him such an education as a matter of course, dismiss the idea of the public school and concentrate on facilitating his entrance to the University. Discover from his schoolmaster whether he is likely, with proper industry and guidance, to be able to win his way there by scholarships. If this is likely, or even possible, do all in your power to ensure it. If the boy succeeds he will, after a year or two at the University, be far better able to envisage his future career than you can during his school-days. If he fails, be certain that his efforts will not have been in vain; the pursuit of a noble aim is the greatest former of character.

There is a great deal of nonsense talked about youth and sport. It is asserted that modern young men—and young women too—devote too much of their attention and their time to athletics. They are alleged to consider their working hours as merely so many tedious intervals between their opportunities for sport. I do not believe that this wholesale condemnation is justified. If I were

passing judgment on the younger generation to-day, I should probably draw the exactly opposite conclusion, for, so far as I can see, only a small proportion of our young men (and fewer still of their seniors) appear to appreciate the paramount importance of athletics.

Doubtless there are a very small number of men who do over-emphasize their devotion to games. I am thinking of those who spend every hour of daylight on the golf links, or, so far as our climate permits, on the cricket field. And yet they are necessarily young men of leisure; otherwise they could not afford the time. To suggest that they are making the best use of their lives would hardly be a tenable proposition, although I have no doubt that some play their golf or cricket very much better than they would perform any other tasks, so that perhaps there is little justification for blame. They are, however, exceptions, and I am not here concerned with them. Nor indeed is the charge which I quoted brought against this type of youth; the critics are thinking rather of the young man who has to work five or six days a week, and whose opportunities for recreation are therefore limited to the week-end, and to occasional evening hours on long summer days.

The ancient Greeks very rightly placed athletics almost on an equality with the care of the mind. "A healthy mind in a healthy body" was their guiding rule in life, and it did not seem to them possible that a healthy mind could exist without a healthy body. This is borne out by all expert medical and psychological opinion to-day. We know now that the brain is very much a part of the body, and that, over any considerable period of time, its working will depend upon the general health of its user. No young man who does not take care to harden his body, to exercise his muscles, to promote by judicious exercise his intestinal and perspiratory functions, can hope to address himself to his work with the keenness and vigour of his more athletic rivals. What is more, even if by sheer force of habit he reaches

the age of, say, thirty without taking reasonable exercise, he will certainly find after that age an increasing staleness and liability to illness.

I realize, of course, that it is possible to go too far. If indeed a young man is foolish enough to spend all his working hours in blissful anticipation of the moment when he will don flannels and sweater, he deserves censure. There is a golden mean in everything, and most especially in keeping a balance between the healthy body and the healthy mind.

It has been my experience all through my life that a young man reveals his character very plainly in the field of sport. I do not mean that the best tennis player will prove the most intelligent worker, but I cannot play three sets of tennis with a couple of young men without at the end forming a definite opinion as to their respective qualities of courage, perseverance, intelligent anticipation and sense of honour. And these after all are what one needs to know about any youth in whose career one is interested; his talent for work can be gauged almost in an instant, but it is the basic driving forces in his character which in the long run determine his success or failure.

There is no better school for character than sport. A man can learn to be a sportsman, just as he can learn to be a doctor or a lawyer. But he must start early. It is to my mind one of the greatest assets of the British educational system that it attaches an ever-increasing importance to outdoor athletics. Many a boy, rich or poor, handicapped by no matter what parental disabilities, has been taught on the playing field to achieve a strict sense of duty, a spirit of emulation, and even—which is precisely the reverse of what the decriers of sport allege—unremitting habits of industry. When I see a schoolboy pounding away at the nets to make himself a length bowler, I know that he is capable, in whatever his chosen career in life, of fulfilling the laborious and often tedious preliminaries to success.

I have tried all my life to follow out the views I put forward on this paper. Although I had to work exceedingly hard at school, at Oxford, and in my early days in the law, I never missed an opportunity of football. I am proud to think that I captained the Birkenhead Park fifteen, one of the finest of northern sides, with two of my brothers in the scrum with me. I played tennis, partnering one of the Dohertys in tournaments in the days when we played in shorts and woollen stockings. I swam, sailed, golfed, and, so soon as my income permitted it, hunted. I remember that, in the first enthusiasm of my engagement to my wife, I expended the whole of my meagre bank balance on the purchase of two hunters. But this was real, if pardonable, extravagance; and I cannot recommend it as a good example.

Any fool can lose money, but the wisest young man finds difficulty in acquiring it. The whole subject of expenditure is very difficult. An extravagant youth is rightly an object of derision; but, on the other hand, I have never been able to share the raptures expressed by some people for the parsimonious young man. Once again the solution lies in the golden mean, and this can be determined only according to the circumstances of each individual case.

I address myself here rather to young men on the brink of a career than to those whose station in life is already more or less fixed. In the latter case the scale of expenditure must be a simple matter of mathematics. As Charles Dickens's father said to him—and his son put the theme later into the mouth of Mr. Micawber—"If a man has twenty pounds a year and spends nineteen pounds nineteen shillings and sixpence, he will be happy; but a shilling spent the other way will make him wretched." But in the case of a youth of twenty-one with a small and fluctuating income and with, let us hope, high expectations of a successful career in the future, the case is different. Ought he to follow the precepts

of thrift which our grandfathers' age thought so very praiseworthy ?

I suppose he ought. I suppose that from every shilling which passes through his hands he ought to place twopence on deposit in the Post Office Savings Bank. I suppose that, if he carries out this practice all his life, he will never be anxious about the future, and never fear the ignominy of bankruptcy. Yet I did not behave in this way myself and I do not see that I can properly insist upon it as a necessary part of a young man's training.

So far as I remember, I never saved a penny of my meagre pocket-money at school except for some immediate purpose. There were periods when I haunted second-hand bookshops, and after dismal weeks of abstention from other congenial amusements, amassed the few shillings needed to acquire some calf-bound, dog-eared volume which attracted me. Yet none of the books which I bought were worth even the small sum that I gave for them ; and, if I lost nothing by saving my money from other entertainments, I certainly wasted it on these. Years later I discovered that any old book worth buying is a fairly costly thing, certainly outside the range of the average young man's pocket.

An enterprising young gentleman, writing in the *Isis* newspaper at Oxford, has recently estimated the amount of money which undergraduates owe to the tradesmen of Oxford as amounting to about £250,000. Unless the calculator had access to the books of all the principal Oxford tradesmen it seems very difficult to understand his arrival at the figure so confidently proclaimed. And personally I suspect that no inconsiderable exaggeration disfigures the estimate.

The statement, however, has attracted attention. I see, however, that the allegation of " cupidity " against the Oxford tradesmen has been withdrawn by the *Isis*. But the article has undoubtedly raised a topic of interest to Oxford men, both ancient and modern. I belong

quite definitely to the ancientry in this matter, but I have the satisfaction of recalling that the same discussions took place between the years 1891 and 1895, within which my own undergraduate life was lived.

Little, indeed, changes at Oxford. I recently purchased a copy of the *Isis* at the Great Western station, and my heart was warmed by the close resemblance which this prosperous and persevering newspaper still maintains to the organ of my young days—to which, it may be added, I very frequently contributed.

In fact, pursuing a little irrelevantly the road of reminiscence, I may recall that I wrote my first leader in the *Isis* in October, 1892, and was a frequent contributor in the days of the late Mr. J. B. Harris-Burland, now, alas! unhappily dead, but once well known as a Newdigate prizeman, secretary of the Union, editor of the *Isis*, and later as the author of many successful sensational novels.

I have, I believe, kept in touch with Oxford and Oxford habits as closely as an older man may. I am still Honorary Fellow of two Colleges, am the High Steward of the University, live within twenty miles of Oxford, and am frequently visited by successive generations of undergraduate guests. I may, therefore, I hope, claim some right to offer an opinion upon the matters treated in this article.

It is undoubtedly true that the credit system at Oxford affords greater facilities to young men for obtaining goods without immediate payment than they would probably enjoy anywhere else in the world.

In the first place, the tradesman has the security, generally well founded, that the father of the undergraduate is in a fairly satisfactory situation in society, and will not be willing, unless the liabilities are altogether excessive, to see his son leave Oxford with debts unpaid.

In the second place, he has the security that the young man in question—unless, so to speak, he fall a victim by the roadside—will remain at Oxford for three or even

possibly four years. He is not, in other words, dealing with a very migratory debtor.

To this there must, in the third place, be added that there is of course still, even in post-war Oxford, a very considerable section of young men, either rich in their own right, or with fathers by whom even a considerable measure of indebtedness need not be, and is not, seriously considered.

There are, of course, two sides to the question. Otherwise, it would not be worth discussing at all. The credit system does indeed offer temptations to the boy without much ready money at a time when he seems to need a great many things, easily acquired in existing conditions, but perhaps very difficult of attainment upon a strict ready money basis.

A boy with reasonable strength of mind will keep himself generally abreast of the extent of the liabilities which he is incurring; the poor son, for instance, of a clergyman who is making a brave struggle to send his son to Oxford at all will certainly meet with little commendation if he adds to his father's anxieties by any avoidable extravagance. Nor would it be right to dismiss altogether the risk that a boy with ordinary strength of character may be thoughtlessly persuaded by the easiness of credit to incur liabilities unsuitable to his position.

But the real truth is that at Oxford, as in the great world, the tests begin to be applied by which strong men are distinguished from weak men. It comes a little earlier, that is all; it comes, perhaps, at a moment when the resistent power is not quite fully developed. But, after all, the ordinary boy goes to Oxford at about the age of 18½; he leaves at 21 or 22. A reasonable perspective, and adequate self-control, ought not to be beyond the reach during these years of any young man possessing the qualities which make for success and dependability in the world.

Nor am I able in the least to agree with the view frequently advanced that Oxford tradesmen are, as a

class, extortionate. I still deal with several tradesmen much respected by me, whose customer I was when an undergraduate. I should hardly have dealt with them over a period of nearly forty years if I had not found them both satisfactory and honest.

But it is, of course, apparent that if the payment of an account is postponed beyond the normal period, that circumstance, one way or another, must find a reflection in the total sum ultimately paid. There is evidently no reason whatever why a man who buys a college blazer, and pays for it in cash, should pay the same price as one who wears it for two and a half years before settling his liability.

And, indeed, so far as I know, almost all London tailors observe the same practice, actually in their bills quoting two alternative prices, the one based upon cash, the other upon a credit basis. It would evidently be dangerous to state with too great precision what amount of credit is contemplated; but, speaking from memory, I should imagine that from two to three years' credit is not infrequently given by the best London tailors.

I am, therefore, of opinion that in my day, in all the circumstances of the case, the charges of Oxford tradesmen were reasonable. Nor have I heard upon reliable evidence of any change in this respect.

I fell myself somewhat into debt while I was at Oxford. But I cannot on the whole remember, with a single exception, that I was ever treated except with great consideration. And it must be observed that the convenience of the credit system to one who keeps his head, has a sense of proportion, and enough ability to justify confident hope in his own future, may place him under very great obligation to this much-abused system.

If, for instance, a young man goes to college with little to support him but scholarships, it is very difficult for him to take such a part in the social life of the University as his abilities and pursuits equip him for. He may be a very good athlete; perhaps captain of his

college team, perhaps even a Blue; or he may be president of the Union; all these positions involve both hospitality and expenditure.

I have known many cases of men who have been enabled, by the reasonable consideration of tradesmen, to play a distinguished part in the life of Oxford, to whom such a part would otherwise have been completely denied; and all of whom repaid to the last farthing—and not after too long a delay—the amount of their indebtedness.

I must not be supposed to lend support to the argument that it is ever a good thing to be in debt. It is, on the contrary, *in abstracto*, always a bad thing. But when one hears a system assailed, to which many of us have owed much, it is only fair to call attention to the fact that in this controversy, as indeed in all controversies, there are two strongly marked points of view.

Upon such a matter one can naturally only speak with high authority for oneself. My convenience and comfort at Oxford were greatly forwarded by judiciously availing myself of the system of credit which existed there. If I must say, like Horace:

Novi meliora proboque;
Deteriora sequor:

I must at least be frank and say that if I were happy enough to make my appearance at Oxford as a freshman to-morrow, in circumstances identical with those of my past, I cannot hope that I should succeed in adopting a very different policy.

At the University I found it impossible to live within my income. I was sure, however, that, if I took the full advantage of my stay at Oxford—and this meant a certain expenditure and even extravagance—I should soon be able profitably to capitalize my experience; and I did not hesitate to take advantage of the credit facilities offered by the local shopkeepers. I left Oxford owing them several hundred pounds. Within three years I had paid off the debt.

I repeat that I am not advising young men to run into debt as a matter of principle. My point is that an overwhelming horror of any form of extravagance is in the long run just as likely to hinder a man as to help him. I would rather that a young man ate good meals, drank good liquor, was well dressed, possessed a few good articles of furniture, a few good prints on his walls and the nucleus of a good library, and paid his subscription to such intellectual and athletic associations as appeal to him, even if this entails temporary over-expenditure, than that he should deprive himself of these few admirable concomitants to his early manhood and amass a few pounds in the bank. If he is a fool, miserliness will not avail him; sooner or later the sharks will find him out. If he is a young man of courage and self-possession, he will not have to wait long before paying off his early debts, while all the time having the advantage of his investments.

It is, I agree, very necessary that a young man should acquire what is known as the "money sense." I know no one more objectionable than a youth, no matter of what financial standing, who is deficient of an understanding of the value of money. But I have yet to learn that a miser understands the value of money better than a spendthrift. Each of them fails to grasp the importance of wise expenditure, without which he will never be able to appreciate the rewards of success, or to face resolutely the frowns of fortune.

I have more than once been invited by anxious parents to advise their sons about the desirability or undesirability of early marriage. I need hardly say that on each occasion the young man was bent on matrimony, and his parents hoped that I might be able to dissuade him. It is true also that in every case there was a very good reason why the marriage should not take place—or at least not too soon. But it is not my view that early marriages are always to be deprecated.

There is no topic on which it is less easy to speak

in general terms. For one young man an early marriage may provide just that element of responsibility and poise which is lacking in his everyday outlook on life. For another the reckless choice of the wrong girl may mean the ruin of his future. For another again, if he be poor, an alliance with a wealthy family may provide the additional income which he needs to ensure his career; while, for a fourth, early marriage may mean saddling himself with a load of hopeless impecuniosity which will embitter the whole of his life.

The essence of the problem is whether the young man is himself capable of summing up the situation. At twenty-one very few of us can hope to have that experience of the world which is essential for a decision of such momentous consequence. Yet I have known young men to marry at that age and to look back on their marriage as the most providential episode of their lives. Certainly they were very fortunate in their wives.

I have known others, married early—too early—who soon found themselves faced with that hideous spectre of incompatibility which our mediæval divorce laws refuse to exorcise. But it is only fair to these young men to say that it is not only youthful marriages which go wrong. The Sir Peter Teazles of this world are very numerous.

My best advice to a young man contemplating marriage is that he should recognize the advantage which his youth confers on him, namely, the absence of any necessity for a hasty decision. He should try to examine his position and his prospects, not with the eye of a lover, but, if I may use the expression, as if he were his own best friend. If on a calm examination of the position it seems to him that there is no reason why he should not plunge into this supreme domestic adventure, I would still advise him to consult a man older than himself, whose judgment he respects. Perhaps this parent or friend will approve his choice but counsel

delay. The young man, impatient as all lovers are, may find the suggestion irksome. But what has he to lose by delay? If the girl of his choice is worthy of his love and likely to make him the wife whom he needs and whom he can respect, she too surely will be ready to wait.

These are fortunate cases. It is, I fear, just as likely that the friend to whom our young man turns may seek to move him from his purpose. Love is proverbially blind, and it is not easy for a young man to see in his beloved defects which are perhaps plain to everyone else. I do not envy either the lover or his adviser in such a case. Such cases need the exercise of great tact and forbearance by all concerned. Though a year later the young man may acknowledge a debt of gratitude to his counsellor, it is improbable that he will feel grateful at the time.

But I would not have young men too prudent. Love is too sacred an emotion to be treated cavalierly. Better an adventure with a chance of success, though also the risk of failure, than no adventure at all. Marriage is always an adventure, perhaps the greatest adventure in any man's life. To found a household, to bring children into being, to undertake the responsibility of providing for their future—these have always been the object of man's endeavour throughout the ages:

> "To make a happy fireside clime
> To weans and wife,
> That's the true pathos and sublime
> Of human life."

XI

THE TRUE LORD KITCHENER

IT is given to few men to become a legend in their lifetime, and by their death to shock into sudden calm the emotions of a world exercised by the greatest war that has ever devastated mankind. But such a man was Lord Kitchener of Khartoum. More than any other individual figure who participated in the World War, his fame is unchallenged; his reputation rises with every passing year. His was a character misunderstood by men who knew him little, maligned sometimes by men who knew him less, and almost unintelligible to those who knew him not at all. Even had I not been privileged to enjoy somewhat exceptional opportunities of personal contact with him, I should consider it my duty at every available opportunity to bring home to the minds of a generation which is sometimes inclined to forget it, the extent of the debt which this country and the Empire owe to the memory of one of the greatest of her sons. Not only in the War; not only in India; in Egypt and in the Sudan; not only as a soldier and not only as an administrator did he stand high above the bulk of his fellows.

Horatio Herbert Kitchener—his first name was borne also by his father, who had been born in 1805, Nelson's year—was born in Ireland in the summer of 1850; his parentage was English on both sides. Early in his life he demonstrated that love of his profession and contempt for the conventional paths to success which are among the hall-marks of genius. As a youth of twenty who had just passed out of Woolwich and was spending

the winter with his father in Brittany, he managed to join the French army, then in retreat from the victorious Germans; though he saw little fighting, his share in this campaign was never forgotten by the French. But on his return to England he was summoned by the Duke of Cambridge, the Commander-in-Chief, and reprimanded for his impulsive action. Kitchener ingeniously argued that, having completed his term as a cadet, and having not yet received Her Majesty's commission, he was not immediately subordinate to English military discipline. This defence did not impress the Duke, a stickler for military etiquette, but, after the reprimand, he unbent sufficiently to remark: "I am bound to say that in your place I should have done the same thing."

Kitchener received his commission in the Royal Engineers just before his twenty-first birthday; he was a smart soldier, a keen student of technical problems, and a devoted churchman. Three years later he travelled East, where so much of his life was to be spent. This first appointment was to assist in the survey of Palestine, a work which especially appealed to him in its professional interest, in the contact it gave him with an Eastern people, and in its relation to Biblical history. Twice in this short spell of service he saved his chief from death, once from drowning, the second time when the camp was raided by a band of fanatical Arabs. After this he was entrusted with the task of surveying the island of Cyprus, then newly under British protectorate. While he was there, disturbances broke out in Egypt, and he at once made his way to Alexandria. Both then and ever afterwards he denied that he had in any sense behaved irregularly in leaving his post and volunteering for service in Egypt. He pointed out that he had been given a week's sick leave from his duties in Cyprus—what could be more natural and innocent than that he should sail to Alexandria, accidentally miss the return boat, and, on the strength of his knowledge of

Arabic, volunteer for and undertake a dangerous secret mission up the Nile? The authorities at Cyprus, however, like the Duke formerly, took a different view.

I need not recount here his early career in Asia Minor, Egypt, and the Sudan. The whole series of events which led up to his capture of Khartoum testifies to his indomitable courage, his flair for organization, his capacity for leadership, and, the rarest quality to be found in the military world, his innate sympathy and capacity in face of the problems of statesmanship. It is true that Lord Cromer, the British Agent in Egypt, was also a man of genius; but few soldiers exist, then or now, who could so admirably have collaborated with him as Kitchener. Economy, always the bugbear of English polity when lavish expenditure can have no effect on party fortunes, came near to crippling their joint task; Kitchener, however, was big enough to conquer financial difficulties. Both as an engineer and as an organizer economy was second nature to him.

It is amazing in these days to realize that the whole expense of the three years' campaign which crushed the Mahdi, reconquered the Sudan, built seven hundred miles of railway, and pacified the storm-centres of North-Eastern Africa cost less than two and a half million pounds.

Stories abound of Kitchener's skill in improvisation. He built the Dongola railway largely with materials left over from the Wolseley expedition of a dozen years before. Rails which had been used by the peasants as rafters for their huts, as fences, and even as gallows, were re-collected and put to service by him. Whenever a hitch occurred—and they were many—Kitchener himself, though he trusted his subordinates to exercise wide powers of discretion, would appear on the scene and set matters straight. This amazing energy, coupled with the power and the will to do the work of half a dozen men, has sometimes been distorted to bolster up a legend that he was not an easy man to work with, that

he hated to delegate responsibility, that he was a devotee of centralization—with himself as the centre. Nothing could be falser.

As I have said, he was the most statesmanlike of soldiers. When he succeeded Lord Roberts as Commander-in-Chief in South Africa, he combined brilliant military skill—his was the brain which contrived the policy of blockhouses which at last forced upon the Boers the realization of the hopelessness of their struggle—with a generous and far-seeing appreciation of their sentiments. He was no "Die-Hard" militarist. "We are now carrying the war on to put two or three hundred Dutchmen in prison at the end of it. It seems to me absurd and wrong," he wrote to the Secretary of State for War after the first unsuccessful peace negotiations with Louis Botha. He urged on the Government suggestions of conciliation which, rejected at the time, had nevertheless to be adopted later after much more blood and treasure had been poured out on the sun-baked veld. He showed himself in this struggle a better statesman than the statesmen, and the best soldier of all.

So, too, in India, where he went in 1902 as Commander-in-Chief, immediately after the signature of peace with the Boers. He found the Indian army handicapped by outworn forms which, to his energetic mind, seemed certain to cripple its value in war and quite unnecessarily to harass it in times of peace. The reforms which he introduced during the seven years of his Indian command are, for the most part, too technical for description here. It is enough to say that he transformed our military forces in India from a tape-ridden, semi-efficient organization into a masterpiece of well-oiled machinery.

It happened that, soon after the beginning of his service in India, he came into conflict with a personality hardly less remarkable than himself, the late Lord Curzon. Since in many matters these two men were able to see

eye to eye and to give each other credit for outstanding qualities, and since, unfortunately, there has grown up a tendency to suggest that their quarrel in India was based on a considerable degree of personal antipathy, it may be well that, in justice to them both, I should set out in plain words the exact nature of their dispute.

When Kitchener arrived he found that, although as Commander-in-Chief he had a seat upon the Viceroy's Council, this body contained also a Military Member who acted as a channel and a buffer between Commander-in-Chief and Viceroy. As Lord Roberts once wrote, "The evils of the arrangement are palpable. All the work involving references between Army Headquarters and the Military Department has to be done twice over." Even if the Military Member had been a civilian, as in theory he might have been but never was, he must still appear to a man of Kitchener's stamp a wholly unnecessary cog in the administrative wheel. In Kitchener's own words, "I am responsible for the efficiency of the army in India, but I had no opportunity of explaining my own plans to the supreme authority, the Indian Government; they had to be filtered through the brain and mouth of another military officer." This diarchy was carried to extraordinary lengths, some tragic, others ludicrous.

The Commander-in-Chief was the executive head of the army, but the Military Member administered all the services which supplied the troops with transport, equipment, munitions, and food. Cases, too, were known where reforms, urgently demanded by the Commander-in-Chief, had been rejected because a junior officer in the Military Member's department deemed them unnecessary.

It is a gross error to suggest, as some of the Viceroy's rasher partisans have done, that Kitchener desired to override the authority of the King-Emperor's civil representative. Even Lord Curzon, with an uncharacteristic obscurity of vision, declared that Kitchener

was proposing "not to disestablish an individual, or even a department, but to subvert the military authority of the Government of India as a whole, and to substitute for it a military autocracy in the person of the Commander-in-Chief."

No such thought ever moved him. In the minute from which I have just quoted, Kitchener added: "There is no question as to the right of the Government of India to decide finally on questions of policy; the civil power is, of course, supreme. All I contend for is that it must be adequately informed as to the plans which I, as the responsible expert it employs, think necessary for the efficiency of the army." He backed his insistence on this change of procedure with the threat of resignation. Sir George Arthur tells us that, after a hint by friends of the Viceroy that this threat unduly weighted the scales of justice, Kitchener respectfully suggested that the Viceroy could easily equalize matters by himself threatening to resign if the old principle of dual control were abolished. I mention this in passing as a conclusive answer to those who have suggested that Kitchener was devoid of a sense of humour. Though with strangers and in public he rarely unbent, his friends and his immediate subordinates knew how human he was.

I am not suggesting that there were not weighty arguments to be adduced on the side which Lord Curzon adopted. It is clear that a weak Viceroy, confronted by an overbearing Commander-in-Chief, might indeed sigh for the restraining blanket of a Military Member and his department. Equally, an inefficient Commander-in-Chief might well require the support of a Military Member in his encounters with an overweening Viceroy. But no system of government can be, or ought to be, established on the fear of such possibilities; the Empire is unlikely to appoint to positions of such vast importance men so utterly incapable of administering them.

The dispute was referred to the Home Government.

Kitchener's case, presented with unsoldierlike clarity and cogency, prevailed in large degree. Lord Curzon took an early opportunity to resign, and it is certain that to the end of his days he never forgave Lord Midleton, then (as Mr. Brodrick) Secretary of State for India, and Lord Minto, his successor in the Viceroyalty, for the defeat. It is an interesting commentary on the false impression created in some quarters in England by partial reports of the controversy, to find Lord Minto writing a few months later to Lord Morley from India:

"I am bound to say that Kitchener's position as explained to me was entirely different to what I found it to be. I was told that he was aiming at a military autocracy, and that it was evident that he intended to minimize any constitutional safeguards which might be urged. One can only take people as one finds them, and I cannot but say that he has been perfectly straightforward with me, and has, as I am sure you will see from the papers I have sent you, been anxious to recognize all constitutional requirements." And Lord Morley soon wrote to Lord Minto, after meeting Kitchener: "I was a good deal astonished, for I had expected a silent, stiff, moody hero. Behold, he was the most cheerful and cordial and outspoken of men, and he hammered away loud and strong, with free gestures and high tones. He used the warmest language, as to which I was in no need of any emphasis, about yourself; it was very agreeable to hear, you may be certain."

In the autumn of 1911 Kitchener became Agent and Consul-General in Egypt. In the summer of 1914 he happened to be in England; with the outbreak of war he was ordered to return to his post. But as he boarded the Channel steamer he was instructed by Mr. Asquith, the Prime Minister, to return to London. Next day he became Secretary of State for War. He who with unerring finger had disclosed and remedied the defects of our army in India now found himself confronted by the amazing inadequacy of the army at home. His

first comments at the War Office, it is said, were: "There is no army," and, a few minutes later, as he vainly tried to sign his name to a document with an official pen: "Not a scrap of army, and not a pen which will write!" He said to me one day: "Whatever be said of my colleagues, no one at least can deny them courage. They have no army, and they have declared war against the mightiest military nation in the world."

I always remember, as an extraordinary incident of his prescience, the remark he made to me on the first day on which I became Director of the Press Bureau. He gave me some notices for publication in the Press, which made it clear he foresaw a war of at least three years' duration. So far as I know, in this respect he stood absolutely alone. I asked him: "Do you really think it will last as long as three years?" "More," he replied laconically. I am certain that neither Von Moltke nor Joffre, nor any politician in any of the combatant countries, would have given the same opinion. He was right. All the others were wrong.

Kitchener found the War Office denuded of all officers of senior rank, who with a unanimous impulse had hastened away to win reputations with their units. Most of them were under the pathetic impression that the War would consist of a few quick skirmishes, followed by a triumphant march into Berlin. It was left for Kitchener to declare at once that these hopes were ill-founded. It is no small testimony to the ascendancy which he had acquired over the minds of his countrymen, from the highest to the lowest, that his grim prophecy that the War would last at least three years exercised a sobering influence upon the nation, and helped in no small degree to create those new armies which will always be associated with his name.

Fortunate it was in other ways, too, for England, in that most perilous hour of her existence, that Kitchener was at the War Office. When one recalls the sanguine and stupid prognostications of other military officers

of exalted rank, their desire then and always to risk everything on a foolish under-estimate of the enemy's strength, and an even more foolish over-estimate of their own ability, it is clear that only Kitchener's combination of experience, organizing skill, and foresight saved us from disaster. Methodically, brilliantly, intelligently, he built up that mighty machine which four years later won the victory. He was not always well served by those from whom he was entitled to expect most. I need refer only to the unfortunate incidents wherein Sir John French, the Commander-in-Chief, sought—plain language may now be used—to save himself from the consequences of his own errors by attempting to transfer the blame to his chief.

The Commander-in-Chief had been fulsome in his compliments to Kitchener. "Thank God you are there," he wrote to him at the War Office, "and I mean it." And on May 2nd, 1915, he concluded a message to his chief about the projected Anglo-French offensive with these words: "The ammunition will be all right." Events proved that the ammunition was all wrong, and at once Sir John French took advantage of the casual presence at Headquarters of *The Times* correspondent, Colonel Repington—"The dining gladiator," as this military gossip was afterwards nicknamed by a wag—to blame the failures at Neuve Chapelle (which Headquarters had hitherto described as a victory) and at Festubert on the shortage of high explosives, for which Kitchener was to be held responsible. Nor was this all; the Commander-in-Chief dispatched an aide-de-camp to London as if to discredit Kitchener with the rest of the Cabinet and with the Press. This attack (like that at Neuve Chapelle) failed. Kitchener's position in the eyes of his colleagues and his countrymen was not shaken by the manœuvres of which he was a victim.

A silly legend has been spread that Kitchener was a failure in council. One recognizes in this a resurgence

of the prejudiced statements to which Lord Morley referred in the letter from which I have quoted above. I may claim to be reasonably competent to express a view in this matter. During the first six weeks of the War, as Director of the Press Bureau, I visited him on business every day that he was in London; our conversations were never short, though certainly neither of us indulged a habit of prolixity. He would tell me his view of the actual situation, and we would discuss the matter and the extent of the statements which could be made public. I found him as capable in this novel task as I knew him to be in the more congenial aspects of his profession. Unlike many military commanders, he fully realized the importance of taking the nation into his confidence. The only test which he applied to any piece of news, good or bad, was whether it could in any way afford the enemy useful information. If not, it ought to be published. After I went to France, I was privileged to correspond with him and to visit him on leave. Afterwards I became his colleague in the Cabinet. I am proud to know, on the authority of Sir George Arthur, that he more than once declared that "F. E. has been a comfort in Cabinet to-day."

It is clear to me from every stage of his career that he combined in an exceptional degree the knowledge of a soldier with an understanding of the problems of statesmanship. No one will suggest that he was, or thought himself, an authority upon the party politics of England; this field was too unsympathetic to him, and he had passed his life too far from it, for him to harbour such an illusion. But his rare genius displayed itself in a thorough ability to grasp a situation, to separate at once the essentials from the non-essentials, to concentrate on such matters as conditioned his own duties. It has also been suggested that, in this closing stage of his career, he was no longer possessed of that freshness of mind and vigour of body which had hitherto distinguished him. This I utterly deny. It is a fact that an injury

to his foot, sustained in India, made walking a penance to him; but I never observed that this affected his energy or his judgment; nor indeed is pedestrianism usually accounted a quality of body or mind which one would wish to associate with a great man.

The truth is that, when he became Minister for War in 1914, when he steeled the hearts of his compatriots to face those four years of incredible horror which lay before them, when he laid the foundations of our final victory, foundations without which that victory would never have been achieved, he stood at the height of his intellectual powers. The experience of many years and many climes, the long habits of responsibility and of command gave him a weight in our councils which no other soldier could have possessed.

Fables have accumulated even around his death. I have seen a pamphlet which declares that Kitchener's last journey in the *Hampshire* was betrayed to the Germans by the Empress of Russia and Rasputin through some fantastic channel of direct telegraph communication with Berlin. At the other extreme of imbecility there are people who imagine that he did not perish when the *Hampshire* sank, but that, in some weird disguise, he survives, conscious or unconscious of his identity, in a foreign country. All this is moonshine. His fate is known. On June 4th, 1916, he left King's Cross for Scotland. On the following morning the destroyer *Oak* carried him to Scapa, where he lunched with Admiral Jellicoe on board the *Iron Duke*. A few hours later he boarded the *Hampshire*, and at five o'clock she steamed out of sight of the main fleet. By a cruel jest of fate her captain was directed, in order to escape the worst effects of the prevailing gale, to follow a route which, though much used by merchant vessels, had not been swept clear of German mines. At seven o'clock the two accompanying destroyers returned to their base. An hour later the *Hampshire* struck a mine, and Lord Kitchener perished in the icy waters.

It is very easy now to disparage this extraordinary man and to argue that in the later stages of the War he lost grip and proved incapable of giving effect to his wishes. Which of all the soldiers in the War did not commit incredible errors? Joffre did; Von Moltke did; Foch did; and so equally did French and Haig. And who of all the politicians in all the countries was not guilty of shattering miscalculations? The truth is that the greatness of the problems of the War were beyond all human experience, and transcended the resources of the human instruments to whom its conduct was committed.

It is my deliberate opinion that the career of Lord Kitchener during the War, fairly and dispassionately considered, will challenge comparison with any of the men by whose side he laboured, or whose schemes he set himself to paralyse and to destroy.

With all these men he might indeed say:

> *"Mortales sumus;*
> *Mortalia patimur."*

I am not, I believe, in the habit of using exaggerated language, but I am certain that, with all the disqualifications of his earlier training for this particular task, Kitchener will be pronounced by history to have been one of the very great figures of the War.

XII

REFLECTIONS IN A LIBRARY

EVER since the first days of the War, now over sixteen years ago, books have been poured out in the attempt so rarely successful, to describe the individual War experiences of the writers. Most of the earlier volumes seem to the reader to-day to have been written hastily, and, too often, superficially. The best of them—like " Peter Jackson " and " Le Feu "—would not, I think, bear very critical re-examination now ; we have outgrown " Peter Jackson," and Barbusse's pacifism is as dated as last Saturday's evening newspaper.

After this first harvest there followed a period, after the Armistice, when war literature lost its fascination. Certain narratives of escapes were read as light literature ; but serious attempts to describe the horrors of war drooped between the inability of writers to tell their experiences, still too recent, and the unwillingness of readers any longer to hear them.

This reaction reached its maximum about four years ago. We came to a moment when the generation which had fought the War desired nothing better than to forget about it, while the next generation was not yet old enough to be inquisitive about what had happened. Already that day has passed, and once again War books are read.

It is not perhaps unnatural that the new books should excel their predecessors in distinction. Written in philosophic retrospection, they are not the mere vehicles of their authors' first unbalanced reaction to the trenches. The new author has had time to realize that war is not

merely a cruel caprice of a ruling class, an easily avoidable act of collective madness. But in avoiding Barbusse's hysterical pacifism he is doing much more towards forcing a realization of the horror of war upon the world. No volumes have been so telling, so successful in their arraignment of war, as some of those now being published. I will mention four of them: "All Quiet on the Western Front," by Erich Maria Remarque; "Sergeant Grischa," by Arnold Zweig; "Undertones of War," by Edmund Blunden; and R. C. Sherriff's play, "Journey's End." The truth about war lies in them as never before; this truth is, as Sherman said, that war is Hell.

The four books are not equal in quality. "Journey's End" does not read as well as I expected; perhaps the brilliant setting and production of the play have given it an undeservedly high reputation. "All Quiet on the Western Front" is by far the best. It is intelligent, poignant, marvellously descriptive, cruelly frank. One may judge of Remarque's insight that he is able, while satirizing it, to appreciate the value of the wearisome drudgery of the parade ground and the training camp:

> . . . a renunciation of personality such as one would not ask of the meanest servant—salutes, springing to attention, parade-marches, presenting arms, right wheel, left wheel, clicking the heels, insults, and a thousand pettifogging details. We had fancied our task would be different, only to find we were to be trained for heroism as though we were circus-ponies.

Here is his justification for it:

> Had we gone into the trenches without this period of training most of us would certainly have gone mad. Only thus were we prepared for what awaited us. We did not break down, but endured; our twenty years, which made many another thing so grievous, helped us in this. But by far the most important was that it awakened in us a strong, practical sense of *esprit de corps*, which in the field developed into the finest thing that arose out of the War —comradeship.

A later incident in the book points this moral. The

hero is lying in a shell-hole in No Man's Land during a raid; he volunteered to take part in it, but has suddenly become stricken with fear. Then he hears voices in the trench behind him:

> At once a new warmth flows through me. These voices, these few quiet words, these footsteps in the trench behind me recall me at a bound from the terrible loneliness and fear of death by which I had been almost destroyed. They are more to me than life, these voices, they are more than motherliness and more than fear; they are the strongest, most comforting thing there is anywhere: they are the voices of my comrades.
>
> I am no longer a shuddering speck of existence, alone in the darkness; I belong to them and they to me, we all share the same fear and the same life, we are nearer than lovers, in a simpler, a harder way; I could bury my face in them, in these voices, these words that have saved me and will stand by me.

There follows, a few pages later, an incident which is a more convincing indictment of one aspect of modern warfare than anything which Barbusse, in his most effective moments, ever wrote.

A French attack passes over the spot where the hero lies; a French soldier stumbles into the shell-hole beside him. He swiftly stabs the intruder—then seeks to comfort the dying man.

> I unbutton his tunic in order to bandage him if it is possible. In any case I must do it, so that if the fellows over there capture me they will see that I wanted to help him, and so will not shoot me. He tries to resist, but his hand is too feeble. The shirt is stuck and will not come away, it is buttoned at the back. So there is nothing for it but to cut it off.
>
> I look for the knife and find it again. But when I begin to cut the shirt the eyes open once more and the cry is in them again and the demented expression, so that I must close them, press them shut and whisper: "I want to help you." Comrade, camerade, camerade, camerade, camerade"—eagerly repeating the word, to make him understand.

> There are three stabs. My field-dressing covers them, the blood runs out under it, I press it tighter; there; he groans.
>
> That is all I can do. Now we must wait, wait.

The book is indeed a pastiche of war incidents. Some of them are heroic, like Bertinck's self-sacrifice. Other passages possess a brutal humour: "They will have a job with Hans Kramer's body at the Judgment Day, piecing it together after a direct hit." And there is one vignette which few readers will soon forget:

> One morning two butterflies play in front of our trench. They are brimstone-butterflies, with red spots on their yellow wings. What can they be looking for here? There is not a plant nor a flower for miles. They settle on the teeth of a skull. The birds too are just as carefree, they have long since accustomed themselves to the War. Every morning larks ascend from No Man's Land. A year ago we watched them nesting; the young ones grew up too.

I notice that some reviewers have condemned Herr Remarque for an inordinate amount of references to a certain physical function. I cannot wholly agree with them. It is true that, to a foreigner, German comedians seem to have only one joke, and modern German writers turn much attention to the lavatory. I felt this often when I read "Sergeant Grischa;" its author is, to my mind, needlessly coprological. But I would not press this charge against Remarque. One moves indeed in a hospital atmosphere in the pages of this remarkable book: much is written which it were better that no one knew; but whoever went through the War will recognize that without them no true picture could be painted.

I wish that the author had not attempted, even though half-heartedly, to make his book a novel. It is with a shock, after one has read incident after incident in which "I" figure, to discover that the character with whom the reader has associated himself is a fictitious "Paul Bäumer," of whom the last page assures us, though

without carrying the slightest conviction, that " He fell in October, 1918, on a day that was so quiet and still on the whole front, that the army report confined itself to the single sentence : All quiet on the Western Front." I see no technical or artistic reason why this mystification should have been attempted ; I fear that some publisher or agent must have suggested that a " War novel " would sell better than the same book written as War experiences.

The foreword to the volume is more interesting than its author can have supposed when he wrote it :

> This book is to be neither an accusation nor a confession, and least of all an adventure, for death is not an adventure to those who stand face to face with it. It will try simply to tell of a generation of men who, even though they may have escaped its shells, were destroyed by the War.

It is not the least satisfactory feature of this and the other books which I have mentioned above, that they demonstrate beyond any possibility of denial that Remarque's generation of young men, now in their thirties, were in fact not " destroyed " but only temporarily paralysed. To-day, at last, more than a decade after the conclusion of the four years of horror which ravished their youth, they are recovering vigour and ambition like shell-shocked men from whom the veils have slowly fallen.

So much more intelligent are these books than earlier volumes on similar themes that I do not fear that they will encourage the more foolish kind of pacifism. I repeat that no one who reads " All Quiet on the Western Front " can ever again fail to understand the filth and horror of war ; but at the same time he will appreciate the strength of the complex and universal forces which go to produce war.

It is useless to say, with our less intelligent Socialist politicians, that the first step towards the abolition of war lies in disbanding the British Army, Navy and Air Force. Whoever reads Remarque's book—and I could

call no more unbiased witness—will realize that such folly on our part would lead not to less war but to more. There are at least three characters in his book whose type, existing everywhere, would welcome British disarmament not as a step to peace but as our enemies' opportunity.

The path to peace lies not through England's weakness, but through her strength. The *Pax Britannica* is not less potent among our neighbours than in the distant territories where it directly operates.

* * * * * *

America, as befits the most capitalistic country in the world, has become a hive of inventors. We owe to America the development, if not always the embryonic idea, of innumerable amenities of our present-day life. Nor are these inventions wholly mechanical; for in the least mechanical of spheres, the theatre, the United States have lately produced a new profession, a new "expertism," that of the play-doctor. This individual is summoned, as I understand, to the rehearsals of a forthcoming theatrical production: he is expected to diagnose where and why it is likely to fall short of success, artistic and commercial. Moreover, it is his duty to devise a cure, in order that, when at last the curtain rises on the finished product, the public may be satisfied and even the shrillest critic reduced to generalities if he wishes to condemn the play.

I should like to see a similar profession established in England, to examine the manuscripts of books before their publication and to suggest to the author such changes as are essential for the improvement of his work.

It is true that this task is already performed in part by the publisher's readers, by the publisher himself (if he be a man of taste), and by such friends of the author as may be shown the manuscript or the proofs of the book. But none of these is in a position of professional detachment: the publisher and his assistants must tread

delicately, lest authors, notoriously a vain crew, take offence and transfer their manuscripts to a less critical house. The author's friends are even less likely to advise large emendations or wholesale omissions. But a "book-doctor," if once his place were established, could speak frankly. If his suggestions were not accepted, no one would be offended; if he proved himself right, as he generally would—for the faults of most books are obvious to an expert—the author would learn a lesson, and the publisher's hands would be strengthened in later negotiations.

I am led to these remarks by a recent reading of a much discussed volume of autobiography, "Good-Bye to All That," written by Mr. Robert Graves. Never have I known a book so much in need of pruning. It contains much that is excellent, much that is mediocre, and much that is so worthless as to prejudice the value of the rest. We have the author's admission that it was written in two months—begun on May 23 and finished on July 24—yet it contains no fewer than 110,000 words, possibly more. It is claimed for Balzac that he could write a novel almost at a sitting, sustained by draughts of black coffee; but even he would scarcely have attempted to compress wide memories of thirty-three years, including four War years, into a period which allowed little time for revision and none at all for rewriting. Mr. Graves is no Balzac. A good book-doctor would have reduced this volume to half its present length; he would have removed a mass of puerilities, errors of taste and obvious lapses of judgment. Then "Good-Bye to All That" might have become one of the outstanding books of Mr. Graves's generation, the youthful generation whose careers, whose poise and whose values were shattered by the disaster of 1914, and who only now are beginning to recover themselves, with the mending of their nerves.

The book begins with a description of the author's home life as a child. His father is the Dr. Graves who

wrote "Father O'Flynn" and other popular verse of a period now somewhat remote; his mother descends from the learned and capable German stock which produced Ranke, the historian. One gathers that Mr. Graves despises his parents: a book-doctor would suggest that it is unnecessary to reveal this so frankly. Since the days of Noah it has been held indecent to uncover the nakedness of one's parents. Sir Edmund Gosse did not escape censure for the much more delicate artistry of his "Father and Son"; Mr. Graves loads his dice so palpably that it becomes impossible to regard him as a man of clear judgment, an impression which is strengthened by the long account of his schooldays which follows. That he cherished a passionate affection for a younger companion is not necessarily reprehensible; but it is certainly another proof of abnormality and lack of background. Were Mr. Graves more balanced, less in love with his own self, he would dismiss this childish folly from his memory and his memoirs, in the knowledge that it has no interest to the lay reader or even for the pathologist, whose case-book bulges with far more significant chronicles of calf-love.

The War chapters, which occupy more than half of the book, supply almost the whole of its interest. With them the book-doctor would have much less fault to find; they are, on the whole, among the best English accounts of an individual experience which have been published. "All Quiet on the Western Front," as I pointed out, is peculiarly valuable because it describes the War as a private soldier saw it—or now thinks that he saw it (German acquaintances who served in the ranks tell me that they consider Herr Renn's "War" a more authentic record). "Good-Bye to All That" is once more an officer's story, like nearly every other English War book. But these chapters are, for the most part, admirably written. Based, it would seem, on letters written at the time, they poignantly recapture the atmosphere of the trenches.

The book-doctor would probably advise the omission of certain obscenities, stated or hinted, which have become fashionable in such records. Just as the Germans are drawn to write of latrines, so Mr. Graves makes many references, at second-hand, to brothels. They do not further his artistic purpose. The brothel is no fit subject for literature.

Like every other intelligent man who went to France, he is indignant at the folly of professional soldiers when confronted with a new and valuable device. Here, for instance, is his account of the first attempt to employ gas against the enemy:

> At half-past four the commander of the gas-company in the front line sent a telephone message through to divisional headquarters: "Dead calm. Impossible discharge accessory." The answer came back: "Accessory to be discharged at all costs." Thomas's estimate of the gas-company's efficiency was right enough. The spanners for unscrewing the cocks of the cylinders were found, with two or three exceptions, to be misfits. The gas-men rushed about shouting and asking each other for the loan of an adjustable spanner. They discharged one or two cylinders with the spanners that they had; the gas went whistling out, formed a thick cloud a few yards away in No Man's Land, and then gradually spread back into the trenches. The Germans had been expecting the attack. They immediately put their gas-helmets on, semi-rigid ones, better than ours. Bundles of oily cotton-waste were strewn along the German parapet and set alight as a barrier to the gas. Then their batteries opened on our lines. The confusion in the front trench was great; the shelling broke several of the gas-cylinders and the trench was soon full of gas. The gas-company dispersed.

After a long experience in the trenches, Mr. Graves's nerves broke down. He became as bitter as his friend, Siegfried Sassoon, whose mood changed from reckless bravery in the front line to impassioned pacifist propaganda at home. The strange thing is that, though Mr. Graves realizes that he was a War-shocked man, he does not seem to realize that his revulsion of feeling was

largely a symptom of this same disease. Once again his sense of values wavers; he shows himself agreeing with Sassoon that the whole world had gone mad—except their two selves. He is wrong. The world was no more mad in 1917 than in 1914; but he was no longer as sane as he had been, as a result of his experiences.

Of the remainder of Mr. Graves's book I would gladly say nothing. It describes his marriage, his struggle to earn a living at trades for which he was poorly qualified, and his eventual parting from his wife. In egotism and vulgar exhibitionism these pages sometimes outdo the chapters which deal with his parents and his boyhood. What do Mr. Graves's matrimonial tangles matter to the world? They can be of interest only to his friends, who would surely counsel reticence. The book-doctor's shears were never more needed in a writer's own interests than in the concluding section of this book. I have mentioned it only to point my argument that an efficient publisher, if he cannot suitably urge omissions upon his authors, would be well advised to engage an outside person to do so.

I offer this hint as a contribution to the unending controversy about the desirability of literary censorship.

* * * * * *

The novel is certainly the easiest of all books to write, but as certainly the hardest to write well. It has been said that every living person has in him the stuff of one novel; when I watch the flood of fiction which rushes from the presses in this country each year, I sometimes wonder whether all these potential novelists are not determined to realize their latent material. Because it is so easy to write a novel, and, apparently, so easy nowadays to procure its publication, it is most important that the critics whose peculiar province is fiction should take their duties seriously. Not otherwise can the huge harvest of contemporary fiction be winnowed; not otherwise can publishers and public be persuaded to

exercise reasonable discretion in their choice of novels; not otherwise can novelists of achievement and novelists of promise be encouraged, and the wearisome multitude of worthless fictioneers be dammed back from the library table of an intelligent reader.

It would seem, however, that, at a moment when the general standard of English criticism in every other literary province has reached a high degree of competence, novel-reviewing is, for the most part, neither so competent nor so responsible. Whether from indifference, derision, or sheer cowardice in the face of overwhelming numbers, our fiction critics seem almost to have ceased to regard the annual output of English fiction in relation to any established standards of substance and achievement. As early as the first week of the present year, for example, I discovered one of our most popular critics announcing that he had already discovered one of the "novels of the year." As a chronological statement, this was superfluous; as criticism, it was ridiculous. But it is typical.

In every year, if not in every publishing season of every year, some or other novel is acclaimed by the critics with all the accents of hyperbole as not merely excellent, brilliant, outstanding, superlative in matter and in style, but as a work of genius and a masterpiece of fiction. Some of these wonderful works are actually remembered by name after the passage of a few months. Not very long ago, "If Winter Comes," by Mr. A. S. M. Hutchinson, was solemnly discussed in the correspondence columns of *The Times* in such a spirit of reverence as is no longer vouchsafed to the Book of Common Prayer. Then Mr. Warwick Deeping wrote "Sorrell and Son," which caused hundreds of critics and thousands of suburban households to weep over its pages in an ecstacy of enthusiasm. Mr. Charles Morgan's "Portrait in a Mirror" was another novel to be greeted by the critics, and a somewhat more sophisticated section of the public, as an immortal work of genius; and in the last few

months we have been told on all sides that Mr. J. B. Priestley's "The Good Companions" is a substantial contribution to our national literature. But the spring of mature reflection has withered Mr. Hutchinson's sudden fame; the bays lie dusty on the brows of the Sorrell family; darkness obscures the varnish of Mr. Morgan's "Portrait"; how long will the companionship of Mr. Priestley's characters be sought?

The critics' view of "The Good Companions" are fresh in my mind. Mr. Ralph Straus has assured his readers that "This in my opinion is a very big book indeed, and I do not say this because it happens to be about four times the length of the ordinary novel. . . . Here indeed is a truly great novel, which, so far from being dead and forgotten within a season or two, will find more and more friends as the years pass by." Mr. Hugh Walpole, to whom the book is dedicated, has expressed the opinion that "The Good Companions" will prove to be Mr. Priestley's "Pickwick Papers." Other critics have celebrated it with even more lavish praise. I turn to the novel itself.

It is a long, a very long, account of the adventures of three dissimilar people in connexion with a second-rate pierrot troupe. The first is Jesiah Oakroyd, a Yorkshire workman; the second, Miss Trant, a spinster lady from the Cotswolds; the third, Inigo Jollifant, a young schoolmaster. Leaving home for various reasons, they come together just in time to assist at the reorganization of a concert party, "The Good Companions." Miss Trant, so sweet, so generous, so venturesome, provides the financial backing. Jollifant becomes the pianist, and Oakroyd the property man. As for the concert party, it will not surprise the majority of readers to learn that human hearts beat beneath the motley; even pierrots, it seems, are human. My experience of pierrots is limited, but I am prepared to believe that Mr. Priestley has reproduced with the utmost verisimilitude their conversation and their

adventures. But herein, perhaps, lies a weakness of this mammoth volume; the conversations are so prolix that, true as they may be to life, they are at times remote from art. One of the most essential aims of a story-teller must be to short-circuit his narrative; every passage should throw a shadow; Mr. Priestley's pages, like Prohibition beer, are only ten per cent. inspired. The concert party visits seaside resorts and provincial towns; a hooligan outrage, directed by a Satanic cinematograph proprietor, destroys it. After which everybody lives happily ever after.

It will be seen that the matter of the book is casual. The characters in "The Good Companions" certainly live, but at a low blood pressure. A writer of even the most moderate equipment, who produces a book of nearly a quarter of a million words about a handful of characters, must at least give them a semblance of distinct vitality. The puppet who stands out from Mr. Priestley's canvas is the Yorkshireman; some of the rest are featureless, glossed over with a thin roseate wash of interest.

Mr. Walpole's reference to the "Pickwick Papers" is incomprehensible to me. Dickens wrote his first novel in his early twenties; with all its faults, every chapter vibrates with energy and bulges with material. "The Good Companions" is lifeless and lacks incident. Perhaps Mr. Walpole's attention was drawn to a different Dickensian derivation, for Mr. Priestley, in the middle of his book, drags in by the heels a good-hearted but struggling sempstress, Miss Thong, whose father "had watery eyes, a drooping grey moustache, carpet slippers, and a coat and waistcoat that had seen far too much gravy and egg. Yes, yes, his daughter was in, and they could see her; but she was busy; she was always busy these days, always in great demand; and she wasn't too strong, not really strong enough for all the work that came. One of these days, he told them as they went into the tiny sitting-room, he would have to put his

foot down, the girl was doing too much. And he shuffled out, to tell her they were there. 'I know the sort of foot he'll put down,' Elsie whispered. 'I'll bet she keeps him going all right. If he makes enough out of his insurance to keep him in whisky, I'd be surprised. Silly old blighter! But she isn't strong, either! She's a queer little thing.'"

And this dear queer little thing has always on her lips the appealing phrase, "Aren't I silly?" Whoever remembers Jenny Wren, the dolls' dressmaker, and her drunken father in "Our Mutual Friend," together with Miss Mowcher and her "Ain't I volatile?" may establish for himself the true derivation of Mr. Priestley's Miss Thong from Dickens, to the advantage of the latter.

Mr. Priestley is, of course, modern, most modern, even at his most Dickensian. There are several passages in this "Pickwick" of his which contain words and phrases which dare. To achieve, one must dare; in some of his conversations Mr. Priestley is successfully adventurous.

But though the book lacks coherent strength, it nevertheless contains passages which show that the author has considerable talents. He can well describe little things; his art is rather that of a miniaturist than a 200,000-word literary Rubens. The first entrance of his Yorkshireman shows him at his best:

> Something very queer is happening in that narrow thoroughfare to the west of the town. . . . What is so queer about it now is that the road itself cannot be seen at all. A grey-green tide flows sluggishly down its length. It is a tide of cloth caps.
>
> These caps have just left the ground of the Bruddersford United Association Football Club. Thirty-five thousand men and boys have just seen what most of them call "t'United" play Bolton Wanderers. Many of them should never have been there at all. It would not be difficult to prove by statistics and those mournful little budgets (How a Man May Live—or rather, avoid death—on Thirty-five

> Shillings a Week) that seem to attract some minds, that these fellows could not afford the entrance fee. When some mills are only working half the week and others not at all, a shilling is a respectable sum of money. It would puzzle an economist to discover where all these shillings came from. . . . To say that these men paid their shillings to watch twenty-two hirelings kick a ball is merely to say that a violin is wood and catgut, that *Hamlet* is so much paper and ink. For a shilling the Bruddersford United A.F.C. offered you Conflict and Art. . . . Moreover, it offered you more than a shilling's worth of material for talk during the rest of the week. A man who had missed the last home match of " t'United " had to enter social life on tip-toe in Bruddersford.

In these paragraphs Mr. Priestley demonstrates a verve and keenness of observation which distinguish " The Good Companions."

His best passages show that he has a future as a writer of short pieces, as well as a novelist. It is because I recognize these merits in his book that I exceedingly regret the wrong type of adulation which has been showered on it. This degrades literary taste, and it may ruin Mr. Priestley and other young writers.

* * * * * *

It was not to be expected that Mr. Lytton Strachey, expert though he is in documentary research, would be able to present to his readers any new discoveries of importance concerning his latest subject, Queen Elizabeth. The events of her reign have held the attention of too many eminent scholars, for one who is essentially a commentator and not a historian to expect to unearth material of great importance hitherto overlooked. And, indeed, with all its merits and all its faults, Mr. Strachey's " Elizabeth and Essex " shows no sign of hard historical spade-work. The bibliography appended to the book is by no means impressive. It enumerates forty-eight sources, most of them abundantly familiar, and certainly

does not exhaust the better-known authorities on the Elizabethan period.

Mr. Strachey's rôle is essentially that of an interpreter rather than a discoverer. His interpretation is brilliant in achievement, for he has succeeded in reconciling points of view which have never before been harmonized and, by recalling foreign data not unknown but often forgotten, in creating a background into which all these elements blend.

Whether or not his picture of Elizabeth is accurate, no one at this date can hope to say; that it is plausible, picturesque and intriguing, is certain. Historians of the Elizabethan era have always tended towards two opposed groups: the one displaying Elizabeth as a masterly woman, directing the affairs of the nation while her advisers wield no power but what she is pleased to place in their hands: the other, the exact opposite, dismissing as incredible the idea of her omnipotence and suggesting that she was only a splendid puppet in the hands of crafty ministers. Mr. Strachey, accepting neither and rejecting neither, has succeeded in joining both threads into one central theme.

The Elizabeth whom he has drawn had:

> the lion heart, the splendid gestures—such heroic things were there, no doubt—visible to everybody; but their true significance in the general scheme of her character was remote and complicated. The sharp and hostile eyes of the Spanish ambassadors saw something different; in their opinion, the outstanding characteristic of Elizabeth was pusillanimity. They were wrong; but they perceived more of the truth than the idle onlooker. They had come into contact with those forces in the Queen's mind which proved, incidentally, fatal to themselves, and brought her, in the end, her result of heroism.
>
> The very contrary was the case: the grand policy which dominated Elizabeth's life was the most unheroic conceivable; and her true history remains a standing lesson for melodramatists in statecraft. In reality, she succeeded by virtue of all the qualities which every hero should be

> without—dissimulation, pliability, indecision, procrastination, parsimony. It might almost be said that the heroic element chiefly appeared in the unparalleled lengths to which she allowed those qualities to carry her.

A deep instinct, says Mr. Strachey, made it almost impossible for her to make up her mind upon a definite course of action, or, if she did, to hold fast to it.

Elizabeth's furious thrift is among the canonized legends of history. Mr. Strachey takes pains to exhibit her parsimony; but he hardly emphasizes sufficiently that the strictest economy was essential if she would avoid bankruptcy. Throughout the sixteenth century Spain poured an ever-increasing stream of precious metals from the New World to the Old. In consequence, the value of money continually depreciated; and the real value of Elizabeth's revenue shrank as her policy and necessities expanded. No doubt, thrift was congenial to her nature; but thrift was also the most imperative buttress in her policy. Had she not exercised an almost niggling economy, she would have anticipated the difficulties of her Stuart successors, whose clash with Parliament was largely caused by their inability to husband their financial resources.

Mr. Strachey shows us her ministers planning and plotting, informed and informing, ruled by her and ruling her. The closing words of the book sum up the judgment which the author has formed of them. He is speaking, it is true, only of Cecil, at the moment of Elizabeth's death, but the words apply almost as aptly to her other counsellors:

> Meanwhile, in an inner chamber, at his table, alone, the secretary sat writing. All eventualities had been foreseen, everything was arranged, only the last soft touches remained to be given. The momentous transition would come now with exquisite facility. As the hand moved, the mind moved, too, ranging sadly over the vicissitudes of mortal beings, reflecting upon the revolutions of kingdoms, and dreaming with quiet clarity, of what the hours, even

then, were bringing—the union of two nations—the triumph of the new rulers—success, power, and riches—a name in after-ages—a noble lineage—a great house.

The other great service which Mr. Strachey has rendered in his book, is his picture of what I may call the Spanish end and of the Armada campaign. We in England have long been brought up to believe that the Spanish fleet was an overwhelming instrument of war, magnificently equipped. Mr. Strachey, drawing chiefly, it would seem, from Froude and French sources, shows how little true this is.

The Court of Philip of Spain had neither the ability not the administrative power to create the Armada of legend. Their preparations were weak, their councils confused, their commands regulated less by cool intelligence than by the whims of a superstitious, obscurantist and invalid King.

By the summer of 1597 it seemed as if the third Armada should be ready to start. Yet there were unaccountable delays. The Council sat in solemn conclave, but its elaborate discussions appeared for some reason or other not to help things forward. There were quarrels, too, among the commanders and officials; all were at loggerheads without any understanding of the great task on which they were engaged. King Philip alone understood everything. His designs were his own secret, he would reveal them to no one; even the Adelantado, inquire as he would, should not be told the destination of the fleet. But there was to be no more of this procrastination. The Armada must sail at once. The Adelantado declared that nothing could be done, that it was impossible to leave the harbour, that the preparations were altogether inadequate, that, in fact, he lacked *everything*, and could not face the enemy. It was exasperating; the pious Martin seemed to have caught Medina Sidonia's tone. But there was no help for it; one must face it out, and trust in the Trinity.

Never before in any book designed for popular reading has the real story of the Armada been told as in Mr. Strachey's pages.

Mr. Strachey has pictured Elizabeth and her ministers, Philip of Spain and his ministers, with plausible skill, but the same can hardly be said of his portrait of Francis Bacon. It cannot be denied that Bacon's character was, by the highest modern standards, deficient in many moral qualities; that, as a politician, he sought ends and used means to attain them which, as a philosopher, he might condone but could hardly justify. Yet that he was such a creature as Mr. Strachey suggests I for one do not believe. Certainly he is painted only sketchily; the attacks are veiled in subtle insinuations.

"He was not striped frieze; he was shot silk," we are told. "The detachment of speculation, the intensity of personal pride, the uneasiness of nervous sensibility, the urgency of ambition, the opulence of superb taste—these qualities, blending, twisting, flashing together, gave to his secret spirit the subtle and glittering superfices of a serpent."

I do not think this means very much more than that Bacon was a serpent. Throughout this book he is treated as a serpent, whose presence somehow contaminated that strange and romantic Eden in which the youthful Essex was created from a rib of the masculine but pusillanimous Elizabeth.

Bacon, more than any other Englishman, embodied the ideals of a Renaissance statesman, which the prevalent Italianate taste had imported along with statuary, versification and philosophy. The great Lord Chancellor, whom his enemies, cleverly but by no means honestly, broke by their charges of corruption, moved in a world which derived its ethics from Machiavelli, which admired the Borgias as master-statesmen, and which consistently set personal and family power above administrative purity. Bacon and Cecil were equally "serpents," equally the products of their age.

A letter to Bacon from his mother is quoted in the book in which she refers to one of his friends as "that bloody Percy, a coach companion and bed companion—

a proud, profane, costly fellow." Mr. Strachey leaves us in no doubt that we are intended to take these allusions literally, and thus to form a very low opinion of Bacon's habits. In this he is, of course, following John Aubrey, a notoriously unreliable gossip; but many readers will choose rather to believe that Lady Bacon's vocabulary was as peculiar as her temper—which is saying a great deal.

Mr. Strachey's intrusion of this letter—it is certainly not called for by his thesis—is typical of an unpleasing feature in his book. He exhibits a curious degree of archness whenever any question of sex is involved. Whether he is describing the Queen's presumed physical attributes, or Bacon's Welsh friends, or the penalty for high treason, one detects a simper in his sentences. It is as a stylist and an original observer that Mr. Strachey has become prominent in contemporary letters; it is proper, therefore, that this unwelcome trait should be mentioned and rebuked.

Otherwise the style of this book is far more mature than in any of his previous writings. The smart, if facile, criticism of "Eminent Victorians" has long been superseded in his own work, though we meet it again and again in the books of ultra-modern biographers. In "Queen Victoria" it was already submerged by a more serious approach to his subject.

If this were Mr. Strachey's only book, he might be accounted a disciple of Gibbon, than whom there could be no better master for the historical biographer, in no matter what age and of what age he writes. That Mr. Strachey is liable to the faults of Gibbon's style as also to its merits, is clear from the description of Bacon's character which I have quoted.

In one other respect only may he be held to fall from grace. He is too much inclined to fail in distinguishing between imagination and fact. He *may* be right in his attempts (sometimes spread over several pages) to read the minds of his subjects; his brilliant reinterpretation

of Elizabeth's relations with her ministers permits us to suppose that he is as likely to be right as wrong. But it is the part of a novelist, not of a biographer, to picture what his characters are thinking, and Mr. Strachey far too often builds up an edifice of psychology upon a very meagre foundation of historical material.

Perhaps it is this defect—for in such work it is a defect—which forces us to regard "Elizabeth and Essex" rather as a brilliant and colourful picture of a romantic reign than as a formidable contribution to either history or biography.

* * * * * *

Of all Emil Ludwig's books, I rate highest his "Kaiser Wilhelm II." It has the modern touch, already made familiar to us by Mr. Lytton Strachey. That is to say, it tends to subordinate general biographical details to the emphasis of isolated traits in the character of the person described. Whereas, however, it may reasonably be held that many of Mr. Strachey's subjects do not fit in with such treatment—were too complex by nature or not altogether as the writer pictured them—there can be no doubt that Herr Ludwig's reading of the Kaiser's personality is not merely acute and accurate, but provides the touchstone by which all his actions and emotions may be tested. He sees the Kaiser as vanity incarnate—a spoiled child to whom no one dared to tell the truth. From the outset of his career to the last inglorious moment, when the All-Highest waited for six hours on the Dutch frontier before he was allowed to begin his exile, Wilhelm II was never allowed to see himself as he really was. Always he was told the pleasant, the flattering, the incredibly eulogistic thing.

The Kaiser was born with a crippled arm. As a boy he was acutely conscious of this disability; his whole training was intended to provide for the hiding of this defect. Thus, for example, he was taught to rein his horse with his right hand while passing the reins through

his useless left hand, to give the appearance of normality. It must be said that the young prince displayed courage in the face of this handicap. The reaction, however, on his will was to make him seek compensation in the appearance of power. The cripple would show himself a Hercules. Since actual physical prowess was out of the question, he took recourse to magnificence of gesture, magniloquence, an attempt to shine in every branch of life—as monarch, war-lord, diplomat, philosopher, æsthete.

In the Kaiser's special hatred of England, Herr Ludwig, following the lines of modern psychological analysis, reads an infantile envy of his grandmother's and, later, his uncle's Empire. For his mother was an English princess. She, as well as her husband, her mother, and her brother, realized the wilful nature of her son. Their relations became gradually embittered and influenced the Kaiser's father, the ill-fated Frederick III. When Bismarck wished to employ the young Wilhelm in the Foreign Office, his father, then the Crown Prince, wrote:

> In view of the immaturity as well as the inexperience of my eldest son, together with his tendency towards overbearingness and self-conceit, I cannot but frankly regard it as dangerous to allow him at present to take any part in foreign affairs.

If Herr Ludwig's reading is right, the Kaiser was always seeking to revenge himself for his mother's slights by impressing his English relatives with his growing might.

Bismarck sought to provide the young Prince with an advisor in the arts of governing, but the Prince rejected on frivolous grounds the man selected by the Chancellor. He chose one for himself, but this tutor withdrew after a few weeks because he "could not instil a sense of the importance of earnest application" into the boy. Despite his youthful courage and intelligence, the Prince's conceit and almost maniacal refusal to be

restrained left him, at the age of twenty-nine, curiously immature.

> Already everyone he encountered began the work of destroying him. Secretly, writes Lucius, "all observers constantly remark upon his immaturity, which, at the age of twenty-nine, is truly extraordinary." But to himself and his intimates, who might repeat it to him, everyone loudly extolled his "firm character, and great promise for the future. . . . The very people who had been intriguing against the Prince now see that he will soon be Emperor, and are looking out for favours." His military rank, moreover, was prematurely enhanced by the impending crisis. At Christmas time the old monarch was still refusing to promote his grandson, but, later, he yielded and made him a General on his twenty-ninth birthday. The Prince did not see that the order was instinct with distrust—he saw only that he, so young, had got so far; and began to tell himself that the promotion naturally ensued from his own qualifications.

From the adulation of his intimates the young Kaiser believed that he inspired similar feelings among the crowned heads of Europe. He knew, indeed, that in England his grandmother and his uncle regarded him with misgiving, but it was a considerable shock when Bismarck adroitly contrived to let him see the Tsar's comments on him: "*Il est fou. C'est un garçon mal élevé et de mauvaise foi.*" The Kaiser's vanity was deeply wounded. He knew that the Russian and the English Court had read the insulting comment: he could not tell to how many people Bismarck, too, had shown it.

The Chancellor had made Germany an Empire and a great Power and had protected it by skilful diplomatic ties from any danger of the "encirclement" of which, in later years, the Kaiser and his countrymen were so bitterly to complain. So long as Bismarck remained in power, Germany was safe and, it would seem, destined for greater influence in all parts of the world.

The Kaiser's break with Bismarck—how could he tolerate the old man's superiority?—was the end of

this prudent policy. By playing fast and loose with his neighbours and with England, by attempting to set each against the other, by the use of language so indiscreet as to be unique in history, by the most flagrant attempts to thrust himself into the limelight at the expense of his own officials, and of the countries with which he took it on himself to negotiate and by sheer incompetence, the Kaiser became the most hated and, in inner circles, despised man in Europe. Such, however, was the adulation of his intimates that, to the very end, he believed the whole world trembled at his nod.

His hatred of concentration and his inherent frivolity are illustrated by many anecdotes in Herr Ludwig's book. At his last meeting, for example, with the dying Bismarck in 1897, the old man sought for the last time to save the Kaiser from himself. He raised question after question of grave political significance only to find these ignored by the Kaiser, who countered with such riddles as "What is the difference between a mother-in-law and a cigar?" Suddenly, the veteran uttered a prophetic warning:

> Your Majesty, so long as you have these officers around you, there is no doubt that you may do exactly as you please. But, if ever this should not be so, things will be quite different.

But the Kaiser took no notice, and the two men never met again.

His favourite Minister, Bülow, approached him with flattery so transparent that it seemed barely possible that the Kaiser should not resent it. Ballin, the astute Jewish head of the Hamburg-America line, once said, "This cannot possibly last. The Kaiser is much too intelligent not to see that Bülow is perpetually humbugging him." But the man to whom Ballin spoke, a much older acquaintance of the Kaiser, commented, "I am of a different opinion. The Kaiser can never have too much of that sort of thing." Bülow, too, was shameless in defending his flatteries. "After all," he

said, "I could not begin by irritating the Kaiser with contradiction. I had, first of all, to consolidate my position." Yet, if Herr Ludwig's reading of the Emperor's character is correct, a certain amount of firmness, tactfully exercised, might have had valuable results:

> A little contradiction in the first week might certainly have annoyed the Emperor, but might also have made him more tractable. . . . Zedlitz, for years a subtle observer of Bülow's behaviour at Court, in another passage deplores the fact that he, too, would never say anything but smooth words to the Emperor: "If he had even once shown the least reserve, or let it be seen that he was as he actually *was*, independent of his position, he might have done great things, for, personally speaking, no one could have replaced him with the Emperor. Unfortunately that was not in his nature."

After the Bjorkö incident on the Tsar's yacht, Bülow used the only weapon left to him—the threat of resignation—to force the Kaiser to allow the Treaty to lapse. When the Kaiser received Bülow's message, he replied hysterically:

> "If Bismarck had succeeded in this . . . he would have been beside himself with joy, and would have made all the nations acclaim him." Then began reproaches and lamentations for Bülow. "To be treated like this by my best and most intimate of friends . . . it has dealt me such a terrible blow that I feel quite broken, and cannot but fear I may have a serious nervous attack. . . . No—you shall not do this, for both our sakes! We are elected by God, we were made for each other. . . . You yourself are worth a hundred thousand times more to me and the Fatherland than all the treaties in the world. . . . To please you and because the Fatherland seemed to demand it of me, I consented, as it were, to ride (with my disabled arm, too!) a horse I knew nothing about, and if it has brought me within an inch of my life, *you* are accountable! . . . And now, because I am in this quandary, you, for whom I did the whole thing, want to let me down like this!! No, Bülow—I have not deserved it of you! . . . Why, it would be a disavowal of your whole policy, and I should be a laughing-stock for the rest of my life. But I should

> never survive it! . . . Telegraph 'All right' as soon as you get this, and then I shall know you're not going. For the day after I receive your resignation, the Emperor will no longer exist! Think of my poor wife and children!"

The Kaiser could not realize the incredible folly of which he had been guilty. His irritation at the failure of the Treaty turned to hatred of the Tsar. The spoilt child could not admit that he had made a mistake.

He had no capacity for work. He sought the credit for masterly achievement, but despised the labours without which no task, however small, can be carried out. In 1910, when the Kaiser was a man of fifty, he said to the new chief of his Military Cabinet, "You won't bring me nothing but musty papers, will you? Now and again some funny little story or another!" He was only practical, comments Herr Ludwig acidly, in money matters tending to his own personal profit.

His love of flattery and frivolity was insatiable, and everyone pandered to it.

> The most exalted personages of every way of thinking were disgusted, and said so in private. But of some I have to admit that, when His Most High expressed satisfaction with a thing, they instantly abounded in admiration and endorsement of his view. This lightning change, and above all the shamefaced glance at anyone nearby, who had heard the directly contrary opinion of a moment earlier, was certainly comic enough in its way. Eulenburg writes of the Scandinavian trip in 1903: "The contrast between the years and the convulsive merriment of the guests is what I find most painful. These men are, without exception, persons who have reached high office . . . and they are all utterly worn out. But they retain sufficient energy to put up a show of gaiety, wit, even talent. . . . It very much disgusts me. I can't stand these Excellencies nowadays—always on bended knee; nor can I stand punning and suchlike from nine o'clock in the morning onwards."

Probably the only time after Bismarck's death when anyone dared to speak the truth was when the younger Moltke told him the truth about the Army manœuvres.

Moltke, on being selected for the position of Chief of Staff,

> opened the interview by telling the Kaiser that he could not accept the post until he had frankly expounded his views. Then he proceeded to criticize the manœuvres, which always concluded by making prisoners of an army of half a million in a few days. "Your Majesty is aware that the forces led by yourself invariably make mincemeat of the enemy, so that the campaign is by way of being decided at a single blow. This kind of war-game, in which the enemy is, so to speak, delivered over to Your Majesty, is bound to instil most erroneous ideas which would inevitably be disastrous in real warfare. . . . And I regard it as still more unfortunate that this arbitrary treatment of the war-game prevents every one of the officers concerned from taking any real interest in it. . . . But what I most deplore, and am bound to mention to Your Majesty, is that the officers' confidence in their Most Supreme War-Lord is profoundly undermined by this proceeding. The officers say to each other: "The Emperor is much too shrewd not to see that everything is arranged for him to win, and so he must like it that way."
>
> *The Emperor:* I had no idea of this—I never dreamed that both sides did not fight on equal terms. I have always been in absolute good faith. Tell Schlieffen that at the next manœuvres he is not to treat me any better than the enemy.
>
> *Moltke:* Count Schlieffen says: "When the Emperor plays, he must win" . . . Your Majesty ought really not to command at all, but stand above both parties. . . . If the decisions of the Generals commanding are constantly to be affected by Your Majesty's expressions of opinion, their initiative will suffer; they will lose keenness and confidence. . . .
>
> *The Emperor:* Why didn't you tell me this long ago?
>
> *Moltke:* Well, everyone can't come to Your Majesty saying "I approve or disapprove of this or that. . . ."

Result at the next manœuvres, eight months later—the Emperor did not take the command, "though it was a bitter disappointment to him," nor did he interfere, but gave great praise to Moltke. "He never resented it when I frankly opposed him."

Again, three years later, Moltke states that the Emperor

had done, and even said, what Moltke had advised: "He was sensible from first to last, and his critique was the best I ever heard him give—everyone was delighted with it."

Herr Ludwig points the moral of this story in the following pregnant words:

> If we add to this the statements of Ballin, Metternich and others, who all thought the Emperor responsive to skilful handling, it is clear that the verdict of history will hold his advisers more responsible than himself, for it was their business to confront him boldly and turn his timorousness to good account.
>
> But, in the last resort, it was not the business of some twenty persons only. It was a duty laid upon the nation.

Even the result of the Battle of the Marne, which was for ever to destroy Germany's hopes of winning the Great War, is traced by Herr Ludwig largely to the Kaiser's conceited interference:

> That decrease in the Eastern Army which was the Emperor's, not Schlieffen's, idea, and which had been described as perilous by Waldersee fifteen years before, was quickly visited upon him by the irruption of the Russians. The President of East Prussia arrived at headquarters, imploring aid. He demanded from the Emperor in person the dispatch of two divisions, by which the Western advance was suddenly depleted, and the fatal gap in the flank of the Second Army created. Even the second and more determining cause of that defeat—the inadequate transmission of orders on the decisive 8th and 9th of September—can be traced to the position of headquarters, which "by the Emperor's command" were in Luxemburg, and, therefore, too far behind the lines; this entirely for the sake of personal safety from air-bombs, for resolute men there were urgently desirous of a more forward position.

The sorry farce was played to the end. In 1918, when everything was lost, nobody wished to tell the Kaiser the truth. When, at last, the basest flatterer no longer dared to hide the seriousness of the position, the Kaiser's true nature came to the surface. Here was the man who, years before, had told his mother that

it would have been better if his father had died in battle rather than perish on an unromantic sick-bed; he was surrounded by officers who would have joined him in a last chivalrous stand on the battlefield; old Delbrück, the chief of his Civil Cabinet, hastened across Germany to lay down his life beside his Emperor, of whose personal courage he was convinced. For a few hours, the Kaiser contemplated a heroic death which would have lit up, though it could not redeem, the faults of his life. "They want to persuade me to go to Holland!" he cried. "I never will. It would be like a captain deserting a sinking ship." But the braggart War-Lord was a coward. When evening came, he took refuge in the Imperial train and made an ignominious dash for Holland and safety. This end crowned the pyramid of conceit, posturing, and pusillanimity of which his whole life was compact.

Very little need be said of the Kaiser's own account of his childhood, the English translation of which appeared almost simultaneously with Herr Ludwig's illuminating volume. "My Early Years" is dull to unreadableness; it avoids without adroitness all incidents about which it would be interesting to have its author's opinion; and it rings false throughout. The preface is typical of the book. "In the loneliness of my exile in Holland," it begins, "my thoughts often travel back to the past. And the darker the present appears, the farther these thoughts wander and seek the radiant sunshine of the happy years of peace and youth." The author says that he

> lives again the years of childhood and youth; he sees himself with his parents, brothers, and sisters; he sits again under the strict master with boys of his age in the Gymnasium; laughs and romps on the seashore and in the park of Sanssouci; once more wears the white cap of the Borussia Corps, and attends many a stiff lecture. The "march past," rings out, and with beating heart the young lieutenant marches by his grandfather, the Emperor. Years pass, and the radiant dream of a day now becomes

> the stark reality of arduous service. Drill is practised; words of command sound forth; the sun flashes back from the parade ground as, like every other Prussian of military age, the Prince does his utmost; service to the King; service to the Fatherland; service to the People! Service and study—these are the symbols of the preparation for the highest office in the Fatherland.

"The Prince does his utmost." "Service to the People!" The folly and vanity of the man surpass belief. If there are two qualities in which he has proved himself deficient all his life, they are "service and study."

> In many lonely hours of reflection I have seen my whole life unrolled before me. I have bestowed anxious thought on finding an answer to the many questions which Fate put before me. And if, indeed, many a riddle was solved only for many another to take its place, that is but the common lot of mankind. We do not solve the ultimate questions in this world. The Almighty Guide knows the course of our destiny: let that suffice!

Thus, even to-day, after a dozen years of solitary reflection, the Imperial dilettante at Doorn can find no other explanation for his errors and his downfall than the inscrutable workings of fate. He remains a spoiled and rather an offensive child to the end.

* * * * * *

The fifth volume of Mr. Winston Churchill's story of the War fully maintains the interest of its predecessors. He has the great advantage over most contemporary historians of having himself taken an active part in the most decisive events, political and military, of the last thirty years.

The son of Lord Randolph Churchill, he became a cavalry subaltern. By the age of twenty-four he could claim to be the only soldier in history, except Napoleon, who had fought in three continents. He returned to England from South Africa, the hero of a sensational escape from the Boers; and occupied in the eyes of his

countrymen a place comparable only with that enjoyed in more recent years by Colonel Lawrence.

Entering politics, he, a youth in the middle twenties, at once became an outstanding figure in the House of Commons, and when he went to America to lecture, he was hailed there as "the hero of five wars, the author of six books, and the future Prime Minister of Great Britain." Among these books was a biography of his father, which no less distinguished a critic than Lord Rosebery declared to be one of the first half-dozen British biographies.

Ever since Mr. Churchill entered Parliament he has been among the most forceful and prominent of its members. He has occupied a greater variety of posts for a greater length of time than any other member of the present House of Commons; such responsibilities and opportunities have been accepted by him as were combined before by few Englishmen.

That Mr. Churchill's writings, therefore, dealing as they do with the momentous period in which he has played a leading rôle should be of great interest would not be surprising, even if he were a mediocre writer. But he is not. He has a gift altogether remarkable of surveying a vast subject and reducing it, by brilliant analysis, to a concise and illuminating record. His judgments, moreover, on men and politics are as penetrating as they are profound; he combines the utmost economy in words with the maximum of insight.

The four books which he had already published on the Great War will undoubtedly be accepted by future historians as authorities. A fifth volume is here. Therein Mr. Churchill describes the hardly less interesting events which followed upon the Armistice of November 1918. It shows Mr. Churchill at his most typical and best. His account of incidents, his character sketches, his lucidity and his wisdom have never been shown to greater advantage. Only on one point so far have I found myself in serious disagreement

from him. I believe that he has wholly misjudged the significance of Lenin.

No man, I imagine, not even the most patriotic Russian, hated Lenin more than Mr. Churchill hated him. Certainly no Russian did more to oppose Lenin and his Bolshevist colleagues than Mr. Churchill. It is also true to say that he understood from the first, better than almost any other public man, the menace which Lenin and his fellows represented for the future of civilization. Yet in the very intensity of his loathing, Mr. Churchill has come to conceive a certain admiration for the arch-murderer of Moscow.

Mr. Churchill's friends may say that this is a fine gesture of generosity towards a dead enemy ; they would not be wholly wrong. His detractors may sneer that Mr. Churchill instinctively magnifies Lenin in order to magnify himself for the part he played against Lenin ; I will not say that even in this there is not a grain of truth. Such emotions are human.

But, whatever the reasons, I believe Mr. Churchill to be mistaken in his estimate of Lenin's personality. He has confused Lenin the man with Lenin the figure-head, Lenin the demagogue with Lenin the thistledown of fate.

Here is what Mr. Churchill says of him :

> Lenin was to Karl Marx what Omar was to Mahomet. He translated faith into acts. He devised the practical methods by which the Marxian theories could be applied in his own time. He invented the Communist plan of campaign. He issued the orders, he prescribed the watch-words, he gave the signals, and he led the attack. . . .
>
> His mind was a remarkable instrument. When its light shone it revealed the whole world, its history, its sorrows, its stupidities, its shams, and, above all, its wrongs. It revealed all facts in its focus—the most unwelcome, the most inspiring—with an equal ray.
>
> The intellect was capacious and in some phases superb. It was capable of universal comprehension in a degree rarely reached among men. The execution of the elder

> brother deflected this broad white light through a prism; and the prism was red. But the mind of Lenin was used and driven by a will not less exceptional.

And he calls Lenin "the Grand Repudiator." For the Russian people, he says, "their worst misfortune was his birth; their next worse—his death."

This is extravagance. It is to credit Lenin with all the bloody triumphs of the Bolshevists, to ascribe to his foresight and will-power all the fortuitous series of events which placed them in power in Russia and has held them there for the past decade.

Let us examine Lenin through a prism less purple. Before the War he was known to a limited circle of revolutionaries as the head of an extreme section of the Russian Social-Democratic organization. In one respect, and one only, did he exhibit consistency; he sought by every channel of chicanery and intrigue to become the leader of his party, or, at any rate, of *a* party. Since to do this it was necessary to split the organization, Lenin without compunction forced a split and thus became head of the small group of Bolshevists.

It then became necessary to overlook the fact that more than three-quarters of his adherents were either police spies or willing to become so; Lenin was prepared to overlook this. When the chief Bolshevist in the Duma was unmasked as an *agent provocateur*, Lenin alone of the Russian Socialists gave him a welcome abroad. A complete egotism, a lust for supremacy over no matter how few toadies, an utter lack of any scruples —these were the admitted traits of the pre-war Lenin.

He was a fluent oracle of unsound prophecy. As far back as 1908 he anticipated a revolution in England:

> That Socialism among the working class in England is growing, that Socialism is *once again* becoming a mass movement in that country, that the social revolution in Great Britain is approaching—one should be blind not to see.

This is typical of his superb capacity for universal comprehension.

The world first heard of Lenin in the spring of 1917 when he was sent by the Germans into Russia in order to confuse the new revolutionary order there. He began at once to address the Petrograd Soviet—in those days an amorphous and, on the whole, fairly patriotic body—urging it to take "all power" into its hands. He met with no success; Kerensky utterly vanquished him in debate. The revolution pursued its hesitating path. Muddle succeeded muddle.

In the summer Lenin called upon his followers to make an armed bid to overthrow the Government. It was an utter failure; the Bolshevists were routed and a fresh wave of patriotism followed. Had Kerensky acted then; had he possessed the moral courage to arrest Lenin and shoot him as an armed rebel in time of war, history would never have recorded the name of the "Grand Repudiator." But Kerensky was only a rhetorician. The most eloquent Russian of his day, he did not understand how weak are words unaccompanied by action. He blundered in allowing Lenin to live; soon he blundered worse by provoking a senseless quarrel with the army commanders.

Through his mad folly the army collapsed into a marauding mob, and, since even mobs demand leaders, Lenin's moment came. Lenin and his group alone were shameless enough to set themselves at the head of the mutineers with promises of Peace, Bread, and the Land. This was his supreme moment of triumph; and such was the path by which he attained it.

From November, 1917, to the very moment of his death, he did not initiate a single measure which turned out as he intended it; not one policy but achieved the opposite result; not one forecast about the future of Europe and the certainty of an early world-revolution but proved false.

It is idle to say that he and his colleagues defeated all their enemies, both internal and external. There was never a moment during his whole reign when he

could not easily have been overthrown. The foes of Bolshevism chose rather to quarrel among themselves, to allow the Bolshevists to oppose them *seriatim ;* each in turn repeated Napoleon's mistakes and learned again the lessons of 1812.

Nor was it due to any internal statecraft that Lenin's rule lasted so long. The most damnable orgy of murder that ever disgraced mankind terrorized the unhappy Russian people ; but it could not feed them. Murder and famine, disease and civil war, the moral degeneration of at least one whole generation of children, the utter breakdown of everything which stands for civilization and progress—these were what Bolshevism has meant for Russia.

But it is idle to suppose that Lenin, with some Satanic lust, desired these things to befall his country. He did not. In his constructive moments he—the " Grand Repudiator ! "—dreamed in his diseased brain of a vague, co-operative commonwealth, with a great deal of electric light, and himself, of course, as perpetual president. He was an optimist as well as an egotist. Even after the murders had begun, he could write :

> The Republic of Soviets of workmen's, soldiers' and peasants' delegates is not only a higher type of democratic institution, but it is also the form capable of ensuring the most painless realization of Socialism.

He was indeed an incompetent, and a very tedious and prolix one. If his intellect were so " capacious," " superb " and " capable of universal comprehension to a degree rarely reached," it seems a pity that his writings should be as voluminous as, and even more turgid than those of his master, Karl Marx. The latter could at least, in his lighter moments, write a good descriptive account of a riot ; Lenin was incapable of writing clearly about anything.

Mr. Churchill's Lenin will not do. To cast him as a modern blend of Judas Iscariot, Lucifer and Machiavelli

is very well as an exercise in the Gibbon style; but I suggest to Mr. Churchill that he might with better reason paint a similar picture of Mr. A. J. Cook. Lenin only rose to notice in a distraught, defeated, mob ridden slaughterhouse. Mr. Cook for a considerable period baited the Government of the world's greatest Empire, victorious, calm, and by comparison with Russia, almost incredibly prosperous and contented.

If it were possible to separate men's mental equipment from the uses to which they subordinate it, one might attempt to weigh Lenin against his latest celebrator. I will only say here that, in every year of his official life, Mr. Churchill has displayed twenty times as much courage, capacity, intelligence, understanding, and driving force as this pinchbeck Red *polichinelle* exercised in the whole of his foul career.

* * * * * *

It is rare, indeed, that the appearance of a single volume produces so great a revulsion of popular feeling as greeted the posthumous autobiography of the late Lord Haldane. Certainly those of us who knew him and worked with him, as a politician and a lawyer, in the House of Commons and the House of Lords, understood the merit of the man. But the general public could not know the overwhelming case which, had he wished and been permitted to do, he could have presented in reply to calumny.

To Haldane more than any other individual man does this country owe the fact that, at the outbreak of the War, she was able instantly to dispatch a magnificently trained and well-equipped expeditionary force to the Continent; and, not less important, to tap, through the Territorial and other organizations, vast resources of additional man-power. Yet it was precisely Haldane who received the least credit for this great work.

He was always exposed to the denunciations of fools. Among his own Liberal Party the silly, pacifist majority

regarded him with the utmost suspicion; on the other hand, the immeasurable prejudice and stupidity of the Tory Die-Hards was directed against him.

In his book, completed only a few weeks before his death, he touches on his difficulties with his own Party when he became Minister for War in 1905:

> A very large section of the Liberals, disgusted alike with the War Office and with war, had pledged itself to proceed to a tremendous reduction of War Office estimates. My friend and colleague as Financial Member, T. R. Buchanan M.P., was one of the most loyal of comrades, but very orthodox as a Liberal. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman had made him Financial Member at the War Office in order, I think, to make sure that I should not run wild. The argument used by some of the average Liberals if I wished to get the support of the party in the House of Commons was, "Do not attempt great improvements. The attempt will fail. But concentrate yourself on reducing the estimates."

And again, when he introduced the invaluable Territorial and Reserve Forces Bill:

> At first a large number of the Liberal rank and file were suspicious. But when I showed that I had actually brought down the Army estimates from over thirty millions to within twenty-eight (including the whole cost of the new reorganization), the Bill was allowed to pass. This was in 1907. There was, of course, fighting, but it was touched in no point that was material.

This internecine fighting is the only kind the Liberals understand.

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's contempt for the War Office is evidenced by his comment when he appointed Haldane to it: "We shall see now how Schopenhauer gets on in the kailyard."

Thus the Liberal Party, which ruled the destinies of this country up to the beginning of the War, demonstrated the utter incapacity of the bulk of its members for the responsibilities of Government; and Haldane

had to build up his organization, and his armies, behind a screen of smug official Liberalism. He was, in fact, a sturdy patriot, surrounded by mealy-mouthed traitors.

He was, perhaps, unwilling to realize that Germany would take the plunge into war, even though he always prepared against this danger. At the outbreak of the War, however, as when the Liberals split over the Boer War, Haldane never wavered. Of his colleagues, "Morley and Burns were altogether opposed to our entering the War," he reminds us, while "Lloyd George, Harcourt, Simon and Beauchamp at first professed to be irreconcilable." What a Party to be in power at such a moment! What a Party to be in office when such a war was to be guarded against!

No sooner were these first difficulties overcome than Haldane found himself attacked by a fresh set of political half-wits, the Tory Die-Hards. These extremists made it a condition of Conservative entrance into the first Coalition that Haldane should be omitted. The *Morning Post* abused him in and out of season. "We think it monstrous," declared this organ, shortly afterwards,

> that, while Lord Haldane is conscious—for he must be conscious—of the way the nation regards him, he should go about lecturing upon education or any other subject. If he knew the feelings of his suffering fellow-countrymen, if his front were not of brass, he would not desire to speak nor to see, nor to be seen of men. He would relapse into silence and seclusion until such time as it was thought safe for the world to hear his defence. When that time comes his place will not be to lecture but to plead. In the meantime his appearance in public is a public outrage.

And again:

> No one, for instance, will now believe that, as Mr. Runciman has the hardihood to affirm, to Lord Haldane is due one particle of the credit of the creation of the New Army.

And yet the very generals whom the *Morning Post* regarded as the highest intellectual paragons of the age knew better than their self-appointed and brazen mouth-

piece. Haldane tells us in this book how, on the evening of the day our victorious troops marched through London, he sat alone in his book-lined study at Queen Anne's Gate, with its great windows overlooking St. James's Park and the Ministries:

> My servant came upstairs to me and said that there was an officer who wanted to see me, but would not give his name. My servant was careful in these days, for strange people had tried to get into the house to have sight of me, and he had been warned from Scotland Yard to be cautious about letting unknown people enter. However, I told him to show to my room the officer, whoever he was, who had called. The door was opened, and who should enter but a friend who was indeed intimately known to me. Field-Marshal Douglas Haig, come from a triumphant ride with his Sovereign along the Mall. "I am not going to remain," he exclaimed: "My purpose is to leave with you a book in which I have written something." With that he insisted on going away. The book was a volume containing his Dispatches, and on the page at the beginning he had written these affectionate words:
>
> "To Viscount Haldane of Cloan—the greatest Secretary of State for War England has ever had. In grateful remembrance of his successful efforts in organizing the Military Forces for a War on the Continent, notwithstanding much opposition from the Army Council and the half-hearted support of his Parliamentary friends.—HAIG, F.M."

Haldane's sister appends in a footnote a letter which she discovered among her brother's papers after his death. It was written by Lord Haig from his head-quarters in France a week after the Armistice, and runs as follows:

> My dear Lord Haldane,—There has been so much going on here that I have not been able to attend to my private correspondence. I therefore hope that you will forgive me for not writing to thank you sooner for your most kind letter.
>
> I appreciate very much indeed your kindly remembrance of my work with you at the War Office. For me that time will always stand out in my memory most prominently

because the organization of our Army *for war* dates from then. Until you arrived at the War Office no one knew for what purpose our Army existed! And I feel sure that all the soldiers who in those strenuous years were working at the War Office will bear witness to the all-important service which you then rendered to the British Army in the Empire. You then sowed the seeds which have developed into the tremendous instrument which has vanquished the famous German Army and brought about a victorious peace. And where would we be to-day without the Imperial General Staff which was your creation and the Field Service Regulations (Part II Organization) which you forced through in spite of opposition from Army Council and Treasury?

I and many soldiers with me are greatly distressed at the ungenerous treatment which you have received during the critical phase in our country's history; and I hope the day is not far distant when the invaluable services which you have rendered to our Empire may be adequately recognized.

With heartfelt admiration for the way in which you have done your duty and ignored all the spiteful criticisms of the Press which has attacked you, and again many thanks for your very welcome congratulations on what the British Army has done.—Believe me, Yours very truly,

D. HAIG.

I leave the *Morning Post* to reply to the late Field-Marshal.

Haldane knew himself better than most people, even his intimates, knew him. His Scottish reserve; a tiresome prolixity in exposition; a somewhat over-emphasized admiration for the less lucid German philosophers, masked a robust good-nature. He was a successful advocate; and a learned, courteous and able judge. He confesses in this book that he probably possessed a too "international mind," making for sympathy and tolerance with foreigners, than was good in one who, as a member of the War Cabinet, had to gain and retain the enthusiastic confidence of the British public. "I had gone to Germany too often, and had read her literature too much, not to give ground to

narrow-minded people to say that Germany was my 'spiritual home.'"

But King Edward found him ever a congenial companion, and was probably responsible in some degree for his appointment to the War Office.

We read, too, how Haldane, in his earliest days at the Bar, was invited to dinner by an influential solicitor. A bottle of Château-Laffitte, 1858, was opened, which neither the host nor any of the other guests were allowed by their doctors' orders to drink. Haldane slowly drank the whole bottle, "paying a well deserved tribute to the merits of each glass," greatly to the delight of his host, who, shrewdly recognizing in him gifts of taste tact and presence of mind, began to send him valuable briefs.

When Oscar Wilde was sent to gaol, Haldane was one of the committee appointed by the Home Office to investigate the organization of our prisons. He sought out Wilde at Holloway and secured for him books and the permission to write, thus making possible the appearance of "The Ballad of Reading Gaol."

The first time Haldane, as Secretary for War, met the Generals on the Army Council, they inquired from him some general idea of the reforms which he intended to introduce.

> My reply was that I was as a young and blushing virgin just united to a bronzed warrior, and that it was not expected by the public that any result of the union should appear until at least nine months had passed. This was reported by the Generals to the King, who accompanied with mirth his full approval of the answer.

He became a member of the first Labour Ministry in this country. I imagine that the contempt he must have felt for the Liberal rank and file between 1906 and 1914, and for the subsequent Liberal splits and vendettas, absolved him in his own mind from any further loyalty to his old Party.

At the same time, conservatively minded as he was

he knew that his implacable enemies among the Tory Die-Hards would permit no alliance between him and the more intelligent members of their Party. Absence from politics irked him. He saw a chance to guide the inexperienced men who were about to take office, and at the same time to assist the fulfilment of various educational reforms in which he was interested. He was, so to speak, a non-Party man in a Party ministry.

He discloses in his book his dissatisfaction with the Labour Government's handling of the two incidents which brought about its fall, the Campbell prosecution and the Russian Treaty, and, while he speaks highly of Mr. MacDonald's tact and breadth of view, he does not hide a certain dissatisfaction with him and other leaders of the Socialist Party.

When this impatience, however, extended to Mr. MacDonald's fondness for spending the week-end at Chequers, Haldane was unjust. He wrote with unusual bitterness that

> Prime Ministers who have sprung from the middle classes, and are attracted by the pleasures of a country-house life to which they are not accustomed, are apt to be unduly drawn there. . . . The consequences were at times mischievous.

I realize that the reason why he thought this was because to him a week-end at Chequers would have meant nothing but an unwelcome withdrawal from his favourite routine. Haldane's pleasure was congenial conversation over a good dinner, followed by an excellent cigar and a discussion of educational themes or a solitary browse upon philosophy. He could not understand that, for a man of Mr. MacDonald's temperament, a week-end at Chequers provides an ideal opportunity for the uninterrupted deliberation of difficult problems. Haldane's objections to Chequers were a queer survival of his Puritan boyhood: he distrusted what he himself could not enjoy.

Otherwise his criticisms of his Socialist colleagues were well-founded.

Haldane never was a Socialist. The most he could say was that he sympathized with the "broad purpose" of the Labour Party, though I do not think he ever clearly defined what that broad purpose was. And I am quite sure that he never understood it. Who could? But without any personal ambition he realized that the first Labour Government must possess a Lord Chancellor who understood the traditions of the office.

* * * * * *

The career of Mr. Philip Snowden is certainly one of the most remarkable of this generation. That the son of a working weaver should become Chancellor of the Exchequer is phenomenal if, in these democratic days, not altogether astonishing. But, as "Ephesian" shows in his vivid and revealing biography, Snowden has had many other handicaps to overcome besides poverty. Crippled at the age of twenty-seven, when he was just setting his foot upon the ladder of promotion in the Excise Service, and forced in consequence to retire from that service, he may well have seemed to himself and to his friends destined for a life of hopeless and painful obscurity. For, after all, he was no longer in his first youth. The accidents of politics, however, brought him into contact with the nascent Socialist Movement in his native Yorkshire dales; the very circumstances of his convalescence, compelling him to a long period of sedentary leisure, gave him an opportunity of studying and being converted to the new political dogmas. Thus his first great misfortune turned to his advantage.

The Socialist Movement in England has never been remarkable for the possession of first-class brains; Snowden's, though I am not inclined to class him with the greatest contemporary statesmen, were nevertheless sufficiently outstanding among its rivals to ensure him speedy promotion in the Revolutionary ranks. Within

five years after his declaration of his belief in Socialism, we find him already a member of the small group which, under Keir Hardie, ruled the Independent Labour Party, and, through it, the whole Socialist Movement. No dictator was more autocratic than Hardie; no oligarchy more determined to concentrate power in its hands than the little junta to which Snowden belonged.

He stood for Blackburn in the Khaki Election of 1900; despite the unfavourable circumstances of the moment, and the opposition to him as a "foreigner" in this conservative Lancashire constituency, he succeeded in polling more votes than had ever before been cast for a Socialist candidate in this country. Snowden's election campaign resembled a revivalist drive; memories of old-time Chartism were revived among the Blackburn Radicals who, in default of a candidate of their own, rallied to Snowden's support.

He might well, two years later, have been returned unopposed to Parliament for Clitheroe as one of the very first Socialist members of the House of Commons; but David Shackleton, with a local reputation among the cotton-spinners, was preferred to him as the Socialist candidate. Undeterred by the fickleness of fortune, Snowden continued to stump the country as a popular exponent of the new creed. No one outdid him in his denunciations of the rich—did he not reiterate the phrase, "The idle rich"?—and in his assault on strong drink and on Capitalism. Nor did he turn a blind eye to the backslidings of his colleagues in the Labour Movement. Just as in later years he accused Arthur Henderson and other patriotic Labour leaders of mere greed of office when they joined the War Coalition Ministries, so already he was attacking John Burns, then the foremost working-class figure in politics, for accepting a post from Campbell-Bannerman.

It is not untypical of the man that, while accustomed to employ the bitterest taunts in decrying those with whom he disagreed, he was, and has remained, impatient

of criticism. This is due, however, not to any thinness of intellectual tegument, but to a fanatical certainty of his own correctness. Everyone else might be out of step; but never "Our Philip." The description of him as "the Robespierre of the English Labour Movement" is sound.

In 1906 he was at last returned to Parliament. He had for three years been the chairman of the Independent Labour Party. From his earliest days in the House he made his mark as the most forceful debater and the keenest dialectician on the Socialist benches. Keir Hardie was beginning to lose his hold over the "Movement"; the leadership of a Parliamentary party needed more ability than this somewhat theatrical "rebel" possessed. Snowden might have taken his place, for in sheer ability he could excel all his Labour colleagues. But a shrewder man outstripped him: Ramsay MacDonald, with his flair for political manœuvre, his striking presence, his instinct for the approach of danger, and his valuable gift of verbal obscurity, had already nursed the young Party through its Parliamentary youth; he now became its acknowledged leader.

Snowden, I remember, made his maiden speech on the same night as I; and immediately before me. His speech was an attack equally upon the Free Trade and the Tariff Reform programmes as determinants of prosperity. He spoke bitterly, resentfully, but eloquently, of the miseries of the poor in Free Trade as in Protectionist communities. The House, which had assembled to watch the first trial of strength between the Mad Majority and the defeated Unionists, could not but regard Snowden's speech rather as an interlude in the debate than as a contribution to the duel. He fell, as he knew he must fall, between two stools; but I very distinctly recall the degree of interest which his frail appearance and biting eloquence made upon all sides of the House.

Up to the outbreak of the War he duly consolidated

his position in Parliament. His Party did not possess any serious importance in weight or numbers. While, it is true, the Liberals found it expedient to humour a group whom they regarded as very little else than their own left wing, they did not take its occasional challenges too seriously. And the Labour men were helpless without some form of tacit alliance with the Liberals. Ramsay MacDonald favoured this alliance; Snowden detested it. On more than one occasion, and notably in the debates upon the Insurance Act, he staked out a claim for independent Socialist action at all costs. I am not concerned here to discuss which of these two leaders was right, according to their own lights. The present Socialist Party owes much to MacDonald's tactics in those early years; on the other hand, without Snowden's perpetual insistence upon the necessity of independence, it is not impossible that the present numerical strength of the Liberals and the Socialists might be reversed. If either man had been less forceful or less successful, the Socialist Party of to-day would not be in power.

Perhaps the greatest setback which Snowden has had to overcome in his rise to high office was his attitude during the War. With a blindness equalled only by his sincerity, he denied the possibility of an Allied victory in either the field of battle or the sphere of economics. He was convinced that the War must end in a stalemate. In consequence he threw in his lot with those people—part cranks, part perverts—who sought by every means to interfere with the work of the Government and the Army command. No rumour was too absurd for Snowden to espouse it; no mirage of peace too flimsy for him not to accept it as a concrete proposal, and to express genuine horror at the wickedness of the Government in rejecting it. Towards the end of the War he was even advising our people to follow the example of Russia and cast down all order and authority; his objections to Bolshevism came later. Although he was

proved to be monstrously wrong, he scorned to claim, like so many of his colleagues, that his pacifism had been conditional and not absolute. As a result, Blackburn threw him out by a huge majority at the earliest electoral opportunity.

This apparent disaster was in reality the greatest stroke of good fortune which could befall him. For four years, from 1918 to 1922, he disappeared from the public eye. Socialist meetings still knew him; their applause had not lessened; but he was able in the latter year to place himself before the voters of the Colne Valley with the pleasant certitude that his War record (though he never sought to hide it) had been almost forgotten, while the vast problems and disturbances of the post-Armistice period provided rich ground for his Socialist propaganda. It has always been characteristic of the British electorate—as of all democracies—that past performances, whether good or bad, count for little at elections; promises, pledges and appeals to current emotions are much more effective.

Mr. Asquith's blunder in putting the Socialists into office in 1924 made Snowden Chancellor of the Exchequer. If his Budget did little to advance the cause of Socialism, it had the curious effect, in combination with various speeches he made, of persuading Finance that this ardent evangelist of a New Social Order was "safe." The City might be injured, as individuals, by the spoliative taxation which he threatened to introduce as soon as Labour had an independent majority, but the methods he proposed to employ were, so Finance said, perfectly respectable. And thus it has come about that Snowden, its bitterest foe, has become the intellectual darling of Mammon. It will, I prophesy, learn to regret this impulsive affection.

Statesmen to-day are not accorded triumphs; instead, it would seem, biographies are written of them. One who has hitherto been a somewhat shadowy figure in the public eye, emerging into sudden, and perhaps

exaggerated, glory at the Hague Conference, is now shown to be what he himself claims, "a stolid, unimaginative, unpoetical, truthful Yorkshireman." Unlike several of the best known of his colleagues, Snowden has never trimmed. When they hedged about the War, he declared himself emphatically. When they tried to water down their support of the Capital Levy, he set it more prominently in the forefront of his electoral programme.

Only in two directions, it seems, has he ever modified his views to any appreciable extent. In his early days as a teetotal enthusiast for Temperance Reform, he declared himself unimpressed by the value of Prohibition; but in view of recent experiments in America, he now believes Prohibition to be both a possible and a desirable measure. Most men believe exactly the opposite. If, like Jack London, they thought twenty years ago that Prohibition might be effective, they now realize that America's experiment has utterly damned it. But it has never been one of Snowden's traits to accept the obvious, if it happens to clash with his beliefs.

The second matter on which, I gather, his opinions have undergone a certain change is in regard to the merits of Nationalization. In his earlier years he was a fanatical adherent of this Socialist fetish; I would not go so far as to say that he has, even now, ceased to genuflect at its mildewed shrine. But not long ago he remarked, in the course of a speech, that he was not so sure, after all, that Nationalization would be a good thing if the existing Government was to control the Nationalized enterprises. The Government, of course, was one to which Snowden was in vigorous opposition; doubtless a Socialist Government would not come under the same ban. Since, however, the prospect of permanent Socialist rule in England is fortunately remote, Snowden must make up his mind whether he is prepared to advocate Nationalization both in and out of season.

For it is not the least objection to Nationalization

that, wherever it has been tried on a large scale, it has opened a wide field to political corruption and interference. It may be true—many Socialists seem to think so—that the Labour Party is immune from every human failing; but neither the example of Queensland nor, nearer home, that of West Ham, Poplar, Chester-le-Street and Bedwellty, confirms this optimism. I do not know how often biographies of living men are brought up to date; I shall be interested, however, in the next few years to note such additions as may be necessary to elucidate Snowden's ultimate attitude towards State ownership and State control. They may to some degree influence the future of British politics; for Nationalization is certain to be the centre of acute controversy in the coming years, and Snowden will be one of the chief protagonists.

* * * * * *

I have never been able to share the view held by some English business men that trade with Russia is an object for which this country must strive at all costs. Their main argument is based on the analogy that, while any civilized person may be unwilling to meet cannibals socially, it is wholly right and decent to sell them cooking pots for their peculiar pleasures. Therefore, while one may abhor the methods by which the Bolshevists gained and have held power, their massacres of innocent millions, including the Tsar and his children, and, what is more pertinent, their continued attempts to stir up sedition in our own country and its Empire, these considerations, we are told, should not deter us from re-establishing trading relations with them to the best possible advantage of both parties. This argument is fortified by the suggestion that a prosperous Russia would inevitably cease to be Bolshevist.

Those who put this case do not appear to be well conversant with business conditions in Russia to-day. In the first place, a "prosperous Russia" cannot in

existing circumstances mean anything else than a prosperous Bolshevist Government and a prosperous Third International; for all external trade is the monopoly of the Soviet departments. It is certain that the intention of the Soviet Government in exporting many articles badly needed inside Russia is to build up a fund in foreign countries which can be used to subsidize Communist Parties and other disruptive agencies there. And, whatever may be the established canons of commercial ethics in regard to cannibals—I confess that I have no first-hand experience—there seems to me a considerable difference between selling them cooking pots in which to boil their own friends and establishing cordial trading arrangements with a regime whose main policy is to overthrow the foundations of our economic and political system. I should imagine that if I threw open my house to commercial travellers in gunpowder and other explosives, my insurance company might reasonably object that I was overstepping the conditions implicit in my agreement with it.

We hear so much in these days about the almost religious significance of business—its morals, its ethics, its "Message," and the rest of the Rotarian claims—that I must confess myself astonished by the wholly matter-of-fact attitude adopted by some business men in regard to trading with Russia.

Even, however, if I accept their cannibal-Bolshevist analogy (and I do not), I still cannot see why trade with Russia should occupy so prominent a position in discussions to-day. Anyone would suppose—if he were to accept at face value statements made by the Socialits Party during the last election—that in trade with Russia is to be found the solution of our unemployed problem; and that because the late Government broke off diplomatic commerce with the Bolshevists, other nations have stepped in and are plucking golden plums from the Russian tree.

This is far from being the case. I am aware that the absence of British consuls from Russian ports may to

some extent interfere with business. But this difficulty is exaggerated; other nations, with or without consuls in Russia, are not showing any disposition either to recognize the Bolshevists or any ability to do big trade with them. Consuls in Russia nowadays spend most of their time in obtaining the release of their nationals who, for no crime at all, are incarcerated in Bolshevist gaols; they have little time to spare for the promotion of trade. Nor do the arrests stop at traders; I would not advise any young man of my acquaintance to set his thoughts on becoming a member of a future British Consulate in Bolshevist Russia unless he is prepared to spend part of his official life in a filthy Russian prison cell.

But, after all, all this is subordinate, on the practical side, to one main question: Is trade with Russia on a large scale possible?

A very interesting book was published some while ago entitled "In the Clutches of the Cheka," by a Finnish gentleman named Boris Cederholm. It illustrates, conclusively to my mind, the illusory nature of trading prospects with Bolshevist Russia, as well as the peculiar inconveniences attaching to any attempt to pursue them. M. Cederholm tells us that:

> I went to Russia at the end of the summer of 1923 as representative of a South American firm which exported materials used in tanning. My visit was not a casual one, but had been arranged a long time before. The new economic policy of the Soviet Government ("Nep") had from the time of its initiation attracted the attention of our directors. Many foreign business men saw in "Nep" the resurrection of Russian industry, believing that it would open the door for the supply of the Russian market with large quantities of raw material.
>
> I personally was very sceptical regarding all reports of brilliant advantages to be gained from trade with the Soviet Government, but I was at last obliged to give way to the wishes of my principals, who hinted broadly that I was scantily informed as to the actual state of the Soviet Russian market and Soviet trade policy.

We shall see that he was better informed than the directorial wiseacres who contradicted him. It must be understood that Russia was, and presumably still is, badly in need of the tanning materials which his firm wished to import; he was given a *visa* in Helsingfors for Russia by the local Soviet authorities, in order that the contract which he had drafted with them might be ratified at Petrograd by the heads of the Government tanning syndicate.

There was no question of his doing business with any private Russian firm. "Not one of them had the right even to make an application for the receipt of a licence to import goods of any kind from abroad." There is, it seems, only one way of doing business with private individuals inside Russia; M. Cederholm, too discreet to attempt it, describes as it follows:

> You must seek out some thoroughly proletarian organization, such as a workmen's or peasants' co-operative association, or even a Cheka co-operative association, and then find out just what article this organization is in need of at the moment. As all Soviet undertakings without exception need goods and have no ready money, the board always consents willingly to buy goods on credit, and undertakes to apply for an import licence. To make things safer, the lowest possible figure is named in the contract, sometimes even one which would obviously mean a loss to the seller. When the licence has been procured, it is sent along with the contract to the Soviet trade delegation in the country from which the goods are to be sent. On account of the abnormally low price named, the trade delegation cannot protest against the deal, for if it did so, it would itself be obliged to buy the goods at an equally low price.
>
> When the consignee receives the goods, then, according to an agreement made in advance between the seller and influential members of the board, a considerable part of the goods is rejected, very often half or two-thirds of the whole quantity, and the seller has the rejected goods returned to him. He then sells his goods to private shops and speculators at a price which repays with interest the expenses of his cunning manipulation.

Arrived in Russia, M. Cederholm, who, although a Finn, had once been an officer in the Russian Navy, and was therefore familiar with Petrograd, saw little likelihood of his contract being signed at an early date.

> Sometimes a whole business deal was frustrated by the whole staff of the organization we were negotiating with being arrested—in other words, our customer disappeared from the face of the earth. . . . The whole contract with the tanning syndicate was to be redrafted. When, after endless negotiations, communications, and correspondence, the new contract was finally drawn up, it appeared that the syndicate had not the right to import goods direct from abroad. This right was withdrawn from the syndicate just at the moment when our negotiations were concluded. . . . About Christmas the unexpected news was spread in Petrograd that the whole tanning trust and the whole board of the tanning syndicate had been arrested by the Cheka in consequence of the discovery of extensive defalcations, corruption and extravagance. The number of persons arrested was over four hundred, for the Cheka, as its custom is, arrested not only the Soviet officials who had been privy to the scandal, but their relations, friends and acquaintances as well.

Disconcerting as this was, M. Cederholm remained in Russia in the hope that his principals' expectations would be fulfilled. There were plenty of Bolshevists left from whom a new Tanning Syndicate could be formed; technical experience, he already knew, plays no part in Soviet appointments to such posts.

Instead of a new syndicate being formed, however, he himself was suddenly arrested by the Cheka and sent to gaol. His real offence was that one of his subordinates, tempted by an *agent provocateur*, had surreptitiously engaged in speculation; as soon as M. Cederholm had heard of this, he had instructed the man to cease. The Soviet authorities claimed that, having become aware of the man's "crime," M. Cederholm ought at once to have brought it to their attention. Tale-bearing, it must be

remembered, is considered the highest form of social service in Bolshevist Russia.

After a series of interrogations, M. Cederholm was informed that he was to be charged with three additional crimes: (1) Secret relations with the international *bourgeoisie*—this because he had prudently written to his firm in South America through the Finnish Consulate-General's bag instead of through the public post, where all letters are delayed and examined; (2) discrediting the Soviet power; and (3) economic espionage. He comments grimly that he was now charged under six clauses of the Bolshevist criminal code, five of which were punishable by death.

He protested at the absurdity of the whole affair; the Finnish Consul added his protests, and the Cheka, aware that it had no case against him, suddenly showed its hand. One of his "judges" explained that

> "It all depends on you. Would you be willing, when set at liberty, to give us information about your fellow-countrymen and Russian *émigrés?* We will give you instructions. You will be excellently provided for from a material point of view, and we will allow you to carry on commercial business, in the place where your office used to be, if you like. You can write to your family. When you make a trip abroad we will allow you as much as your firm did."

At the same time, M. Cederholm afterwards discovered, two attempts were made in Helsingfors to lure his wife to Russia, in order that she might be held there as a hostage for his good behaviour as an *agent provocateur*. He refused the Cheka's offers, and was thrown, still without trial, into solitary confinement and afforded a sight of the execution chamber, stained with blood and smelling of carbolic acid, as further hints to moderate his stubbornness.

I do not propose to give details here of the abominable filth and agony of the prisons in which he was confined. I will merely say that the keenest advocate of trade with Russia would hardly care to visit, far less to inhabit, them.

Finally M. Cederholm was sent to the Solovetsky Islands, in the White Sea, a notorious concentration camp for the Cheka's victims.

There he was set to work, without food or sleep, for thirty-six hours. The cold, dirt, hunger and exhaustion of the prisoners are graphically described in his pages. Every evening a list is read out of the people who have been shot during the day.

In advising perusal of his book by all who consider that trade with Russia at the present moment is possible to such an extent as might relieve our own economic problems, I especially recommend it to business men who are thinking of visiting Russia in person to open up trade. I do not suggest that a large proportion of them will necessarily be as unfortunate as M. Cederholm; but, while the possibility exists, they would be wise to make themselves familiar with the nature of the risks they will run. They may well decide that commercial travel is safer among cannibals than among the Bolshevists.

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Mr. Tim Healy, wittily referring to his own political career, once spoke of the good fortune of a man whose father had been hanged. "If the son turns out badly," he said, "everybody agrees that it is not his fault, whereas, if he is only a reasonably decent member of society, everybody says, 'What a contrast with his father!'"

Sir Austen Chamberlain's case is precisely the opposite. The son of one of the most distinguished figures in recent political history in this country, he has throughout his life had to bear comparison with his father. All his actions and all his speeches have been judged by that high standard; and, by a piety in which he himself has always joined and still joins, he has hitherto been regarded rather as the promising son of a great statesman than as himself a great statesman.

It is clear that this position has its advantages as well as its drawbacks. The Conservative Party is not so eager to welcome new blood that few young men of talent can expect advancement so speedy as Sir Austen enjoyed at the outset of his career. To be given office at the age of thirty-two and to become Chancellor of the Exchequer eight years afterwards are gifts of fortune beyond the grasp of most politicians. Sir Austen would be the first to agree that his early rise was due in no small degree to the lustre of his parentage.

But it is one thing to enjoy opportunity, another to be able to use it. No man of the inner circle of politicians in the last thirty years but has realized that Sir Austen possesses in an outstanding degree the qualities which brought his father fame, and has, moreover, with the passage of years, added to these others no less remarkable. The time has now come when, besides the inevitable comparison with Joseph Chamberlain, Sir Austen may take rank with one of the greatest Foreign Secretaries whom this country has ever produced, Lord Castlereagh.

The latter statesman's worth and achievement have been better appreciated by historians than by the lighter writers whose judgments so often create tradition. Castlereagh is probably better known to-day through Byron's scathing insults than for his solid and remarkable achievements. Yet it was he who, by insight, tact, and the gleam of genius which distinguishes the statesman from the politician, brought peace to a troubled Europe a century ago and restored order from the chaos of the Napoleonic wars. His task was to reconcile embittered foes; to call forth co-operation from strife. The structure of which he laid the foundation and designed the fabric not only succeeded in its immediate purpose, but lasted until, in course of time, the volcanic onslaught of Bismarck caused it to topple and fall.

A highly interesting parallel could be drawn between the tasks of Castlereagh and Sir Austen Chamberlain.

Once again a British Foreign Secretary was confronted with a Europe feeble but contentious at the end of a long struggle. Once again it was his task to act as peacemaker, to reconcile suspicious and angry enemies, to act—in a phrase to which Bismarck gave a cynical significance—as an "honest broker." Once again the seemingly impossible has been achieved; and Sir Austen's work during the last few years rivals the colossal feat of Castlereagh a hundred years ago. His Locarno Treaty is the corner-stone of the new European peace.

Be it stated in parentheses that Sir Austen's immediate successors in the British Government do not seem likely to add anything of value to the building which he has raised. The strange and not wholly explained incidents surrounding the enforced resignation of Lord Lloyd from his office in Egypt reflect little credit on the Socialist ministers who demanded it. How monstrous was the excuse which they presented to Parliament—or, rather, to the House of Commons, since their leaders in the House of Lords were reticent through ignorance—for their breach with Lord Lloyd. They asserted, with obvious truth, that Lord Lloyd and Sir Austen Chamberlain had not always seen eye to eye in regard to Egyptian policy—as if it had ever been, or could ever be, the case that the man on the spot and the statesman at home must necessarily agree in all matters. The administrator on the spot, especially when he is a man of Lord Lloyd's calibre, is expected and encouraged to present his views and, within the limits of subordination, his criticism of Government projects. Only by such an exchange of views can an intelligent policy be put properly into effect. To be shocked that a very important British representative should not regard himself as merely the mouthpiece of the home government could happen only to men steeped in the dogmatic and uncritical orthodoxy of the Socialist Party. Not theirs the pliability, the receptiveness, and the insight of Sir Austen's mind.

Yet in one way—if this parenthesis may be continued —the Socialist Party has paid Sir Austen a sincere compliment. It may be recalled that, in their electoral and pre-electoral rhapsodies, the Socialists abused him for his attitude towards their dear, trade-seeking, misunderstood Bolshevist friends. He, they told us, was so old-fashioned and reactionary as not to welcome back to England with open arms the Bolshevist envoys whom we had so recently found it necessary to expel for sowing sedition in our midst. For some reason (which America, at least, has never comprehended) it is essential, said the Socialists, to give these Bolshevist agents diplomatic privileges in order that trade between England and Russia may revive. But when the Socialists came into office, they changed their tune from a shriek to a mere hum. And they laid down to Russia precisely similar conditions, as the preliminary to diplomatic agreements, to those upon which Sir Austen had insisted throughout —namely, a complete cessation of mischief-making within our Empire. This showed very clearly that Sir Austen had envisaged a truly difficult situation aright, so much so that the Socialists, who had made his policy towards Russia an election issue, did not dare—in theory —to interfere with it.

It is significant that the volume of Sir Austen's speeches which has appeared, should be largely devoted to his speeches during his last five official years on Great Britain and the League of Nations. In reading them, we trace development of a virile and wise foreign policy. The early speeches were delivered immediately after his assumption of office: they explain the British opposition to the notorious Protocol provisionally accepted in October, 1924, by the Assembly of the League of Nations, and show the substitution for this of the saner policy which culminated in the Locarno signatures. There is no need here to enter into the controversies arising out of the Protocol. They are judged with consummate lucidity in the speeches in this volume,

which may be recommended to every student of contemporary affairs as an admirable exposé of the British point of view. And there are passages in which Sir Austen speaks, not merely as a British minister, not merely as one in whose hands the future destiny of Europe lies, but as a philosopher and an erudite student of history and statesmanship.

In the course of a speech on the Protocol in the House of Commons, for example, we find this:

> I profoundly distrust logic when applied to politics, and all English history justifies me. Why is it that, as contrasted with other nations, ours has been a peaceful and not a violent development? Why is it that, great as have been the changes that have taken place in this country, we have had none of those sudden revolutions and reactions for the last three hundred years that have so frequently affected more logically-minded nations than ourselves? It is because instinct and experience alike teach us that human nature is not logical, that it is unwise to treat political institutions as instruments of logic, and that it is in wisely refraining from pressing conclusions to their logical end that the path of peaceful development and true reform is really found.
>
> After all, what is our crime? The signature of the covenant is barely six years old, and we are to be condemned by the right hon. gentleman because, with only six years' experience to guide us, we are not prepared to re-write the whole document or to superimpose upon it a vast structure which might easily destroy both covenant and League. There has been a good deal of talk of late in this country about the safety and security of St. Paul's Cathedral. A great many experts have been consulted, and not all of them, I understand, have taken the same view; but, as far as I know, no expert, however eminent, has thought that the security of that building would be promoted by putting another dome on the top of the existing dome, and, whatever their differences have been, they have all agreed that it is by underpinning the foundations that the building will be best preserved. That is our view in regard to the Protocol. We do not think that it would add to the strength of the League or that it would add to the security given by the covenant.

The peroration of the same speech deserves quotation, for it is a passage which will not soon be erased from the anthology of English Parliamentary eloquence:

> The statesmen of this country have some responsibility. Our policy, not wholly through our own fault, has been wavering and inconsistent. Our influence—no one can move as I have done amongst the statesmen of Europe, and of more than Europe, and not feel it—has lost something by our hesitation and our inconsistency. But a new chance is coming to us. I see in these proposals the possible dawn of a better day. Without our help, nothing will be done. With our help the war chapter may be brought to a close, and a real triumph of peace begin. The British Empire, detached from Europe by its dominions, linked to Europe by these islands, can do what no other nation on the face of the earth can do; and from east to west alike there comes to me the cry that, after all, peace is in the hands of the British Empire, and, if they will that there shall be no war, there will be no war.

One of Sir Austen's most engaging qualities is his modesty. There could be few clearer demonstrations of this than are afforded in the brief introduction which he has written for this volume.

"Can there be," he asks, "any more delicate flattery offered to a politician than a publisher's suggestion that some of his speeches are worth rescuing from the daily papers or Parliamentary reports, where they lie buried, and that a small volume of them would find a public? I, at least, am unable to resist so subtle but so potent a temptation." Yet, he continues, of all forms of art the speaker's and the actor's are the most fleeting. The conjunction of the man, the audience, and the moment are all-important. Repetition, as Sir Austen rightly says, may be essential when the speaker is endeavouring to impress a point upon his audience, but to a reader of the speech, when it is reprinted in newspaper or book, these same repetitions seem as tedious as unnecessary: "Which of us, friend or foe, who listened enthralled to the oratory of Mr.

Gladstone can now endure to read that which it was so great a delight to hear ? "

Sir Austen, perhaps, overstates this case. One wonders whether, even under modern conditions of oratory, a naturally brilliant speaker, like himself, does not instinctively strike the happy mean between the delivery demanded by the exigency of the moment and the literary qualities which are implicit in all great speaking. Burke, as he points out, excelled as what may be termed a literary speaker, but utterly failed to hold, far less move, an audience. Gladstone, on the other hand, gripped audiences by the fire and earnestness of his address, but is to-day, for the most part, unreadable.

Surely the truth is that neither Burke nor Gladstone was an orator of the first class. Burke was a writer whose command of English has never been surpassed ; Gladstone was a politician whose hypnotic powers over his audience disguised the frequent aridity and even dullness of his words. The perfect orator in these days of dual appeal—to the ear of the immediate audience, and to the eye of that vaster audience whom he reaches through the Press—is he who pleases both, convinces both, delights both by the clarity, the brilliance, and the cogency of his utterances.

That Sir Austen's speeches read well is known to all who follow Parliamentary and diplomatic reports and will be evident to all who turn to this volume for the cream of his recent speeches. Anyone who has heard him speak knows, too, that there are few living statesmen with so compelling a platform presence. His tones are clear and modulated ; his gestures are superb. His arms wave like those of the conductor of an orchestra. He extends them appealingly towards the hall, his hands cupped as if to receive the agreement of his audience, and throws them back triumphantly over his shoulders. Again, one arm seems to represent the argument he is demolishing and we see it grow feebler and droop while the other, the symbol of his cause,

gradually overcomes it, just as the Russian anthem in Tchaikovsky's "1812" asserts itself over the Marseillaise. And not only his expressive arms and hands, but his figure, his features, the characteristic monocle —all share in the task, never unsuccessful, of capturing the whole interest of the listeners and pointing every detail in the argument.

There are in this book, as well as the portion devoted to the League of Nations, six speeches on Far Eastern problems, three on the British Empire, and two on France. There is a particular fascination in the last speech of all—translation of an address delivered by Sir Austen in Paris last year on the occasion of the presentation of the book, "La France à l'Empire Britannique." Sir Austen has a fluent command of French; what is more, he so well understands it that he is able to throw himself into the mood of a French audience in a manner unparalleled among British statesmen of any day.

The following passage, which seems extravagant in its dour English garb, needs only to be re-translated into French for the reader to understand why it moved the Parisians to tears:

> Ladies and gentlemen, turning over these pages, I noticed some words of Marshal Joffre. "Kitchener," he writes, "understood us because he loved us." Well, I too love France. I love her in all the beauty of her days of splendour, I love her still more, perhaps, in the time of misery and suffering; and it is with deep emotion that I pay her to-day my most respectful homage and my unbounded admiration for her fortitude and resolution. I love her as a man loves a woman, in her hours of gaiety and in her pleasures, in her agony and in her tears. If you will allow me to say so, I will add that I love her as much for her failings as for her virtues. In short, I love her—and there is no man to whom you could have given greater pleasure by choosing him to receive this token of your friendship.

To revert to the main body of this volume, I could hardly end with a better example of Sir Austen's

eloquence than the termination of a speech which he delivered at Liverpool at the profoundly delicate moment when the Coalition Government was negotiating with the Sinn Fein leaders for a settlement of the Irish problem :

> Our object was to find, at this great crisis, at this hour, after so many failures, some solid foundation on which to build once again a national policy, to find some policy from which no British Government could, or would, depart, and once again, to remove the Irish question from the scene of party conflict, where it followed our fortunes, upset our fortunes, and was itself the shuttlecock tossed from battledore to battledore.
>
> The South African War was a just and necessary war. But for the issues then fought out and settled, there could have been no lasting peace in that country. But, though peace was signed, though allegiance was sworn, reconciliation lagged behind. Then came a change of Government, and with a new Government a new policy. By a great act of daring faith they conferred upon our recent enemies in the Transvaal and Orange Free State, on the morrow of our victory, full self-government.
>
> I voted against them. I thought it a rash and wicked thing to do. If we could have seen farther into the future, if I could have voted in that division with the knowledge I have to-day, I should have known that that great act of faith was not, as I thought it, the destruction of our policy, but its completion and its fulfilment.
>
> That is the vote that I would undo if I could undo a vote once given. That great act, that daring act of faith, led directly to the reconciliation of the races in South Africa; it led to the Union of South Africa; it brought South Africa into the war with us; added German East Africa and German South-West Africa to the British territory.
>
> Now and again in the affairs of men, there comes a moment when courage is safer than prudence, when some great act of faith, touching the hearts and stirring the emotions of men, achieves the miracle that no arts of statesmanship can compass. Such a moment may be passing before our eyes now as we meet here. I pray to God with all my heart and soul that to each of us to whom responsibility is brought there may be given visions to see, faith to act, and courage to persevere.

Sir Austen does himself an injustice when he states that "such interest as these speeches still have lies not in their form but in their matter." For the content of eloquence is evanescent; its expression is immortal.

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The Encyclopædia Britannica has been, and is, a national institution. In securing Mr. Garvin as editor-in-chief for the new volumes, the directors did honour to one of the most brilliant pens of the day. Mr. Garvin has earned, and justly earned, a unique position in English public life. He is a great intellectual who has never lost contact with practical life; he is a great patriot who has never lost contact with democratic life. His supervision of the new volumes has, generally speaking, meant a wise choice of articles and authors, but in the case of "Bolshevism," which I proceed to discuss, the subject might have been more fully presented. The contributions upon this subject indeed are *ex parte* statements in favour of this creed and are so obviously special pleading that they have little recommendation to the reader save that of audacity.

The present review will deal with certain new sections of the *Encyclopædia* treating of the Russian Revolution and the Bolshevists. In an earlier edition the progress of the Russian Revolution up to 1921 was described by the late Professor Paul Vinogradoff, who, without boasting the same brilliance in the rôle of historian as in his legal work, might claim with justice to be both well informed and unbiased. His long article threw no brilliant new light on the tragic events of the Revolution, but it incorporated such facts as were in general agreement among skilled observers. In the succeeding issue of the *Encyclopædia*, Professor Vinogradoff's article was cut short at the outbreak of the Revolution and the whole period from then on entrusted instead to "A.R."—initials which, the index explains, stand for Mr. Arthur Ransome.

What are Mr. Ransome's qualifications to succeed

Professor Vinogradoff as the *Encyclopædia's* contributor on modern Russian politics, and even to replace him in regard to the five first fatal years of Bolshevism? Mr. Ransome is a journalist who first became known as an unauthorized and excessively uninspired biographer of Oscar Wilde. A certain familiarity with the Latin Quarter of Paris produced in him a sympathy with advanced causes just because they are advanced. He happened to be in Russia at the outbreak of the Revolution, although at that time he was familiar with neither the history nor the language of the country. During the last few years, he has written a couple of books about his experiences in Bolshevist Russia. Like Mr. Lansbury's, Mr. Ransome's books display a naïve trust in the good faith and good works of the Bolshevist leaders. If a Bolshevist commissary says something three times —or even only once, so long as he says it to Mr. Ransome —it is so. His books have been criticized and their dubious foundation exposed in such organs of well-informed criticism as *The Times Literary Supplement.* Mr. Ransome is not the least of that numerous and tiresome body who may be described as "not Bolshevists, but . . ." They are not fanatical enough to be able to swallow everything the Bolshevists tell them, but their dislike of decent, democratic government and a large willingness to enjoy the sensation of saying the paradoxical thing makes them the willing dupes of the much more astute men in Moscow. Only himself can say if he had his tongue in his cheek when he wrote his contributions to the new *Encyclopædia.* The editors of that work, however, in accepting his account of the Revolution and the events succeeding it, have done themselves and their readers a grave disservice. No more partial story of the last grave years in Russia has ever been penned. In its special pleading for the Bolshevists, it rivals the most fantastic interpretations published by the Bolshevists themselves. Beneath an air of supercilious observation, decked out with little

touches of journalistic detail, it offers an utterly false and misleading picture. At one blow it places the Russian section of the *Encyclopædia* among the tenth-rate histories with which the world has been flooded since the end of the War.

To demonstrate the absurdity, to use no harsher word, of Mr. Ransome's contribution, it may be best to treat it in as much detail as space allows. The necessity of exposing it justifies copious quotation. Here are some of his more remarkable mis-statements :

> Whereas most of the leaders of the Duma were dissatisfied because the war was not better conducted, the mass of the people were dissatisfied because it had not long ago come to an end.

Such descriptions of Russia at the beginning of 1917 have been the foundation for much Bolshevist propaganda. The dissatisfaction of " the mass of the people " with the continuance of the War is a fantastic hyperbole. The spirit of the Russian people was rather more than less determined in 1917 than previously, and such dissatisfaction as was shown was due much more to a desire for more efficient conduct of the War than for its immediate conclusion.

> The Duma leaders were themselves horrified when they realized that they were face to face not with a change of Government, which they sincerely desired, but with a collapse of the whole regime to which they belonged. . . . They had the advantage of being in touch with existing Government apparatus, but the disadvantage of being compelled to insincerity in public utterance. In the face of the troops and the populace of Petrograd, they had to welcome the Revolution, which, in reality, filled them with misgiving and distrust.

Mr. Ransome, it may be noted, was not at this time in a position to understand the utterances of the Duma leaders, but he has since had ample opportunity of discovering what their position was. His implication that the Duma leaders " belonged " to the Tsarist

regime and that their welcome to the Revolution was insincere is doubly unfortunate. Once again he has accepted a Bolshevist premise which establishes an utterly untrue theory—that the Duma was not, and could not become, the head of the new political system.

> Not pro-Germanism, but the events of 1905 dictated the famous Prikaz (Order) No. 1 (issued on March 18) which hurried towards its end that process of disintegration in the army.

It is interesting to note that Mr. Ransome post-dates the publication by several days of the Order No. 1, which he equally carefully suggests to be an act of self-defence by its sponsors, who feared that otherwise the Revolution—and themselves, its self-appointed custodians—might be suppressed as they were in 1905. Had Mr. Ransome stated the exact date on which this order, undermining the discipline of the army, was published his argument must have gone by the board and another Bolshevist premise would have been destroyed.

> In the months that followed, the Parties of the Right were as ready to weaken the front by bringing disciplined troops to suppress revolution in the rear as were the Parties of the Left to weaken the front by destroying the discipline of the troops.

This is a silly sneer, again a part of Bolshevist propagandist legend, which betrays the nakedness of Mr. Ransome's historical equipment. Has it occurred to him that modern war is not fought only on the battlefield, and that any intelligent patriot must secure support in the rear before he can conduct operations at the front?

> From the moment of Lenin's arrival the Bolshevists had a definite policy. They set themselves to bring into the open the profound mistrust of the masses that actuated the temporary Government. . . . Peasants and workers alike were heartily sick of the war, and were, besides, inflamed by the miracle of the old regime's collapse. Every-

> thing seemed possible. The world had been turned upside-down, and they had other things to think of than a war in which they had never had any personal interest. The peasant soldiers wanted to get home anyhow. . . . The masses were, as Lenin rightly perceived, far more "Left" than their representatives in the Soviets.

Mr. Ransome speaks of the "masses" and "the revolutionary masses" like any Bolshevist. He tells us, again no doubt on the same authority, that the temporary Government profoundly mistrusted these "masses"; and the latter, it seems, were "heartily sick of the war" and "far more 'Left'" than the Soviets. The phraseology makes discussion impossible. The "masses" exist as a homogeneous body only in the eyes of the pathetic Marxians, and no historian worthy of the name would base arguments upon such a fiction.

> The officers lumped in common detestation the [regimental] committees with the Bolshevists who were undermining them.

This elegant description of the officers' sentiments is merely another instance of Mr. Ransome's hyperbole. When the position at the front became critical, many intelligent and patriotic officers did their best to co-operate with the soldiers' committees, hoping that, by limiting these to domestic functions, there would be less interference with purely military considerations. The success or failure of this attitude need not be discussed here; that it admittedly existed again proves Mr. Ransome's incapacity as a historian.

> The political meaning of the [July] advance [at the front] was illustrated in Petrograd by the demonstrations by well-dressed people which accompanied the first news of the victories.

Note the sneer! Mr. Ransome implies that the jubilation in the capital at the first military success of the Revolution was merely a class demonstration.

> The Soviets' opponents, regardless of the fact that Russia was still at war, seemed determined to justify the Bolshevist

> claim that the new Government and the old represented hostile classes. . . . The whole of the Civil Service went on strike.

This reference to the Bolshevists' seizure of power is rather more naïve than usual. Again, the implication is that the members of the Civil Service in Russia struck as a class demonstration, whereas even the Bolshevists know that their own occupation of the Ministries was regarded as a stab in the back by all patriotic citizens. When one considers that the Bolshevists' expressed programme included the immediate coming to terms with Germany at the expense of the Allies and of Russia herself and that their efforts had been wholly directed towards destroying the Russian army, Mr. Ransome's rebuke to the Civil Servants that "Russia was still at war" is particularly nauseating.

> The Germans could easily have walked into Petrograd, and been welcomed as they were welcomed in Kieff by everybody who preferred being ruled by a foreigner to being ruined by a revolutionary.

All that can be said of this remark is that the Germans did walk about Petrograd immediately after the Bolshevists seized power. Mr. Ransome hints several times in his egregious article that the Bolshevists were foes to the death of the German Government. History has shown us the opposite.

He turns next to the Constituent Assembly:

> In March, 1917 . . . as it was clear that immediate elections to the Assembly would have given an immense majority in the Assembly to Parties represented in the Soviets, the Parties on the Right desired to postpone it.

More threadworn Bolshevist propaganda! Even Mr. Ransome ought to know that the preparations for a general election on the basis of universal suffrage must take some time in a country where hitherto voting had been restricted to a minority of population. All evidence goes to show that preparations for the Assembly elections

were pushed on in the country with reasonable speed. Mr. Ransome ought sometimes to check the statements he is inspired to make.

He refers to the forcible dissolution of the Constituent Assembly:

> The Assembly met on January 18th. As soon as it had declared its complexion by electing a Right Social Revolutionary, Chernov, instead of a Left member of the same Party in Marie Spiridonova, as president, the Bolshevists and the Left Social Revolutionaries allowed it to be told to go home [January 19th] by its guards, who expressed the opinion that it had talked enough.

This is all he has to say in defence of one of the most flagrant instances of Bolshevist political duplicity. He comes to the notorious Cheka, the murderous organization by which the Bolshevists established their power in the country and have since maintained it. The Cheka was, he says,

> formed in the beginning in the first weeks after the fall of Kerensky to deal with the attempts to organize drunken pogroms in the capital. . . . The scope of its work rapidly widened and it became in the end the organizing centre of the political police and the instrument of the Terror which followed on the beginnings of intervention.

Thus the old Bolshevist lie that, when the mob looted a cellar and drank the contents, the owners of the cellar had some deep political design—pogroms!—is revived. Mr. Ransome has cast his net wide. The further suggestion that the Terror *followed* foreign intervention is no longer considered even by intelligent Bolshevists as worthy of their well-organized propaganda. This does not appear to worry Mr. Ransome.

Mr. Ransome continues his discourse with a long series of statements designed to suggest that, if there was one thing more than another that the Bolshevists desired to do, it was to fight the Germans and to continue the War in conjunction with the Allies. The Allies'

representatives, he explains incidentally, did not really understand the situation; they had to depend so much on their old acquaintances, disgruntled members of the old regime. It would be entertaining to have the opinion of such men as Mr. Bruce Lockhart and other British representatives in Bolshevist Russia at that time upon this surprising statement.

The assassination of Count Mirbach, the German envoy in Moscow, by a Social Revolutionary in July, 1918, affords Mr. Ransome an opportunity to repeat one of the more cynical theses of Bolshevist propaganda. The social revolutionaries, it seems, believed "that the cause of revolution would be best served by inducing a German occupation of Russia," which they hoped this assassination would provoke. Mr. Ransome also tells us that the Bolshevists "feared that the Left Social Revolutionaries would be likely to blow up an Allied ambassador or two in order to prove that they had not been agents of the Allies in killing Mirbach, and in order to force the Revolution to stand alone without dependence on 'Imperialists of either camp.'" The Bolshevists, he adds, also "believed that they could better guard the Allied representatives in Moscow" than where they were in remote Vologda. Thus, in Mr. Ransome's inspired eyes, the Bolshevists were not merely the only Russian patriots, but they alone were concerned for the happiness and safety of the Allied representatives. How cruelly the world has since judged these benevolent people!

Our writer comes now to a section headed "The Terror Follows Intervention." He has said this twice: but it is not true. Next, the murder of the Tsar and his family, as he describes it, was the spontaneous action of the local Soviet at Ekaterinburg, and "the fact was announced on July 18th to the Præsidium of the Central Executive Committee in Moscow, which, in view of the circumstances, approved the action of the local Soviet." Mr. Ransome, who shows that he knows so many things

hidden from the ordinary competent historian, would appear to have forgotten that the fact has been beyond doubt established that the Bolshevists in Moscow knew beforehand that the murder was about to take place, and that, if they did not actually order it—which seems probable—they certainly made no effort to prevent it. Their complicity and guilt in this dastardly crime have been proved, but Mr. Ransome forgets to say so.

As is to be expected, he is content to accept the figures of the Cheka's victims published by the Bolshevists. Eight thousand persons, he says, were shot in 1918–19 "in the twenty Governments of Central Russia alone." If this figure shocks him, as it appears to do, he would surely be even more horrified if he had chosen to give more accurate figures, which exceed his fiftyfold.

He is more at ease when he comes to treat of the White Armies which fought in the Civil War against the Bolshevists. He can now rely wholly on Bolshevist legend, not having himself any first-hand knowledge of the circumstances:

> In the south the forces opposed to the Bolshevists were headed by a series of dictators, L. Kornilov, Alexiev, Denikin, surrounded by persons who made no secret of their distaste not only for the Bolshevists but for politicians far to the Right of them. . . . It rapidly became clear that the choice was not between the Bolshevists and a more moderate Government, but between the Bolshevists and extreme reaction. The Red Terror was matched by a White Terror that affected far larger sections of the population. Refugees from the country held by the Whites brought into Soviet Russia accounts of such treatment of the working-classes as enormously increased the will of those in Soviet Russia to see the struggle through, regardless of the daily increasing hardships of a starving and beleaguered camp.

It is a pity that Mr. Ransome has not documented these assertions with, for example, some of General Denikin's proclamations, which said, as he always said, that the future government of Russia must depend on

the will of the people. Perhaps Mr. Ransome, who can see such virtues in the Bolshevists' bloody tyranny, could have shown that General Denikin, in publishing these proclamations, was really a reactionary of the deepest dye. It would certainly need some such paradoxical explanation. And it is surely unfair to the butchers of the Cheka to match their unparalleled exploits with the sporadic outbursts of revenge—incomparably inferior in scope, numbers, and method—by a few groups of White Officers.

"War Communism" is the next section of Mr. Ransome's entertaining allegory. Once again we are shown a Russia we never knew, ruled by a Government whose virtues we have never properly recognized. "Private trade in bread was forbidden because its existence made it more difficult for the State to obtain corn." In our ignorance we, who are unblessed with the paternal rule of the Soviets, imagined that the abolition of private trading was one of the main planks in their platform, but it seems that, "when the economic measures of those years are separated from the words that accompanied them, it appears that there was little difference in principle between them and measures adopted in other countries during the World War."

> The rationing of the inadequate supplies distinguished in other countries between the civil and the military population. In Russia it had to go further, and among the civil population to distinguish between those whose work required more physical effort and so more food than those whose work could be got through with less.

This, of course, explains to the meanest intelligence why the executioners of the Cheka received the largest ration of all. Their work required "more physical effort."

> The requisitioning of corn was in the hands of committees of the poorer peasants to whose interest it was to see that the rich peasants did not hold back their stores. The result of this was a general levelling among the peasantry,

> during which the conflict of interests between rich and poor peasants guaranteed the Government against active resistance by the peasantry as a whole. It must not be imagined that the Communists were able to make of these measures a complete system.

Mr. Ransome seems here to have been badly let down by his Moscow informants. The statements he makes were commonplaces of their propaganda a few years ago, but have since been discarded. Soviet spokesmen have even pointed out with great humour that the effect of their land legislation did not establish the "poorer peasants" in control of the villages. The same villagers who ruled the roast before the Revolution generally contrived to maintain their supremacy after it. When committees of the "poorer peasants" were called for, these same men promptly stepped forward to do the work. If Mr. Ransome is right in glibly repeating what the Bolshevists used to say years ago, would he not have been well advised to accept their retractions now?

> In transport, things did, by the end of 1920, show unmistakable signs of improvement, and improvement here promised it everywhere else. During this period were finished the land works of a huge electric power station on the Volkhov, a power station at Kashira and another on the Shatura peat mosses (which was promptly destroyed by fire). In circumstances in which it seemed possible that Russian civilization would disappear altogether, starving and ragged engineers were planning the future electrification of Russian industry and rationalization of Russia's industrial geography.

Readers of the *Encyclopædia*, however, would be well advised to take the ever imminent "electrification" of Soviet Russia, like Mr. Ransome's gas, with a pinch of salt.

There are pages more of this alleged history of the Bolshevist regime, but space forbids further detailed reference. One plum, however, deserves quotation. Speaking of the ill-fated Treaty with the Bolshevists which was signed in the autumn of 1924 by Mr. Ramsay

MacDonald's eager political lieutenants and the signing of which led largely to the downfall of our first Socialist Government, Mr. Ransome remarks with simple pathos that "the Conservative Government that succeeded Mr. MacDonald did not offer the Treaties for consideration by Parliament. The position remained what it had been before the negotiations began."

One feels that, in the writer's opinion, this country missed an excellent opportunity of joining forces with the practical and good-natured gentlemen who hold sway in Russia.

With a final flourish of trumpets, Mr. Ransome proclaims the virtual reconstruction of Russia at the end of 1924. The following year, it is true, produced a severe economic crisis through the selfishness of "the peasant, straw in his hair and sunflower seed in his mouth," but no reader of Mr. Ransome's delightful tribute to the efficiency and patriotism of the Bolshevists will harbour doubt that Utopia is not far off in the Soviet paradise. It only remains to extract Mr. Ransome's contributions and the eulogy of Lenin by Trotsky, which also appears in these volumes, and to re-issue them as a separate work with the appropriate title of the *Encyclopædia Bolshevistica*. Then Mr. Garvin will know where he stands.

* * * * * *

Mr. Sinclair Lewis's rise to popular fame in England has its humorous side for those of us who remember the contemptuous reception by most English reviewers of his first important book, "Main Street," ten years ago. We were then told—when he was not wholly ignored—that he was merely an American "small-town novelist," and wonder was expressed that any English publisher should think his trivialities worth editing over here.

But "Main Street" sold in hundreds of thousands in the United States; the English reviewers, learning this, began to wonder whether there was not perhaps

some element of importance in the book which they had overlooked. Then, when "Babbitt" began its record-breaking career in America and on the Continent of Europe, the critics realized at last that Mr. Lewis was not merely a story-teller but a social critic of unusual calibre.

His invention of Babbitt has placed him among that very small class of modern writers who have added a new term to our vocabulary. Just as the name of Sherlock Holmes will endure as long as the detection of crime retains its interest; so the name of Babbitt will continue to be applied to its particular type of philistine in every country.

There was certainly a little excuse for the early short-sightedness of the English reviewers; journalists, wholly ignorant of American life in the Middle West, might not be altogether blamed for supposing Mr. Lewis a writer of no great distinction. The plot and the incidents, the characters and the psychology, of "Main Street" and "Babbitt" cannot be very highly praised as narrative; the significance of those two works, by which Mr. Lewis achieved his first fame, is rather sociological than literary.

It would seem that he himself realized this defect, for, ever since, his novels have shown a steady increase in literary merit. "Martin Arrowsmith" was a considerable advance on its predecessors; "Mantrap" was an exciting story; "Elmer Gantry" showed perhaps a certain reversion to type; but "Dodsworth" goes far beyond anything else he has yet written. It combines a lively and interesting plot with the discussion of a problem which, one may suppose, has long exercised this author's thoughts.

The story concerns the relations between Samuel Dodsworth, a successful American motor car manufacturer, and Frances, his wife, who represents the typical spoiled wife of the rich American business man. The Dodsworths visit Europe for an extended holiday. The

husband, for the first time, finds himself with leisure to observe his wife; her old assumption of cultural superiority to him is not so convincing against a European background as it has been in Zenith. He sees in her a mass of artificiality and unscrupulous indifference to his own desires. At the same time he cannot rid himself of the established American idea that it is his duty to sacrifice himself wholly to her amusements; even when she has deceived him, humiliated him and deserted him, a telegram of appeal brings him post-haste back to her apron-strings.

He has, however, during his enforced absence from her, made the acquaintance of a Europeanized American widow, who nerves him to a sufficient degree of moral courage to break finally with his wife. That *deus ex machina* of American family drama, the divorce court judge, unites Dodsworth at last with the widow, while the wife is left to go her own way with her sham emotions and her providential income of several thousands of pounds a year.

Such is the plot; and it is much better worked out than any which Mr. Lewis previously attempted. For the first time he has allowed himself to enter the higher places of psychology; and he succeeds adequately in bringing to life his chief characters, both men and women. At the same time he has developed a keener and neater sense of humour than ever before. Several of his parenthetical sketches of unimportant people in this book are good enough to rank with Mr. H. G. Wells's earlier endeavours in the same vein. Indeed, Mr. Lewis seems more and more to be taking up Mr. Wells's inspiration where the latter abandoned it, soon after the outbreak of the War, for the prolix pursuit of uninviting Utopias.

The underlying theme of "Dodsworth," however, is the antagonism between America and Europe. This is the problem which must have obsessed the author when he planned his book: how is it that ordinary

Englishmen and Americans, who have so much in common, find it so very difficult to like one another; and how is it that so many Americans are ashamed of their own country? Though the story carries its chief characters to Paris, to Berlin, and to Italy, the main theme remains that which exercises the Dodsworths the moment they step upon the liner at New York.

Lockert, an Englishman, asks Mrs. Dodsworth if she will stay in London. She replies:

> "Yes, if there aren't too many Americans there. Why is it that the travelling American is such a dreadful person? Look at those ghastly people at that second table there—no, just beyond the pillar—father with horn-rimmed spectacles, certain to be talking about either Coolidge or Prohibition—earnest mother in home-made frock out to hunt down Culture, and terribly grim about it—daughter with a voice like a file. Why is it?"
>
> "And why is it that you Americans, the nice ones, are so much more snobbish than the English?"
>
> She gasped, and Sam Dodsworth awaited a thunderbolt, which did not come. Lockert was calm and agreeable, and she astonishingly bent to his domination with a puzzled: "Are we really?"
>
> "Appallingly! I know only two classes of people who hate their own race—or tribe, or nation, or whatever you care to call it—who travel principally to get away from their own people, who never speak of them except with loathing, who are pleased not to be taken as belonging to them. That is, the Americans and the Jews!"
>
> "Oh, come now, that's idiotic! I'm as proud of being—No! That's so. Partly. You're right. Why is it?"
>
> "I suppose it's because your boosters go so much to the other extreme, talking about 'God's own country'——"
>
> "But that expression is never used any more."
>
> "It isn't? Anyway: 'greatest country on earth,' and 'we won the war.' And your ghastly city-boosting tours and Elks' conventions—people like you hate this bellowing. And then, I do think we English have, as you say, 'Put something over on you'——"
>
> "I've never used the phrase!"
>
> "——By sitting back and quietly assuming that we're the noblest and rightest people on earth. And if any man

> or any nation has the courage or the magnificent egotism to do that long enough, almost everyone will accept it from him. Oh, the English are essentially more insufferable than the Americans——"
>
> "But not so noisy about it," mused Fran. Sam was not at all sure that he liked the discussion.

The theme is worried throughout the book in a sort of *parti carré*. We have the pro-American American (Dodsworth); the anti-American American (Mrs. Dodsworth); the anti-American European; and the pro-American European, the last two being incarnated in various guises in various countries.

I conclude that Mr. Lewis thinks there is a good deal to be said on all four sides. It is, perhaps, unfair to expect from him a more definite solution; it is his business to pose the problem and argue it, rather than to pass judgment. But it may perhaps be left for one who has for some time pondered this very problem, to offer a few suggestions upon it.

We must, of course, begin by ruling out from the discussion those Englishmen and Americans who are intimately acquainted with each other's country. Among them there is none of the odd, snarling antagonism to which Mr. Lewis's book so often adverts. We are not concerned here with such sympathetic minds as that of Mr. Walter Page, whose account of his ambassadorial experiences in London during the War is one of the most remarkable evidences of the true affinity of cultivated American and English minds. "Dodsworth" deals rather with such suspicious provincial natures as find their highest expression in the lesser country houses of both nations. When these are English they effect an exasperating superiority towards everything American; when they are American, they add to a similar sense of superiority an equally infuriating attitude of moral condescension.

There seems to me little doubt that, in the jargon of the modern psychologist, our respective Babbitts suffer

from an inferiority complex. To the small-minded Englishman it is an incredible affront that America should presume to have become the most prosperous country in the world. To the small-minded American it seems monstrous that the English should refuse to acknowledge America's wealth as entitling her to assume a proportionate cultural supremacy.

Our sillier press and stupider stage insist on representing, as the typical American, a dollar-proud, boastful barbarian dummy, while, in the American counterparts, no Englishman may appear who is not a drawling, conceited nincompoop. And so our respective innocents learn to despise one another.

There is, however, another side to the subject. Suppose an educated young American to come to England, unprovided with such introductions as will bring him into contact with the more intelligent social groups; he often discovers himself in an odd dilemma. If he is an artist or a scholar, he will probably find that living in England is far more agreeable to him than the prospect of returning to his own country. But, at the same time, he is soon infuriated at the constant reiteration of the insular English view that his country is utterly vulgar, altogether without culture and without tradition.

Similarly, a young Englishman visiting America may easily be nauseated by the general feeling in certain classes that, in the light of American enterprise, our own country must be considered contemptibly effete. Both these young visitors return home bewildered by their emotions; admitting to themselves some admirable qualities in their hosts, but violently hostile to others.

It seems to me that the two great English-speaking nations are much more complementary than most of their more innocent inhabitants suppose. So far as artistic and literary traditions are concerned, I have no hesitation in reminding such questioners as Mr. Lewis that the roots of American literature are indubitably in British soil. I am quite certain that an American

writer is likely to live more happily in an English scene than in his native country. Henry James's example bears me out; Mr. Lewis's own frequent visits here are another proof.

On the other hand, I am equally certain that in many branches of modern progress, English must give best to American. There can be no doubt, for example, that in modern science generally, America, for all her youth, has built up not merely a fine record but a great and established tradition.

* * * * * *

Mr. Harold Nicolson is to be congratulated upon an original idea. His book, "Some People," is an autobiography told in the manner of fiction. Nine episodes of his life, from childhood to the present day, are set out in the form of sketches centred round other people. By this means Mr. Nicolson to some extent evades the charge of egotism, greatly adds to the interest of his pages, and, as his publishers did not fail to realize, woos the thousands of fiction-lovers in the public who so vastly outnumber the readers of other types of literature. The idea is admirable, and Mr. Nicolson has carried it out admirably. He states in a foreword: "Many of the following sketches are purely imaginary. Such truths as they may contain are only half-truths." But the effect of this disclaimer—which may, perhaps, temper the disciplinary severity of his seniors in the Diplomatic Service, who are said to be annoyed—is somewhat lessened by its being dated from Teheran, where also the final sketch in the book is made. Moreover, many personages, ranging from the late Lord Curzon to Mr. Nicolson's coeval colleagues in the Service, are introduced by name, while the victims of the author's wit are in several cases concealed by merely perfunctory pseudonyms.

The first sketch deals with the author's governess and life at Constantinople, where in those days (as books of

reference tell us) his father, Lord Carnock, was Secretary of the Embassy. We pass in the second incident to the author's youth at Wellington and Balliol; the chapter has, as its major interest, his acquaintance with one "J. D. Marstock," whose identity is no doubt familiar to other Old Wellingtonians. We come next to "Lambert Orme," who serves to remind us that Lord Carnock was Ambassador at Madrid after being Agent in Bulgaria and Minister in Morocco, and that his son served also in the Madrid Embassy. Lambert Orme was a young æsthete with a hang-over from the eighteen-nineties, a poet, and a bore. When Mr. Nicolson was transferred to Constantinople just before the War, Lambert Orme visited him, descending (to use his own phrase) at the Pera Palace Hotel. Mr. Nicolson invited him to sail in the Sea of Marmara, but his guest sent an excuse at the last moment: "To-day is too wonderful. It is the most wonderful day that ever happened; it would be too much for me: let us keep to-day as something marvellous that did not occur." The infuriated host left the curt message, "Silly ass," scribbled on the back of a card at Orme's hotel, but the latter countered effectively by dispatching him a huge bouquet of Madonna lilies.

We return to Oxford for the next sketch, that of a young French aristocrat whose extreme class-consciousness was somewhat impaired by the fact that he had learnt English from a cockney nurse. He is assured by hoaxers that the Royal Automobile Club is the most exclusive club in England and spends much time lobbying for admission to that august body. When he succeeds, he prints its name in the corner of his visiting cards. In his company Mr. Nicolson meets d'Annunzio at Florence and Marcel Proust at Paris. The author tells us that "I could not have believed that anything not an egg could have looked so like an egg as d'Annunzio's head," but his voice was the voice of a silver bell. The young French snob, however, explains that d'Annunzio is not a man of family, that d'Annunzio is not even his

real name and that "*dans tous les cas c'est un garçon qu' on ne peut pas voir.*" When they meet Proust, the snob declares him "*un homme remarquable, evidemment, un homme remarquable: mais juif, juif.*" Proust asks permission to mention his aristocratic acquaintance in one of his books, but the latter refuses rather than risk offending "moy family" and hindering, as he supposes, his election to the Jockey Club in Paris.

Mr. Nicolson's picture of Proust is well done:

> He would lie in bed all day in his stuffy darkened room, and in the evening he would put on his elaborate evening clothes (those white kid gloves clasping an opera hat) and attend the receptions given to the members of the Peace Conference. He appeared there like Beethoven at the Congress of Vienna. He would flit about looking like a Goanese bridegroom. He would flit about from Mr. Balfour to M. Venizelos, from Marshal Foch to M. Berthelot. He was very friendly, and ill, and amusing. He enjoyed hearing stories about the Conference. He seemed quite unaware of the early and enduring monument of his own impending fame. He drank a great deal of black coffee and stayed up very late.

Next scene: A Paris *pension* where young diplomats are coached in the French language. *Dramatis personæ:* Mr. Nicolson, Sir Coleridge Kennard, Lord Eustace Percy, and other young diplomats; Mlle Jeanne de Hénaut, the cousin of General Mangin, their instructress; and members of her family circle. Mlle Jeanne, a lady of questioned age but unquestioned authority, overawes her pupils by the force of her character. This, too, prevents her, years later, from evacuating her fifth-floor flat during the air raids: "*Non, monsieur! Non, monsieur! La cousine germaine du General Mangin couche au cinquième.*"

> I did not see her again: she died soon afterwards; and in 1919, meeting General Mangin at a dinner party, I told him about Jeanne and the air raids, thinking he would be diverted by the story. He was not diverted. He failed, I think, to observe in it anything either of pathos or of humour. He drew himself rigidly to attention. He struck

his chest so that all the medals thereon danced like harebells upon the Downs. And then he started shouting. "*Ah, ça!*" he shouted. "*Ah, ça! C'est bien elle: c'est bien la France!*"

We come to Professor Malone. "Eugen Malone was the old-fashioned type of journalist. . . . He was not a correspondent, he was not even a special correspondent, he was just Professor Malone: and at his name the Chancellories of Europe used, so it was said, to tremble." It should not be difficult for the inquisitive, reading this sketch, to recognize the identity of the most cruelly handled personage in the book. We meet him first in St. Petersburg, where he is entertained by the author's father, the Ambassador. Next he is the author's guest at luncheon in Constantinople. Follows a scene in England where we meet M. Cambon and Mr. Winston Churchill. Professor Malone has given his hostess a copy of one of his books; she asks him to write something very nice inside. He slowly unscrews the cap of his gold fountain-pen:

I had seen that pen before and in a flash it all came back to me. M. Venizelos had just such another pen and so had M. Také Jonescu. I had commented on its beauty once to M. Venizelos. He had laughed and pushed his skull-cap to the rakish angle which it assumed when he was amused. *Ah oui, mon cher—figurez-vous ce pauvre Malone a une petite vanité—la Vanité des Stylos. Quand j'ai signé le Traité d'Athènes il m'a donné un stylo magnifique encrusté d'or. Il me l'a repris après la signature et l'a remplacé par un autre. Traité de Londres, même procédure: Traité de Bucarest, idem. De cette façon il collectionne des plumes historiques.*

The rest of this sketch details the author's not always unsuccessful attempts to "take a rise" out of Professor Malone. In the course of it we are brought into contact with the Supreme Council in Paris; and Mr. Lloyd George, President Wilson, Lord Balfour, Mr. Lansing, Baron Sonnino, and M. Orlando all play their part in the story. One suspects that their appearance is intended to be not the least important feature of the chapter.

The episode which follows, dealing with Lord Curzon and his valet, is by far the best part of the book. The amusing facts which it details are not new. They have for some years been the standard seed of anecdotes in the worlds of diplomacy and journalism. They have even been inserted in a play, though this has apparently not yet been produced. Briefly, Lord Curzon engages a drunken valet and retains his services out of admiration for his supreme extravagance and audacity. Mr. Nicolson's picture of Lord Curzon is quite the most effective character-sketch of that statesman which has yet been written.

It begins a little unfortunately. The writer recounts how Lord Curzon intercepts on the telephone a message to his valet from the latter's inamorata; in consequence of which he dismisses his valet. This shows Lord Curzon in an uncharacteristic and somewhat unpleasing light, and Mr. Nicolson, who gleaned the story from him on an official errand, would have done well to suppress it. With the coming of the new valet, Arketall, however, no more such false notes are struck; the comedy winds its way to a perfect conclusion. Arketall has "the appearance of an aged and dissolute pro-Consul" and a predisposition to drunkenness. On a journey abroad he is mistaken alternately for Lord Curzon himself and for Sir Roger Keyes, to the great delight of his master:

> We found it difficult to induce Lord Curzon to treat the problem seriously. On the second morning Arketall, in helping his master on with his socks, had slipped and fallen. "Arketall," Lord Curzon had remonstrated, "you are either very ill or very drunk." "Both, m'Lord," Arketall had answered. Lord Curzon was so pleased with this response that his affection for Arketall became unassailable. We grew seriously uneasy. I found him one morning standing by the side-table in the dining room pouring liqueur-brandy into a claret glass. He winked slowly at me and placed a shaky forefinger beside his nose. I was incensed at this gesture of confederacy: I told Bill

Bentinck that the Marquis must again be warned. But, unfortunately, that morning Marchese Garroni had, in Lord Curzon's presence, mistaken Arketall for Sir Roger Keyes, had seized both his hands and had assured him in a torrent of Genoese French how great a debt, how unforgettable a debt, Italy owed to the noble and generous British Navy. Lord Curzon was so delighted by this incident that our warnings fell on even deafer ears. A catastrophe was imminent and it came.

Lord Curzon, Mr. Nicolson, and a press of other diplomats, important and unimportant, watch and participate in a ball at the Hôtel Beau Rivage at Ouchy; Arketall, admirably dressed, is discovered dancing with an American lady. When he meets Lord Curzon's eye, he slips and brings down his partner and himself to the floor, whereupon he is at last dismissed. But this is not the end of his adventures for, before he leaves, he conceals all his master's trousers, which are discovered by Mr. Nicolson only after considerable search:

I clasped the trouser-press and returned in triumph to Lord Curzon. He was seated at his writing table, his pencil dashing across sheets of foolscap, his lips moving. I stood there waiting. When he had finished four or five sheets and cast them from him he turned to me indignantly. His face relaxed into a smile and then extended into that irresistible laugh of his, that endearing boyish sense of farce. "Thank you," he said, "I shall now complete my toilet . . . and, at dinner to-night, as a reward I shall give you my celebrated imitation of Tennyson reciting 'Tears, idle tears.'"

He kept his promise. It was an amazing performance. We expressed our admiration and our gratitude. A sudden wave of depression descended upon Lord Curzon. "Ah, yes," he sighed, "ah, yes. I know. All that was years ago, when I was young and could still laugh at my elders. But all young men are remorseless. You will go upstairs this evening and chaff me behind my back. You will give imitations in after life of the old buffer imitating Tennyson. And so it continues." He sighed deeply. And then he grinned. "I am sorry," he said, "for Arketall. I liked that man."

It is principally by his happy sketch of Lord Curzon that Mr. Nicolson's book will live. Except for the one passage mentioned, it is a delicate and admirable piece of portraiture. Excellent is the description of the tiny room, cheaply furnished, in which Lord Curzon slept at Carlton House Terrace. "You are observing," said the latter to Mr. Nicolson, "the simple squalor of my bedroom. I can assure you, however, that my wife's apartments are of the most unexampled magnificence."

M. Mussolini also makes his appearance in this chapter:

> There was a stir at the front door and the managers dashed to the entrance. They returned in triumph, escorting a small brown gentleman in a brown suit and very white shirt-cuffs. He carried a brown bowler in his left hand and his right was thrust into his waistcoat. The iris of his eyes was entirely surrounded by white, a phenomenon which I had hitherto observed only in the photographs of distinguished mesmerists. He was followed by three or four other gentlemen and two boy scouts in black shirts. An electric tremor ran through the assembled journalists. "Mussolini," they whispered in amazement.

The last episode in the book, dedicated to "Mrs. Miriam Codd," an American behaviourist, is something of an anti-climax. It details quite pleasantly a journey of the author from Alexandria and Cairo across the desert of Persia, on which he is accompanied by the lady mentioned, a British colonel, and a Polish pianist, but the reader may suspect, possibly unjustly, that the author is paying off one or two private scores.

This chapter also helps to establish the verisimilitude of the narrative, by definitely taking its teller to the country where the book was written. Modesty, it would seem, is not really Mr. Nicolson's *forte*, despite the form of his book; for it is hardly permissible, even in a semi-autobiography of this type, to mention in the midst of the text the name of one of his novels, together with the publisher's name and the net price.

* * * * * *

Confined to my bed with an attack of influenza, I

found leisure recently to read half a dozen or so volumes of detective fiction. This intensive experience brought to a head a train of ideas which had long troubled me whenever, for want of more congenial literature, I have enlivened tedious train journeys with such works.

The detective novel is a gigantic system of imposture practised on a credulous public.

I doubt if there are two private detective agencies in England or ten in the whole world, whom one could entrust with any more onerous or delicate inquiry than that of tracking a supposedly unfaithful wife. And even then, if she went in at one door of the Army and Navy Stores and out at another, the private detective would almost certainly lose her.

Anyone with experience of our Courts knows how poor a figure the average private detective agent cuts in the witness-box. Amazing with what diligence he follows the wrong person; with what perseverance he waits outside the door of a room which his quarry has long since vacated; with what lack of finesse he interrogates, and is deceived by, persons interested to lead him astray; with how little skill he disguises himself, so that nobody can possibly mistake his calling and his purpose. Such is the private detective in life. The amateur detective is even less admirable.

But in every book I read during my illness, an amateur detective was shown as a creature of superlative intuition, encyclopædic knowledge, extraordinary finesse, and, in most cases, with a gift of disguise which would put the finest professional actor to the blush. And, in exact ratio to his amateur perfection, the Scotland Yard detectives were revealed as stupid, blundering nincompoops. Yet, I repeat, this is not the experience of those of us who have, in the course of a legal career, come into contact with detectives, amateur and official.

I suppose that no crime takes place nowadays where there is the slightest doubt about the culprit and his whereabouts, without at least half a dozen would-be

Sherlock Holmeses endeavouring to take a hand in his detection. I do not recall that in a single actual case of which I have had direct knowledge or of which I have read, these earnest busybodies have contrived in the very slightest degree towards the elucidation of the mystery. They have, on the contrary, often caused the police much extra trouble.

They blunder in where no intelligent policeman would tread. They seize upon, and conceal or damage, material which in expert hands might convey a useful clue. They besiege the authorities, whether in person or by letter, with half-baked theories and completely incorrect statements. The amateur detective is, in short, a blundering ass; while the private detective agency is not, and does not pretend to be, an important factor in the detection of crime. That mysteries are cleared up, that cunning criminals are brought to justice, is due, almost if not entirely without exception, to the official detectives who are the butt of all detective novelists.

Miss Dorothy Sayers, when editing a collection of short detective stories, was obliging enough to trace the rise and fall of the detective of fiction throughout the ages.

She began with the ancients. Sherlock Holmes, she said, could not have reasoned more lucidly from the premises than did Æsop's fox when, asked by the lion why he had not come to pay his respects to the king of beasts, replied:

"I beg your Majesty's pardon, but I noticed the track of the animals that have already come to you; and, while I see many hoof-marks going in, I see none coming out. Till the animals that have entered your cave come out again, I prefer to remain in the open air."

Miss Sayers pointed out also that in the apocryphal story of Bel and the Dragon "the science of deduction from material clues in the popular Scotland Yard manner is reduced to its simplest expression," whereas the story of Susannah and the Elders may, on the other hand, "be

taken as foreshadowing the Gallic methods of eliciting the truth by the confrontation of witnesses."

The germ, however, of the modern cult of the amateur detective is in Edgar Allen Poe. In "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," we find the first traces of that prolific fountain from which all the modern Sherlock Holmeses flow. Dupin is that fountain:

> Residing in Paris during the spring and part of the summer of 18—, I there became acquainted with a Monsieur C. Auguste Dupin. This young gentleman was of an excellent—indeed, of an illustrious family; but, by a variety of untoward events, had been reduced to such poverty that the energy of his character succumbed beneath it, and he ceased to bestir himself to the world, or to care for the retrieval of his fortunes. By courtesy of his creditors, there still remained in his possession a small remnant of his patrimony; and, upon the income arising from this, he managed, by means of a rigorous economy, to procure the necessaries of life, without troubling himself about its superfluities. Books, indeed, were his sole luxuries, and in Paris these are easily obtained.

We are quickly afforded an example of the "peculiar analytic ability" which Dupin possesses:

> We were strolling one night down a long dirty street in the vicinity of the Palais Royal. Being both, apparently, occupied with thought, neither of us had spoken a syllable for fifteen minutes at least. All at once Dupin broke forth with these words:
>
> "He is a very little fellow, that's true, and would do better for the Théâtre des Variétés."
>
> "There can be no doubt of that," I replied unwittingly, and not at first observing (so much had I been absorbed in reflection) the extraordinary manner in which the speaker had chimed in with my meditations. In an instant I recollected myself, and my astonishment was profound.
>
> "Dupin," said I, gravely, "this is beyond comprehension. I do not hesitate to say that I am amazed, and can scarcely credit my senses. How was it possible you should know I was thinking of——?" Here I paused, to ascertain beyond a doubt whether he really knew of whom I thought.

"Of Chantilly," said he, "why do you pause? You were remarking to yourself that his diminutive figure unfitted him for tragedy."

This was precisely what had formed the subject of my reflections. Chantilly was a quondam cobbler of the Rue St. Denis, who, becoming stage-mad, had attempted the rôle of Xerxes, in Crébillon's tragedy so called, and been notoriously Pasquinaded for his pains.

"Tell me, for Heaven's sake," I exclaimed, "the method —if method there is—by which you have been enabled to fathom my soul in this matter." In fact, I was even more startled than I would have been willing to express.

"It was the fruiterer," replied my friend, "who brought you to the conclusion that the mender of soles was not of sufficient height for Xerxes *et id genus omne*."

"The fruiterer!—you astonish me—I know no fruiterer whomsoever."

"The man who ran up against you as we entered the street—it may have been fifteen minutes ago."

I now remembered that, in fact, a fruiterer, carrying upon his head a large basket of apples, had nearly thrown me down, by accident, as we passed from the Rue C—— into the thoroughfare where we stood; but what this had to do with Chantilly I could not possibly understand.

There was not a particle of *charlatanerie* about Dupin. "I will explain," he said, "and that you may comprehend all clearly, we will first retrace the course of your meditations, from the moment in which I spoke to you until that of the *rencontre* with the fruiterer in question. The larger links of the chain run thus—Chantilly, Orin, Dr. Nichols, Epicurus, Stereotomy, the street stones, the fruiterer."

There are few persons who have not, at some period of their lives, amused themselves in retracing the steps by which particular conclusions of their own minds have been attained. The occupation is often full of interest; and he who attempts it for the first time is astonished by the apparently illimitable distance and incoherence between the starting-point and the goal. What, then, must have been my amazement when I heard the Frenchman speak what he had just spoken, and when I could not help acknowledging that he had spoken the truth. He continued: "We had been talking of horses, if I remember aright, just before leaving the Rue C——. This was the last subject we discussed. As we crossed into this street, a fruiterer,

with a large basket upon his head, brushing quickly past us, thrust you upon a pile of paving-stones collected at a spot where the causeway is undergoing repair. You stepped upon one of the loose fragments, slipped, slightly sprained your ankle, appeared vexed or sulky, muttered a few words, turned to look at the pile, and then proceeded in silence. I was not particularly attentive to what you did; but observation has become with me, of late, a species of necessity.

"You kept your eyes upon the ground—glancing, with a petulant expression, at the holes and ruts in the pavement (so that I saw you were still thinking of the stones), until we reached the little alley called Lamartine, which has been paved, by way of experiment, with the overlapping and riveted blocks. Here your countenance brightened up, and, perceiving your lips move, I could not doubt that you murmured the word "stereotomy," a term very affectedly applied to this species of pavement. I knew that you could not say to yourself "stereotomy" without being brought to think of atomies, and thus of the theories of Epicurus; and since, when we discussed this subject not very long ago, I mentioned to you how singularly, yet with little notice, the vague guesses of that noble Greek had met with confirmation in the late nebular cosmogony, I felt that you could not avoid casting your eyes upwards to the great nebula in Orion, and I certainly expected that you would do so. You did look up; and I was now assured that I had correctly followed your steps. But in that bitter tirade upon Chantilly, which appeared in yesterday's *Musée*, the satirist, making some disgraceful allusions to the cobbler's change of name upon assuming the buskin, quoted a Latin line about which we have often conversed. I mean the line

Perdidit antiquum litera prima sonum.

I had told you that this was in reference to Orion, formerly written Urion; and, from certain pungencies connected with this explanation, I was aware that you could not have forgotten it. It was clear, therefore, that you would not fail to combine the two ideas of Orion and Chantilly. That you did combine them I saw by the character of the smile which passed over your lips. You thought of the poor cobbler's immolation. So far, you had been stooping in your gait; but now I saw you draw yourself up to your full

> height. I was then sure that you reflected upon the diminutive figure of Chantilly. At this point I interrupted your meditation to remark that as, in fact, he *was* a very little fellow—that Chantilly—he would do better at the Théâtre des Variétés."

I do not recall that Sherlock Holmes ever quoted Latin to our dear thick-headed Watson; but then, Chevalier C. Auguste Dupin, although he too possessed an "indolent humour" and an equal contempt of the official police, neither played the violin nor took drugs. To every genius his own trade-marks.

Who knows Dupin, knows them all. I need not mention here the more remarkable, not to say incredible, deductions and analyses of his myriad successors.

I should very much like to have the views of a competent member of the C.I.D. upon some of the claims made by various Dr. Watsons on behalf of their marvellous friends. They might confirm my theory that it takes two to make a great amateur detective—the detective himself and his Watson.

So long, indeed, as the average reader is content to align himself with the thick-headed friend, so long will the Dupins and Holmeses beget their profitable progeny. But I detect signs of a reaction. The rise to fame of Mr. Edgar Wallace, explicable while it is by his incredible fertility of plot and incident, owes something, I fancy, to the fact that his criminals are opposed by professional, not amateur, detectives; that Scotland Yard in his books is not a mere hospital for the feeble-minded.

And this, being in accordance with the everyday facts of life, will perhaps drive into their graves all the naturally indolent, marvellously analytical, Latin-quoting, drug-taking, violin-playing, utterly impossible amateur detectives. The private detective agencies will doubtless continue to watch the swing doors of the Stores; and Scotland Yard will do all the work and receive all too little of the credit of criminal investigations.

XIII

THE CRUELTIES OF DIVORCE

"IT is established beyond all question that for various reasons, amongst others improvident, reckless and early marriages, drunkenness, sensuality, brutality, immorality, lunacy, and crime, many marriages become absolute failures, and married life becomes either morally or physically, or both morally and physically, impossible."

"Unless the unions formed by marriages which have already ceased in fact can be dissolved by law, lives become hopelessly miserable, illegal unions are formed, immorality results or illegitimate children are born."

These two quotations from the Report of the Royal Commission upon Divorce set out clearly the social reasons why marriage, which all agree should in this realm be monogamous and lifelong, should be dissoluble. A law which prevents the dissolution of marriage in cases where for the most cogent reasons of the interests of society such a union ought to be terminated is a law both cruel and unjust.

No one denies that the Christian ideal of marriage is noble and uplifting, or that all married people ought to strive to attain that ideal. No one denies that it is best in the interests of society that a marriage once contracted should subsist, if possible, until it is dissolved by death. But if, in order to attain that ideal, a marriage, the parties to which can never attain it, shall nevertheless continue to exist as a mockery and a sham: if in order to attain the best interests of society a marriage, which

has in fact ceased to exist in all but the eye of the law, must perforce continue contrary to those interests, then truly the pursuit of ideals and the conversation of social interests are turned to their own destruction.

Marriage, though an institution necessary to the State, is not compulsory upon any citizen. Many foolish and improvident marriages are contracted, but no one draws from the fact the conclusion that marriage should be more narrowly restricted than it is. A female can contract a valid marriage at the age of twelve, though for over forty years it has been recognized that intercourse, even if invited, with a girl under the age of sixteen is so reprehensible as to constitute a criminal offence. Everyone recognizes that undue obstacles ought not to be placed in the way of those who seek to contract marriage, and the restrictions placed upon the right to do so are limited—so carefully limited in some respects as to be derisory; yet, when at once it is suggested that carefully restricted and guarded provision should be made to dissolve marriages which are no real marriages, it is at once argued that such facilities will lead to abuses and a train of reasoning is accepted which, if applied to the contracting of marriage, would be at once seen to be wrong and be rejected.

It must be admitted that there are people who marry though they have no adequate conception of the obligations which they thereby undertake. Such people are not confined to one class of the community. Their unions are like the unions of brute beasts; or are even more casually contracted and more lightly ended. Such people readily take advantage of any means of terminating a union which is merely carnal, and, whether divorce existed or not, would in fact make and unmake fresh alliances as their levity suggests or appetites demand. It is not with regard to such people that the grave problems of marriage and divorce can properly be discussed. Depravity derides religion and evades the law.

Fortunately the great majority of the people of this

country are decent people to whom marriage appeals for its sober joys and comfortable welfare. They desire the ideal: they respect the interests of society. Free to contract a marriage or to remain celibate, they deliberately elect to live in lawful union, realizing its responsibilities and undertaking its obligations with the intention, so far as in them lies, to make their marriage happy and successful. It is with regard to such men and women that these problems must be discussed, remembering that a member of this class has decided that a celibate life is not one which is suitable for him or her. Few indeed there are for whom such a life is right and proper.

When such a man or woman has contracted a marriage, which contrary to all hopes and resolutions has resulted in failure: when the marriage has turned out to be no marriage except in law: then so far as the law gives him or her no redress it is harsh and unreasoning.

By this it is not meant and cannot be suggested that divorce should be easy or that rules can be dispensed with. In all such discussions the true interests of society must never be lost sight of. But, viewing the law as it stands, divorce is cruel, because it is inadequate to do justice.

It is true that in recent years some attempt has been made to remove some of the more obvious injustices. The extension of facilities to poor persons, which were practically denied to them because of the cost, has enabled many to obtain redress which the law allowed but their means forbade. The ground of adultery applies in degree now to both man and woman. The temptation is greater in the case of a man; the consequences are not often so serious as in the case of a woman. The reason for the change is, and can only be, that the trespass is, on the part of the one as much of the other, a breach of the same solemn obligation of mutual fidelity.

It will surprise some to learn that if a man marries a woman who has deceived him, though she knows, and he does not, that she is pregnant by another man, the

marriage is valid, and he has no cause in law to complain. The old common law of purchase and sale certainly laid down the principle *caveat emptor*, but even the common law recognized that fraud going to the root of the matter vitiated the contract. Ecclesiastical law has a habit of being sterner, harsher and more unbending than the common law, perhaps because its makers did not live in the world and did not realize all that such rules mean to frailer humanity. Inheriting the old rule, the law of divorce gives no redress—a stupid unmeaning premium on female fraud. If such a trick were played on the sovereign, it would, by statute of Henry VIII, be high treason, but the divorce court pays no heed to this treason to the state of matrimony. The unfortunate husband must bear his lot patiently, waiting in the hope that his wife will be unfaithful. What a marriage! What a vindication of the divine institution! It may be said that there are few such cases. There are indeed not many, but most people know of at least one case, and none know of a marriage, thus violated in advance, which has proved a success. It is not that a husband should be able to annul his marriage for pre-nuptial unchastity, but that he shall not be forced without his knowledge or consent to father a bastard.

The law recognizes that a lunatic may be unable to marry; but it does not necessarily disqualify a person who is mentally afflicted. Such a one may marry and the other spouse realize the situation too late. The law will also tell him or her that it is too late. There is no redress, it may be objected. But surely the relatives would warn the spouse. Nothing is more certain than that relatives will as a rule do nothing to cast aspersions on their own sanity. The other person learns the truth, if at all, from others, and usually in such cases learns it too late.

There was a young professional man who married a charming girl. On their honeymoon he learned that she was mentally unstable. Gradually he found out

that her parents knew of it, but were unwilling to spoil her matrimonial chances. He was fond of his wife. Whenever she was fit to be free, he looked after her with tender devotion, though her suspicion that she would be "put away" embittered their life together. At last she sank, and after a few months' terrible anxiety she died. He was a strong young man, but within three months he, too, was dead. His ordeal had worn him out, a sacrifice to her relatives' natural desire "not to stand in the girl's way." Had he been warned, he would perhaps have done precisely the same as he did, but he would have done it with knowledge. In such cases the sane party is saddled with a marriage which is in no sense a mating, and the law gives no relief.

There is, further, the case of a man or woman who commits the criminal act of marrying while suffering from venereal disease in communicable form. Such a monster, unless he or she commits subsequent adultery, can, and does, hold the innocent party to the union. The law allows it and the Court awards it. Yet from such marriages can only come disease and misery. The promise of offspring is blighted. Happy indeed is the spouse who escapes contamination. Fortunate if abortion spoils the hope of posterity. From such unions come monsters and imbeciles useless to the State, an anxiety and expense to the parents. How can religion uphold such a union? Why should the law enforce the obligations of marriage when one party so callously disregards the ordinary canons of decency?

Indeed, it may be contended that such persons who thus defile the sacrament should be repelled by the Church, that religion should abhor the sin of one who presumes while pregnant to deceive an innocent party, or while suffering from so loathsome a disease to subject the other to contamination, frustrating one of the most holy objects of the institution. But the law, inheriting and continuing the old rules, sees no cause for alarm. The parties are competent: they have gone through the

prescribed form. *Caveat spousa!* All is well, and the blessing of God is invoked on this mockery. Whom God hath joined let no man put asunder—not even if the union be brought about by deceit and is defeated in its inception.

The most serious case of hardship resulting from our existing divorce laws is that of the deserted woman. The husband has left her, almost invariably to join another woman: in any case, he has deliberately elected to dissolve in fact a union which has become distasteful or irksome to him, and his wife is left bound in law but unmarried in fact. She cannot form another union recognized by the law. She must perforce live that celibate life which she has decided, and rightly decided, is unsuited to her. It may be said: "Well, she can get a divorce for adultery." Yes, she can if she can prove it, but perhaps the deserted wife has neither the time nor the means nor the opportunity even of ascertaining the whereabouts of her peccant spouse. He may be in the same town, or elsewhere in the realm, or he may have emigrated. In the working and lower middle classes, he is untraceable save by chance, and the tantalizing remedy of divorce is held perpetually just before her eyes. She may even be bound though he is dead, because he has passed beyond the bounds of her knowledge. He is dead to her, save that she is held in bond.

What is such a woman to do? Her husband has freed himself from his obligations, has committed a fundamental breach of the primary duty of a husband, and yet the detriment falls upon her, who does not desire to live alone, distinguished only from the unmarried by a ring, the shadow of a name, which only keeps alive the memory of a wrong. Often indeed there are children, the whole burden of whom is cast upon her. Such a woman, overwhelmed with the problems of life and deprived of the companionship, help and sympathy to which she is entitled from the society of her husband, is not comforted or aided nor is the State or religion

benefited by the circumstance that she remains married and consequently can only form a new alliance which the law will not recognize.

It is said that she need not marry again—the adequate remedy is separation, that many separated couples come together again. Such remarks do not touch the problem. Divorce is not a remedy that must be taken. A woman who does not desire a divorce need not ask for it. Why mock a woman who is subjected to a separation in fact by offering it to her as a means of redressing that wrong? Separation may be a salutary means of bringing to their senses couples who treat matrimony as a battleground. Separation is no true remedy for the deserted. In their case the union is, in fact, dissolved by the fundamental breach of its obligations by the other party, and the law should recognize that the injured party who desires married life but whose spouse has deliberately thwarted that lawful and proper desire shall no longer be faced with the dilemma, "Shall I be spinster or mistress? Wife I can never be, because I am a wife."

There is a type of man who is not averse to profit gained at the expense of his wife's virtue. In the lower walks of life such a husband often forces his wife into prostitution. Ought a woman to be forced by law to remain the wife of such a man? She may or may not be a victim. If she is as depraved as her husband she is beyond help; but if she is a victim then the law which denies her redress is cruel and unmeaning. If he misconducts himself then she can obtain relief, but if he forces her to commit acts which are wholly inconsistent with her status as a wife that fundamental breach of the relationship entitles her to sympathy and no more. It is cruel to say that she can leave him. She has elected to be a wife. She desires the security of married life. She has been foully wronged and injured in that relation, and the law mocks her by saying that she can cease to be a wife in all that matters but she must remain a wife tied to a filthy beast to whom marriage has no meaning.

Rules of divorce, which compel decent folk to live celibate, against their will, or to contract unions unsanctioned by the law and branding their offspring as bastards, are cruel and unjust.

In a similar condition are those who are the victims of habitual drunkards. There was a man once married to such a woman. Their home was filthy. Their furniture was sold for drink. Time after time he re-formed the house. As often as he did so as often did she sell it. Some of her children were born in prison. Several died whose lives might have been saved. His life was one unceasing misery, but he could obtain no redress. She did not commit adultery. One night he came home to find again, as on many preceding occasions, that there was nothing to eat and no money to buy food. On this occasion he for once lost his temper. An unlucky blow brought him into the dock charged with murder. He went to prison for manslaughter and his children went to the workhouse. For all of them it was a change for the better. Why say that he could have left her ? So he could, but he could not maintain himself and his children without setting up a new home with a woman in charge, and in his station of life he could not hire a housekeeper. He might have maintained a wife. Who was the guilty party—the husband or the law which forced him to continue such a union ?

His case is typical of many, though they do not often find their way into the criminal courts as he did. The wife of a habitual drunkard is in equal misery. Inevitably she has to face nights of terror, shut up alone with a man who has deprived himself of restraint, and subject to any torture that his drunken humour may suggest to him. It is not enough to say that she can separate. Permanent separation is a cessation of matrimony. A separation order recognizes that it is not reasonable to force a man or woman to continue married life in such circumstances. It may be that the

injured party does not desire divorce. In such cases the remedy in fact is at hand. It is not necessary to go to law to obtain a separation. A party who withdraws from such a life cannot be forced back to it, and if he or she thinks that departure for a time will effect a radical improvement, so be it. The cases for which divorce is demanded are not these. If the injured party in such cases wishes to be free—wholly free from a union which is an absolute failure—redress can only be given if the offender commits adultery.

But adultery is not the only cause which is a fundamental breach of marriage. A man does not marry a woman nor a woman a man merely on terms that neither shall have sexual intercourse with anyone else. Intercourse is not the be all and end all of matrimony, and to treat the breach of that obligation, important as it is, simply concentrates the legal importance of marriage in the commerce of male and female, and thus puts human relations on the same plane as that of the beasts that perish.

There is another class of victims whose fate is hard. A man or a woman may commit murder and be sentenced to death. The law has claimed a forfeit, and if it is paid, the culprit's wife or husband is free. The union is dissolved by death at the hand of the law. But sentence of death is not the last word. There is a prerogative of mercy which may even at the last moment stay the execution. The reprieved felon then passes into prison on a life sentence, rarely, if ever, commuted in less than twenty years. But the mercy which is extended to the offender has a further effect. He ceases to be dead in law and his marriage continues. But for that executive act, the other spouse, the innocent party, would have been able, if she so desired, to forget the past in another marriage to which not even the most rigid opponent of divorce would withhold his sanction. Now she is held bound. The act that lengthens her husband's life sterilizes hers, and she has no hope, no

chance even of a supervening cause of divorce, when the man is secluded from all opportunity of sexual misconduct. Her fate is not considered by the Home Secretary. It would not even be right for him to do so, but she at least ought to be able, if she desires, to obtain by decree that freedom to remarry that the rope would have given her. But the law says No.

There are many men and women who are alone in the world for another reason. They are tied to spouses who are incurably insane. The law recognizes that insanity is a bar to marriage, but only in a limited degree. It does not recognize that insanity in a form that would wholly prevent the patient from contracting marriage at all is a cause for terminating a contracted marriage where the disease is made manifest after the relationship has been established. It has been proposed that incurable insanity shall be a ground for divorce. The patient is not and cannot be harmed by such a decree. The sane party is tied for life. Many insane people live to a ripe age. The other, out in the world, anxious and willing to play a proper part in the life of the nation, is forbidden to do so because of a union which exists only in law and can never be resumed. Many medical men take a strong line as to insanity where criminal responsibility is concerned. It may well be that the case of a person married to one who is intermittently insane demands the same remedy. It is at least worthy of consideration whether any insane person should have the liberty to propagate his species. But there can be no doubt that marriage with an incurably insane person is no marriage at all, and to maintain it as a bar to the marriage of the sane and healthy party is of no advantage to anyone and a detriment to the State. The compulsory legal loneliness brought about in such cases by the law of divorce is a needless cruelty.

It may be said: But what about the patient? Is he or she to be left without means and without care? The answer is: Not at all. The law has always recog-

nized that the physical welfare of an insane person must be provided for, even at the expense of creditors. If the insane person's fortune is insufficient for his maintenance and the other party can contribute to that maintenance, there is and should be no reason why the obligation should pass with the marriage. What is intolerable is that the living dead should exist as husband or wife only to confront the other with the dilemma : celibacy or sin ?

I may perhaps cite the words that I used in Rutherford *v.* Richardson (1923) A.C.1. It will be remembered that the effect of the decision was to leave Mrs. Rutherford bound in matrimony. The law left no option, and in reluctantly giving effect to the principles which govern her case I said : " It is an unfortunate circumstance that she should thus be tied for life to a dangerous, violent and homicidal lunatic, after having for many years suffered both in body and in spirit from his unfaithfulness and his cruelty. He is forty-one years of age and she is forty. We need take little account of his feelings. As regards her, we are bound to note that during many more years, unless death remove him or release her, she must look forward to a loneliness from which she can escape only by a violation of the moral law. To some this may appear a harsh, and even an inhuman, result, but such is the law of England. Your Lordship cannot, because of the sympathy you must all feel for this unhappy victim of our marriage laws, impeach the chastity of a woman, equally innocent, who also is entitled to the sympathy and shelter of the law. The true remedy lies outside any Court of Law ; it lies beyond the scope of your Lordship's faculties, sitting as the supreme appellate tribunal. It rests with Parliament (if and when it thinks proper) to end a state of things which, in a civilized community and in the name of morality, imposes such an intolerable hardship upon innocent men and women."

XIV

NEW LIGHT ON PRESIDENT WILSON

THE publication of Colonel House's intimate documents marked a new era in the form which War literature has assumed and, it may be added, must furnish a new terror to the conversations of the Great. It would appear that Colonel House's documents were given to Yale University some six or seven years ago for deposit in the University Library. Colonel House has given full permission to the very careful editor, Dr. Seymour, for the publication of all the documents contained in these volumes.

The result is as remarkable as it is valuable. Many of the important personages who are dealt with, with the very striking exception of President Wilson, are still alive. We do not know whether their permission was obtained before publishing in the greatest detail the most private conversations upon the most delicate subjects. If such permission was not obtained, the book, interesting as it is, must be pronounced an extraordinary indiscretion. For conversations upon subjects of vital importance, in the middle of a great war, will obviously become impossible if a note is to be taken by the discreet secretary of one of those who takes part, and reproduced with exact fidelity a few years afterwards.

This is not the only peculiarity of the book. It cannot indeed be said that Colonel House is the Boswell to President Wilson's Johnson. Indeed, the Colonel—to give him a title which he repudiates but by which he was always known—contrives to appear far more like Dr. Johnson, and to present the President as displaying

many of the weaknesses and inconsistencies of Boswell. The real truth upon this matter would appear to be that Colonel House might not himself have cared to write a book giving the impressions of himself and his hero which this book undoubtedly gives. He has, therefore, handed over the whole of the papers to Dr. Seymour, and left him to make the very damaging assault upon the reputation of President Wilson which this book undoubtedly constitutes. Dr. Seymour, in fact, is the Boswell of the business; and Colonel House the hero, who is kind enough to supply very ample material for his own aggrandizement.

This is not to suggest that Colonel House is not a very remarkable man. He most undoubtedly is. We suspected it before; and this book proves it. We cannot pause here for more than a moment to dwell upon the astute and uncanny skill with which the Colonel, always in the background, pulled the wires of Texan politics for so many years. He proved himself, indeed, even in those early days, what he was so long to remain—incomparably the greatest wire-puller of any country in the world. And in Texas, as later on in the great world theatre, he was always content—and seemed, indeed, to desire—to be prompting in the wings rather than declaiming in the limelight. Indeed, not the least interesting point psychologically about Colonel House is that he should have decided so suddenly, and so late in the day, to have claimed for himself publicly the notoriety of an influence which he was at so much pains to conceal over a period of so many years. We feel the same kind of surprise that his contemporaries would have felt if the late Sir George Lewis had suddenly published an autobiography containing a faithful statement of the very important part which that acute and experienced solicitor bore in the anxieties of so many illustrious houses. It is, indeed, impossible to rise from the study of these volumes without reaching the conclusion that Colonel House was by no means so

indifferent to fame and to public reputation as he contrived to appear for so many years; perhaps, indeed, the inference would not be very unfair that the reason for a long and unpalatable self-suppression was to be found in the fact that an earlier revelation must almost certainly have paralysed and brought to an end his influence.

These speculations are of much abstract interest. What is certain is that the publication of the Colonel's book leaves him a very much larger figure than even his admirers had suspected; and the President a much smaller one than his detractors have ever claimed.

When the Colonel grew weary of the applause of Texas, he looked round for new worlds to conquer. He had, we are told, since boyhood been a politician. He decided that a Presidential election would afford him the material for an effort worthy of his powers, and the amazing thing is that he was right. I suspect that he somewhat underrates the part played by others in supporting the candidature of Governor Wilson. These pages, at any rate, give the whole of the credit to the Colonel. Indeed, quiet and soothing as our hero's conversation and methods invariably are, he is by no means lacking in push, or over-embarrassed by modesty. But, making full allowance for these tendencies, these pages establish the fact that House played a great, if not a decisive, part in the selection and in the ultimate triumph of President Wilson.

When House first decided to throw the handkerchief to Wilson, he did not even know him; but in the discreet little New York house, unobtrusive as the Colonel himself, which was to see so many momentous meetings in the future, they first met at a quiet meal in order that House might throw his eye over the man he was to make so great. To use a humble phrase, the two men "clicked" at once. Wilson was superficially cold, slow to give confidence, inapt to form new and deep friendships. But he found at once, in the assiduous,

subtle, accommodating, and indispensable House, one who was soon to become, in his own phrase, his "other self." And so Wilson, who knew little or nothing about electioneering, was deftly whisked along the mazes of the most baffling and incalculable election campaign in the world, until he reached the dazzling pinnacle of victory. Not even House, of course, could have procured success if it had not been for the candidature of Theodore Roosevelt. Indeed, ironically enough, no other man than Roosevelt, who grew to detest him, made Wilson President. But, accepting the advantages and disadvantages of the whole position, it must be accounted almost incredible that Wilson would ever have inhabited the White House had it not been for the subtle intuitions, machinations, and contrivances of Colonel House.

When Wilson became President, House's influence had already, in this short space of time, become supreme. He is consulted as to the choice of almost every Cabinet Minister. He balances their claims. He gives advice as to who should become Attorney-General. And, indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that, from the day on which President Wilson became President until that on which he sailed to the Peace Conference, the little finger of House counted for more than the accumulated loins of all the President's orthodox colleagues. Occasionally, indeed, we find House, when recommending vital decisions in the sphere of a particular Cabinet Minister, writing (when he and the President had made up their minds): "Would it not be well if you were to mention the matter to X?"

This book leaves us in no doubt as to who was the originator of the very successful domestic policy, from the democratic point of view, which the President proceeded to carry out. The process, indeed, becomes tedious. Colonel House conceives the desirability of certain legislation. He presses it on the President, who replies with enthusiasm. And so it is decided. House gives a few persuasive meals, passes through innumerable

diplomatic interviews; the President makes a majestic and eloquent speech; with the result at the end that we find on the Statute Book what was considered, at least by contemporary democratic opinion, a masterpiece of judicious statecraft.

Soon even domestic triumphs pall upon Colonel House. Nothing will satisfy him but a Pan-American Federation, which was, by anticipation, to be a kind of League of Nations for the New World. The idea is broached to the President, who never at any time of his life knew anything whatever about foreign affairs, and is received by him with the usual enthusiasm. And so, once again, House supplies the idea and the driving power. This particular scheme, in this respect resembling (it must be admitted) so many of the Colonel's larger efforts, somewhat missed fire. And here we find for the first time a note which proves recurrent when he meets a still larger world and a still graver crisis. Those who do not at once adopt his nimble and altruistic ideas and translate them into fact are almost invariably "stupid." It never even seems remotely to strike Colonel House that he may be wrong himself. Everyone who disagrees with him is either foolish or the victim of nerves. He plunges time after time into the most tremendous scenes, the atmosphere of which is wholly strange to him; he forms without hesitation or self-distrust a clear-cut view; he adheres to it, whatever changes take place; and, when confronted by failure at the last, he is still found marvelling at the obtuseness of his fellow-men. In this volume he ladles out censure with the utmost liberality; but we do not recall one single occasion on which he ever conceives that he made the smallest error of any kind. And yet, as we hope presently to show, he most ludicrously misconceived all the actualities of the European situation in which he was to play so large a part.

These reflections upon the Colonel's eupeptic complacency must not be understood as meaning that we

underrate his undoubtedly great abilities. He had, up to a point, imagination; up to a point, knowledge; he had immense industry; a very amazing judgment of men; and a degree of quiet pertinacity which has not often been exceeded. We have spoken of his knowledge of men. He certainly varied his methods, but he would, we think, have agreed with Disraeli that flattery is more often than not the most useful arrow in the quiver. Sometimes, indeed, his compliments to President Wilson are almost nauseating, although it must be observed that even his idol and hero by no means escapes posthumous but secret castigation when he disagrees, as he occasionally did, with his adviser.

The Pan-American League had to give way to the restless desire of Colonel House to play a hand in an even larger game. We doubt whether President Wilson had given a quarter of an hour's consideration to the European situation when, in 1914, Colonel House suggested that the condition of affairs in that continent was one of grave menace which, however, might be happily composed by the House "touch." President Wilson most readily assented to this proposal. Indeed, an ill-natured critic, though we do not share this view, draws an inference from the uniform enthusiasm with which the President welcomed House's repeated and protracted political excursions to Europe. Our traveller takes great credit to himself for the prevision which taught him that a general conflagration was so soon to take place. There was, in fact, hardly a statesman of conspicuous eminence who did not know that Europe was carrying matches in a powder magazine. Lord Roberts had written years before:

> We may stand still. Germany always advances, and the direction of her advance, the line along which she is moving, is now most manifest. It is towards that consummation which I have described—a complete supremacy by land and sea. She has built a mighty fleet; but, as if nothing were done so long as anything stands between her and her goal,

> still she presses on—here establishing a new Heligoland—for every available island in the North Sea has now been strongly fortified—there encircling a Holland in a network of new canals, and deepening old river beds for the swifter transport of the munitions of war, whether of her army or her navy. Contrasted with our own apathy, our puerile and spasmodic efforts, how impressive is this magnificent and unresting energy! It has the mark of true greatness; it extorts admiration even from those against whom it is directed.

The real truth was that, if the powerful clique of soldiers and sailors who surrounded the Kaiser desired war, nothing could prevent it. And neither we nor House had the slightest control over these men. The proposals which he was authorized to make on the visit which immediately preceded the War—or which it would be more accurate to suggest that he had himself suggested to Wilson—had not the slightest correspondence with the actual facts of the European situation. Germany was not looking for a pact to keep the peace guaranteed by the United States, Great Britain, herself, and France. She was looking, with undue apprehension, at the increase of man-power in Russia; at the development of Russian strategic railways; and was awaiting feverishly to determine the moment which promised success to a lightning and unheralded campaign. Personally, I have not the slightest doubt that, in the private appraisement of the statesmen of Germany, House was regarded as a recurrent peripatetic joke. His mentality, his simple enthusiasms, and his neat little formulæ belonged to a world in which they did not live and did not desire to live. To put the matter shortly, Germany was clear that the sword had not yet done its work. Any European accident of whatsoever kind which could be made a pretext for war would be made a pretext, if it appeared to promise a swift and dazzling success.

And so the War came. It is interesting to notice the following entry in the diary of Colonel House, dated August 30th, 1914: "The President goes even farther

than I in his condemnation of Germany's part in this war." House's own attitude is not always quite rigidly consistent upon this very important point. On the whole, he has no doubt that the responsibility was that of Germany. But, in moments of disappointment at the attitude of England, he is not incapable of weakening a little in his attitude. Never for one single moment did he attain to the flaming conviction of Ambassador Page. And when annoyed by Page's unconquerable advocacy of the Allied cause, he has the impertinence (from the English point of view) to suggest that Page should be recalled to the United States for a short time to "Americanize" him. Considering that hardly anyone in the United States had a clear and coherent view of the matter; considering that for years President Wilson and his Cabinet vacillated and continued to vacillate; considering that the President in one maladroit sentence after another continued to suggest that there was little to choose in morality between the combatants, we cannot think that Ambassador Page was greatly to blame if he anticipated the conclusions which the American Government by a very sudden change was destined to make. Nor can we readily forget—though we recognize much kindness in House's attitude to this country—that he first made the statement in conversation with Englishmen that, if France had violated the neutrality of Belgium in order to march upon Germany, England would have been fighting by her side. We have never disputed Colonel House's honesty, and, therefore, we must suppose that he really believed this. To admit this is to make it plain how ludicrously ill-equipped he was to understand English feeling or to intervene effectively in the European conflict. This charge is unfair, unfriendly, and untrue. It is one of those things about which one cannot argue, but on which there is, nevertheless, complete certainty. And if Colonel House never really understood the English (in his heart he was pleased to think us slow and stupid), still less did he

understand the French and the Germans. And so the first crusade failed, as it was predestined to fail, for the reasons which have already been examined.

We have not space here to deal with House's activities and those of the President between his return to the United States and his visit to Europe in 1915. It is very interesting to find him writing on September 28th, 1914:

> I find the President singularly lacking in appreciation of the importance of this European crisis. He seems more interested in domestic affairs, and I find it difficult to get his attention centred upon the one big question.
>
> Congress will adjourn now within a few days, and when it is out of the way it is my purpose to make a drive at the President, and try and get him absorbed in the greatest problem of world-wide interest that has ever come or may ever come before a President of the United States.

And then again on October 22nd, 1914:

> I am sorry to say, as I have said before, that the President does not seem to have a proper sense of proportion as between domestic and foreign affairs. I suppose it is the Washington atmosphere that has gripped him, as it does everyone else who lives there, and the work of the day largely obscures the tremendous world issues that are now before us.

We must also do House the justice to admit that at this period he seldom ceased to urge the President to make some naval and military preparation. But here the President was adamant. Dr. Seymour summarizes the situation (volume 1, page 303) in the following words:

> Because of such factors Colonel House found himself in complete agreement with the preparedness crusade, and he urged that immediate steps be taken to strengthen both the army and the navy. He found the President cold. Wilson did not visualize the rôle America might play in the same fashion as House; he believed that the United States should give an example of pacific idealism which was at the other pole from military preparation, and he

> felt himself supported by the mass of public opinion which, until aroused by the peril and the opportunity of the situation, opposed the sacrifices necessary to preparedness.

And a little later the professor summarizes the position as follows:

> The arguments of House produced no immediate effect upon the President, who, in his annual message to Congress, refused to approve plans for a large reserve force and the principle of compulsory training; Wilson insisted that any revolution in our established military policy (if policy it might be called) would indicate that we had been "thrown off our balance by a war with which we have nothing to do, whose causes cannot touch us." Left thus without guidance, except of a negative sort, public opinion was slow to perceive the need of military efficiency.

The extract last quoted gives us Dr. Seymour's estimate of President Wilson's attitude at a very critical moment. There is every reason for supposing (indeed he had told us so) that this was also House's view. What, then, is the true conclusion? We have no vestige of doubt as to the answer. President Wilson had drifted into considerable trouble and incurred grave antagonisms in a rather old-maidish and unsuccessful attempt to keep Princeton University "safe from democracy." He certainly never studied foreign politics amid his academic duties. Nor was the period of his Governorship likely to equip in this respect the future pacificator of the world for his very considerable task. He naturally never flattered the politics of Europe by consideration in his Presidential campaign; and the years of House-inspired triumph which followed, in the field of domestic legislation, afford little space for education in world politics.

He never thought of Pan-American Union until the ever-germinating House put the idea into his head. It is, indeed, hardly an exaggeration to say that in the month of August, 1914, an average Sunday School teacher away down in Minneapolis was hardly less qualified

to form a just appreciation of European politics than President Wilson.

Here was precisely the soil which the facile and well supplied watering pot (or, shall we say, oil flagon ?) of Colonel House required. "I supply the ideas," the retiring Colonel might have said, "you bring into the hotchpot your position and your rhetoric; and you get the glory—till you die." And so we find, as a running refrain in the Colonel's mellifluous correspondence, a rosy picture of a mad world made sane by the inspired intervention of the Super-Neutral (the Colonel, of course, as all the world knew, hanging on as usual by the coat tails). The President contemplated this new rôle and began to like it. It is, indeed, agreeable to anyone to be placed in a position which by its very nature presupposes a great superiority over all those among whom your part is to be played. And if the superiority be moral the prospect to certain natures becomes at first dazzling and soon irresistible. Accordingly, we find our President (and even at times almost our Colonel) forgetting their swift and early perception that Germany, and Germany alone, was to blame for the War. But if the President was to descend from the mountain, an awe-inspiring (almost a divine) figure, to bestow the tablets of peace upon a generally receptive world, it was evident that his early anti-German impulses must, at least in their public expression, undergo some soothing modification. And now, accordingly, begins the era in which one "is too proud to fight;" in which there is, after all, little to choose between the motives and the methods of the two schools of belligerents. Both, indeed, have now declined rather into the rôle of naughty children for whom the bland pedagogue is waiting, as the case may require, with a cake or a cane. And so we approach the period of allocutary admonition. "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth."

More and more the President became enamoured, very creditably, of the Sermon on the Mount. Ever

more and more swiftly he became convinced that he was the one man living who could bring it up to date.

We approach now the second stage in the Colonel's Odyssey. Early in January, 1915, he made up his mind, naturally with the full approval of the President, to revisit Europe in the modest hope of evolving specific proposals acceptable to the belligerents. On January 12th he dined with the President at Washington. After dinner, the President read so long from some comparatively trivial book that House observes in his diary:

> I was surprised that he preferred to do this rather than discuss the matters of importance we had between us. He evidently had confidence in my doing the work I came to Washington for without his help.

About the same time the Colonel records in a pleasant metaphor, which he rather affects, that the President was of opinion that he (House) would be able to "button up" the Pan-American business before he left.

In order to form a balanced opinion of the judgment of those who thought that a special visit to Europe on the part of a private envoy coming from the President might at this moment contribute to the formation of a rapid peace, it may be well to recall the following facts:

1. The reaction of disappointment among the Germans at the untoward result of the Battle of the Marne had almost spent its force. The long stalemate of the Aisne had been followed by the race to the sea; in the resultant trench warfare there was advantage to neither side.

2. Germany was in complete occupation of Belgium and the Northern Provinces of France. From the territory so conquered there was not the slightest prospect within any forseeable period of dislodging her by force.

3. The fierce Russian thrust had been definitely arrested and broken by Hindenburg in the marshes of Tannenburg. From a further Russian

assault little was to be apprehended in the near future.

4. The full extent of the strategical disaster sustained at the Marne had been concealed from the German people. Claims of victory were everywhere made. In the military situation as it actually was, and still more as it was officially pictured in Germany, it would have been absolutely impossible for any Government, despotic or democratic, to make the only kind of peace which elementary considerations of honour and security permitted the Allies to accept.

All these facts were, or should have been, known both to the President and to Colonel House. It is probably true that no man then living, and, indeed, that no man who ever lived, could, at that stage, unless he brought with him compulsive forces, of which the Colonel had none, induce a peace.

And yet we find him on January 3rd sailing, quietly confident, from New York in the *Lusitania*. He was over-persuaded by Sir Cecil Spring-Rice to see the Russian and French Ambassadors before he left. Their warnings were not wanting. The Colonel's diary contains a brief note:

> Both Jusserand and Bakhmetieff were violent in their denunciation of the Germans and evinced a total lack of belief in their sincerity. They thought my mission would be entirely fruitless.

But, on the other hand, on January 14th he had what he describes as an interesting "and satisfactory talk" with the German Ambassador, Count Bernstorff.

As soon as he arrived he lunched with Sir Edward Grey. They had a talk which, in view of what is universally known now, and what was generally known then, can only be described as comic. The Colonel suggests that, if France insists upon Alsace-Lorraine, these provinces might be neutralized so that France and Germany "could only get at one another by sea."

Grey thought that Russia might be satisfied with Constantinople. The restoration with indemnity of Belgium and the northern provinces of France was, of course, assumed.

In the course of the discussion, Grey made an interesting suggestion which undoubtedly contained the germinal conception of the League of Nations. Such a scheme (or even the idea of it) had not, as far as one could judge, up to that time, been very particularly considered either by the President or by his emissary. Grey insisted that the United States should, as part of a general settlement, come into some general guarantee for world-wide peace. The Colonel, oddly enough, countered this by a very minor suggestion that all the nations of the world should meet together when peace was made, in a kind of magnified Hague Conference, to re-regulate the rules of war. Dr. Seymour adds the interesting note:

> Through Colonel House, Grey's conviction was ultimately impressed upon President Wilson, and was finally translated into the Covenant of the League.

On February 10th Grey and he had another interview, which House records as follows:

> Sir Edward said he had told Delcassé, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, of my visit and of our conversation of Sunday.
>
> Delcassé thought that the Allies had not yet achieved sufficient military success to begin negotiations, and he believed with Sir Edward that the Germans were insincere.

On February 11th he lunched with Sir William Tyrrell of the Foreign Office, and his diary contains a passage as interesting as it is surprising:

> Tyrrell believed that in the convention I suggested yesterday, if an agreement should be made between all the Powers, neutral and belligerent, to establish rules governing future warfare, Great Britain would consent to the absolute freedom of merchantmen of all nations to sail the seas in time of war unmolested. This was brought out in our conference

> yesterday, but Tyrrell recognized that the submarine had changed the status of maritime warfare, and in the future Great Britain would be better protected by such a policy than she has been in the past by maintaining an overwhelming Navy.

It is not our purpose here to examine the authority of this opinion upon the point. Its present interest lies in the fact that Colonel House, hitherto bankrupt, immediately clutched at this straw, so that it became henceforward what we may describe as the *pièce de résistance* of his 1915 tour.

Henceforward, the good Colonel obligingly explains to his English friends how much they would gain by the Freedom of the Seas, while we may surmise that, in his well-known persuasive way, he repeated (indeed, he almost tells us so) a similar argument in Berlin. But no doubt the Colonel would retort that both would gain, so that he was right in both cases.

It is, however, amusing to notice that until this conversation with Sir William Tyrrell, Colonel House does not give the slightest indication that he had come to Europe with any practical suggestion of the slightest value or, indeed, with any practical suggestion at all. Henceforward the freedom of the seas becomes the *tabula in naufragio*. It is not only the chief, it is the only, dish in the banquet to which he invites the belligerents.

On February 12th House received the invitation from the Germans for which he had been waiting. Dr. Seymour observes of it, with great humour, that it was "not entirely satisfactory." In fact, it contained the following passage:

> What you suggest concerning the paying of an indemnity to Belgium seems hardly feasible to me. Our campaign in that country has caused the German nation such infinite sacrifice of human life that anything in the form of such a decided yielding to the wishes of our opponents would cause the most bitter feeling among our people.
>
> I hear that you are on your way to England at this moment, and that a trip to Germany is in view. I shall be

> most happy to see you, should you carry out your intention, and shall hope for a personal interview more satisfactory than is possible corresponding by letter.
>
> ZIMMERMAN.

We should have been interested in studying the countenance of Herr Zimmerman had he been informed at this time of the Colonel's plans in relation to Alsace-Lorraine and Constantinople.

A letter to the President of February 15th contains two interesting passages:

> As long as the military forces of Germany are successful as now, the militarists will not permit any suggestion of peace.

It would, perhaps, be too critical to point out that this was exactly the advice which had been given to House in the interview (which he did not desire) at Washington by the French and Russian Ambassadors. The letter continues:

> I am formulating in my own mind, and am unravelling from time to time to Grey and others in authority, to see how far it is feasible, a plan for a general convention of all neutral and belligerent nations of the world, at which you will be called upon to preside, and which should be called upon your invitation.

One may, perhaps, suspect, without undue cynicism, that the *bouquet* of this communication is to be found in its concluding words.

On February 15th the American Ambassador at Berlin, Gerard, writes to House urging immediate peace proposals, but adding this promising sentence:

> Germany will pay no indemnity to Belgium or anyone else.

On February 23rd our traveller records in a letter to the President that Grey had outlined his general proposals to the Russian Minister of Finance and the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, who had both recently

been in London, and that he had asked them whether or not they would like to have a conference with House.

> They both [records the Colonel] preferred not doing so, stating that the time was not opportune for peace proposals, for the reason that it was certain that Germany, being so far successful, would not acquiesce in such terms as the Allied Governments would demand.

At the same time the President was informed that the British public and the majority of the Cabinet would not look with any greater favour upon the only terms that Germany would now concede than would France and Russia. The Colonel himself adds a useful warning to the President:

> You may put it down as a certainty that Germany will only use you if it suits her purposes to do so, and she will not be deterred from this if at any time it is to her advantage to accept your good offices.

We may, therefore, on the eve of the Colonel's journey to Berlin, summarize the very promising material with which he had to deal—a summary, it may once again be pointed out, which could equally well have been made in Washington:

1. The Allies could not honourably make peace without securing a withdrawal from Belgium and northern France and the payment of due indemnity for damage done. In this view House fully concurred.

2. No one in Germany who possessed a vestige of authority had, in the year 1915, the slightest intention of giving up an inch of Belgian or French territory or of paying a farthing in the way of indemnity.

Undeterred by these small difficulties, the Colonel goes hopefully on, observing in a letter to the President that he proposes to keep "up his sleeve" the supposed English readiness to concede the principle of the Freedom of the Seas. Without the slightest desire to say any-

thing unkind, we must ask leave to observe that the Colonel's sleeve was a very suitable *nidus* for this fantastic proposal.

However, on March 11th he leaves England for Paris and Berlin, having interviews, coming and going, with French Ministers. But these consisted almost entirely of empty civilities. He reports, however, rather characteristically to the President:

> The main thing accomplished is that France has, at least tentatively, accepted you as mediator, and this, I think, is much.

Of concessions on the part of the French, there was not, of course, the slightest indication. Dr. Seymour writes:

> The aspirations of the French for territorial annexation put out of court immediately the basis for peace which he had discussed with Grey.

A message from Gerard indicated that the Germans were equally determined upon wide annexations.

On March 21st House writes from Berlin to a friend:

> I cannot write you very fully except to say that there is nothing that even looks like peace this side. . . . It looks as if there would have to be a decisive victory on one side or the other before parleys could begin.

On March 20th he writes to the President:

> It is plain at the moment that some reverse will have to be encountered by one or other of the belligerents before any Government will dare propose parleys.

On March 22nd Zimmerman stated to House:

> If peace parleys were begun now upon any terms, they would have no chance of acceptance. It would mean the overthrow of this Government and of the Kaiser.

On March 26th the Colonel writes sadly to the President:

> I feel much disappointment that we were misled into believing that peace parleys might be begun upon a basis of evacuation of France and Belgium.

Who, it may reasonably be asked, misled them? All that was left was to play Sir William Tyrrell's cards and hold out before the Germans the prospect of the Freedom of the Seas.

> I told the Chancellor [writes House to the President on March 27th] that the United States would be justified in bringing pressure upon England in this direction, for our people had a common interest with Germany in that question.

We may make the point quite clear that, whatever Sir Edward Grey and Sir William Tyrrell might be willing to discuss, the English people had neither then, nor at any time, the slightest intention of surrendering in return for paper terms the weapon which was afforded to them by the strength of the British Fleet.

And it may usefully be noticed that, when America herself came into the War, she immediately associated herself with the greatest enthusiasm in all those activities of the British Fleet which she had spent three years in denouncing, condemning, and trying to turn into money.

On April 15th the Colonel writes, so far as we know, for the first time, to the American Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Bryan:

> Germany is not willing to evacuate Belgium at all, nor even France without an indemnity. Count von Bernstorff suggests that this could be arranged wider afield. The Allies, of course, will not consent to anything less; and there the situation rests.

Things in Paris, which he had revisited, were even worse.

> I can see [he writes on April 15th] from my interviews, not only with Delcassé and Poincaré but with others, that I would have made a mistake if I had attempted to talk peace at this time.

And so House returns to London. He resumes discussions with Sir Edward Grey on that which has now become his particular topic. He has now reached

a point at which he finds himself in a position to "outline" to Grey the full plan of the Freedom of the Seas. He adds again an interesting passage:

> Sir Edward tells me that public opinion here will have to be educated in this direction, particularly the Conservatives, and I shall endeavour to do this.
>
> We will have to keep this programme absolutely confidential between yourself, Sir Edward, and myself; and even the men I shall discuss these things with will not know our full purposes.

With such a discreet prospect House was completely happy. To bring to an end a long, and, it may be added, a somewhat futile story, the *Lusitania* was sunk on the 7th May. This tragic event, as Dr. Seymour observes, destroyed all hope of beginning negotiations with Germany and Great Britain. It may, however, be added, that there was no hope, and never had been any, of any successful negotiations at this stage. The proposal made by House to Grey (originally borrowed from Tyrrell) had been that England should abandon her maritime policy, and that Germany should desist from her submarine campaign against merchantmen.

Colonel House conveys the news to the President in a letter dated 25th May:

> London, 25th May, 1915.
>
> I have the following cable from Gerard:
>
> I gave your suggestion to von Jagow this morning. This proposition of permitting the passage of food in return for the cessation of submarine methods has already been made and declined. If raw materials are added, perhaps the matter can be arranged. Germany is in no need of food.
>
> Of course, the conditions they make are impossible. This does away with their contention that the starving of Germany justifies their submarine policy. I think this strengthens your already unassailable position.
>
> EDWARD HOUSE.

Of the sinking of the *Lusitania*, House writes to the

President finely and truly, and this, be it observed, in May, 1915 :

> America has come to the parting of the ways, when she must determine whether she stands for civilized or uncivilized warfare. We can no longer remain neutral or spectators. Our action in this crisis will determine the part we will play when peace is made, and how far we may influence a settlement for the lasting good of humanity. We are being weighed in the balance, and our position amongst nations is being assessed by mankind.
>
> EDWARD HOUSE.

On 30th May he writes :

> I have concluded that war with Germany is inevitable, and this afternoon at 6 o'clock I decided to go home on the s.s. *St. Paul*, on Saturday.
>
> I told Plunkett it was my purpose to persuade the President not to conduct a milk and water warfare but to put all the strength, all the vitality, and all the energy of our nation into it, so that Europe may remember for a century what it meant to provoke the peaceful nation into war.

The two passages last quoted suggest the impression that Colonel House was not much better informed of the probable action of the President than he had been of the actual conditions in Europe. The 1915 attempt had ended, as it was bound to end, in complete failure. It is proper to add that it was founded upon insufficient knowledge, and a kind of amateurish self-sufficiency which afforded no prospect whatever at any stage of success.

Far the best commentary upon it was made in his diary by that staunch and sagacious statesman, Ambassador Page. He wrote on April 30th, 1915 :

> *Concerning Peace :*
>
> The German civil authorities want peace, and so does one faction of the military party. But how can they save their faces ? They have made their people believe that they are at once the persecuted and the victorious. If they stop,

> how can they explain their stopping? The people might rend them. The ingenious loophole discovered by House is mere moonshine, viz., the Freedom of the Seas in war. This is a one-sided proposition, unless they couple with it the Freedom of the Land in war also, which is nonsense. Nothing can be done, then, until some unfavourable military event brings the new mind to the Germans. Peace talk, therefore, is yet mere moonshine. House has been to Berlin from London, thence to Paris, then back to London again, from Nowhere (as far as peace is concerned) to Nowhere again.

And to this nothing can be added without spoiling it.

On his return to America, Colonel House placed the failure of his negotiations a little more exclusively upon the sinking of the *Lusitania* than the circumstances altogether permitted. He had, in fact, in letters which have already been quoted, made it plain that in no event was there the slightest prospect of any real peace in the existing circumstances, whether the *Lusitania* had been sunk or not.

On his return, he by no means abandoned his intentions, though the limits of space at our disposal make it necessary to pass somewhat rapidly to the events of 1916.

But, in passing, we cannot resist quoting a passage from his diary of December 15th, 1915, which illustrates very vividly both the volatility and the self-conceit of the diarist:

> I called the President's attention to the impossibility of doing things quickly in London. Matters that he and I would settle in a day would easily occupy a week, or perhaps two, there.
>
> I asked him to remember the slowness of the British mind, as exhibited even in such a crisis as this war. They have been a year and a half getting thoroughly awakened to the situation. The President wondered if I could not facilitate matters somewhat by going to France earlier than anticipated and getting them to help rush.

We confess, in this extract, to some feeling of irritation at the complacent cocksureness of the Colonel. What

did he and the President settle in a day in relation to the War? They never settled anything but moonshine proposals. When House left England he was persuaded that War would be declared at once. We suppose that this was an instance of quick settlement.

Nor are we enamoured of his patronizing reference to "the slowness of the British mind." Patience completely fails us when we find him complaining that we had been a year and a half getting "thoroughly awakened to the situation." How long did it take the President? And, if it comes to that, how long did it take the American nation?

The same entry contains an illuminating extract from one of Gerard's letters. The Kaiser had said that he

> would attend to America when this war was over; that President Wilson's attitude regarding Germany eliminated him from any possibility of acting as mediator.

So much for the success of the diplomacy in Berlin.

However, another of these visits was arranged without, so far as we can judge, the least serious attempt to re-adjust an understanding which had already been proved so faulty.

On December 28th Colonel House set sail, reaching Falmouth on January 5th. On January 7th he reports that he had conferences with Grey and Balfour separately.

> Their minds [he writes] run parallel with ours, but I doubt their colleagues.

In a further passage he writes:

> Grey is now in favour of the Freedom of the Seas, provided it includes the elimination of militarism, and further provided we will join in a general covenant to sustain it.

The general scheme which House was now putting forward embraced, we believe, the following proposals:

1. The British were to agree to the Freedom of the Seas (whatever that might mean).
2. The Germans were to give up submarine warfare.

3. A League of Nations was to be formed contemporaneously with the making of peace to "put an end to militarism" (whatever, again, that might mean).

4. Germany was to withdraw from Belgium and France and pay indemnity for damages done in the occupied districts.

5. Such proposals having been made, if the Allies adhered to them and Germany declined them, the United States would come into the War at once.

These were, apparently, the proposals, although it must be admitted that the language employed to describe them was sometimes ambiguous and not always self-consistent, so that it is impossible to formulate a very explicit statement. And, moreover, when the proposals were submitted to the President for confirmation, he rather characteristically added, to the extremely vital assurance that America would go to war, the qualification that she would "probably" do so.

Dr. Seymour, for whose judicial qualities we entertain some admiration, argues a little strangely that this change was quite unimportant. We find ourselves unable to agree with him. It may be absolutely true that the President could not, on his *ipse dixit*, carry the United States into war. We agree entirely that others had to be consulted. We have, moreover, always been of opinion that, if President Wilson had selected the occasion of an outrage deeply wounding to American pride, he could have brought the American nation into the War at any moment after the sinking of the *Lusitania*. But it was a very different matter to undertake that the American nation would declare war upon the Central Powers because the latter declined to accept certain terms of peace, the fairness of which would lend themselves to infinite and balanced disputation. Indeed, the argument is not unfair that the President would not, in his own handwriting, have inserted the word "probably" if he had not attached some little importance

to it. He was habitually precise in his use of language, and it is very reasonable to suppose that what he meant was that more likely than not the American nation would declare war in the circumstances supposed. The opinion had, no doubt, value; but those who recall how gravely, and how tragically, the President misread the minds of the American people in relation to the League of Nations may well doubt the authority of his confident expectation.

It is interesting to hear that Mr. Page did not approve of Colonel House's new visit to Germany. He insisted upon her "smashing defeat" without negotiation. This attitude was unwelcome alike to the Colonel and to the President, although the President was destined long afterwards to proclaim to the world the same conclusions in burning language, and House in a passage already quoted, had formed the same opinion when the *Lusitania* was torpedoed.

He soon discovered, as everyone but himself had known that he would, that the rulers of Germany had still no intention whatever of accepting peace terms that would satisfy the Allies. Bethmann himself, probably one of the most pacific Germans in high place, evidently thought himself moderate when he suggested giving up the territory conquered by German armies in return for an indemnity. Dr. Seymour very sagaciously adds:

> So long as the Germans persist in the belief that they can win the war in a military sense, discussions of a settlement are fruitless.

Our Colonel was so discouraged that, contrary to his custom, he permits himself a word of slightly acid description:

> The Chancellor drank copiously of beer which was served to us from time to time. I contented myself with mineral water, matching him glass for glass. The beer had not, apparently, affected him, for his brain was as befuddled at the beginning as it was at the end. Into such hands are the destinies of the people placed.

We are left in some doubt as to the ground of the censure which the guest, in the concluding words just quoted, implies in relation to his host. Was it that the latter preferred beer to mineral water? Or was it that the beer did not befuddle his brain? As usual, the Colonel felt himself entirely superior to his company.

Dr. Seymour summarizes the general effect of Colonel House's visit in the following words:

> He arrived in Paris with an intensified conviction that the German Government would not agree to peace terms that even the most moderate of Allied statesmen would offer. Even had the civil rulers of Germany been so inclined, they would not have dared confess it to the public, and they would not have been permitted to take any action by the military.
>
> His four days' stay in Berlin, however, had not been fruitless, for, in his conversation with the Chancellor, von Jagow, and Zimmerman, he had, for the moment, eliminated the danger of a break over the *Lusitania* disavowal.

The English reader of this tribute may, perhaps, be forgiven if he conceals his elation at our amateur diplomatist's dazzling success. He had absolutely failed, as the discredited Page once again warned him that he would fail, to make any progress whatsoever in obtaining German concessions. All that he had done was to reduce the probability of a break over the *Lusitania*. Considering that a year earlier House had been of opinion that the broad issues of civilization required such a breach upon this outrage; considering, further, that if the American nation had rallied to that cause as House saw it, millions of lives and hundreds of millions of treasure would have been saved, we may, perhaps, read without bursting into audible applause the only positive result of the Colonel's visit.

The real truth is that the United States had nothing to contribute to the cause of the Allies, and would have contributed nothing, unless and until she had been forced into war by German outrages directly affecting American

interests. The United States were, in fact, kicked into war against the strong and almost frenzied efforts of President Wilson. In the earlier periods official America had nothing to offer the Allies but good advice, founded neither upon knowledge nor true instinct; munitions of war to the Allies for which they were much overpaid; and contraband to the Central Powers, most of which we happily intercepted.

We have throughout made it plain that we have looked upon Colonel House as an honest man. This admission brings into startling relief his simplicity and his unsuitability to intervene in the European quarrel. He had not a fiftieth part of the knowledge of Ambassador Page, and nothing whatever of his sure instinct; but these deficiencies by no means prevent him from including the Ambassador among the number of those over whom he poured his polished disapproval.

Colonel House was enabled, by the confidence and authority of President Wilson, to enjoy a number of visits to the belligerent countries at a very thrilling period.

We have every reason to suppose that he enjoyed them. That he contributed anything useful in the course of his visits, we most absolutely challenge and deny. His published papers, indeed, constitute a melancholy record of facile optimism and unrelieved failure.

XV

BOOKS ABOUT THE BOLSHEVISTS

LEO TROTSKY, the Bolshevist leader—or former leader—is not, as a rule, regarded as a humorous writer. But one of his "works" which has been translated into English, "Where is Britain Going?" must remove any misconception about his powers in this respect. As a conscious humorist he is not conspicuously successful, although, to be sure, the publisher of this book tells us that "it is written in the celebrated Communist's most lively manner." His liveliness consists chiefly in vigorous abuse of the people who disagree with him, say, ninety-nine out of every hundred people in every country and political party in the world. Thus he refers to Mrs. Snowden as a "Conservative old lady," to Mr. J. H. Thomas as "this absolutely unprecedented lackey," and to the members of the Fabian Society as "bombastic authorities. pedants, arrogant and ranting poltroons . . . self-satisfied pedants, gabbling eclectics, sentimental careerists, upstart liveried lackeys of the *bourgeoisie*." . . . After these exercises in abuse, which must have occasioned considerable difficulty to the translators, it is almost a shock to find Mr. Ramsay MacDonald merely abjured to "blow his own nose" before he teaches the Communists the sanctity of democracy and makes accusations against the Soviet regime.

As an unconscious humorist, Trotsky is much more amusing. His reference to the British Royal Family paying "too much attention to horse-races with the

inevitable totalisator" is a happy sidelight on our sporting customs; that "the British General O'Dwyer" fired on the mob at Amritsar is generally unknown; and the following political note should not be overlooked by the connoisseur:

> In 1918 a new electoral reform was introduced in Great Britain, which greatly enlarged the ranks of worker voters, and for the first time permitted women to participate in the elections. Surely, Mr. Baldwin will not trouble to deny that the Russian Revolution was an important motive for this reform.

There can be no lack of liveliness in a book containing such passages as these.

Trotsky argues that Britain is a declining Power. We are losing, and have already largely lost, our pre-eminent position in world trade. "Will a Communist Party have time to grow up in Britain, sufficiently strong, sufficiently linked with the masses, to draw, at the necessary moment, all the indispensable practical conclusions from the intensifying crisis? In this question Great Britain's destiny is to-day summed up. The *bourgeois* politicians in Britain, from Mr. Baldwin to "hypocritical" Mr. Lansbury, all believe in the inevitable "gradualness" of progress, but, Trotsky affirms, the history of England proves that the opposite is true. Was Cromwell gradual, he asks, in a long panegyric of the regicides. "Force, force, force to the uttermost" is Trotsky's motto for political progress, just as it was President Wilson's for the conduct of the War. The Fabians, the I.L.P.'ers, and, in fact, all the leaders of the Socialist Party in Great Britain must be regarded as renegade careerists, to be thrust aside by a determined Communist Party if Britain is to become a first-class Bolshevist Power and to recover its waning economic importance by "depending on the gigantic material and human resources of our (Russian) Soviet Union." Force, not "gradualness," has hitherto won every advance of political power for the British worker,

indeed, "all the later developments in Great Britain took place with the aid of European revolutions."

> The formation of British trade unions was in large measure inspired by the influence of the French Revolution on the British working masses. . . .
>
> The July Revolution of 1830 in France gave impetus to the first electoral Reform Bill in 1831 in Britain. . . .
>
> The revolutionary Chartist movement led in 1844-7 to the institution of the ten-hour working day, and in 1846 to the Repeal of the Corn Laws. . . .
>
> The electoral reform of 1868 was preceded by the civil war in the United States. . . .
>
> The Russian Revolution of 1905 immediately strengthened the British workers. As the result of the General Election of 1906, the Labour Party for the first time formed a large fraction with forty-two Members. Without doubt, the influence of the 1905 Revolution is manifest in this.

And, as already mentioned, the Russian Revolution of 1917 led to the electoral reforms here in 1918 and the admission of women to the vote. What could be more lucid than this historical sketch, or more convincing? If the Battle of Waterloo was won on the playing-fields of Eton, Trotsky shows us that the future battles of Westminster will be won in the gaol shambles of Moscow. I will return to his other theories in a moment.

His book contains a characteristic introduction by a Radical turned Socialist, Mr. H. N. Brailsford. This ineffable gentleman, who (as the phrase goes) is "not a Bolshevist, but . . ." tells us that we are bound in duty to welcome the appearance of the book, although we may differ from Trotsky's reading of our inevitable destiny.

> The opinion which Trotsky maintains has never been more brilliantly argued. Behind its wit and its logic there is the prestige of experience. The pamphleteer who tells us that if we mean to achieve Socialism we cannot escape civil war has himself conducted a civil war against terrific odds to a triumphant conclusion. It is obvious, moreover, that he has taken pains to equip himself for his task and has applied his versatile intellect to the study of our history and our contemporary life. He makes some mistakes, it

> is true, in his facts, but none of these really invalidate [*sic*] his argument.

These mistakes, a footnote hastily explains, are that "he evidently misunderstands our electoral system," and, while ascribing a shorter life to the Independent Labour Party than is the fact, also seems at times to identify it with the Fabian Society. "But such slips," admits this maudlin introducer, "are of no importance."

Most of Trotsky's readers will take a less complacent view of his thesis than does Mr. Brailsford. Exactly half, for instance, of Mr. Norman Angell's book, "Must Britain Travel the Moscow Road?" is devoted to a reasoned and conclusive destruction of Trotsky's arguments. Although I do not agree with many of Mr. Angell's own views, as expressed in the other half of his book, I feel that the portion in which he demolishes Trotsky is one of the best pieces of anti-Bolshevist literature that has yet been published. Trotsky's vocabulary of invective will be seriously strained when he comes to reply, if, indeed, he finds a reply possible.

The first point in the reply to Trotsky, says Mr. Angell, is that the method of civil war and coercion, as means of abolishing Capitalism and introducing Socialism or Communism, has completely failed where he himself has applied it. "He and his colleagues are abandoning it, and are now resorting to that alternative policy of 'gradualness' which he so much derides."

> The whole implication of Trotsky's book is that he speaks as one who has successfully applied the policy he advocates. His arrogance, his cocksureness, the ferocious contempt he expresses for all who hesitate to precipitate civil war and promote revolution is hardly compatible with any implied admission that the policy which he advocates has failed. . . . He and his party have been successful in imposing and maintaining the political dictatorship of a certain group of persons; but the methods which they apply to the State which they rule are not Socialist, nor Marxian, nor Communist. They are as much a compromise as the Reformist methods against which Trotsky fulminates.

The political dictatorship, Mr. Angell points out, has not abolished private property nor private trading in Russia. The general position there now is that the Bolshevists have not only abandoned the attempt to destroy Capitalism but are " trying hard to induce the Capitalist to apply his system to the new Russia, and are busy assuring him that his interest on his loans and his profits from his concession, employing workers to whom wages may be paid, will be secure."

The Bolshevists tried to make the peasants of Russia, who form the vast majority of the population, cogs in a Communist machine. Their land, their labour, and their crops were to be parts of a Communist enterprise conducted for the welfare of the community and with complete disregard of private profit. The peasant, notwithstanding that armed force and incredible atrocities were employed to make him a better Communist, bluntly refused to work for the Bolshevist millennium. The Soviet leaders, therefore, surrendered to the inevitable, and left the peasant in control of his land with power to lease it and sell his crops to his own advantage, on payment of certain taxes to the State. (It should be mentioned that Mr. Angell has been content to take many of his facts from the authority of Mr. Michael Farbman's books, although this writer tends invariably to systematize the Russian chaos for his own arguments. Things are not always as they seem to Mr. Farbman's departmental brain, but this defect strengthens, rather than weakens, Mr. Angell's argument that Communism has failed in Russia.)

In industry, as in agriculture, Communism has given way to Capitalism. Apart from foreign concessions, the New Economic Policy " destroyed at one blow the system of State distribution of raw materials and fuel and brought back the principle of commercial calculation. . . . A decree was passed which, on the one hand, insisted that industry had to pay its way "—no more subsidies for Soviet mines !—" and, on the other, removed from the

list of State-provisioned and supplied trades the overwhelming number of nationalized factories." State trusts have been formed, run by boards appointed by the Government, but they receive no subsidies, are allowed no rations for their workers, and receive payment even for goods supplied to the Government. "In the way of dealing with labour or with the market, State trusts exactly duplicate the principles and methods of ordinary stock companies."

The Bolshevists once wished to abolish money, as the root of all capitalist evil. They have so far weakened in their resolve as to have established a new currency on the ruins of the old inflated rouble.

> The resurrection of money revived the idea of obtaining mônetary taxes. . . . The introduction of the principle of paying one's way into economic life made it inevitable that the State itself should live up to this principle. . . . The question of revenue became the chief problem of the day. In order to find new sources of revenue it was announced that all services run by the State or the Communes, that is to say, railways, posts and telegraphs, mines, schools, etc.—which under Communism had been free of charge—were henceforward to be paid for.

In trade, finally, there has been the same failure to withstand the force of private enterprise. In the first three years that followed the introduction of the New Economic Policy, 92 per cent. of the private trade of the country (even by Soviet figures) returned to the hands of private traders. The Bolshevists expelled Capitalism with a pitchfork; Trotsky shows that they have no use for "gradual" methods. The result speaks for itself.

Having thus successfully carried the war into the enemy's camp, Mr. Angell proceeds to demolish Trotsky's case in regard to England. He points out that, just as the passive resistance of the Russian peasants destroyed the Bolshevist hopes in their country, so the vast British middle class makes the introduction of Bolshevism impossible here. The Bolshevists, he says, always speak

as if the organized working class was in a large numerical majority in every country; but this is untrue.

> All available evidence, whether based on trade union statistics, on figures of election results, on the experience of widespread strikes, points to the conclusion that Labour in a class sense, the workers organized in trade unions, or steeped in trade union atmosphere, represent, even on the most generous estimate, only half the population. It is ill service to Labour in Britain not to face these facts, particularly in considering the possibility of civil war. If it came to such a war, in all probability *the numbers would not be on the proletarian side.* And it would be merely silly, after the experience of the Great War, to assume that the *bourgeoisie* would show less tenacity, less cohesion and organization in the war than the trade union element.

These lines were written before the General Strike of 1926, in referring to which in a note the author justly claims that his view has been amply proved.

Although, it is true, Trotsky promises our incipient revolutionaries that they would have all the vast resources of Bolshevist Russia to depend on in the event of a successful overthrow of political and economic power in this country—it is proverbially the poor who help the poor—Mr. Angell withstands this generous offer. He shows that a Bolshevist Britain would collapse even more swiftly than did the economics of Bolshevist Russia. No matter what kind of regime rules this country, food and raw materials must be imported, and goods exported in payment, at a price competing successfully with similar goods from other countries.

> If the confiscation of securities and the repudiation of loans (which the Communists insist must be "ruthless"—the more ruthless the better, apparently) have so disorganized credit, that, in fact, the purchase of American cotton or overseas food-stuffs cannot be financed; and manufacture in consequence is so disorganized that foreign sales cannot be effected—then, in that case there will not be freights to carry for the railroad, and the workers' possession of it will avail exceedingly little. The wealth which is the source of life for them is not a material object

> to be taken by physical coercion from the hands that now hold it (which is broadly the case of peasants taking a landlord's estate); it is a very complex process to be maintained, a constantly moving shifting stream to be diverted from one direction to another, a stream that can only be controlled by the co-ordinated efforts of vast masses of men; railway workers having come to agreement with coal-miners, cotton operatives, printers, dairymen, market gardeners, about prices and conditions; whether unskilled shall get as much as skilled, whether the smallholder must deliver milk at a fixed price or keep it for raising pigs; whether the market gardener is to have life tenure; whether captains of ships at sea must in this or that circumstance accept the ruling of crews' committees. It is clear that, in these circumstances, the more a State apparatus has gone to pieces, the more difficult will all these co-ordinations become. Individual action here is worthless. It must be a collective action, a co-ordination so complex that the co-ordination must in a large degree be voluntary.

This is a long quotation, but it could hardly be bettered as an exposition of the incalculable difference between the conditions of the Bolshevist revolution in Russia—essentially a mere transference of the ownership of land—and any conceivable similar catastrophe in England. The Russian experiment having swiftly broken down, the far greater British experiment is clearly beyond any possibility of achievement. "Food production," as Mr. Angell remarks, "is, relatively to such activities as industry, banking and foreign trade, an extremely simple process." Trotsky must be an extremely simple person to imagine that his exhortations to the British Communists can inspire them to a task so far beyond their or anybody else's powers.

Mr. Angell's book contains so complete a reply to Trotsky's arguments that I regret he did not confine it to this purpose. He has, however, written a preliminary eighty pages, setting out what in his opinion is the problem before this country and how he thinks it should be met. Here, it is impossible to express the same measure of agreement with him.

The moment Mr. Angell leaves Russia and begins to imagine the future of this country he seems to leave his common sense behind. "Let us imagine," he says, "that during the next twenty years the Conservative element, convinced that the time has come to call a halt to the socializing tendencies of the last twenty years, taking advantage of the disintegration of the Liberal Party and the difficulties of the Labour Party among a non-industrialized and unorganized rural population, becomes very much less flexible than it has been, failing to concede, as it has conceded (or acquiesced in concession) in the past at the point where further resistance would be socially dangerous;" imagine, he continues, that the Conservative Government becomes increasingly unbending, increasingly dominated by the Die-Hard elements, increasingly "subject to such follies" as prosecuting Communist journalists and creating Fascist bodies—"in other words, imagine the probable."

Why should we imagine anything of the kind? The influence of the Die-Hards in the last Conservative Government was smaller than it has ever been in the history of the Conservative Party, and showed no sign of increasing; the outstanding prosecution of a Communist journalist, the notorious Campbell, was properly undertaken (and improperly dropped) by a Socialist Government; and the Fascists have no reason to boast of official Conservative support. Mr. Angell's imagination is badly at fault. His whole argument, which is that reaction here will breed revolution, whereas all Russia's roubles would fail to do so, is thus invalidated. There is no need to follow him further on the political side.

His case is, at least, better founded—it could not be worse—on the economic side, though he has little to say here that is novel. He tells us, what is well known to all, that we are suffering from lack of markets, although, it is well to remember, our relative position in world-trade is as high as in 1914. He shows that the prosperity

of American trade is due to the vast internal market of that country, itself due in large part to the absence of inter-State tariff boundaries. "If Europe were to adopt as much Free Trade as America enjoys—abolish all barriers over as wide an area, that is—that area, particularly as it would have a much larger population, would soon show as high a standard of living." Very likely; but can this be used, as Mr. Angell seems disposed to use it, as a weapon to beat those who support a scheme of Tariff Reform for Britain? The case, surely, of every Tariff Reformer is, first, that the adoption of a tariff makes it possible to force a compromise on other Protectionist States and thus ensure an equitable measure of free trade between the two countries; and, secondly, that, by Imperial Preference, we should be able to join the Dominions to ourselves in a larger economic unity. In an imperfect industrial world the shortest road is not always the quickest way home, and Mr. Angell's positively angelic suggestion of an economic United States of Europe is at the moment far outside the bounds of practical politics. It is no use for him to tell us that we have lost the patriotic impetus of the War period and are relapsing into peace-time barbarism; this sort of moral reproach is too easy, and facts are too difficult, for it to have real value.

Mr. Angell must be surprised—he sometimes reveals a naïve astonishment—that his soft words and simple calculations are not readily accepted. He is inclined to blame the Press for creating a public opinion hostile to clear thinking. If, however, his case was so self-evident, all the newspapers in the world could not keep the truth from the public.

One of the apparently obvious things to which he devotes a chapter is the question of expropriation. Because, he argues, during the War the State claimed, by conscription, the right to "confiscate lives," it must follow that it has the right to confiscate property. "If the life of each belongs to the community, then

assuredly does his property. . . . If it is theft to take a man's money for the purposes of the State, is it any less theft to take his life?" When Mr. Angell wrote these words, he must have been struck by the simplicity of his thesis. He might also, as a man of common sense, have assumed that, seeing that the analogy is not generally accepted, there might conceivably be a flaw in it. There is such a flaw. Much as it may surprise Mr. Angell, one may state in the most definite possible terms that the conscription of men in time of war does not justify the conscription either of wealth or of labour in peace—and for a simple reason. Conscription is justified by equality of sacrifice. If it is true to say that a man cannot give his country more than his life, it may equally truly be said—without disrespect to the volunteers who died or those who survive—that he cannot give less. His life is the one thing he achieved without effort; it is the one thing he possesses in common with every other man. His wealth, on the other hand, is the measure of his own endeavours; there is no need to enter into the obvious exceptions to this general rule. By confiscating a man's wealth, therefore, he is reduced to the same level as the man who has made no effort to justify his existence. Taxation, however heavy—and, if Mr. Angell pays supertax, he will realize how heavy taxation may be—does, at least, leave the socially superior man relatively richer than the socially inferior man. In short, the analogy does not work, and Mr. Angell's sentimental fugue on a sentimental theme is wasted wind. The two problems—the conscription of life and the confiscation of wealth—are as different in nature as the ordinary man accepts them to be. To attempt a comparison between them is to confuse two separate issues, both far too deep to run in the shallow channel to which Mr. Angell would divert them.

* * * * * * *

One's feeling on putting down Mr. J. M. Keynes's pamphlet, "A Short View of Russia," is one of astonish-

ment that he should have thought it worth composing. He explains that it is the fruit of a brief visit to Russia a few years ago by one ignorant of the country and the language. In fact, he went as the representative of Cambridge University at the bicentenary celebrations of the Academy of Sciences at Petrograd. There is no evidence in these pages that he saw there anything that had not been seen before by innumerable other equally unqualified visitors. The very paucity of his material perhaps explains why he has devoted the principal place in his essay to a pretentious series of dogmas, which he might just as well have written before his journey, or, even more usefully, not have written at all. As it stands, it merely serves further to confuse an issue already sufficiently complicated by the incompetent loquacity of other tourists.

This theory is, to put it briefly, that Bolshevism is a religion and that Trotsky, for one, is "among the most religious" men in the world. In seeking to establish this paradox, Mr. Keynes wrestles abstractedly with the meaning of religion and the significance of Bolshevism. For example:

> We have long recognized that there are two branches of religion—high and low, mystical sleep-walkers and practical idealists. There are two distinct sublimations of materialistic egotism—one in which the ego is merged in the nameless mystic union, another in which it is merged in the pursuit of an ideal life for the whole community of men. The participants of the first may neglect or ignore the second; many followers of the second condemn what seems to them the idle indulgence or self-deceptions of the first. It has been the peculiarity of some great religious leaders that they have belonged to both classes at once. At any rate, when I speak of religion I include both, and not the former only.

This inadequate contribution to the topic of religious criticism brings us to the other partner in Mr. Keynes's distorted miscegenation:

> Like other new religions, Leninism derives its power not from the multitude but from a small minority of

> enthusiastic converts, whose zeal and intolerance make each one the equal in strength of a hundred indifferentists. Like other new religions, it is led by those who can combine the new spirit, perhaps sincerely, with seeing a good deal more than their followers, politicians with at least an average dose of political cynicism, who can smile as well as frown, volatile experimentalists, released by religion from truth and mercy, but not blinded to facts and expediency, and open, therefore, to the charge (superficial and useless though it is where politicians, lay or ecclesiastical, are concerned) of hypocrisy. Like other new religions, it seems to take the colour and gaiety and freedom out of everyday life, and to offer a drab substitute in the square wooden faces of its devotees. Like other new religions, it persecutes without justice or pity those who actively resist it. Like other new religions, it is unscrupulous. Like other new religions, it is filled with missionary ardour and œcumenical ambitions. But to say that Leninism is the faith of a persecuting and propagating minority of fanatics, led by hypocrites, is, after all, to say no more and no less than that it *is* a religion and not merely a party, and Lenin a Mahomet, not a Bismarck.

In short, as with the albatross and the baby, there is a B in both. The reader has only to substitute the word "pan-Germanism"—Mr. Keynes might prefer to call it "Bismarckism"—for "Leninism" in the above passage, to see that it makes equally good nonsense. The whole result of Mr. Keynes's argument is to tell us that Bolshevism is a theory (which we know); that some of the Bolshevist leaders are fanatical tyrants (which we know); and that the mass of the people are apathetic to their ideas (which we know also).

When Mr. Keynes turns from his ill-digested Platonism to concrete matters, he shows himself equally blind to essentials. It is true that he acknowledges the bankruptcy of Bolshevism as an economic process, but he, nevertheless, tells us that the Soviet State "has established an organization, covering all the activities of economic life . . . which has been evolved out of the chaos and the void." This is rank nonsense, or worse.

The Bolshevists took over power in a country which, though exhausted by three years of war and a period of inefficient administration, nevertheless retained the skeleton structure alike of civil and of military life. The Soviet system paralysed its inheritance for a time, but, with the acknowledged failure of Bolshevism, the old life has again begun faintly to function. The Soviet industry is the pre-revolutionary industry, only vastly weakened. The Soviet administration is the old administration, only infinitely more incompetent and corrupt. The Soviet army—supreme achievement of a pacifist party—is the old Russian army, only without a tithe of its efficiency.

With consummate egoism, Mr. Keynes closes his pamphlet with a rebuke to non-Bolshevist Russians: "If I were a Russian," he says, "how much rather, even after allowing for everything, would I contribute my quota of activity to Soviet Russia than to Tsarist Russia! I could not subscribe to the new official faith any more than to the old. I should detest the actions of the new tyrants not less than those of the old. But I should feel that my eyes were turned towards, and no longer away from, the possibilities of things; that out of the cruelty and stupidity of Old Russia nothing could ever emerge, but that beneath the cruelty and stupidity of New Russia some speck of the ideal may lie hid."

This peroration ignores the all-important fact that Bolshevism is not, and never has been, an alternative to Tsarism. Bolshevism destroyed not the "Old Russia" but the new *bourgeois* Parliamentary regime initiated by the Revolution of March, 1917. After that Revolution there were only a handful of convinced Tsarists left in Russia. To-day, there are possibly ten times as many, chiefly people who, like Mr. Keynes, have forgotten the meaning of the 1917 overthrow. The present Russian opponents of Bolshevism, who represent ninety-nine out of every hundred educated Russians —the peasants and workmen, too, are passively hostile

—properly regard Bolshevism as a tyranny every whit as intolerable as Tsarism and far more inefficient. Their alternative is a constitutional European regime. Mr. Keynes ought to learn the fundamentals of the Russian situation.

His association of the cold-blooded despoilers, traitors, and murderers who have brought Russia to its present condition with religion is an insult to the intelligence of his readers. He must be counted not the least conspicuous of the dupes who have toured Bolshevist Russia.

Miss Emma Goldman's "My Disillusionment in Russia" may serve as light relief to Mr. Keynes's sonorous pomposity. Miss Goldman is the well-known American anarchist who, imagining that she saw in Soviet Russia the fulfilment of her social dreams, went there—poor lamb—"to learn to draw sustenance and hope from her, to lay down my life on the altar of the Revolution." It should be added that the American Government entered into the spirit of this enthusiast's yearnings by deporting her and over two hundred other pro-Bolshevists to Russia. This bevy of anarchical houris reached Russia in December, 1919. In December, 1921, Miss Goldman left Soviet Russia surfeited—shall we put it ?—by her contact with Mr. Keynes's co-religionists.

> It was just one year and eleven months since I had set my foot on what I believed to be the promised land. My heart was heavy with the tragedy of Russia. One thought stood out in bold relief: I must raise my voice against the crimes committed in the name of the Revolution. I would be heard regardless of friend or foe.

Our disillusioned lady has now raised her voice to the extent of 260 pages of vitriolic criticism of the Bolshevists. Not the least amusing of the experiences she describes was her first meeting with the great Lenin. One of his first questions to her was, "When can the Social Revolution be expected in America?" It seemed incredible to her that "a man of his information should know so little about conditions in America."

Our authoress, however—as yet teeming with ideas—had a suggestion to make to him. She pointed out that Americans thirty years ago had done much to assist the Russian emancipatory movement, and "I told him I would like to repay America what it had done for Russia." Her idea was to organize a Russian Society for American freedom. Lenin was delighted with the proposal, which, he pointed out, would, of course, have to be under the auspices of the Third International. To this Miss Goldman replied that she could not think of collaborating with the Bolshevist Government while it kept her own colleagues, the Russian anarchists, in prison and refused them free speech. "Free speech," Lenin obligingly explained, "is a *bourgeois* notion. There can be no free speech in a revolutionary period." This was the first of many disappointments for the enthusiastic but simple-minded American anarchist.

What specially annoyed her, as it has annoyed men and women of all shades of opinion, was the cynical hypocrisy of the Bolshevists. She learned, for example, that the educational system consisted of two sides—one for show to foreigners (e.g., Mr. Keynes), the other for the ordinary children.

> The majority of the schools and children's homes were squalid, dirty, and neglected. . . . At first I ascribed this condition of affairs to the scarcity of food and materials . . . but, added to the prevalent scarcity of things, was the dominant notion of Communist propaganda. Even the children had to serve that end. The well-kept schools were for show, for the foreign missions and delegates who were visiting Russia. Everything was lavished on these show schools, at the cost of the others. . . . A committee investigated some of the institutions. They found the children dirty, full of vermin, sleeping on filthy mattresses, fed on miserable food, punished by being locked in dark rooms for the night, forced to go without their suppers and even beaten. The number of officials and employees in the schools was nothing less than criminal. In one school, for instance, there were one hundred and thirty-eight of them

> to one hundred and twenty-five children, in another forty to twenty-five children, all of these parasites taking the bread from the very mouths of the unfortunate children.

It would be monotonous, although to a cynic very humorous, to trace the history of all Miss Goldman's disillusionments. They were many and various. But she relates interesting conversations with two well-known Russian writers, now both dead—Vladimir Korolenko, the novelist, and Prince Kropotkin, the anarchist economist. Korolenko's denunciation of the Bolshevists is sufficiently picturesque to be worth quotation :

> If the gendarmes of the Tsar had the power not only to arrest, but also to shoot us, the situation would have been like the present. That is what is happening before my eyes every day. The Bolshevists claim that such methods are inseparable from the Revolution. I cannot agree with them that persecution and constant shooting will serve the interests of the people or of the Revolution. . . . At a time when the fullest expression and co-operation of all intellectual and spiritual forces is necessary to reconstruct the country, a gag has been placed upon the whole people. To dare question the wisdom and efficacy of the so-called dictatorship of the proletariat or of the Communist Party leaders is considered a crime. We lack the simplest requisites of the real essence of a social revolution, and yet we pretend to have placed ourselves at the head of a world revolution. Poor Russia will have to pay dearly for this experiment.

Miss Goldman has much to say about the members of foreign Socialist missions visiting Soviet Russia and the manner in which they write about that country. One American delegate, for example,

> published glowing accounts dwelling on the absence of prostitution and crime in Moscow. At the same time the *Cheka* was daily executing hold-up men, and . . . near the Luxe Hotel street women mob the delegates with their attentions. Their best customers were the very delegates who waxed so enthusiastic about the wonders of the Bolshevist regime.

"A shrewd Asiatic, this Lenin," is her comment on the chief figure of Bolshevism. "He knows how to play on the weak sides of men by flattery, reward, medals." This picture is borne out by Trotsky's pious sketch of his dead leader. In his recent life of Lenin, Trotsky relates his first meeting with Lenin in London in 1902, and describes the struggles of Lenin to dominate the Russian Socialist exiles abroad. He intrigued with one man against another; and, by constant pressure and supple opposition tactics, made himself the most influential member of that extremist group which was eventually to become the Bolshevist Party.

The second part of Trotsky's book deals with the Bolshevist seizure of power in the autumn of 1917, and with the formation of the Soviet Government. It is this portion of the volume which has brought the author into disgrace with his colleagues. This cannot surprise the reader, for rarely has anyone made less attempt to idealize a movement than Trotsky in his account of Lenin's policies. Some Bolshevists—Trotsky himself in earlier books—have spoken of, or implied, a general popular demand for Bolshevism in Russia at the end of 1917. This, however, is how Trotsky now sums up the position in this book:

> If we had not seized power in October, we should not have seized it at all. Our strength before October lay in the uninterrupted influx of the masses, who believed that this Party would do what the others had not done. If they had seen any vacillation at this moment on our part, any incongruity between word and deed, then, in the course of two or three months, they would have drifted away from us, as they had done formerly from the Socialist revolutionaries and the Menshevists. . . . It was just this that made Lenin decide to act.

Lenin, although he demanded that the Soviets be invested with "all power," refused to wait for a forthcoming Soviet congress to approve the Bolshevist designs. "The conquest of power," he said, "must precede the

congress of Soviets." Our little tin soldier trade unionists may usefully take note.

Another favourite Bolshevist fable is that the Red Terror was inaugurated as a reply to "atrocities" committed by patriotic Russian anti-Bolshevists in the latter part of 1918—a year after the Bolshevist triumph. Trotsky reminds his readers that, already in *November, 1917*, Lenin was demanding and enforcing a Terror. The Bolshevists' first action in power was to repeal the death penalty in the Army. When Lenin learnt of this

> his anger knew no bounds. "That is madness," he repeated. "How can we accomplish a revolution without shooting? Do you think you can settle with your enemies if you disarm? What repressive measure have you then?"

Lenin, we are told, "at every passing opportunity emphasized the absolute necessity of the Terror."

Another revealing feature of Trotsky's book is its insistence on Lenin's failure as a prophet. Whether intentionally or not, Trotsky appears to have written these passages with a suggestion of sarcasm. For instance:

> In Lenin's theses about peace written in January, 1918, he says, "For the success of Socialism in Russia a certain period of time of at least a few months is necessary."
>
> Now these words seem quite incomprehensible. Is it not a mistake? Are not years or decades meant? But no, it is no mistake. One could probably find a number of other statements of Lenin of the same type. I remember very well that in the first period he frequently said that within half a year Socialism would rule and we should be the greatest State in the world.

What is more, Lenin "believed in what he said." Trotsky explains, however, that this was Lenin's "system of inculcation. Lenin wanted to train everybody to consider all questions in the setting of their Socialistic structure, not in the perspective of the 'goal,' but of to-day and to-morrow."

Trotsky reveals a Lenin not less unscrupulous, domineering, ignorant, and short-sighted than the bloody-

minded man whom Miss Goldman sees. The legend of Lenin's extraordinary political genius dies slowly, but it can hardly survive many more such intimate revelations.

It is well that we have Trotsky's confirmation of Lenin's personal responsibility for the Red Terror, for there are still too many people who accept the false statement that the anti-Bolshevist Russians were, if not primarily responsible for the orgy of bloodshed that decimated Russia between 1917 and 1921 (and still continues to a minor extent), at least equally responsible for it with Bolshevists. Mr. Melgounov's volume, "The Red Terror in Russia," should combine with Trotsky's to put an end to this lying legend. Mr. Melgounov has made as careful a study as is possible of the Red Terror, and he shows that it was deliberately inaugurated by the Bolshevists to terrorize the Russian people and to remove their political enemies, especially rival Socialists; and that its scope and atrocity far exceed any idea that has yet been formed of it in other countries.

No Englishman can credit at first the abominable outrages of some of the leaders of the Bolshevist terrorist organization, the *Cheka*, which has ruled Russia for the last thirteen years. Many of Mr. Melgounov's pages are unquotable here. It is sufficient to point out that the chiefs of the *Cheka* in many important districts were criminal lunatics, who developed a thirst for murder and sadistic torture unmatched in history. Here is one paragraph taken at random from his volume:

> With Johnson (a negro Chekist at Odessa) was associated a young woman executioner named Vera Grebenninkova, or "Dora." This female's talent for barbarism rivalled that of the negro himself, and amongst other stories of her ferocity we may include the item that she would tear out victims' hair by the handful before doing the same with them limb by limb—cutting off ears, dislocating jaws, and the like. Her activities may be summed up in the fact that during her two and a half months with the Odessan *Cheka* she shot over 700 persons—a third of the whole tale!

Here is another, from the same chapter :

> During January, 1922, a female "people's prosecutor" of one of the *Chekas* of Kiev (Remover, a Hungarian) was arrested on a charge of having, without authority, shot a batch of eighty prisoners, most of whom were young men ; she was found to be sexually deranged, and to have shot not only persons actually suspected, but also witnesses who, unfortunately, had excited her diseased craving during the time that they had been testifying before the *Cheka*. Lastly, a medical man has described for us a woman commissary named Nesterenko who would compel Red Guards to violate helpless women and girls—yes, and young children—in her very presence.

Mr. Melgounov deals fully with the old story of the Bolshevist "nationalization of women." He does not pretend—any more than does any competent critic of Bolshevism—that the Soviet Government ever put this forward as a national policy. He does, however, mention districts where the *Cheka* officials regularly prostituted their female prisoners, who had been arrested, as often as not, as "hostages" for the good behaviour of their male relatives. And even the *Pravda*, the official newspaper of the Bolshevist Party, published the following passage in a report :

> Whenever an expedition that was collecting the grain tax in the Khvalinsky district (Saratov Province) reached a village, the peasants were commanded to surrender their best-looking girls to the officials.

This is not the "nationalization of women," but it is certainly the Bolshevization of them. After this, one is quite prepared to read that in May, 1920, a whole family of hostages was shot at Elizavetgrad, including four little girls, the daughters of an officer, whose ages ranged from three to seven, and their grandmother, an old woman of sixty-nine. But death is often a better fate than imprisonment in Bolshevist gaols.

Mr. Melgounov's book should be read by everyone who is interested in Bolshevism. It contains no vague theories

about the religiousness or irreligiousness of its subjects, but it deals in the plain facts of their abominable regime. It does not express a hope that beneath this sadistic riot of torture and slaughter "some speck of the ideal may lie hid." It makes abundantly clear that neither Russia nor the rest of Europe can recover its health until this foul miasma of murder, treachery, and hypocrisy is swept away.

* * * * * *

"If the fool would persist in his folly," said Blake in one of his more lucid moments, "he would become wise." This maxim was never better illustrated than in regard to some recent books about Soviet Russia. Two of their authors—Mr. Berkman and Mrs. Stan Harding—entered Bolshevist Russia as whole-hearted sympathizers with the existing regime. They left, after a certain interval, with newly acquired wisdom.

Mr. Berkman's "The Bolshevist Myth" may be regarded as a pendant to the book written by his fellow American anarchist, Emma Goldman, whose case I have just considered. Like her, he was deported, a willing deportee, from America to the Soviet paradise. Like her, he was at first welcomed by his hosts, then dispatched on a mission through Russia to collect exhibits for a "museum of the revolution," then snubbed and ignored by his heroes, and, finally, reduced to a state of profound and overwhelming disillusion and hostility to the Bolshevist regime. He came to bless and remained to curse.

Mr. Berkman disapproves of all governments, because they are, in his opinion, always the organs of an oppressive class.

After coming into contact with the Soviet form of government, he realized that it was, of all governments, the most oppressive and the most cynical. *Hinc illæ lachrimæ!* He has partially dried his tears on more than three hundred large pages, and, while we cannot sym-

pathize with his prejudices, it is impossible not to recognize that his book is a courageous recantation of his ideas about the Bolshevists.

This is how he arrived in Soviet territory :

> *January* 20, 1920.—Late in the afternoon yesterday, we touched the soil of Soviet Russia.
>
> Driven out from the United States like criminals, we were received at Belo-Ostrov with open arms. The revolutionary hymn, played by the military Red Band, greeted us as we crossed the frontier. The hurrahs of the red-capped soldiers, mixed with the cheers of the deportees, echoed through the woods, rolling into the distance like a challenge of joy and defiance. With bared head, I stood in the presence of the visible symbols of the Revolution Triumphant.
>
> A feeling of solemnity, of awe, overwhelmed me. Thus my pious old forefathers must have felt on first entering the Holy of Holies. A strong desire was upon me to kneel down and kiss the ground—the ground consecrated by the life-blood of generations of suffering and martyrdom, consecrated anew by the revolutionists of my own day. Never before, not even at the first caress of freedom on that glorious May day, 1906—after fourteen years in the Pennsylvania prison—had I been stirred so profoundly. I longed to embrace humanity, to lay my heart at its feet, to give my life a thousand times to the service of the Social Revolution.
>
> It was the most sublime day of my life.

One may gather that Mr. Berkman was pleased to be there. But this is how he concludes his book, nearly two years later :

> *September* 30, 1921.—With bowed heart I seek a familiar bench in the park. Here little Fanya sat by my side. Her face was turned to the sun, her whole being radiant with idealism. Her silvery laugh rang with the joy of youth and life, but I trembled for her safety at every approaching step. "Do not fear," she kept reassuring me, "no one will know me in my peasant disguise."
>
> Now she is dead. Executed yesterday by the *Cheka* as a "bandit."

Grey are the passing days. One by one, the embers of hope have died out. Terror and despotism have crushed the life born in October. The slogans of the Revolution are foresworn, its ideals stifled in the blood of the people. The breath of yesterday is dooming millions to death; the shadow of to-day hangs like a black pall over the country. Dictatorship is trampling the masses under foot. The Revolution is dead; its spirit cries in the wilderness.

High time the truth about the Bolshevists were told. The whited sepulchre must be unmasked, the clay feet of the fetish beguiling the international proletariat to fatal will-o'-the-wisps exposed. The Bolshevist myth must be destroyed.

I have declared to leave Russia.

Mr. Berkman, flushed with enthusiasm, spent a few happy first days in Russia. He enjoyed the inevitable interview with Lenin and left impressed, but vaguely uneasy.

Lenin is a fighter—revolutionary leaders must be such. In this sense Lenin is great—in his oneness with himself, in his single-mindedness, in his psychic positiveness that is as self-sacrificial as it is ruthless to others, in the full assurance that only his plan can save mankind.

A month or two later the British Labour Mission arrived. By this time Berkman had come to know, from Russian friends and first-hand inquiries, more of the true state of things in the Soviet paradise. His comments on the Mission's progress are tinted with the beginnings of disillusion.

Soviet newspapers and Communist speeches have created the impression that the Mission represents the sentiment of the whole proletariat, and that the latter is about to come to the aid of Russia.

I heard the subject discussed by a group of workers and soldiers at the meeting of the Labour Temple. I had been asked to render into English the resolutions to be represented. . . . The full glare of the electric lights shone upon Ben Turner, the chairman of the Mission, short, stocky, and well-fed.

"There, look at him!" a worker behind me exclaimed.

"You can tell he's from abroad. Our people are not so fat."

"What wonder!" a soldier replied. "It isn't Russia, England isn't, and people don't go hungry there."

"The workers starve everywhere," a hoarse voice said.

"These are not workers," the first man corrected. "They are delegates."

Then a man pushed his way through the crowd towards the platform. His prosperous appearance, well-fitting clothes, and ruddy face were in striking contrast with the people in the room.

"Look at that fat delegate! They aren't starving in England," the soldier whispered to his neighbour.

Something familiar about the stout "delegate" fastened my attention. His eye fell upon me and he smiled recognition. He was Melnichansky, the chairman of the Moscow Soviet of Trade Unions.

At a final banquet given to the British Mission in Petrograd, Mr. Berkman was again made translator.

Antselovich, the chairman of the Petrograd Soviet of Trade Unions, rose even to the height of asserting that full individual liberty is established in Russia—at least for the workers, he added, as if suddenly become aware of the recklessness of his statement.

Perhaps I did Antselovich an injustice in omitting that falsehood in my translation of his speech. But I could not stand up before the delegates and repeat what I knew, as well as they, to be a deliberate lie, as stupid as it was unnecessary. The delegates are aware that dictatorship is the reverse of liberty. They know there is no freedom of speech or press for anyone in Soviet Russia, not even for Communists, and that sanctity of home or person is unknown.

The delegates, in their conversations with the writer, revealed more or less the impressions they had received during their fantastic "mission."

In general terms, Ben Turner spoke of the need of a more humane attitude to Russia, while Messrs. Skinner and Purcell nodded their approval—more of the generality of the

chairman's remarks, it seemed to me, than of their meaning. Williams was outspoken in his admiration of the good order which prevails in Petrograd, while Wallhead, of the Independent Labour Party, agreed with Allen—the only Communist among the Englishmen—in roundly denouncing the Allied crime of the blockade which is starving millions of innocent women and little children. Mrs. Snowden preserved the well-bred dignity of high society, participating in the conversation to the extent of a patronizing smile that said very plainly, "I am with you, but not of you."

In Moscow the Mission was again fêted.

Covers were set for a large number, including the delegates, the official representatives of the Soviet Government, some members of the Third International, and the invited spokesmen of Labour. Russian caviare, soup, white bread, two kinds of meat and a variety of vegetables were on the menu. When fried chicken was served, I saw some of the Britishers exchange wondering glances.

"A jolly good meal for starving Russia," a delegate at my side remarked to his neighbour in the lull of clattering dishes and laughter.

"Rather. Natty wench," the other replied with a suggestive wink at the winsome young waitress serving him. "Thought the Bolshevists had done away with servants."

We may now turn to a volume produced by one of these delegates, Dr. Haden Guest. "The New Russia" is a pretentious book, the aim of which is "to describe Russia and such parts of the social, political, and economic structure as come within my scope." With the mock self-depreciation of a little man engaged on a great task, the author tells us that his object "is a modest one. . . . I tie myself down to a limited and pedestrian task. . . . This volume only hopes to add somewhat to the daylight and be useful for ordinary people." He then sets about a general description of the political, geographical, administrative, constitutional, legal, foreign, economic, agricultural, industrial, trading, co-operative, financial, educational, cultural, and labour aspects of Bolshevism.

Despite the modesty of his object, Dr. Guest has found little difficulty in filling nearly five hundred stodgy pages. He has obtained his material, he naïvely explains, from Bolshevist sources:

> I am particularly grateful to Mr. C. G. Rakovsky, chargé d'affaires of the Soviet Embassy in London, who has procured for me a large library of books from Russia published since the Revolution. A large proportion of these works . . . are written by authors who gained the larger part of their experience under the Tsarist regime but who are now working for the Soviet Government.

Like the pigs who went to market, some little delegates got roast chicken, and one little delegate got a large library of books from Russia. It does not seem to occur to Dr. Guest that the motives of Rakovsky, to whom he is so grateful, may have been identical with those who provided him and his companions with such excellent dinners in Petrograd and Moscow. Dr. Guest is quite positive—amiable dupe—that "present Russian statistics are not compiled by Machiavellian politicians misusing them for sinister ends." He was the editor of the Labour Party Delegation's report and, in that capacity, "he had to study, sort, and arrange a mass of documents dealing with every aspect of the revolutionary situation."

It should be pointed out to Dr. Guest and whatever readers he acquires, that despite his protests, the documents on which his book is based are of no real value whatever. They may, some of them, be accurate, or, on the other hand, they may not; but, for the most part, they are sheer guesswork. For this statement we have the evidence of one of the Russian officials "who gained the larger part of their experience, etc.," and who were charged with the preparation of the documents for the delegation.

This official, who has since escaped from Russia, stated unequivocally, in a signed article quoted in an issue of *The Times Literary Supplement*, that the statistics

presented to the British delegation were drawn up largely in the Moscow Government offices without any relation to actual facts. The officials were told to present an accurate picture of some chief industry within a few days ; they were incited to vigorous efforts by the promise of extra rations, and there was, of course, the threat of dismissal if they failed to accomplish the task. What did they do ? They had neither the time nor the organization to discover the actual dimensions and details of the various industries. They, therefore, took the pre-War figures, compiled by their predecessors in the office, multiplied or divided them arbitrarily according as, in their opinion, the industry had benefited or suffered from the War, and multiplied them again by a round figure to give the number of men engaged in the particular trade. The completed lists were rushed into type and presented with due solemnity to the British Labour delegation. Here they are again in Dr. Guest's book, set out in all the dignity of special typography, statistical divisions, and solemn appendices.

In view of their origin, therefore, we shall not be expected to discuss the figures and facts that Dr. Guest offers in his pages. They are largely fictitious, and wholly misleading. They could not have been relied upon by a critical, or even by a sensible, man who understood Russian.

So far as Dr. Guest's own personality has crept into these pages—and once the statistics are ignored, there is precious little left—it is interesting to note that he has not yet progressed far enough in his folly to have become wise. He tells us definitely that " at a very early stage of these labours " he formed " two quite definite ideas " :

> 1. That the Soviet Government is a stable Government backed by the mass of the population, the peasants, and the workers ; and
>
> 2. That the attempt to introduce Communism on the scale projected in 1920 was a mistake which would have to be acknowledged.

We must grant the justice of the second quite definite idea. The attempt to introduce Communism has been an acknowledged failure. Perhaps we hardly needed Dr. Guest or his five hundred pages to tell us a fact so patent, but we must not grumble if, for once, he is right. It is, however, on behalf of the first quite definite " idea " that Dr. Guest may reasonably be asked to provide some evidence.

What right has he to say that the Bolshevists are backed by the mass of the population ? If this is so, why are elections conducted under such conditions of tyranny as are to-day unknown in even the most backward parts of the civilized world ? Why are no papers except official Bolshevist papers allowed ? Why is free speech punished with imprisonment and even death ?

We turn now to a double example of the truth of Blake's proverb. Mrs. Stan Harding's volume of personal experiences in Bolshevist Russia, " The Underworld of State," contains an introduction by Mr. Bertrand Russell. Mr. Russell, it may be remembered, was one of those who, in the early days of the Bolshevist regime, threw his influence into the scale as an ardent sympathizer with it. He could be relied upon to denounce any denunciations of the Bolshevists by better informed people. He went to Russia with the Labour delegation. He returned, sadder and wiser, with his faith in Bolshevism utterly destroyed.

His introduction to this volume, however, exhibits him as not yet really wise. The story of Mrs. Harding is, briefly, that she went to Russia as a journalist, was denounced as a British spy by a Mrs. Harrison (who was an American spy turned Bolshevist spy), and imprisoned without trial by the Soviets. Mr. Russell, instead of denouncing the Bolshevists for their arrest and torture of a woman without adequate inquiry or proper trial, tells us that " they behaved as every government does under such circumstances." He then rambles on with a

long attack upon all Secret Service work in every country, and even, with that peculiar ingenuity that has made him famous as a mathematician but ridiculous as a political figure, suggests that friendly relations between the Soviets and this country are being prevented by the machinations of spies.

> Friendly relations between England and Russia would throw out of employment hundreds of spies in both countries. Is it to be supposed that none among those hundreds will concoct evidence likely to prevent friendly relations? That would be to attribute to all spies an exalted moral character, which their very profession renders unlikely. Thus, international relations continue to be filled with suspicion and fear; an atmosphere is produced in which stable peace is impossible; any suggested increase of armaments is proved to be necessary by a mass of secret evidence submitted to Ministers ignorant of the world they aspire to govern; and so humanity is sacrificed to the incomes of a few practitioners of legalized crime.

Mr. Russell would do well to read the published accounts of Bolshevist leaders' speeches and the proceedings of the Third International, which is their engine for producing revolution in other countries. He will find there ample evidence to show what, in fact, are the Soviet principles of foreign policy. His melodramatic spies could not invent a policy more vicious, more disruptive, and more frankly subversive of other States than is openly expressed by the men who rule Russia to-day.

Mr. Russell, like Dr. Guest, must be urged to persevere in order that, at last, he may reach the clear vision that has been vouchsafed to Mr. Berkman and even Mrs. Harding.

The last-named is another writer who admits that she entered Russia "with prejudices far from being anti-Soviet" and with "sympathies known to be pretty far to the Left;" and who left after an interval in which

"the Russian Government and I had grown mutually disillusioned." Here is the original illusion:

> The power of money has been challenged in Soviet Russia, and the whole structure of society altered. There the money standard for everything no longer obtained.

She disregarded all tales of Bolshevist atrocities, because everybody whose sympathies are "pretty far to the Left" knows that tales of atrocities are always invented. No atrocities ever take place until, as in Mrs. Harding's case, they are committed against oneself. Then one claims compensation from the Russian Government and, further, from the American Government; and one demands "justice" in the columns of the daily papers of several countries. A Communist with a grievance always gallops for the law courts.

Mrs. Harding's journey into Russia, which was to establish her as an authority on the Soviet challenge to money power, was cruelly interrupted by arrest and imprisonment in the unspeakable gaols where the Bolshevists have caged so many thousands of patriotic and decent Russians.

"Why die?" said her gaolers to her after they had sentenced her to death without a trial; "Give us a document by which we hold you—then you can live, and perhaps be exchanged presently."

She lived in hourly expectation of torture and death, sometimes alone, sometimes with other unfortunates who had not even committed the crime of curiosity. She describes the horrors, the filth, the tortures of the prisons and the remarks of her fellow-captives.

> "The chiefs of the old Tsarist police were more accurate," said my companions. "They didn't arrest the wrong people to the same extent. Much of the present-day police work is very inaccurate. . . . Above all, the *Cheka* shoots much more freely. No proof is needed, suspicion is enough. . . . One must trust no one, now that treachery is a civic duty."

Acute and competent Dr. Guest, by the way, sums up the position in Bolshevist Russia in this respect as follows:

> From a consideration of the Codes and the general legal situation of Russia, it is evident that she now possesses a defined body of laws fitted to the needs of the country. . . . There is nothing in the legal system of Russia to prevent full and friendly relations with that country.

He clearly considers that *Cheka* methods are fitted to the needs of Russia. And, for all we know, he may be right.

Eventually, strong representations by the British Government led to Mrs. Harding's release, and she was duly dispatched across the Finnish frontier and so back to England. After an extended correspondence between the British and Bolshevist Governments, she was awarded an indemnity of £3,000 by the latter. In this she has been more fortunate than scores of her countrymen who have been arrested and imprisoned by the Bolshevists for equally frivolous reasons and subjected to equally horrible treatment.

Another book before us is, fortunately, of a different type from the others. It is no gradual exposure of a simpleton's conversion from faith in Bolshevism to disillusion; it is not even a statistical list of the conditions that are officially stated to exist in that administrative paradise. Maitre Aubert's "Bolshevism's Terrible Record" is a translation of the speech he delivered before the Criminal Court of Lausanne in defending Polunin, who was an accomplice of Conradi, the young man who assassinated the Bolshevist envoy, Vorovsky, in that city in 1923.

It may be recalled that the speech led to the acquittal of Polunin and Conradi by the jury, for which reason diplomatic relations between Russia and Switzerland were strained for years. Moreover, the Bolshevists, in pursuance of their secret policy of attempting the assassination of prominent anti-Bolshevists abroad, made

an attempt on the life of M. Aubert, fortunately without success.

This speech is an eloquent examination of the record of the Bolshevists from the first moment of their triumph. To English ears, attuned to less emotional arguments, it occasionally seems somewhat unmeasured in its violence; but, when this racial characteristic is allowed for, it remains one of the finest denunciations of the Soviet regime yet delivered. Here are one or two of M. Aubert's character sketches of prominent Bolshevists:

> *Zinoviev-Apfelbaum-Radomysslsky*, the great orator of the Communist party. He lived in 1906 at Berne, then at Zürich. In 1917 he left Switzerland with Lenin. Orator, but also profiteer. He offered a pearl necklace of 250,000 roubles to his collaborator, Adelaide Hansen. He is one of the leaders of the Terror.
>
> *Rakovsky*, a Bulgarian, who was a German spy in Rumania and the Ukraine, agent in London.
>
> *Radek-Sobelson*, Austrian subject, profiteer and business man. In 1922, he said he spent three million gold roubles in Egypt and Turkey on propaganda. But he bought at the same time English industrial shares up to a million francs.
>
> Where are the proletarians? Where are the idealists? What is there astounding in the fact that financial scandals take place in this confused milieu?

A sidelight on Bolshevist "education":

> In Petrograd the Central Commission for classifying the children has stated that 90 per cent. of girls under sixteen seen by them had lost their virginity. A report of venereal diseases among children states that out of 5,300 girls seen by the Commission, 4,100, i.e., 80 per cent., were prostitutes. Another report emanating from the school teachers utters this cry of distress: "We are powerless before these facts, up to now unknown in Russia—the development of immorality and crime among children."

There is no need to prolong quotation from this well-informed pamphlet. It is one that every student of affairs should have at hand, and may be recommended

as a guide to those pro-Bolshevists who are still struggling along the path of obstinate error towards ultimate wisdom.

* * * * * *

It is a tribute to the public interest in the Communist problem that book after book is published on Russian subjects, even in these days when the publishing of any book on any subject whatever is a risky proceeding. It is a known fact that, of all the scores of books about Russia that have appeared in the last decade, barely one in a dozen pays the publisher his out-of-pocket expenses, or recoups the author for the cost of his typewriting. But they still come. Authors are, on the whole, an unusually sensitive class of men; without doubt the output of financially unprofitable books about Russia is due to the writers' instinctive feeling that Russia is the most spacious subject of the day.

Every month sees the arrival of more or less valuable books on Russian subjects. Of a recent batch the more important are Sir Bernard Pares's "History of Russia;" "The Truth About Moscow," by Henri Béraud, a well-known French novelist and journalist; "The March of The Seventy Thousand," the story of the Czechs' amazing campaign in Siberia and on the Volga after the Russian Revolution, by Henry Baerlein, himself a novelist of some standing; a biography of the Dowager Empress Marie of Russia by Vladimir Poliakov, a Russian who has taken up his residence and his work in this country; and "Once I Had a Home," a personal account of the experiences of an anonymous Russian girl of gentle family during the Revolution and the Bolshevist Terror.

Of this batch, Sir Bernard Pares's "History of Russia" is undoubtedly the most important. If the author does not make any startling contribution to historical theory, or uncover any especially interesting new source of facts, he, at least, sets out in a readable form the general

conclusions that have hitherto been reached by the best historians both in Russia and in England. He claims as his teacher and master Professor V. O. Klyuchevsky, the famous Russian historian, and the latter would probably approve the work of his disciple, although he might, perhaps, criticize it as somewhat uninspired in style. There is no need to follow Sir Bernard Pares through all the chapters of his book, although it may be noted that his account of the Time of Trouble—so analogous in some ways to, so different in others from, present conditions—is admirably done. It is when we come to recent events that Sir Bernard's strength and weakness are most marked. The story of the Revolution and the Communist regime is told in thirty pages. It is a masterpiece of compression, but, although the author's views are perfectly clear, the reader may be repelled by his almost too detached outlook. One would think that all he describes had happened hundreds of years ago; the Time of Trouble seems to have interested the writer far more than the present collapse of Russian civilization. The same lack of feeling for the picturesque—and a history without colour is a vegetarian dish—may be inferred from the fact that he pedantically insists on substituting for the traditional and awe-inspiring title of Ivan the Terrible the jejune appellation of "John the Dread." His is a history without the colour of life.

One appreciates Sir Bernard Pares's dryness better when one reads such a book as Mr. Poliakov's "The Empress Marie of Russia and Her Times." Mr. Poliakov deserves all credit for being probably the first writer to realize the romance and tragedy of the life of Maria Feodorovna, wife and widow of Alexander III and mother of Nicholas II, that unfortunate victim of Moscow's blood-lust. But the wealth of detail and historical reminiscence in which he has embedded her story has almost stifled it. A volume half the size would have possessed twice the interest. Disentangled from the author's

garrulous prolixity, the life of the Dowager Empress is a cross-section of the history of Russia in the last three-quarters of a century. Her father was Prince Christian of Holstein-Glucksburg, a poor Danish cavalry officer and a distant relative of his King; and her mother, Princess Louise, was a daughter of the princeling of Hesse-Cassel.

Theirs had been a love match and, suitably enough, was housed in a cottage. Their eldest daughter was Alexandra, who became the wife of the young Englishman who was to be Edward VII, and whose memory is still dear to us as the late Queen Mother. Their fourth child was Princess Marie Sophia Frederika Dagmar, born in Copenhagen on November 26, 1847. Princess Dagmar, as she was then called, helped her eldest sister and their mother in the economies of their modest household. When she was sixteen years old, however, her father, by a chain of historical accidents, became King of Denmark. The foreign government to which he owed most for the recognition of him as monarch was Russia; moreover, King Christian was a remote relative of the Emperor Alexander II through the latter's maternal ancestry. The good relations between the two Courts led, at last, to the betrothal of Princess Dagmar to the heir to the Russian throne, the Grand Duke Nicholas.

The two young people became ardently attached to each other. Alexandra, the Princess of Wales, acted as chaperon during Nicholas' protracted visit to the Danish Court. His return to Russia, however, in the winter of 1865 was the beginning of a tragedy. He became seriously ill and was sent to Nice in the hope that the warmer climate would benefit him. The vessel passed within sight of Copenhagen, but Nicholas refused to allow the young Princess to see him on his sick bed. Only a string of flags carried a message from him to her. He hoped to return soon in full health, and chose to spare her the sight of his suffering. But on the Riviera he gradually grew worse. Princess Dagmar, with her

mother and her eldest brother, hurriedly crossed the Continent to be with him, for he had asked for her. Simultaneously, Alexander II, his father, and his brothers hastened to the same destination. The driver of the French train was a Pole who had fled from Russian rule and whose family possessions had been confiscated. The French railway authorities, knowing this, hesitated to permit him to drive the Imperial train. The Pole replied that, although he would have refused to drive the official train of a Russian Emperor, he would most readily help an unhappy father to reach his son's death-bed.

In April, 1866, Nicholas died. A few moments before, he summoned his brother, the Grand Duke Alexander, into the room where Princess Dagmar sat by him. Taking her hand, he extended it to his brother, and, assuring her that Alexander was worthy of her love, expressed a dying wish that they should marry. Seven months later the marriage was celebrated in St. Petersburg, and Princess Dagmar became the wife of the heir to a troubled throne. Alexander was in most ways different from his brother. Nicholas had received the training fitted for a future Tsar ; Alexander's education had been neglected. Nicholas was a man of culture and charm ; his brother's mind, on the contrary, was slow and ponderous. Alexander possessed great physical strength, and his military training fitted him more for the life of a country gentleman than for that of the Court. He regarded his new position as Tsarevitch without pleasure, but a stern sense of duty held him to his responsibilities. His bride was received into the Orthodox Church under the name of Maria Feodorovna. On March 1st, 1881, Alexander II was murdered in the streets of St. Petersburg by a revolutionary, and his son came to the throne.

For the next thirteen years his life and that of Maria Feodorovna were haunted by the ever-present threat of murder. Actually, Alexander III died in his palace,

but the revolutionary peril which had spared the Empress till then was destined to revenge itself upon her in the persons of her eldest son, Nicholas II, and his family a quarter of a century later. Maria Feodorovna's influence in affairs of State during her husband's reign was, of necessity, small; if anything, it increased after his death, for Nicholas II, never a man of strong will —though, as was afterwards to be seen in the terrible hours of persecution, he possessed a noble and courageous spirit—was easily led both by his mother and by his wife. The Dowager Empress was a popular figure, even at a time when the popularity of the Romanovs was at its lowest. Like her sister, Queen Alexandra, she was respected by every class in the community, and, whenever charity and the good of the country could be served, she was never invoked in vain.

In the dark days of the Great War, when rumour falsely laid charges of pro-Germanism on the Russian Royal Family, especially on the Empress, the Dowager Empress was known as the determined foe of Germany. Her father's accession to the Danish throne had been chiefly due to the hatred of the Danes for their Prussian despoilers; the Dowager Empress never forgot this. At the outbreak of war she was travelling through Germany on her way back from England to Russia. The train was stopped by the German authorities, and, though no actual insult was offered her, the sights she saw and especially the ill-treatment of Russian refugees roused in her a deep loathing of Germany.

A few years later, when she was herself a refugee and a prisoner in a palace where she had lived as Empress, the German troops offered to rescue her from the advancing Bolshevists. Although the peril was great and her suite feared that the Bolshevists would murder her, she refused to be saved by Germans. She remained behind in the Crimea, and, only when all hope was gone, did she embark upon a British vessel. In England she was greeted by her sister, by King George, her nephew,

and by other members of the Royal Family. She forgot for a time her sorrows in the joy of reunion with Queen Alexandra. Then she returned to Copenhagen, where she lived in retirement, almost the last survivor of the great figures of Imperial Russia, until her death in 1928.

The destruction of Russia and the birth of Czecho-Slovakia are, in a sense, bound up with one another. It is not merely that the leadership of the Slav world has temporarily passed from the one to the other, but in a more actual sense the Czecho-Slovakian State was consolidated on Russian soil. The Czech Legion which, for many perilous months, withstood the Bolshevists in Siberia has become the backbone of the new State. The Legion consisted largely of Czech deserters from the Austrian armies, who joined their countrymen, resident in Russia, in battalions formed to fight their ancient oppressors. When Kerensky's folly and Lenin's treachery delivered Russia to the mercy of the enemy and the cruelty of the mob, the Czechs preserved their discipline. They began to make their way to Vladivostok in order to sail back to Europe.

The desire of the Allies, however, to reconstitute the Eastern front and to strengthen the loyalist forces in Russia made them turn about, take hold of the Trans-Siberian Railway, and oppose their bayonets to the Bolshevist hordes. They fought well and, if they were not altogether as idealistic as is suggested by Mr. Baerlein, who is a partial historian, they certainly gave their countrymen reason for pride in their activities. They presented the unprecedented spectacle of an army on wheels; in this, they resembled to some degree the ancient Mongolian invaders of Russia, whose carts carried them perpetually across the vast spaces they traversed in their invasions of Russia; but the wheels of the Czechs were those of railway trains. Their headquarters were in trains; they had a bank, printing presses, even guard rooms, and all the other appur-

tenances of modern warfare—all on wheels; when they went into action, either they attacked with an array of armoured trains or they rolled up to the fighting line in the carriages in which they lived, and deployed from them into action.

When, at length, Kolchak was beaten and he had fallen into the hands of implacable enemies, the Czechs had to think of their own safety. With considerable difficulty and no small loss, their trains brought them, at last, to Vladivostok, whence they took ship to Europe. It is noteworthy that one of the ships was purchased by them with money accumulated from the enforced savings of the troops, and was the first vessel of the new Czecho-Slovak navy, just as the bulk of the legionaries' funds became the nucleus of one of the principal Czech banks of to-day. Mr. Baerlein describes many remarkable instances of the courage and intelligence of the legionaries. The reader, even if he has no great knowledge of Russian conditions, must find the effect of these episodes diminished by the contemptuous attitude Mr. Baerlein adopts to all the Russians involved, White and Red alike. It must seem unlikely, even to the most innocent reader, that all Mr. Baerlein's geese can have been such perfect swans; and it is grossly untrue to suggest that the White Russian armies were as badly manned as he implies. The campaign of the Czech Legion, however, remains one of the most thrilling and extraordinary episodes of the whole War.

M. Henri Béraud won his reputation as a novelist in France, and, to some extent, in England also, by a book describing the "Martyrdom of a Fat Man." In his volume of personal impressions of Bolshevist Moscow, he describes the martyrdom of a lean people. He accomplishes his new task with felicity; he went to Russia with a certain prejudice in favour of the Bolshevists—he was himself once a workman, and the "dictatorship of the proletariat" touched a romantic note in his heart. But personal contact with the cynical

rogues at Moscow soon had its inevitable result. Here is his picture of the capital:

> Men and women came, went, passed one another, met face to face, without a word or a smile. Laughter is dead in Moscow and silence is king; the very pavement hears each word that it ought not to hear.

Laughter in Russia to-day is reserved for the Communist orator who, having harangued the mob on the glorious successes of the Soviet Government at home and abroad, returns to look his fellow augurs in the eye. Soviet elections, for example, may provide them with amusement; M. Béraud found the voting sufficiently unreal.

> Proletarians have good cause to ask themselves if dictatorship and obedience are not the same things. They have been told that they were going to "stamp out the middle class," and all they see are hosts of profiteers rise up and prosper. They accept this state of things with that patience which is at the bottom of Russian character. But they would probably like to have their say about it. Impossible. Voting by show of hands is no vote at all; every striker knows that. I have been a working man; I have been on strike, and I know what I am talking about.

M. Béraud took malign pleasure in discussing Bolshevist affairs with the Moscow leaders. It was not difficult for him, with the actual evidence of the regime before his eyes, to embarrass them by disingenuously begging for enlightenment about details of their much advertised paradise. "Are *you* possibly a 'dirty *bourgeois*'?" he asked Kamenev, with delicate reference to the latter's immaculate suit. Kamenev replied, with eager politeness, that neither he nor his interrogator would ever be a *bourgeois*. "What is a *bourgeois*?" insisted M. Béraud.

> Truth obliges me to state that this simple question, this mere nothing, greatly embarrassed Monsieur Kamenev. He coughed, blushed, pressed a button, and answered me according to formula, "I will send for the Constitution."

Every honest man who goes to Moscow with a prejudice in favour of the Bolshevists returns cured. M. Béraud is only one more name in the long list of the Bolshevists' converts—to anti-Bolshevism.

"Once I Had a Home" is a personal account of a Russian girl's experiences in Petrograd and the Crimea during the War and the Revolution. The authoress hides her identity under her christian name of Nadejda, although there seems no reason why she should not have disclosed her full name. Her record is obviously authentic. One might say, without offence to her, that the book is too bare to be an invention. There is probably no novelist alive to-day who could successfully reproduce the nightmare horror of the Russian Civil War, before which the French Revolution and all previous social cataclysms dwindle into *macabre* episodes. The truth is that Nadejda's companions in misfortune were not of the heroic mould. They acquiesced in their own privations; and all their endeavours were directed towards the elementary end of saving their lives until it should be possible to escape.

People who have seen with their own eyes the apathy of such Russians in the face of the Bolshevists will recognize in this book the symptoms of fatalistic impotence to which the Bolshevists owe their continued power in Russia. Almost, it justifies Mr. Baerlein's strictures upon the Russians in Siberia. Yet this impression of the Russian people as spineless cowards is unjust. What, after all, could Nadejda and her aged parents have done to withstand the Bolshevist mob? The magnificent exploits of General Kornilov and his tiny force of ex-officers in the Caucasus in 1918 are an epic, as yet insufficiently celebrated, of heroism and endurance beside which even the adventures of the Czech Legion pale. It is a pity, by the way, that Sir Bernard Pares's book dismisses Kornilov's campaign in a few words, for, without due appreciation of this noble episode, no picture of the Russian people and their

recent history can be complete. But when, at last, the artist is found who is competent to paint that picture, all the books that have been mentioned in these lines will help him to mix his colours.

* * * * * *

For a few months, ten years or so ago, the name of General Denikin was one of the most familiar to the public of this country. But when his campaign against the Bolshevists in South Russia finally failed, his reputation in foreign countries faded away as swiftly as the remnants of his defeated forces. It may, however, be recalled that he was offered a refuge in England; refused it on the ground that the British Government had betrayed him—for which reason, too, he thought fit to return his British decorations; and went, instead, to live in Belgium. There he has devoted his leisure to the writing of his memoirs, three fresh volumes of which have appeared not long since.

They are published in Russian. The first section of his memoirs was translated into English with the title of "The Russian Turmoil;" but, from the fact that no further translations have appeared, it would seem that the experiment was unsuccessful. Historians of the period, therefore, will have to go to the Russian text, of which Denikin is preparing the sixth and last volume. They will not be able to ignore his memoirs, for, unlike nearly every other important participant in the Russian civil war, he has shown himself an honest chronicler. He is even unprejudiced, so far as this is possible in a man who is describing his own actions and misfortunes. There is at present no better nor juster account than his of the stirring events between the abdication of the Tsar and the final victory of the Bolshevists over their internal enemies.

It is too much to expect that Denikin should blame himself for the failure of his army;* in this, as in every other respect, he is no egotist. Yet, good soldier, honest

man, and devoted patriot as he is, it is on him that history will pick as the real author of his own failure. For he lacks personality, and without personality no general can win a civil war.

Novelists and descriptive writers, in newspapers and books, have tried to convey their impressions of the Russian agony, but the words are not coined by which it can be understood here. The sensations were too foreign to us, the breakdown too complete, the retchings of the dying country too painful for an English audience to understand. Yet through the horror there loomed the names and reputations of two or three men, lighting up the darkness like torches. Where they led, others followed; for they brought light into the shades of despair. Such men were Generals Kornilov and Alexeiev, soldiers whose reputation was as well known as their names, natural leaders. But Denikin was not such. His presence inspired few to risk the terrors of the Russian battlefield, the anguish of civil war, and the threats of Bolshevist vengeance. No one to this day can charge him with any worse fault than this one essential fact—his mediocrity as a national figure.

While Kornilov and Alexeiev lived—the former leading forlorn hopes against Bolshevist hosts sometimes a hundred times as numerous, the latter planning and organizing at the base—patriots flocked to their standard and thought of nothing but the restoration of Russia as a civilized and united country. When they died and Denikin took their place (there was, perhaps, no man better than he, and thousands of pretenders who were far worse) men stopped to think of the future. The curse of politics entered the Volunteer Army; monarchists quarrelled with republicans, pro-Germans with pro-English; federalists with centralists; democrats with would-be dictators. And in this welter of confusion, doubt, and controversy, the early flames of patriotism died down. The country became resigned and fatalistic, as Russians so easily do; without vision, the

people perished, and the Bolshevist mob stifled the patriot army. Denikin became the Kerensky of the Volunteer Army—the cruellest possible comparison, but a true one. Just as the promise and fire of the Revolution died away during the months when the voluble but ineffective Socialist demagogue ruled, so the hopes of the Volunteers vanished when Denikin, upright but uninspiring, led them.

All through his books we see him sternly refusing to take sides in the politics of his lieutenants—refusing, that is, to risk the defection of some to gain the enthusiastic support of others. His logic is unexceptionable. The future government of Russia was to be decided, in his view, only when the Bolshevists were destroyed; until then no party had the right to claim his adherence. But he failed to see that he was not big enough to carry his army on his shoulders, and that this very weakness made a decision necessary. It would have been far better had he come out boldly for a republic, or for a constitutional monarchy, no matter what the other generals desired. He saw the Bolshevist armies as his only opponents, and in this he was wrong; events showed that not the strength of the Soviets, but his own weakness and the futile passivity of the bulk of the population would destroy him. He was a good soldier, a stout patriot, a loyal ally; but what Russia needed was a strong man.

His three volumes, while chiefly of importance to the specialist in Russian affairs, contain, nevertheless, a mass of interesting details. There is, for example, the first complete account of the long and intricate negotiations between the Volunteer Army and the Allied representatives. It is not altogether pleasant reading for Englishmen. Our Government spoke with various voices, some of them encouraging, others neutral, others again hostile. Even the British generals in South Russia seemed to have had different instructions from one another. We made promises, and kept some of

them; we threatened, and occasionally fulfilled our threats. When the whole fate of Russia trembled in the balance, in November, 1919, Mr. Lloyd George said at the Guildhall:

> I am not unmindful, and certainly Britain is not unmindful, of our obligation to the gallant men in Russia who helped us to fight the Germans when the Bolshevist leaders were betraying the Allies on that front.

This was circulated throughout Denikin's country in reply to Soviet propaganda which had stated that the Allies would no longer aid the Volunteer Army. But, eight days later, Mr. Lloyd George changed his mind and said:

> Denikin and Kolchak have two great main objects. The first is the destruction of Bolshevism and the restoration of good government in Russia. Upon that he could get complete unanimity amongst all the forces. But the second is that he is fighting for a reunited Russia. Well, it is not for me to say whether that is a policy which suits the British Empire. There was a very great statesman, a man of great imagination, who certainly did not belong to the party to which I belong, Lord Beaconsfield, who regarded a great, gigantic, colossal, growing Russia rolling onwards like a glacier towards Persia and the borders of Afghanistan as the greatest menace the British Empire could be confronted with.

The significance of this speech was lost on neither side in Russia. The Volunteer Army had built up its hopes largely on the promises of British support—doubtless it ought not to have done so; but it did—and this speech cut away the ground from under its feet. The Bolshevists knew that they had nothing more to fear, and they said so. If Mr. Lloyd George could have foreseen a great, gigantic, colossal, growing Bolshevist Russia rolling on towards Persia, Afghanistan, India, and China, he might perhaps have distrusted the counsels which caused his change of policy. It is no secret that the Cabinet were not united on their Russian

policy; the section that carried the day must take a share in the responsibility for the present activities of Moscow. The only thing we can claim in regard to our intervention—fatal word!—in Russian civil war politics is that we behaved better than any other foreign power. This is very small praise.

To turn to purely Russian aspects of the turmoil, Denikin has interesting sections on the anti-Bolshevist Russian officers and officials who joined the ranks of their enemies. Their invariable excuse was that, by penetrating the counsels of the Soviets, they hoped to be able to aid the Volunteers.

> In two and a half years of war in South Russia (comments Denikin), I know of only one case where an important Bolshevist operation which seriously threatened my armies was intentionally ruined. The man who did this had a high sense of duty and extraordinary courage; he paid for it with his life. . . . Occasionally, of course, sections of the Red army and individual men came over to us, but in general the operations of the Bolshevists were carried out according to plan, and sometimes even with talent,

thanks to the assistance of the would-be treacherous commanders. The reasons such men had for joining the Bolshevists were much more compelling than their excuse. Not merely their welfare was at stake, if they refused, but their lives and those of all their families and friends. Denikin recalls the occasion when a genuinely Bolshevist commander mutinied and endeavoured to set up a separate command. The Bolshevists killed not merely him, but one hundred and six *bourgeois* hostages, "who neither had nor possibly could have any share in his mutiny. . . . Among the slaughtered hostages were a number of officers who had refused to join the Bolshevist armies, including General Russky, who had rendered important services on the German Front before the Revolution, and General Radko-Dmitriev. The hundred victims were stripped to their shirts, their hands bound, and made to kneel down

in the cemetery. Then they were struck with swords and thrown, living or dead, into an open grave. The Bolshevist official who killed General Russky taunted him first with the words, "Now do you recognize the great Russian Revolution?" "I can only see great brigandage," was Russky's reply.

The brigandage was, unfortunately, not all on one side. Denikin frankly admits that certain of the forces under his command could not be restrained from seeking the spoils of victory in the towns they captured from the Bolshevists. The legend has long been circulated by Bolshevists, pro-Bolshevists, and parlour-Bolshevists in all countries that there was nothing to choose in brutality between the Red and the White armies which fought the civil war in Russia. This is absolutely untrue. A few sections of the anti-Bolshevist forces certainly plundered, as is admitted; a few treated with needless cruelty the political enemies who fell into their hands. In some places there were Jewish pogroms; Jew-baiting was practised by the mob in almost every city where the conflict passed. But to compare the misdemeanours of a few ill-disciplined White detachments with the wholesale and officially ordered atrocities of the Reds is to compare a fire in a grate with the Fire of London.

The offenders in the White ranks were chiefly certain Cossack forces who, under their own commanders, offered Denikin a limited allegiance. He was in no position to refuse their aid. The Cossack territories as a whole were on his side, but they were sufficiently divided for it to be necessary to enlist all possible volunteers from them. Had he refused the men in question, they would undoubtedly have ravaged the country under his control, attacked his own forces, and drawn away many of their fellows into their own freebooting ranks. One of the more notorious of these "partisans," as they were called, was Shkuro, a young Kuban Cossack, who made war in the best and worst style of the Middle

Ages. He was, as Denikin admits, a man of remarkable courage, and the evil reputation of his troop was not the least reason of his success. But the excesses in which he and his men—who explained that " they hadn't gone to the war to save the *bourgeoisie* "—indulged whenever they entered a city made them dangerous allies. They alienated the plundered inhabitants—*bourgeoisie* and others; they contracted the awkward habit of riding home with their plunder and distributing it among their friends after every raid; and they were most unwilling to obey orders or submit to army discipline. Shkuro referred to his men affectionately as his " wolves," and they did their best to live up to their title.

Yet the indiscipline of these Kuban " wolves " was not so fatal in its results as the falling off from grace of the Volunteer forces which, under Generals Mamontov and Mai-Maievsky, made their sensational raid northwards in the late summer of 1919. They came within two hundred miles of Moscow, and victory seemed within Denikin's grasp. But both forces gave themselves up to looting and debauchery; Mamontov disobeyed orders and started off on a further raid. His successes were so considerable that, as Denikin sadly writes, " he won loud applause, the title of a national hero—and immunity from disciplinary action." Denikin dared not censure and replace a commander whose exploits were ringing in everyone's ears and who had brought his troops almost in sight of the capital. Yet Mamontov's disobedience to orders upset the whole plan of campaign and helped to a large degree to make possible the remarkable collapse of the White forces who, three months later, were fighting for their lives back by the Black Sea. General Mai-Maievsky was indeed replaced by General Wrangel, who reported that he found the former's troops worthless from the military point of view and corrupted by their experiences of " war as a means of profit," speculation, and plunder.

Many of Denikin's pages are devoted to the

personality of General Wrangel, who later succeeded him as commander-in-chief of the shattered Volunteer Army. No better proof of Denikin's impartiality is possible than the fact that he writes of Wrangel, whom he detests and always detested, with a complete absence of personal feeling. Wrangel despised Denikin as a weakling and for his seeming inability to rise to the height of the occasion. He did not hide his contempt, and the final resignation of Denikin was largely engineered by him. Denikin leaves us in no doubt that Wrangel was a man of courage and energy, as was afterwards demonstrated in the last fight in the Crimea, but he leaves it to be understood why, as later events proved, Wrangel was not the man to succeed where Denikin himself had failed.

Wrangel's energy was occasionally unfortunate in its effects, as, for example, when he hanged a member of the governing body of the Kuban Cossacks who had declared for the independence of the Kuban from Russia, and thus for the cessation of assistance, in men and material, to the Volunteer Army. The Kuban Cossacks, even those politically opposed to the dead man, never forgave Wrangel for this. Their sense of Cossack rights persuaded them that, if anyone was to hang a Cossack, it ought to be another Cossack.

Half Denikin's troubles were due to the Cossacks' insistence upon their privileges. Every Cossack country —from the large territories, like the Don, Kuban, and Terek, to the small mountain districts of Daghestan —claimed independence and every diplomatic right of which they had ever heard. The older Cossacks showed the greatest intelligence, but the young men—especially those who had spent some time in cities under the Bolshevist regime—put forward claims that would have been merely ridiculous had they not interfered so tragically with Denikin's hopes. The Transcaucasian States of Georgia and Azerbaijan were no better. In Georgia a gang of insignificant attorneys discovered

the profitable brief of "democratic independence. They pleaded it with every extravagant argument that came to their glib tongues. Georgia, it should be remembered, is a semi-barbarous country which does not produce enough food for its population and has no exports, except a certain quantity of manganese, to buy what it lacks. Nevertheless, it demanded complete independence of Russia and formed alliances behind Denikin's back hostile to his interests. Azerbaijan, the Tartar country lying round the oil wells in Baku, had no tradition of nationality; its inhabitants, so far as they desired to break with Russia at all, would have sought alliance with, and incorporation in, Turkey, rather than stand on their own feet. Azerbaijan, however, found its demagogues to demand its independence.

The strangest phenomenon of all was that each of these countries found British officials to back their claims. The British mission in Tiflis, the capital of Georgia, was intensely pro-Georgian in sympathy; even the Tartars found British officers to second their demands that Denikin's troops should be withdrawn from their territory. Georgia and Azerbaijan, to be sure, gained nothing by Denikin's discomfiture; the Bolshevist hordes raided their territory as soon as the Volunteer Army lost control of the Black Sea ports. Since then the discredited Georgian politicians have taken refuge in Paris, whence they excite the sympathy of the English Labour Party, which has adopted them as the most convenient stick with which to temper its extremists' admiration for Moscow. One hesitates to deprive any Socialist of an argument which divides him from his spiritual home in Moscow, but the Georgians are really poor ammunition for such a fight.

There is no space here to enter into all the noteworthy passages in General Denikin's three volumes. The more they are examined, the more poignant is the reader's realization that here was a good man wasted on a task beyond his powers, one who would have made a

magnificent Chief of Staff for a more magnetic leader. If virtue is its own reward, Denikin will find comfort in his exile. But in Russia the race is to the strong, and hope remains that a Napoleon may yet arise who will lead the Russian people out of their misery and degradation and restore them to their rightful place in the comity of nations.

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