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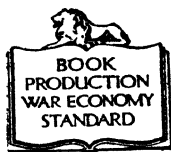
BETWEEN TWO WARS

LAST ESSAYS

BY
J. A. SPENDER



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and Sydney



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IN this volume are collected some of the last writings of J. A. Spender, gathered from various sources and dealing with various subjects. One or two of them cover something of the same ground, but it has been felt suitable to publish them all just as J. A. S. wrote them, for publication or broadcasting. The Publishers would take this opportunity of acknowledging the courtesy of those editors of newspapers and journals who have allowed the reprinting of articles that originally appeared in their columns.

ON LIBERTY

Comment (From a Broadcast Talk, April 4, 1937)

ALL definitions of liberty are unsatisfactory. The word has a glamour in our thoughts which fades when we try to define it. It is never without qualifications; it is always more than the absence of restraint which the dictionary declares it to be. Let us try to avoid all subtleties and think of liberty as embodied in a free country—a country in which the citizen voluntarily accepts the restrictions necessary to order and well-being, but in other respects is left the fullest possible scope for the development and expression of his individuality and character in word and in deed. Opinions differ even about this, but at all events we can start from the point that we have liberty to talk about liberty—an indulgence which in a large part of Europe would expose the talker to the rigours of prison cell and concentration camp.

Many of us, I expect, are a little weary of being reminded of Burke's saying that eternal vigilance is the price of liberty. It is, of course, true, but we need to know what we have to guard and whence the threat to it comes. The first thought that occurs to me is the very simple one that liberty is built on peace and can have no other foundation. Our free government, as we enjoy it, is the substitution of Law for Force, of argument for physical strife. It is an achievement of many centuries; it rests on the belief that free discussion is the likeliest way of doing justice and reaching sensible conclusions about policy. But it has rules of its own which must be observed. It requires tolerance and mutual forbearance. It requires that minorities shall submit for the time being, when they are outvoted in Parliament; and be content to work for a future in which they will have made their views prevail by reason and argument. If any of these assumptions fail, if our

feelings become literally too strong for words, if minorities will not submit, and fly from words to blows, or if majorities so abuse their power as to drive minorities to physical resistance, then it is all up with liberty. Whichever party is physically the stronger will and must crush its opponents. The revolutionary inscribes Liberty on his banner, but if he succeeds he is bound to become a dictator.

Our own Parliament prides itself on being "Sovereign," and people are apt to think it can do anything; but all through its history it has been groping along the edge of the unmapped boundary which divides the things that can from the things that cannot be settled by argument and reason. Even so recently as the year 1914 it came near crossing this boundary in its disputes on the Irish question. Let it once be crossed, and we are outside the region in which discussion avails. The word is now the blow, and the question is simply which party is physically the stronger. We are no longer arguing with an opponent, we are seeking to crush him. No room for liberty here.

This is obvious when we are at war with another nation, but we are slower to recognize it in our domestic affairs. We hear people talking light-heartedly of class war, and yet claiming to be champions of liberty. This, if they mean anything by the word "war," or if they seriously contemplate suspending the forms of free government, is self-contradiction. No kind of war—class war or any other—can be reconciled with liberty. When we begin talking military language in our politics, put our political parties into uniforms, let them arm and drill or even pretend to arm and drill, then we should be aware that liberties are being taken with liberty.

All this is being illustrated for us in certain European countries. In these you have the frankly avowed dictatorship of a party which has got on top and has to keep itself on top. That it can only do by silencing its opponents and removing all the guarantees which in the free State the law offers for the life and liberty of the subjects. Its rule covers the whole of life; there is no stopping-place between

political and other liberties. Its doctrine must be declared infallible and imposed on the school, the home, the newspaper, the theatre, upon art, science and religion. The idea that political liberty can be sacrificed and other liberties kept proves under this test to be groundless.

This brings me to one of the most insidious arguments that is being used for the undermining of liberty. It is suggested that political liberty is of no value because we, or many of us, do not enjoy what is called "economic liberty." We must be prepared, or so we are told, to sacrifice political liberty in order that we may obtain economic liberty. Communist and Socialist writing abounds in this argument, and I should like for a moment to examine it.

It is, of course, true that we are all, in a sense, slaves to our circumstances. There are a few idle rich at one end of the scale and a few tramps at the other who are so independent of circumstances that they can live, what they term, the free life—the life of the race-course, let us say, or the life of the road. These are not generally thought to be the most admirable specimens of human kind. But the rest of us have to earn our living, keep regular hours, do a long day's work and have only short holiday, be careful not to offend against custom and prejudice, show deference to employers and a great many other people whom in our hearts we think to be our inferiors. The lot of some is undoubtedly much harder than that of others, and this inequality is one of the great social evils. Who can but sympathize with the poor man when he cries out that he is a wage slave? It is a cry which strikes a chord in a much wider circle than he sometimes seems to be aware of, for in a multitude of seemingly well-to-do homes there is the same sense of insecurity, the same sense of servitude, the same feeling of being involved in a round of meaningless toil for unappreciative masters.

To mend these conditions, so far as they can be mended, is precisely the aim of all good politics, indeed we may say of civilization itself, which has no other purpose than to release the spirit of man. But it is surely an extraordinary

paradox to suggest that we shall further this object by surrendering our political liberty? Will the workman be better off if he is deprived of the right to strike, the right to vote, the right of voicing his grievances, or promoting his own political party? Is Government likely to do better for him or for any of us when the stream of criticism is cut off, and it is in a position to silence instead of answer its opponents? Is there anything in the condition of the countries which have sacrificed their political liberty to encourage the hope that economic liberty can be won that way? Are the workers better off, are they freer men, are their masters in the Communist or the Fascist State less tyrannical, more considerate?

I cannot pretend to answer these questions. I can only plead that they should be very carefully considered before we conclude that the sacrifice of political liberty will open the road to economic liberty. Broadly speaking, we have two types of society presented to us to-day—one the regimented, disciplined type in which the State undertakes to provide for us all on condition that we obey its rules, think its thoughts, accept what it offers us; the other our own free type which leaves us at liberty to go our own way, to rebel against its rules, to think our own thoughts, to say what we want, to make our private profit. It is customary nowadays to call private profit by rather opprobrious terms, but if you think it out, it plays a considerable, and I would even say a quite respectable, part in economic liberty. For if a man makes profit by selling things to you and me, the presumption is that he is supplying things which you and I want, not things which he thinks we ought to want. To be able to pick and choose between the large variety of things with which competing manufacturers and shop-keepers cater for her taste is the British housewife's prerogative. Let her go shopping where she has to wait in queue for rationed supplies of things which the State thinks she ought to have, or which are the only things it produces, and she will discover the difference, and perhaps learn what a great part the free choice plays in her life.

Both these types of society are possible, and described on paper the regimented and disciplined type undoubtedly looks much tidier and neater. Indeed, if you assume that human beings can be treated like the inmates of a prison or a workhouse, whose wants can be measured from day to day, and who can be set to work at any task which their masters prescribe, and at any wage which they think fair, there ought to be no great difficulty in catering for them. In such a community there need be no more unemployed than there are on Dartmoor, and it should—at all events on paper—be possible to make production and consumption meet without any of the miscalculations which attend supply and demand, and cause unemployment in the actual world. I say on paper, for there would still remain the possibility that the caterers would make a mistake in measuring their quantities, or that harvests would fail, in which case millions would perish who, if left free to cater for themselves, would have managed somehow to keep alive. All human enterprises, however, have their liabilities, and some may think the experiment worth the risk.

Over against this is the free society, of which ours is the type, looking at times very ragged and untidy, bearing on its back all the reproaches for what is wrong and lamentable in human effort and human nature, changing all the time, never perfectly conforming to its own rules, still less to its ideals. Its problem is to reconcile freedom with a more orderly arrangement of life, and some freedom it will have to sacrifice in the process. If I tried to suggest what its aim should be it would be something in these terms—a society in which all would be assured of a sufficient minimum but none prevented from adding to it by his own effort and enterprise, subject always to the right of the State to take from his superfluity to increase the minimum. A society which relies on free speech, free criticism, free invention, to carry it forward, and which positively encourages the varieties and inequalities which result naturally from the differing capacities of men and women. It is, after all, these which give spice and flavour to life, and

those who get in advance of their fellows show the way to the rest. Discourage the pace-makers and you slow down the whole movement.

Each generation is called upon to find its own balance between the contending principles of liberty and authority, but I believe it to be true that civilization progresses in so far as, on the whole, liberty gains on authority. We seem in these times to be in a phase of reaction from liberty. War has familiarized us with authority, and the far-spreading unrest which has followed has made us timid about social order. Liberty is assailed from the right and from the left; in the name of advanced thinking we are asked to embark upon courses which are as perilous to liberty as the frank and open assault on it of the opposite party. It is time to be on our guard. If in our zeal to build a new Jerusalem we allow ourselves to toy with military ideas in our domestic politics, talk light-heartedly of class war, think of crushing minorities, suspending Parliament, overriding law courts; or if alternatively we put our political parties into uniforms and train them to be violent if they don't get their way, we may say good-bye to liberty. Liberty will not live in this atmosphere of war. It demands peace, respect for opponents, and the acceptance of evolution, not revolution, as the method of political change.

I have tried to give some practical reasons why we should cherish liberty, but I think of it also as something which possesses what philosophers call absolute value for the human soul, something which no civilized man or woman can lose without loss of self-respect. It is this something which has inspired poets and orators and made millions of willing martyrs. We have inherited it—we especially in this country. Let us see that we guard it.

ON THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

(From a Broadcast Talk, March 25, 1938)

The free Press is an essential to freedom, as we in this country understand it, i.e. freedom not only to hold opinions, but to express them openly without fear of the consequences. The Press alone supplies us with the means of forming opinions. Without a free Press we should know only what our rulers wished us to know, what they thought it convenient that we should know; we should have no means of forming our own opinion.

But only after long and strenuous efforts have we won this freedom. The cause of the free Press has been a fighting one all the way. In the seventeenth century pamphleteers, like the famous William Prynne, paid for their audacities by having their ears cropped and being compelled to stand in the pillory. The greatest vindication of the freedom of writing is Milton's famous *Areopagitica*, written in that century, which to this day you may read side by side with John Stuart Mill's tract on liberty as one of the two great classic arguments in the English language for freedom of speech. The main argument remains to this day as Milton stated it. Truth will prevail, or is most likely to prevail, when both truth and error may be freely tested by inquiry and discussion: in what he calls the free and open encounter of truth and error.

In the eighteenth century, when weekly, bi-weekly and finally daily newspapers arrived, the struggle was mainly for liberty to report the proceedings of Parliament. Parliament strenuously resisted this process, for the aristocratic families which then controlled the House of Commons, as well as the House of Lords, regarded its debates—as indeed all the proceedings of Government—as private affairs of their own on which it was impertinent for the common folk to intrude. A judge said on the Bench that the people had no concern with the laws except to obey them. The newspapers insisted, and their spokesmen, Wilkes, Crosby

and Oliver, when committed to prison, were followed with the acclamation of the mob, and supported by great corporations like the City of London. The House of Commons continued to protest, but by the year 1771 the battle was won, and the reporters gained the regular footing in the gallery of the House which they have ever since enjoyed.

Thus we may say that the liberty of the Press to report the proceedings of Parliament and all important public bodies, and to comment freely on public affairs and passing events, has been unchallenged now for 170 years. But this liberty is, of course, not absolute. The Press may not publish obscene matter ; it may not publish matter calculated to cause a run on a bank ; it is subject to a strict law of libel ; and so forth. But it may criticize freely everything done by Governments, or for that matter, by Oppositions, express its opinions on home and foreign affairs, however inconvenient these may be to the Government of the day. So entirely is our system of government based on this free play of opinion that we actually pay the leader of the Opposition in Parliament a salary out of public funds to carry on this business of opposing and criticizing the Government. In a great many countries to-day a leader of opposition, if he ventured to hold up his head, would be clapped in prison and be lucky if he escaped with his life.

We think the good citizen is one who learns to think for himself, and we think our country is likely to be happiest and strongest just in proportion as its people are left free to use their own wits and form their own opinions. But we have to realize that this throws a much greater responsibility than the opposite system on the individual citizen. There will always be foolish people in the world, but the free system assumes that there will, at any given moment, and especially in times of stress and crisis, be a majority of sensible ones who will accept of their own free-will the common policy and common discipline required for the honour and welfare of their country. If on these occasions there is no agreement on common policy and no willingness

to accept the necessary discipline, then here, as elsewhere, there will be the same confusion, and the same internecine strife that have led to civil war and the establishment of dictatorship in other countries.

For let us never forget that the one thing assumed in our free institutions is that we shall abstain from violence in the effort to make our own views prevail. / Our weapons must be tongue and pen, not guns and bombs. Each of us, Conservative, Labour or Liberal, must be prepared to go peacefully into opposition when we are overruled, and to work to convince our fellow-citizens that we are right. Convince by argument—not use or threaten violence to make our views prevail. / The moment this line is crossed liberty is in danger. The free debate cannot go on in an atmosphere of violence. Whoever prevails by violence will have to hold his opponents down by violence, and then, whether he belongs to left wing or right wing he becomes an enemy of liberty, and his victory will mean the establishment of one kind of dictatorship or the other. That is the lesson which all current history is teaching us. So a necessary part of the education of a free citizen is the cultivation of the habit of mind which eschews violence, and which, without abating its convictions, relies on moral and spiritual and not on physical weapons to make them prevail. (The greater the difficulty of making this principle prevail in the dealings of nations with one another, the stronger should be our determination to preserve it in our dealings with one another in our own nation.)

CIVILIZATION HAS ROOTS TOO DEEP TO DIE

History's Answer to the Prophets of Gloom

I HAVE read books by very clever people, and reviews of a good many more written by foreign philosophers and historians, all of which are in a state of despair about civilization.

They see the approach of the doom predicted by the prophet Marx or the prophet Spengler, or some other gloomy German; or like Mr. Wells, they are convinced that whatever higher powers they believe in will throw man on the scrapheap as a discarded experiment unless he instantly conforms to some pattern to which it is extremely improbable that he can or will conform in any near future.

Civilization, then, according to these wise men, is a lost cause. So, if we listen to another school of jeremiads, are liberty and democracy. If we win the war we shall only do so by abandoning liberty and democracy and steeping ourselves in (totalitarianism). If we lose it, there is no need for further argument. Hitlerism will be triumphant all over the world.

If this were the attitude of soldiers, sailors or politicians we should brand it at once as "defeatism." We should say that this is not the spirit in which victory is won, and set about finding other soldiers, sailors and politicians who had more faith in their cause. Indeed, if civilization were really the thing that these intellectuals make it appear, it would not be worth fighting for. In that case we might as well bow our heads and let the war of barbarism pass over us. Let us at least take courage to think a little before we come to this conclusion.

Since the appeal is always to Science, what is the first thing that Science has to say? It is to counsel patience. Science encourages us to think that the human race has many millions of years to live on the earth. The history

of civilization extends over about 7,000 years. Prior to that period the exploring archæologist finds himself back in the Stone Age, at best the age of the lake dwellings or some other primitive stage of man beginning to settle down to a community life.

Scientifically speaking, it must be an absurdity to write his doom after this brief experiment. So far, man has never been able quite to make up his mind whether he is angel or devil. He looks in the glass and sees himself to be the paragon of animals and the quintessence of dust. He is heaven's masterpiece and the most abject of failures and the most miserable of sinners. He wonders at the beauties of nature, and rails at the earth as the meanest of the planets or calls it a "sterile promontory."

In his 7,000 years he has come out of his caves or his primitive villages, built himself great cities, created art, literature, poetry and music, sought unceasingly in religion and philosophy for a clue to his meaning and destiny. He has had many ups and downs, and his efforts to conquer Nature have landed him for the time being in one of the worst of his predicaments.

He has had a tremendous spurt in all material advantages ; never in his history has he multiplied or increased his well-being and comfort on such a scale as in the last century. Say what we will of the evils of the present times, very few would willingly exchange them for life as it was in the Middle Ages.

But this semi-conquest of Nature has provided weapons of destruction which give savagery a new chance.

Are we, then, to despair and declare civilization to be a lost cause ? Or shall we take it as a challenge requiring us to call up all our reserves of body, mind and spirit ? Can there be a doubt as to the answer ? Civilization has always been a fighting cause. From the beginning of history it has been a great but dangerous adventure. Each advance is threatened by dangers from without or corruption from within.

The casualties have been immense, but so have the

victories. It has had hairbreadth escapes which hold our breath as we read its story. But the great rally, which saves what is great and permanent when the flames have passed over the rest, has never yet failed and will not fail now.

It would be pharisaical for us to claim that all the good is on one side and all the evil on the other. What lies behind the curtain of silence which is drawn between the Germans and the rest of the world is at present beyond guessing. But we can and do say that the doctrine which Hitler expounds in his book, and the methods which his agents are practising in war and the territory which is temporarily in their hands, are an abomination which we are bound to resist to the death.

We need not abandon the hope that the German people, or a considerable number of them, will, in the future, join hands with us in making an end of the iniquities which their rulers are at such pains to conceal from them. But our present duty is to be steadfast in doing our own part, and to resist all thoughts which sap our courage and shake our nerves. We are not watching a struggle from which we can sit aloof while it is fought out by professional fighting men whose brave deeds give us a reflected glory. We all have our part in this all-embracing war, and we must all be prepared to take our risks.

The vast majority of people see great issues in a simple way, and they are justly impatient with the droning and whining of a few sophisticated people who think all to be lost if history does not justify their theories or if humanity refuses to conform to their patterns.

Civilization has deep roots in the indestructible, and will survive all those who assail it. But whether we draw our faith from religion or from our own inner witness or from our reading of the story of Man and his ascent from the slime, to keep it alive and burning is the great spiritual need of these times.

MR. GLADSTONE: A GREAT VICTORIAN

(Speech at National Liberal Club, November 16, 1937, commemorating the fact that W. E. Gladstone was the first president of the club, then celebrating its jubilee)

TO me and to men of my generation the name of Gladstone is the brief epitome of an age—the great Victorian Age, every phase and mood of which is reflected in his character and career. We see him as its greatest representative man, borne on the tide which, setting in with the Reform Bill of 1832, turned aristocratic England into Liberal and democratic England, abolished class privileges, broke down sectarianism, extended education to the poor, made the public services accessible to all comers, gave the country cheap food and opened its ports to the trade of all countries. Beginning as “the rising hope of stern and unbending Tories,” his always developing mind, with his inherent sense of justice and love of liberty, took him from one step to another in a progress which inverted the common experience and made him more youthful and more daring as he grew older. He had in the highest degree the Victorian virtues. Unlike many gifted and eloquent men, he was a master of administrative detail, who brought to the national housekeeping the thrifty and careful mind of a supreme man of business. He was conscientious and dutiful to a degree which made worldlings seriously doubt whether he would ever hold his own in the rough and tumble of politics. He had every gift, said the wise men who cast his horoscope in his early years, except those of a political leader. They saw his deep reverence for British institutions in their historical setting, but not his keen sense of the need of bringing them abreast of modern needs and changing circumstances. “I was brought up,” he said, “to distrust and dislike liberty. I learnt to believe in it. That is the key to all my changes.” I could illustrate all

these qualities from different incidents in his career, but this would be going over familiar ground, and at the end I should be no nearer giving you a picture of the man as my generation remembers him—the live coal burning with zeal for the causes which had fired his imagination or touched his heart.

So for this occasion let me dwell for a moment on the man as I remember him, the old man, the grand old man, as he was about fifty years ago, when he became President of this Club. He had just suffered an overwhelming reverse in the defeat of his first effort to carry Home Rule and the return of the Unionist party to power by a great majority at the subsequent election. His opponents said he was finally done for, and some even of his own friends hinted that it would be wiser for him to seek a well-earned repose and let the party work its way back to popular favour under some other leadership. He was 78 years old; he had put his question and received his answer; honour was satisfied; many other questions besides Ireland needed the reforming hand. This never for a moment crossed Mr. Gladstone's mind or that of his principal supporters. Here we touch, I think, one of the principal characteristic differences between our own politics and those of the United States. An American party when defeated on a major issue evacuates the unfavourable ground as speedily as possible and seeks a new issue for the next advance. Bimetallism was a lost cause when Mr. Bryan was defeated in 1896; the League of Nations was a lost cause when Mr. Wilson was defeated in 1920. But in this country defeat is always the signal for a renewal of the attack, and to Mr. Gladstone in his seventy-ninth year there was only one possible reply to the disaster of 1886, and that was—"one fight more, the best and the last."

His own diary and his biographer's researches give us a peculiarly vivid and intimate picture of what he was doing and thinking in these days after the 1886 election. He sits down and writes a fifty-page pamphlet on the Irish question, nailing his flag to the mast-head and expressing an

impenitent resolve to carry it to victory. He then takes a short holiday as a guest of his old friend, Lord Acton, in his house in Bavaria, with the famous German theologian, Dr. Döllinger, as his fellow-guest. Here we see him tramping the Bavarian mountains in company with the theologian, who has been given a copy of the pamphlet, but is apparently unconvinced by it. The two men argue it out, and their argument branches out into the old question of the Vatican decrees which has an inexhaustible interest for both of them. Mr. Gladstone's spirits rise in the mountain air, and on his return home he dashes off an article on the second part, lately published, of Tennyson's *Locksley Hall*, in which he brings his own buoyant optimism and confident belief in human progress to bear on the poet's pessimism. Then he turns again to theology and marches to the defence of the faith in a review of Mrs. Humphry Ward's *Robert Elsmere*—a famous novel dealing with the hard case of a clergyman suddenly assailed with doubt about Christian dogma. He made the fortunes of the novel and involved himself in an interminable correspondence with Lord Acton about the credentials of the early fathers. All the time he was reading Irish history and collecting material for speeches in the campaign now preparing. Such was Mr. Gladstone as seen in one little section of him in his seventy-ninth year—a politician, yes, and an ardent one, but also a man of inexhaustible all-round interests, historical, theological, literary. When he was not otherwise occupied he was reading Homer, Horace and Dante, or writing post cards in minute handwriting to correspondents who fired questions at him from all parts of the country. Experts said that his theology was out of date and his scholarship old-fashioned, but that mattered little beside the fact that he was drenched in his favourite authors. He was the equal of most professional scholars in his knowledge of the texts of Homer, Horace and Virgil, and none of them surpassed him in the aptness of his quotations and his power of finding new meaning in the ancient writers. It was this background which on great occasions gave him the appear-

ance of moving in a large and spacious way through all the departments of human and divine wisdom.

Having witnessed the last of his great battles from its beginning to its close, and heard nearly every important speech that he made in the House of Commons during these years, I can think of no effort by any other individual which for fierce zeal and sustained energy can be compared with it, or which in the same degree displayed a powerful mind concentrated on a single purpose. If I may repeat what I wrote in another connection, when the impression was fresh in my mind, he was as effective on the platform as in the House of Commons; though always equal to the great occasions, he was often at his best when he cut suddenly and unexpectedly into a debate. Joseph Chamberlain was heard to say after a twenty-minute impromptu by Gladstone, entirely at his expense, "That is the speech I would rather have made than any I ever heard in the House." Except for a few purple passages that hold their place among the gems of Parliamentary oratory, his speeches do not bear quoting apart from their context; but that is no reflection on them for their own purpose. The good Parliamentarian does not prepare literary compositions for the benefit of posterity, he is the child of the hour using words as tools for his political business in the world of action. Gladstone was supreme at that, and he never anticipated his hour by any preparation that would commit him to a particular groove or prevent him from catching the mood of his hearers and giving it back to them in fervent improvisations. I have seen many of his notes for speeches, and as a rule they consisted almost entirely of headings to keep his argument clear, with a few facts, figures and handy quotations grouped under them, and now and again a sentence written out. All the rest was the creation of the moment, prompted by an extraordinary sensitiveness to the currents of opinion which played about him on all sides and liable to digressions on the spur of the moment, which led the speaker into a maze of side-issues from which he somehow got back in triumph to his main road. Reported the next day in the

newspapers it often seemed highly involved, but it seldom sounded so, and one of the fascinations of listening to him was to follow the speaker as he threaded his way through sentences of bewildering intricacy until he finally found safety and grammar in a trenchant conclusion.

But Olympian as he was, it would be an entire mistake to think of him as sitting above the clouds in celestial indifference to worldly considerations. As a politician he was both skilful and wary. From his long experience he had evolved a protective armament very difficult to penetrate. Quoting his old speeches was a favourite game with his opponents, and his sixty years of public life offered a wide field for research in this respect. But he was very seldom caught out. When the speaker had finished reading he almost invariably said, "Read on," not because he remembered what followed—for that would have been impossible even with his miraculous memory—but because he was quite sure that he had not said what was imputed to him without qualifications which offered a way of escape. When he had to retreat—as happens to every Parliamentary leader—he did so with flags flying and trumpets blaring, until you were amazed at the magnanimity of a small concession from so redoubtable a fighter, if indeed you were aware that he had made any concession at all. He was peculiarly skilful in keeping certain strokes in reserve for the discomfiture of opponents who had been led on in ignorance of what was coming. Labouchere was heard to say on one of these occasions that it was a splendid thing to have the ace of trumps up your sleeve, but better still to be able to persuade yourself, as the Grand Old Man apparently did, that the Almighty had put it there. It was exactly this endearing human quality which made him a man among men, and not a Mahatma in some remote Tibet.

Let me pass for a moment to a more personal memory. I was first introduced to Mr. Gladstone at Lord Brassey's house in the year 1890, and can never forget the flattering courtesy with which he treated an unknown young man as if he were a person of importance who could give him just

the information he wanted about political opinion in the North of England, where I was then working. Also I can never forget the complete freedom with which he poured out his views—some of them rather unexpected—on the then state of affairs. Very great men are very seldom discreet, or if they are, they manage to conceal it.

Two years later I was in charge of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, then a Liberal paper, in the absence of its editor, in the critical weeks following the 1892 election, and was filled with awe and not a little apprehension at receiving communications from him in his own handwriting. Mr. Gladstone, they ran, would like the editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette* to know, etc., etc. But to my great disappointment, the things he wished me to know had never the slightest connection with the politics of the hour. They were that the writer of a literary article had misquoted a line from the Italian poet Leopardi, or that someone had stated wrongly that he was defeated at Oxford in the year 1864, whereas the real date was 1865, etc., etc. During the next two years I had to go repeatedly to Downing Street, and now and again I was admitted to the presence and permitted to ask questions, which he answered. But I cannot remember any occasion when he suggested that the *Pall Mall Gazette* or its successor, the *Westminster Gazette*, should take one line in preference to another, or offered advice except directly in answer to questions, or showed the slightest impatience of criticism. He had a great distaste for politicians who prompted the Press or played games with it, and there was no more certain way for a colleague to earn his disapproval than to be suspected of this practice. He always professed a real respect for the Press, but, in his view, the Minister and the journalist had their separate spheres, and those who mixed them up "didn't know the rules of the game." This phrase was often in his mouth, and it was the most damaging sentence he could pass on a fellow-member of the Liberal party.

Sundry little memories come back to me from these years—such as going to Downing Street when I had hoped to

see him face to face and being met by Sir Algernon West, who said he must be excused, for he had just come back thoroughly exhausted after a dreadful day with Queen Victoria. Yet he always spoke of her with the greatest respect, praising her sincerity and her dutifulness, her knowledge and her long experience. I have the record of a short talk with him in which, after speaking of Lord Salisbury, who was then Prime Minister, and dwelling on his uprightness and conscientiousness, he wound up by saying, "There is one fault I have to find with him, he does not make enough use of the Court." By the Court he meant the Queen, and he went on to enlarge on the extreme value to a Foreign Secretary, who knew how to use it rightly, of her circle of relationships with foreign sovereigns and their families, and her admirable industry in corresponding with them and conveying to them shades of opinion and feeling which could not be conveyed from Government to Government.

Nothing endeared Mr. Gladstone more to the House of Commons than his gracious and beautiful courtesy. "One of the lessons life has taught me," he wrote in one of his fragments recorded in Morley's life, "is that where there is known to be a common object, the pursuit of truth, there should also be a studious desire to interpret the adversary in the best sense his words will fairly bear; to avoid whatever widens the breach; and to make the most of whatever tends to narrow it. These I hold to be part of the laws of knightly tournament." Torrents of abuse descended on him; some of the election addresses at the election of 1886—if anyone cares to look them up—Lord Randolph Churchill's Paddington Address is an example—will be found to contain an incredible invective, but he never repaid any of his assailants in their own coin, he had a mint of his own which made theirs seem trivial and foolish. He could blaze with anger but he scarcely ever lost his temper. He was a master of raillery, but he was almost always jolly and good-humoured.

Had he a sense of humour? I have often heard it

debated and cannot imagine any other answer than that he had a peculiarly whimsical and individual kind of humour. There was indeed a large territory, especially religion and sex, on which he was resolutely irresponsive to any kind of cynicism or levity, and those who approached him on this ground came away convinced that his solemnity was impenetrable. A sense of fun he had and wit. No man knew better, when it suited his purpose, how to keep up a running current of laughter as accompaniment to a debating speech. Isolated sentences of wit and humour are apt to lose their savour when taken from their context, yet if you will forgive me I will risk a few. At a dinner party at which I was a humble listener a guest asked him how it was possible for Mr. Pitt to address the House of Commons after drinking two bottles of port. He appeared to be reflecting deeply on the problem, then suddenly came the answer: "You must remember," he said, "that he was addressing an assembly very few members of which had consumed less." Then how witty in the best sense of the word is his observation that in his encounter with Disraeli, Peel suffered from "a certain righteous dullness." How admirable again is his comparison of himself in his relations with Queen Victoria to the Sicilian mule who served him so well and bore him so patiently but whom, try as he did, he found it impossible to like. Or to take an example of the little things that amused him, and they were many, Asquith used to tell a story of how, seeing him absorbed in contemplation of the benches opposite he asked him what he was thinking about. "I was wondering," he said, indicating two members, "whether X or Y is the ugliest man in the House of Commons." Asquith said, "Surely X."—"No," said Mr. Gladstone, "you are quite wrong, and I will tell you why. If you were to magnify X he would be almost noble, but if you magnified Y he would be uglier than ever."

So far I have collected only a few scattered points to revive a memory which is extremely vivid in my own mind but very difficult to pass on. There remains the question

—what did Gladstone stand for, nay, more, what does he stand for now?

With Lord Morley's great biography available to everybody it may seem rash to plunge in again on this question. Yet great men, like great books, acquire new meaning with the passage of time, and it is impossible to think of Gladstone without relating him to these times. What would we not give if that great and powerful voice testifying for Liberalism and liberty were still sounding through the world to-day!

British politics gained immensely in former times by the projection of great issues in the form of duels between the leading figures on the Parliamentary stage. From the middle of the nineteenth century onwards there was a succession of these encounters. First it was Palmerston and John Bright, the one standing for the combative qualities of the British people, the other for its humanitarian and peace-loving instincts; then it was Disraeli and Gladstone, the one standing for power, authority and prestige, the other for law, duty and conscience. Through their encounters political principles received a sort of incarnation, and their followers ranged themselves behind the protagonists, as behind Ormuzd and Ahriman, powers of light and darkness. Thunder rolled and lightning flashed as the heroes joined battle; both sides appealed to the high gods, whose names were sometimes taken in vain, but between them the onlooker got the impression that political principles were things of tremendous importance with active and living influence not only on nations and national policy, but on the daily life of men and women.

It was, I think, Gladstone's greatest service that he gave Liberalism this standing, not only in this country, but in the world. If we look at the great speeches of his Midlothian campaign we shall find in them the germ of almost everything that is in our minds to-day. He stands for the international order which he calls the "Concert of Europe"; he protests against the toleration of massacre and savagery by the civilized Powers, predicts the catas-

trophe which must follow if the Governments insist on treating the moral order as if it were of no account. He was not, on the short-term judgment of policy, a skilful politician ; his generous enthusiasm often led him astray on the devious road of practical politics, but will anyone say that he was wrong on the great issues ? Viewed in the light of after-events, will anyone say that it would not have been immensely to the advantage of the great European empires if they had heeded his advice and applied themselves in time to the peaceful settlement of the problems presented by the Turkish Empire in Europe, instead of waiting until its weakness and corruption involved most of them in its ruin ?

And then when we come to the chief subject in domestic policy which occupied his closing years there must be very few to-day who do not regret that the country left unheeded his warning that the sands were running out on the question of Ireland. "Think, I beseech you, think well, think wisely, think not for the moment but for the years to come, before you reject this Bill." Do not these words sound prophetic to-day ? But after all there was something more in Mr. Gladstone than the measures he proposed ; there was his extraordinary personality, radiating influence far beyond the circle of one political party or even one country. He has been called the greatest public man of modern times, and the description is just. You may remember Dr. Johnson's description of the great Lord Chatham. "He was not," said Johnson, like Walpole, "a Minister given by the King to the people, but a Minister given to the King by the people." He was "carried," said Gibbon, "upon the shoulders of the people." Could there be better descriptions of Mr. Gladstone ? His publicity was immense, but he never sought it ; the newspapers went after him, not he after them. They reported verbatim every word that fell from his lips, described the scenes at every railway station when he went campaigning, regarded the slightest facts about him as news—the number of times he chewed his food, the number of times he went to church, the shape

of his collars and where he bought his hats. I do not think I exaggerate if I say that the newspapers watched over him with the same care and gave him almost the same honours in big type and splashing headlines as some of them now give only to the more eminent film-stars, jockeys and prize-fighters. There were little plaster busts of him in thousands of humble cottages and a multitude flocked to Hawarden to gather up the chips from the trees that he felled.

What was the secret of it? I think the late Lord Salisbury came nearest to it when he described him just after his death as a great Christian statesman. He was a loyal son of the Church of England, but his faith overflowed all boundaries—witness his great speeches in the Bradlaugh debates—and was always at the back of his politics. Somehow he managed to convey to the country and to the world that there was something called Liberalism, something of infinite value to the human spirit which was greater than any measure or any policy. This was the great light which led him to raise his voice in protest against any form of tyranny and oppression wherever practised. He saw them all as outrages against the being who was made in the image of God.

I have sometimes thought in recent years that we lose something of the power and warmth of this light when we pass it through a prism and project it on to a screen as a programme of reforms. The reforms are very necessary, but also it is very necessary for us to pursue our practical politics without losing the integrity and wholeness of the Liberal idea. How few and feeble are the voices raised in Europe to-day for this essential Liberalism, how many and strident those which deride it as a decadent survival from a past age. Our left-wing politicians pay lip-service to liberty but cannot conceal their admiration for a system in which free speech, free writing and free combination are totally prohibited, or their hankering after a policy which could only be carried out by the sacrifice of liberty. Our right wing seems more concerned to do battle with the left than

to stand for ideas of its own ; and it has never felt as the old Liberals did about this essential thing that they called Liberalism. In all this there is danger that Liberalism may go by default, or that its advocacy may pass from us to the other side of the Atlantic.

I do not know what Mr. Gladstone would have done if he had been living at this hour. The odds at the moment seem to be heavy against the appearance of another like him. Statesmen are immersed in innumerable details ; they are only very scantily reported ; politics are only one among a dozen competing attractions presented to us daily by the popular Press. Yet if Mr. Gladstone were here as some of us knew him and remember him, I feel convinced that he would somehow have made his voice heard through all the obstructions, and against all the clash of opposing voices. And as a last word I would hazard a prediction. This is that the old Liberalism as Gladstone conceived it and expounded it will in the lifetime of many in this audience be once more the advanced thought of the rising generation, and that he will then again be one of the major prophets.

MR. GLADSTONE

(A Broadcast Talk, March 7, 1938)

Mr. Gladstone, please, not Gladstone, not even William Ewart Gladstone, but Mr. Gladstone. Just as in my childhood all old people spoke of the great Commoner as Mister Pitt, so do people of my generation continue to think and speak of *Mr. Gladstone*. When I am writing about past times I write Peel, Chamberlain, Balfour, Morley, Grey, Asquith, but always *Mr. Gladstone*. He is in our minds the great commoner of the nineteenth century—the House of Commons man above all other House of Commons men—the “greatest member of the greatest deliberative assembly in the world.” Session after session, from the year 1886 up to his retirement in 1894, I watched him from my seat in the Press gallery of the House, and

the memory is ineffaceable. What a noble presence, what flashing eyes, what a thrilling voice, what beautiful gestures, how fascinating just to watch the play of sunshine and storm on his eager, restless face! I have an early memory, about the year 1875, of seeing Disraeli in the same place—a sphinx-like, immobile figure, with the sad, tired face that one sees in Millais's last portrait of him. He too was fascinating to watch, but there could have been no greater contrast than in the outward appearance of the two men; you seemed to see written on their faces all the history, all the long conflict between them and their different ideas of life and politics.

The first time I spoke to Mr. Gladstone was in the spring of 1890. I was then, at the age of 27, editing a daily paper in the North of England, and having come up to London for a part of the Parliamentary session was invited to a party at Lord Brassey's house in Park Lane, where he was the principal guest. I supposed that after the conventional hand-shake I should pass on, but, to my great pleasure and a little to my alarm, he sat me down beside him, fired at me a string of searching questions about life and politics in the North of England, and then launched out into a stream of talk about public affairs and the behaviour and character of certain great people. He spoke of Lord Salisbury, who was then Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary, praised him highly for his uprightness and straightforwardness, but said suddenly and surprisingly that he had one fault to find with him—he didn't make enough use of "that great instrument the Court"—the Court with its close touch with other Courts and its unique opportunities of obtaining knowledge which was not accessible to the Foreign Office. By "the Court" he meant, of course, Queen Victoria, who kept up an unceasing correspondence with her royal relatives in Europe, and he went on to speak of her by name and said she was a most dutiful woman to whom the country owed a great debt. But he had one fault to find with her too. She was not enough seen and heard. The trouble they had in the House of

Commons about royal grants—there had recently been considerable trouble—was largely due to the fact that in the public eye “the Court stagnated.” The public, he said, ought not to be grudging in voting the money to enable the Monarchy to keep up its proper estate and prestige, but it expected visible as well as dutiful service.

I give you my notes of that conversation, for they tell something about Mr. Gladstone which could hardly be conveyed by pages of description. Here was I, an unknown young man of twenty-seven, seeing this illustrious statesman—already twice Prime Minister—for the first time, and he gave me at once his intimate thoughts without apparently the slightest reserve or discretion, or any fear of the mischief I might make with them. These thoughts of Mr. Gladstone were really rather surprising. It was known to everybody at all behind the scenes in those days that his relations with Queen Victoria had for many years been those of friction and difficulty, and yet the one fault he had to find with his principal opponent was that he was not making sufficient use of the Queen. But that was Mr. Gladstone all over ; he hardly ever said what you expected him to say, and with a very little prodding would say something quite different. In the subsequent years, when he was again Prime Minister I have been to Downing Street in various efforts to get him to say something which his party wished him to say and my newspaper wished to be able to print and have come away quite baffled. For he would say something different, and very often something not at all convenient.

I have seen many great Parliamentarians at work in the subsequent years, but can think of no Parliamentary feat by one man at all comparable to Mr. Gladstone’s fight for Home Rule between 1886 and 1893. He was 77 when he started on this the last of his crusades, and 84 when he retired beaten. Lord Randolph Churchill called him “an old man in a hurry,” and certainly he seemed to count every moment lost when he was not doing something to promote the Cause. Day after day, from four in the

afternoon till midnight and not infrequently till the small hours of the morning, whenever the Irish question was on the order paper, he was on the bench, taking only a short interval for dinner, screwed to concert pitch the whole of the time, watching, pouncing, thrusting, parrying, sometimes dangerously near a collision with Mr. Speaker Peel, and always keeping the House crowded and excited. He made many very eloquent speeches on set occasions, but some of his greatest performances were impromptus on the spur of the moment. I remember a rollicking twenty minutes devoted to Joseph Chamberlain; and coming out into the lobby afterwards Chamberlain said to a friend, who repeated it to me, "that is the speech I would have made rather than any other I have ever heard in all my life."

Only a few purple passages, if even those, are now remembered of Mr. Gladstone's speeches. The good Parliament man does not deliver literary compositions for the benefit of posterity, he is the child of the moment using words as tools in the world of action. Gladstone was supreme at that, and he never anticipated the moment by any preparation which would tie him to a particular line, or prevent him from catching the mood of his hearers. If he could come back to the House of Commons to-day, I rather think he would be shocked at the number of speeches which are read without disguise from typed sheets—a practice universally condemned in his time, and even now, I think, strictly against the rules of the House. The late Lord Gladstone showed me many of his father's notes for speeches; they were little more than headings, with a few facts, figures and quotations grouped under them, and now and again a phrase and very exceptionally a sentence written down. Thus equipped, he launched himself on the tide, and let it carry him into deep waters and shallow, in and out of innumerable creeks and inlets, just avoiding snags and rocks, but at the critical moment when you thought him lost, somehow picking up his course again and coming triumphantly into harbour. When you read

it the next day, it often seemed extremely involved, but it seldom sounded so. One of the fascinations of listening to him was wondering how he could possibly finish some extraordinarily intricate sentence with half a dozen dependent clauses and qualifying parentheses, yet he never seemed to fail, and presently it was all gathered up in a perfectly grammatical and extremely trenchant conclusion.

Mr. Gladstone, as all the world knows, was a very Christian man, but it would be a great mistake to think of him as practising only the Christian virtues on the political battlefield. He was a tremendous fighter who drank delight of battle with his peers. Controversies about him sundered friendships and destroyed the peace of families. There were times when it was dangerous to ask Gladstonians and anti-Gladstonians to meet at the same table. But he was supreme in the difficult art of turning opposition to advantage, and the enthusiasm for him nearly always rose a little higher than the antagonism to him. He blazed about causes, but seldom or never lost his temper with an individual. He would brush aside the most vitriolic attacks in one sentence of studious and even exaggerated courtesy and pass immediately to his theme. He was a master of the ironic modesty which under the appearance of bending his back to the smiter made the smiter look small and foolish.

At the same time he had a wary and almost a crafty side to him. The cynical Labouchere said it was all very well for him to have the ace of trumps up his sleeve, but he really ought not to talk as if the Almighty had put it there. Long experience had taught him to be very cautious about committing himself, and when his old speeches were thrown in his teeth he almost invariably said, "read on," not because he remembered what he had said next, but because he was quite sure on general principles that he had not said what was imputed to him without leaving himself a way out. On one occasion, when he was reproached for not having fulfilled his promise to put a certain bill first on the Parliamentary programme for the session, he said, "what I promised was to put it in the forefront of the

sessional programme. Surely the Hon. member is aware that the forefront is a line and not a point."

Had Mr. Gladstone a sense of humour? The question is often asked and the answers vary. I should say that he had an enormous sense of fun and a good deal of verbal wit. I have spoken of a rollicking speech which kept the House in roars of laughter from beginning to end, and as debating banter I have never heard it equalled. Cynicism offended him, and he was resolutely blind to any jest which encroached upon the large territory that he labelled serious. But he said a great many good things on the spur of the moment. A guest at a dinner party, at which I was present, asked him how it was possible for Mr. Pitt to address the House of Commons after drinking two bottles of port. He paused for a moment, screwing up his eyes and scratching his forehead, and then said, "You must remember he was addressing an assembly, very few members of which had consumed less." Greatly as he admired Sir Robert Peel he was aware of his deficiencies. Describing Peel's helplessness against Disraeli's brilliant attacks in the great Corn Law debates, he said that Peel met them "with a kind of righteous dullness." Seeing Mr. Gladstone lost in reverie one day on the Treasury bench, a colleague asked what he was thinking about. "I was wondering," he said, "whether A or B (two members sitting opposite) is the ugliest man in the House of Commons."—"Surely B," said the colleague. "No," said Mr. Gladstone, "you are wrong, and I will tell you why. If you were to enlarge B, he would be almost noble, whereas if you were to enlarge A, he would be still uglier."

I was in charge of the old *Pall Mall Gazette*, then a Liberal paper, for six weeks after the election of 1892, when Mr. Gladstone just got back to power for the last time, with a precarious majority. The editor had gone on holiday, and I, very new to the job, had to write every day that 1,200-word leading article on the front page which the Prime Minister, sitting at Downing Street, was known to read with an eagle eye. And sure enough I soon got

intimations of his near presence. There came quarto sheets of paper written with his own hand, in a big envelope which I opened with some trepidation. The first sentence was slightly menacing: "Mr. Gladstone would like the Editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette* to know," etc. But the things which Mr. Gladstone wished the editor to know were not his intentions about the forthcoming Home Rule Bill or his views on foreign affairs, they were that the Editor was mistaken in stating that he spoke at Newcastle on October 12, 1890; the proper date was October 14, 1890. Or the writer who spoke of Irish Catholicism as Ultramontane was in error; Irish Catholicism was never Ultramontane, and so forth and so forth. Though communications of this kind from him were frequent, I have never known him inspire a newspaper article or object to newspaper criticism, and there was no greater offence in his code than for a Minister to convey Cabinet secrets to a newspaper. After he had retired for good, when I was editing the *Westminster Gazette*, he let me send a lady member of my staff to Hawarden, where he entertained her for several days and talked to her very intimately about everything except politics. With this material she wrote a charming series of articles, "In the Evening of his Days"; but it was strictly understood that there were to be no politics in it. He did, nevertheless, convey to me—though not for publication—certain things that I was anxious to know about his last days in Downing Street.

When speeches were made about him in Parliament after his death all dwelt on his deeply religious nature. Lord Salisbury called him a great Christian statesman, his biographer, John Morley, says that he kept the soul alive in England. He was an Anglican and a Tractarian, and a devoted son of the Church of England, but that did not prevent him from being also the idol of Nonconformists, who saw their spirit—the serious Nonconformist-conscience spirit—reflected in his attitude to public affairs and his belief that divine Providence was at work on the human scene. His inexhaustible memory stored equally with

Homer and Horace, Virgil and Dante, the Fathers of the Church, the modern philosophers, and the classical authorities on finance and economics, and this gave a sweeping discursiveness to his speeches and writings. Critics said that his scholarship was out of date and his theology mediaeval, but it was no matter. He seemed to move in a large and spacious way through all the departments of human and divine wisdom. I find that I wrote of him soon after his death that he was not only the supreme politician, but the supreme public man of his generation ; that is still, after forty years, how I chiefly remember him. His publicity was immense, but the newspapers went after him, not he after the newspapers. Thousands of humble people had his portrait on their walls or a little plaster bust of him on their mantel-shelves ; every detail about his life, his family, his religious practices, his hats, his collars, the number of times he masticated his food, were judged to be "copy." Pilgrims went in thousands to Hawarden and reverently bore away chips from the trees he felled.

There have been other public men since he departed whom history may judge to have been great, and some have had even heavier burdens to carry than he had, but Mr. Gladstone still stands apart in my memory for the inexhaustible interest that he excited and the influence that he exercised upon the great body of his countrymen. Quite apart from statesmanship or politics, he had qualities of heart and character which put him in the first rank of great representative men.

MEMORABLE MEN

MY way of life has thrown me into intimate relations with many memorable and famous men who are part of the history of these times. I have written the biographies of some of these and biographical chapters about many others. For the moment I am tempted to go outside this circle and speak of men famous in other fields, of whom the living memory has passed from all but a few old people of whom I am one.

I am, I suppose, one of the few surviving pupils of John Ruskin, and so one of the dwindling number who can bear witness to the all but magical influence he had upon those who had personal touch with him. He was in residence at Oxford as Slade Professor—his second term—when I went up to Balliol as an undergraduate in 1881, and somehow he got to see certain water-colour sketches I had made during a vacation. On the strength of these, he asked me to go and see him. I went in some trepidation and received a benevolent scolding about my slapdash method of drawing, which wound up with an invitation to me to attend his afternoon classes in the Taylorian building. This entailed a considerable sacrifice of Rugby football and other sports, but I did not hesitate, and for many afternoons during the next two years I sat, if not at his feet, very often side by side with him. For he would come and seat himself at my desk, take the brush or pencil out of my hand, show me how to do it, all the time keeping up a fascinating stream of talk which passed rapidly from reminiscences of Turner to stories of "master" Carlyle, and thence to the iniquities of modern civilization and the "storm-cloud" which he saw hovering over the nineteenth century. His wrath kindled as he surveyed the scene, and with his long, flowing beard and piercing eyes he gave one the impression that a Hebrew prophet had come suddenly to life and taken possession of the Art Professor.

He was then very near the end of his working life, and in the last months his nervous condition was becoming dangerous. I was one of a little group who made music for him in the house of his old friend, Sir Henry Acland. It was very simple music, in which I played a modest part on the violin, an instrument which I have long since abandoned. His choice included Handel's Largo, and the two Handel violin sonatas which he insisted that I should learn "accurately and reverently." Someone else brought a 'cello and Miss Acland accompanied on the piano. When we pleased, his praise was unbounded; when we failed, his criticism merciless; I have never forgotten one occasion when he danced out of the room and slammed the door behind him. But in a moment he was back again asking our forgiveness, all smiles and gaiety.

He had a remarkable gift of quiet humour which he used very cunningly on some occasions. William Morris came to lecture in Oxford at that time; his subject was the innocent-looking one of "Art and Democracy," and all the bigwigs came to listen in the Hall of University College, lent by the Master, who presided. To their consternation the lecture turned out to be a plea for Socialism. At the end of it the Master rose in his wrath and said he would never have lent the hall if he had known what was coming. The bigwigs began to walk out. Then up rose Ruskin and chaffed them all off their heads in a little speech which I still remember as a perfect masterpiece. It wound up with a glowing description of a sunset which was quite irrelevant to the occasion, but somehow had the effect of making the bigwigs feel ashamed of their alarms about Socialism.

A little later he left Oxford and went back to his home at Brantwood and we saw him no more. But I have never lost the peculiar affectionate memory which he left in those who saw him in those last years.

There are, I suppose, very few who remember Browning—the smart, dapper figure with the carefully trained beard and man-of-the-world appearance, so unlike anything one

would have associated with a poet or his kind of poetry. Of him, too, I have vivid personal memories. Jowett introduced me to him at one of his evening parties, and he immediately plunged deep into talk about religion and the religious opinion of the rising generation, on which he wished to know all that I could tell him. I can recollect nothing of what I said except that I stumbled and halted in a nervous chase after my incoherent thoughts. But the next day, when I was crossing the back quad, he appeared from nowhere and putting his arm in mine walked me round and round and talked for half an hour, mainly about poetry, and especially about the poetry of Tennyson, of whom he was highly, if critically, appreciative. I ought to have gone back to my rooms and written it all down, but I did not, and all that I remember now is something he said finally about Tennyson, who had just been made a peer. "Some people think a peerage the appropriate reward for a poet; I think an honorary fellowship of Balliol." To be made an honorary fellow of Balliol was the occasion of his visit to Oxford. I saw him once or twice later in London, across a dinner-table or at an evening party, but this was meeting in a crowd and I never again had the opportunity of talk with him.

My admiration of Matthew Arnold in these days—and still—was barely this side of idolatry, and my memory of him is sharp and clear. He also was a Balliol man and shed lustre on the college. His great wrinkled face, with its rather mournful expression and slightly satirical smile, fitted equally the poet and the philosopher, and he had an agreeably soft voice of great flexibility. For my introduction to him I was again indebted to Jowett, but at the time it was little more than an introduction, and I could not reasonably have expected to see him again. But two years later when (aged 24) I was editing the *Eastern Morning News*, at Hull, who but he should come through my guard, walk upstairs, and come suddenly and unannounced into my room? To look up and see Matthew Arnold standing at the door was, for me, an overwhelming sensation. It

was like the miraculous appearance of some divinity and I was literally speechless.

He came forward and said in a most ingratiating manner that he had come to ask me to do him a service, so slight a service that he was sure he had only to explain the circumstances for me to grant it. He was going to lecture that evening to the Hull Literary and Philosophical Society and it was important to him that the lecture should not be reported. If he could take it away with him unreported, he would be able to obtain a substantial sum of money for it from a monthly magazine, but if it had once appeared in print, it would be worth nothing. So, if I insisted on reporting the lecture I should be taking the bread out of his mouth, which would be a very unkind thing to do.

Now, I had naturally taken special pains for this occasion and had told off three reporters to make a verbatim report of it. Instead of going to the lecture I had arranged to stay in the office so as to read it carefully and amend the report. And I was asked to blot it all out and to let the visit of this great and famous man pass without a word of notice in the next day's local paper. I said that there were other papers in the near neighbourhood, the *Yorkshire Post* and the *Leeds Mercury*, who would undoubtedly send reporters to take down his lecture, to say nothing of the News agencies, which would telegraph a summary of it to the London papers. Where should I be, if all these had reports and the *Eastern Morning News* had nothing?

"What a terrible to do about nothing," said he. "But I see your position and we must palaver. What is the minimum that you must have?" He told me the length of the lecture and I estimated roughly that it would fill five columns and said firmly that three columns would be the least. (It was a widely advertised lecture, on his experiences in a recent tour in America, and likely to attract attention all over the country). "Three columns!" he exclaimed. "That is too dreadful and would be quite fatal to me." I came down a little and said I would be content with two. Then he got up from the side of the table at which he had

been sitting, and, coming round to my side, put his hand on my shoulder, and said, "Come, come, as one Balliol man to another." It was irresistible; I burst out laughing and came down to one column.

He sighed a little, said newspapers were dreadful things, but went away comforted and invited me to come and have a talk in the evening when the lecture was over. I went and spent a delightful two hours, listening to many stories of his months in America, the little mortifications he suffered and his painful discovery of what publicity in that country requires. I saw him no more, for a few months later he died suddenly, of unsuspected heart trouble.

Other great literary figures tempt me, but I will pass to men of action, among whom Botha fills a large place in my memory. He came to London in the autumn of 1902, soon after the Boer war was over, in an effort to get the best terms he could in the repatriation of his countrymen. I saw him several times and did little errands for him, and he came to our flat in Sloane Street and told us thrilling stories of the war. From the beginning he struck me as a man who in an extraordinary way combined power and charm and was completely straightforward and honest. Milner used to speak of "the miracle of Botha"—a miracle which, in his view, had saved the Empire, but which we should have no right to expect at the end of another struggle of the same kind.

He was not at all bitter. He was determined, he said, to carry out loyally what he had undertaken to do when he signed the Treaty of Vereeniging, but not less determined that the British Government should do its part. There were difficult moments, and of these there was one almost infallible sign. When things were going well he spoke English intelligibly if not fluently; when they were going badly he became almost ignorant of our language and would say nothing except through an interpreter. His English improved as the weeks went on, and he returned to South Africa reasonably satisfied.

He came again for long periods after the great Act for

the Union of South Africa had been passed, and then brought his wife with him—an admirable woman, fit in all respects to be his partner and helpmeet. On these occasions he stayed at the Hyde Park Hotel, close to our flat in Sloane Street, and we often visited him, and he came with his wife to visit us. His English was now perfect, and no British Statesman could have entered into the problems of the British Commonwealth in a more large-minded way, or with fuller knowledge and understanding. When the Great War came, he had no doubts and took upon himself the whole situation in South Africa, including what must have been to him its most disagreeable part, the handling of the rebellion of the diehard Dutch. When the War was over he came as a delegate to the Peace Conference at Paris. I came across him accidentally one day, and he bore me off to his room in the Hôtel Majestic and there for an hour kept me spell-bound with stories of his campaigns, especially his campaign in South-West Africa.

Beside him, as another man of action, I would place Haig, the Commander-in-Chief in the last war. At Haldane's instigation I had played a small part in the organization of the Territorial Army, and in that connection had seen and talked to Haig several times. During the war I stayed with him twice at his headquarters in France, the last time at Cassel, from which he was directing the Passchendaele offensive.

His handsome outward appearance is too familiar to need description. Externally he was the perfect soldier, but with a quiet, courteous and rather diffident manner which made one forget his military rank. I have never met anyone who had so clear and cool a brain and so halting a tongue. One had to dig at him to get to his plans and thoughts, but they were always clear and firm when he had brought them to the surface. But the process of getting them there wearied and exasperated the quick-witted Lloyd George, who contrasted his tongue-tied incoherence with the lively fluency of men like Henry Wilson or the nimble but much shallower English-speaking French commander,

Nivelle. That, I believe, was the root of the misunderstanding between them. Haig could never explain himself to Lloyd George.

Nor would he let others try to explain him. When I visited him at Cassel, in October 1917, I told him frankly what was being said in London about his persistence in the Passchendaele offensive, and the terrible casualties it involved. For answer he took me into his den and showed me a précis of the communications he was receiving from French generals, all urging him to keep hammering the Germans, since otherwise they would be released to round on the French, who, after their disasters in the summer of 1917, were not yet ready to meet them. In after days, when the attacks on him were renewed, I asked him to let me come to his defence, but he strictly forbade me, saying that he would be vindicated in due time, and that it was extremely undesirable to stir up these quarrels after the peace. I acquiesced with reluctance, for the quarrels had gone far to rob not only him, but the British Army of the credit that had properly belonged to it for the brilliant offensives that had won the war in 1918, in teeth of the official opinion that victory was impossible before 1919 or 1920. Incidentally, this silence gave the Germans a long start with their theory that they were betrayed on the "home front" and were never conquered in the field.

Haig was always very solicitous for the safety of his guests during the war. When I visited him at Cassel I had planned to go on to certain advanced positions from which I could get a good view over Ypres and Passchendaele. He at first said it was too dangerous; he had just had a bad scare about one of his guests, Winston Churchill, and did not want to have my blood on his head. Finally he gave way, but not before he had taken me down to the courtyard of the château and seen me drilled to the gas-mask, and timed my performance with his own watch. I learnt the value of that precaution during the next few days.

If I were to add another name it would be that of my old schoolmaster, Thomas William Dunn, for twenty years

Head Master of Bath College, which has now unhappily passed out of existence. After a long life, in which I have seen and known a great many famous men, he remains in my mind as the equal of any of them in moral and intellectual qualities. He was a fine scholar and a splendid teacher of scholarship, but this was only a small part of education at his hands. That was an unceasing debate on all subjects in which he played Socrates and encouraged the shyest of his pupils to argue with him on equal terms. Certain of them wrote a little memoir of him for private circulation after his death, and it is a fitting tribute to his benevolent and highly original character. He lived to be 94, and one of my happiest memories is that I never passed a year after leaving school in 1881 up to the time of his death in 1932 without paying him at least one visit.

THOUGHTS ON BOAT RACE DAY

AS an Oxford man I have learned to await Boat Race Day in a mood of calm despair. I say to myself, it will be very nice if they win, but I must not be disappointed if they lose.

Last year (1934) my hopes rose. Oxford, by all accounts, produced a very fine crew, one of the finest ever seen on the River, and it actually on the day beat the record over the course. All the critics agreed that on ninety-nine occasions out of a hundred it would have won.

But by the worst of bad luck—the kind of bad luck that seems to dog Oxford on the River—this proved to be the hundredth, and Cambridge again produced an even finer crew. Moralists tell us that the journeying is more than the arrival, but it must be rather discouraging to go on this exhausting journey year after year and always arrive a fraction of a minute too late.

I know just a little about it, for I was at a rowing school, and for three years was coached by a famous Oxford Blue (Oxford in those days used to win). I know what “going to pieces” means, and what happens when, as the novelist Ouida said in her famous description of a boat race, “all row fast, but none so fast as stroke.”

I know how all the rules go overboard in the last stretch when you are a length behind, how the body rushes forward, the hands refuse to rise over the stretcher, the boat rolls, the oars splash and the stroke gets shorter, though cox yells.

I gathered on the occasions on which I followed the great race that the same sort of thing may happen even to the heroes of this occasion, and by happening upset the prediction of the wisest.

Rowing is unique among sports. It is the perfection of one mechanical operation a thousand times repeated. Or, let us say when it comes to racing in an eight-oar boat, the

perfection of this operation a thousand times repeated in perfect time and unison by eight men.

It is extraordinarily difficult to find eight men of the requisite weight and strength who will row together in this way. You may easily have eight first-class oars who will make only a second-class eight. And then, when you have found the eight good companions, they must be men of the right temperament who will not "go to pieces."

These conditions undoubtedly make rowing a first-class sport and a fine discipline, but they are conditions which do not appeal to everybody.

I have heard men who have steeled themselves to it for the sake of the discipline and exercise, or who have become quite good oars, say frankly that they hate it. The reason is that it is one operation endlessly repeated; it requires them to be machines.

You never hear cricketers, golfers or footballers talk in this way. Rugby football gave me a thrill which I never could get out of rowing. I cherish the memory of the occasions when I played with first-class teams—when, for instance, I have had the high privilege of "heeling out" and passing back to the great international three-quarter Rotherham. I think of rowing only with fatigue.

Every moment in the Rugby game was different, every moment in the boat-race was the same—unless you made it different, and then there was the deuce to pay.

A famous Cambridge tutor, who had a difficulty in pronouncing his r's, used to say to his pupils when they first came up, "You must either wead or wow, you can't do both."—"Wead or wow" was for years a proverb in Cambridge, and possibly it may still be remembered.

Not long ago an austere parent told me he had decided to send his son to Oxford because it didn't win the boat-race. He had constructed a syllogism:

Rowing is bad for the intellect;
Oxford doesn't win the Boat Race;
Therefore Oxford is good for the intellect.

This might be set for analysis in the next examination for "passlogic" at Oxford, if that still goes on.

My friend will get a shock when (as I hope may be soon) Oxford wins the Boat Race again. But it is all great nonsense, as most of the talk about sport at the Universities is.

Rowing, as a matter of fact, is rather a favourite pursuit of the young intellectuals. On the whole, it takes less time than most other sports, and if exercise is the object, you get more out of an hour on the river than out of a day on the cricket field, unless you happen to be bowling or playing a long innings.

If one looks to their subsequent records, the rowing Blues seem to yield a higher percentage of statesmen, judges, clergy and other serious sorts of men than any other Blues.

Except as a testimony to the higher coaching, the fact that a University wins the Boat Race really tells one very little about the level of the sport in that University. I have been assured that the general average of rowing has never been higher at Oxford than in some of these years when she has lost the Boat Race.

That the average is ever quite so high at Cambridge is difficult to believe, when one compares the Cam with the Isis. It is easier to think that Cambridge, having earned the reputation of being the "rowing University," has attracted the rowing stars from the public schools.

But if the parent I have quoted or any others think that Oxford or Cambridge, or any University, English or Scottish, is composed of young "intellectuals," he had better be disillusioned. In the seats of learning, as elsewhere, the intellectuals are always in a minority. To subdue the others to the lecture room and the examination schools is a fine art, but long experience has taught those who practise it that it is not to be done by quenching their sports.

On the whole, I do not think that this need be regretted. Intellectuals may be the salt of the earth, but the earth seems to be a little over-salted in these days.

NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN

THE first time I ever spoke to Neville Chamberlain was at a luncheon-party given by James Barrie in his rooms in the Adelphi, to celebrate the late Lord Grey's seventieth birthday. As Barrie himself told me, Chamberlain was on the list of those whom Grey wished to be invited. The two men came together, I imagine, as fishermen and bird lovers, but to me it was a new light on Chamberlain to find him in this intimate circle of Grey's friends.

It would be difficult to explain to younger men exactly what this meant, but from that time I ceased to think of him as merely the politician shut in the closed circle of party politics. Grey's friends were men of high character, open minds and wide interests. The comparison between the two men came back to me in 1938, when I had intimate talks with Mr. Chamberlain about the then very anxious state of foreign affairs. He had much of Grey's simplicity and straightforwardness, and not a little of his unawareness of what was being said about him, as well as the same rather dangerous indifference to it when he was aware. The main facts were obvious to him, and he seemed to think that they ought to be obvious to his critics.

It was, in after days, a complaint against Grey that he had failed to educate the public in foreign affairs, and in a certain sense this was true also of Chamberlain. Whether any man could have broken down the atmosphere of distrust and bitterness into which British parties had drifted at that time is more than I can say, but it was a public misfortune that it prevented the pooling of knowledge which would have kept controversy within bounds.

Chamberlain had just the disposition which enabled him to take up and carry through the thankless tasks that awaited him when he became Prime Minister. He was in what Prince Bülow used to call a danger zone, and a far more dangerous one than Bülow ever had to face. British

armaments were frightfully in arrear, especially in the vital matter of air power and defence against air attack. It was gravely in doubt whether the potential enemies, Germany and Italy, would not have the balance of power on their side if the war came soon or suddenly. How to retrieve this situation and get through it in even relative safety were his problems.

There was no honour or glory to be made out of this material, and he was often in very deep water in dealing with opponents who were either unaware of the facts or honestly convinced that material considerations should not stand in the way of ideal politics. Having a rather fuller knowledge of the facts than most members of the Opposition, I was able to discuss them frankly with him.

His view, put briefly, was that as a Prime Minister he was not justified in risking the British Empire and Commonwealth in any cause, however desirable, until we had strengthened our position in certain vital respects. The good causes would not be helped and the British Empire might easily be ruined if he failed to exercise discretion in this respect. From this nothing could move him. He was prepared to suffer any obloquy and any misrepresentation rather than be goaded into action which he thought to be without the necessary backing of power. It will not, I think, be to Mr. Chamberlain's discredit in the final account that he hoped too much and believed too much or failed to reckon with the mental and moral aberrations of a man like Hitler. Nor, though it be proved to be an illusion, can I bring myself to think the worse of him because he revealed his great happiness at the thought that he had brought back peace from Munich.

It was always strange to me that so simple, straightforward and unaggressive a man as Mr. Chamberlain could excite such animosities as he obviously did in those days. Just as in 1914 one had hoped to the last for a combination of Asquith and Lloyd George, Asquith correcting what was lacking in the other, so one had hoped that the partnership of Chamberlain and Churchill would continue. Since that

partnership began I have heard many tributes (and not least from those who were previously hostile) to the great ability and usefulness of Chamberlain's unostentatious contribution. Mr. Churchill's own testimony should outweigh much hasty and unfounded criticism. Particularly an entire lack of rancour with which Mr. Chamberlain stepped into the second place will long remain an example to British Statesmen.

Newcastle Journal, November 11, 1940.

FROM THE OLD RURAL SYSTEM TO THE NEW

(Review of "*The English Peasantry and the Enclosure of Common Fields*," by Gilbert Slater, M.A., D.Sc.)

OVER and over again during the recent debates on the land question in the two Houses of Parliament we have heard the existing English land system eulogized as a thing of venerable antiquity which has been tried by centuries of experience. These phrases have a strange sound to those who are at all acquainted with the actual history of English agriculture. The English system may have every other kind of merit in the world, but venerable antiquity can certainly not be claimed for it in the majority of estates on which it prevails at the present time. The characteristic English hierarchy of landlord, tenant, and labourer is, in a large part of the country, a creation of the last century or the last century and a half. A hundred and fifty years ago, even a hundred years ago, immense tracts of country in England and the Scottish lowlands presented the same outward aspect as France or Prussia does to-day, and were cultivated by a peasantry enjoying all manner of rights which the landlord or lord of the manor was bound most scrupulously to respect. The open field is the ancient English mode, the open field with big farmer, little farmer, and labourer, all in their degrees owning one kind of property or another on it and on the meadows and waste that lie beyond it, and all in one way or another helping to administer the intricate but highly practical code of law and custom which regulated its use. Readers of Arthur Young, Frederic Eden and Cobbett are, of course, roughly acquainted with the facts. They see the old system still flourishing when Young set out on his tours, they can trace its decline and the causes of its decline in Young's own pages, they can begin to judge of the economic effects before the end of the century from Eden's *Condition of the*

Poor, and thirty years later they may see modern England after the great change in Cobbett's incomparable descriptions of the countryside. There is no more fascinating study than to read Arthur Young and Cobbett side by side and, wherever possible, to follow them over the same ground. But whoever does this will think twice before he speaks about the antiquity of the existing land system, and think again, perhaps, before he accepts other hard-and-fast theories that are current about landed property in this country.

The history of the transition from the "open field" to the modern farm is the history of the Enclosure movement. It is told briefly in many books, and its significance cannot, of course, be missed by any historian of social conditions. Writing some time ago on "Population and Agriculture," I was obliged, while attributing large results to this cause, to leave the details vague, but now has appeared a full and careful analysis of the subject, presented to us by a competent student in the form of a book. I am speaking of Dr. Gilbert Slater's admirable work, *The English Peasantry and the Enclosure of Common Fields*, to which the President of the Board of Agriculture has written an introduction. Dr. Slater spent the greater part of twelve years on his investigations. He examined and analysed the great mass of Enclosure Acts surviving from the early years of the eighteenth century, and divided them into their two dominant types: (1) Acts for enclosing commonable wastes, which may be regarded as *Acts for extending agriculture*, and which did not disturb the existing system, and (2) Acts for enclosing all the open and common arable and other lands of a parish, which were in effect *Acts for extinguishing village communities*. The statistical results of this examination are presented county by county in appendices which will be invaluable to the student of general or local history. Dr. Slater has also made personal investigations in all parts of the country which enable him to gather up the local traditions and to measure the extent of the enclosures by agreement which are not recorded in Acts of Parliament.

The general results of these different inquiries may be seen pictorially in a series of county maps (now in the custody of the London School of Economics) coloured and marked so as to show the extent and the date of the enclosures in the separate parishes. Some of these have been engraved in black and white for this volume by the Royal Geographical Society. With the aid of these maps we can now, so to speak, walk through England county by county and read the history of the countryside as we go. In some districts the enclosure movement was ancient and slow; in others there was a clean sweep in a few years of the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries. Cobbett, going through north-east Wiltshire in 1825, finds that the common field system has been completely superseded by the great farms in less than one generation; Marshall, passing through the Cotswolds in Gloucestershire, in 1789, finds that practically the whole district, which, "thirty years ago, lay almost entirely in an open state—namely, in arable common fields, sheep-walk and cow-down," is practically in a state of enclosure. On the other hand, the process was spread over many centuries in Devon and Cornwall and in Cumberland and Westmorland, with the result that, instead of the landowner and capitalist farmer rushing in to supplant the yeomen and peasantry, the smallholders survived and benefited by the process. Under the influence of war and high prices, enclosure became a passion in the last years of the eighteenth and early years of the nineteenth century. An exact estimate of the amount of land dealt with at this period is not easy to arrive at, for the records of enclosure by agreement are by no means complete. The only total estimate I am acquainted with is that given by Mr. Russell Garnier in his *Annals of the British Peasantry*. According to this, 7,325,439 acres were enclosed between the years 1760 and 1867—a figure which presumably includes enclosures of waste as well as enclosures of common field.

This brief summary anticipates many questions which must be answered before we can begin to understand the

meaning of Enclosure. What was the common field, and how did it arise? The latter is a fearful question into which I do not presume to enter. A very slight study of the recognized authorities will suggest to any non-legal reader that almost every statement about the manorial system or the origins of English agriculture must be so qualified as to include its opposite, and even then is not free from the risk of being confuted by the next writer who attacks the question. The conditions were, in fact, so various that they cannot be reduced to rules without many exceptions. We can, however, say with safety that the common fields were in existence in England long before the Conquest, and there are even some who refer them to the Romans. Professor Maitland conjectures that the system was brought by Teutonic invaders from Germany and was the invention in some remote time of men who were so possessed with the sense of equality that they sacrificed economy and efficiency to the necessity of parcelling out their land in absolutely equal strips.¹ The fact which concerns us is that the common field is *there* in the eighteenth as in the ninth and tenth centuries, and that its peculiar characteristics of individual ownership and individual rights combined with collective management survived all the changes of the Norman Conquest and all the legal developments of the subsequent centuries. If we take Professor Maitland's description of the common field of pre-Norman times, and compare it with Dr. Slater's description of the common field of Laxton in Nottinghamshire which survives to this day, we shall find that both are substantially the same thing. The legal forms of tenure have changed, but the facts are unaltered. During the whole period from, say, the thirteenth to the early nineteenth century, the normal village of this type of culture presented the same features. There was the open arable field, in which the villagers had unequal shares, some being substantial farmers with many strips, others humble cottagers with a few poultry or pigs or a croft. There was

¹ *Domesday Book and Beyond*, pp. 337 and 338.

the commonable meadow where the holders of the arable pastured their beasts or raised their hay according to their holdings on the arable. There was also the waste on which all again had rights in their varying degrees—rights of pasture, rights of fuel, and so forth. In the earlier period the payments to the lord were in kind—offerings of live-stock and produce or labour on the demesne; in the later period, in money-rents. But in both cases the peasantry enjoyed fixity of tenure, though they could not alienate their holdings without first resigning them into the lord's hand. In both they had rights of common against which the landlord was powerless. Such a system could not be stable when population increased and economic conditions changed. The upper members of the hierarchy were always pressing upon the lower, and when driven to desperation the lower retaliated by peasants' risings. The landless men were early recognized as a danger to the country, and the effort of the Government was generally to restore them to some kind of interest in the soil. This conflict of interests went on intermittently through three centuries with varying fortunes, but on the whole the peasantry held their own, and up to the middle of the eighteenth century there were comparatively few able-bodied men who did not possess rights of one kind or the other in the arable field or the common waste.

For all this period enclosure was a chief point of conflict. Agriculture could not advance without bringing the large tracts of waste under cultivation; the waste could seldom be brought under cultivation without disturbing the rights of the peasantry. In these early days enclosure did not as a rule mean what it meant in later times—the consolidating and enclosing of the strips on the arable field; it meant reclaiming and bringing under cultivation the land outside the arable field which was still in a state of wild nature. One can conceive ideal conditions in which this might have been carried on for the benefit of all parties, the lord finding the capital, the people the labour, and the produce being divided proportionately for the benefit of both. But from

the beginning the lord wanted the lion's share, as capitalists will, and we find the Statute of Merton (A.D. 1253) requiring him to limit his improvements so as to leave sufficient common rights for all. The extent of the landlord's rights over the waste was long an unsettled question, but it scarcely became a practical grievance until Tudor times, when the reclamation had reached a point at which it seriously threatened the rights of the peasants. Then the complaints became loud and deep, and at this period we begin to hear of encroachments, not merely on the waste but on the arable field. The wool trade had become extremely lucrative, and the agricultural capitalist was under strong temptation to convert arable into pasture. "Wheare XL persons had theire lyvinges, nowe one man and his shephard hath all," says the husbandman in his *Discourse on the Common Weal of this Realm of England*.¹ "Your sheep may be said now to devour men and unpeople not only villages but towns," says Sir Thomas More. The rebellion of Kett was due to the exasperation of the peasantry, and though it was suppressed, the lesson was learnt by the governing classes, and the Elizabethan land-laws, including the famous Act which prohibited the building of a cottage unless four acres of land were attached to it, were definitely in favour of the peasant class.

Leland, the King's antiquary, who made his famous *Itinerary* between the years 1536 and 1542, almost everywhere notes the condition of the country through which he passed in regard to enclosures. Some progress had been made in the south and west, for, as we have already seen, large parts of Devon, Cornwall, West Somerset, and South Wales had been enclosed from early times. Northumberland, Westmorland, and parts of Kent and Essex were also early in the movement. But, with these exceptions, the enclosed areas were few and far between, and the traveller looked out on champaign country, broken only by forest, moor, and swamp, the arable and tillage lands lying in open fields around the villages. Enclosure proceeded in a

¹ Russell Garnier, *Annals of the British Peasantry*, p. 100.

leisurely fashion during the seventeenth century,¹ and Thorold Rogers speaks of the private Acts which litter the Statute Book of Queen Anne ; but these were probably for the most part enclosures of waste which did not affect the open fields of the village communities. The latter, however, were systematically attacked soon after the beginning of the eighteenth century, and it may be said without much exaggeration that the modern farm system and the English countryside, with its fences and hedgerows as we know them to-day, are the creation of the innumerable Enclosure Acts passed by Parliament between about 1750 and 1850.

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We are now at the period which is the chief part of Dr. Slater's subject, and, following his earlier chapters, let us endeavour to get a nearer view of this common field culture, which was still the prevalent type over by far the greater part of England before the Enclosure Acts. Let us suppose that we have climbed a hill and are looking down on the typical English village of this period. The cottages cluster together in the centre about the parish church, which rises above them, and immediately behind are small closes for gardens or paddocks. Then in a ring comes the open, arable, common field, a thousand acres or more in extent, and covering half the parish. This is divided into three or four approximately equal portions, and cultivated according to a three or four years' course which all the occupiers have agreed to accept. One part lies fallow ; the rest is cultivated in long and irregular strips of wheat, barley, and pulse. You can see the boundaries, if the crops are not too high, and they give the cultivated land the appearance of an immense, patchwork quilt. Cows and sheep are

¹ Gregory King estimates that there were 310,000 small freeholders and farmers in England at the close of the seventeenth century with, on the average, sixty-seven acres of arable and pasture to each family, an average which Thorold Rogers estimates to be substantially the same as that of the fifteenth century.

grazing on the fallow—perhaps tethered, perhaps shut in by hurdles. Outside the arable circle are the commonable meadows, divided into plots of half-acres, quarter-acres, or even less, marked by pegs driven into the ground, or stones. There is no hedge or fence outside the paddocks as far as the eye can see, except possibly the line marking the course of the drift which passes through the arable fields to the meadows. Then the scene fades away into wood or upland, all open and unenclosed, save for the fences or hedges which mark the boundary of the park, within which the big house with its home farm may be seen through the trees.

The scene, in fact, is very much what we may see to-day in most parts of France, or in the few unenclosed parishes, such as Laxton in Nottinghamshire, or the Isle of Axholme in Lincolnshire, which still survive in this country. Dr. Slater has made a careful study of those survivals, and thus helped to fix this history in the concrete before it passes away. The outer aspect is important, because it corresponds to the inner organization of the self-governing village community. Let us now see what this was.

Dr. Slater distinguishes two types, the Mercian and the Wessex, but for a rough sketch we must be content to generalize. The main point is that almost everybody in the village has rights of some kind in the arable field or common meadows. To discover who are the commoners is no easy matter. It is a tangle of custom and tradition, but the village itself is quite sure about it, and nobody else interferes, so long as the landlord gets his dues. Of the farmers who have holdings on the arable field some are freeholders, some copyholders, others legally annual tenants. Their holdings are most inconveniently distributed. A holding of, say, twenty acres of arable land will consist of thirty separate strips scattered all over the arable fields, but approximately divided between each field, so that each year the occupier would have, for example, five acres under wheat, five under barley, five under pulse, and five fallow. Right through the year the fallow land is used as common

pasture, and the land under crops becomes commonable as soon as the harvest is carried. The common meadow beyond the arable is divided into plots, which are assigned to the occupants of the arable field according to their holdings. In the spring, when the cattle are on the fallow, it is let grow for hay; then each holder cuts his own plot, and the meadow also becomes commonable.

But the freeholders, copyholders, and annual tenants on the arable field by no means exhaust the persons with rights. Rights were conferred by the ownership or occupation of certain cottages known as "tofts" or "toft-heads" (possibly a survival of the Act of Elizabeth 1). The villagers knew which cottages were "tofts," though why they were "tofts" had long since faded out of memory. The farmer who owned cottages which were "tofts" might let them to labourers and retain the rights, but the labourer, as a rule, secured a "toft-cottage" with its own right of common. This meant one vote in the village community and one share in the revenue from certain grass-lands (sicks) in the common fields which were mown for hay, besides the right of feeding an indefinite number of sheep on the fallow or on the arable field, after the crops had been taken, and a regulated number on the common meadow. Roughly, we may say that practically the whole able-bodied population of the village had rights of one kind or another from strips in the arable field, with the accompanying privileges, down to the one common right of the labourer whose cottage was a "toft." Then, beyond the circle of arable and meadow, were rights of pasture, rights of fuel, rights of turbary, and so forth, on the common or waste, the value of which may be inferred from the bitterness of the complaints when they were lost.

Such is the system which a hundred and twenty years ago was general throughout England. The types varied according to local customs and circumstances, but one and all presupposed a real village community, self-supporting, self-sufficing, and ordered more or less on co-operative principles. "Under the common-field system," says Dr. Slater,

"the parish township formed one farm, occupied and cultivated by a group of partners holding varying numbers of shares." They had to agree among themselves as to the order of the crops and the dates for mowing the hay or taking the harvest. They elected field juries and foremen of the fields to settle disputes and to bring the backward or recalcitrant into line. The humblest labourer had his vote when the toft-holders met, and he might in a modest way be the owner of flocks and herds. We may judge from the records which survive or from the modern experience of the few village communities still in existence the kind of difficulties that arose. A storm comes at harvest and blows the crops from one strip to another till the produce of thirty or forty cultivators is mixed together in inextricable confusion. There is a backward farmer who won't carry his crops, and so stands between his neighbours and their right of pasture on the common field. Or there is a dispute about boundaries, or the occupier of the headland is incensed with his neighbours, who compel him to defer his ploughing until they have finished theirs. There are rules for the length of the rope by which a horse may be tethered, and fines are imposed when the pigs stray or the cow is in the corn, or when ducks and geese intrude on the meadow reserved for sheep and cattle. The villagers know all the rules, and argue the cases that arise out of them with subtlety and tenacity. It sharpened wits and added a zest to life. We hear little of the dullness of village life in the days of the open-field culture.

Then there came along the scientific farmer with the "new agriculture"¹ brought from Holland. To him the open field with its scattered plots and bare fallow was anathema. He cried out that English agriculture had made

¹ The chief feature of the new agriculture was the change which it made in the rotation of crops, in the substitution of roots, especially the turnip, for bare fallows, in the careful hoeing and weeding of the root crops, and in the fertilization of the soil by the feeding of the root crop by sheep. Not a single stage of this process had to be omitted. Thorold Rogers, *Industrial and Commercial History*, I., 254.

no progress for centuries, that the land produced less of everything and above all less rent than it might and would under an intelligent and scientific system. It may be, as Thorold Rogers suggests, that the system of fines on the renewal of copyhold leases had been developed during the seventeenth century, so as to take the heart out of the peasant cultivators, but this was certainly not the contemporary view. Arthur Young, the most honest and the most zealous advocate of the new agriculture, is never weary of insisting that no progress will be made till agriculture is stimulated by a genuine rack-rent which will force the farmer to make all the profit that can be made. Thus the duties which the rural classes owe to each other are defined as being, on the landlord's part, to get all the rent he can out of the farmer, and on the farmer's part to get all the work he can out of the labourer. Both objects were blocked by the existing system. There was no more rent to be got out of the common field, and there was no more work to be got out of the labourer, who was independent of the farmer to the extent of the rights which made him an agriculturist with his own interests. As the eighteenth century advances, and the larger farmers begin to imbibe the new ideas, the complaint respecting the labourer becomes louder and louder. One reporter to the Board of Agriculture in the year 1794 describes the labourers' plots as "ill-cultivated, impoverished spots," which, while "affording them a very trifle towards their maintenance, yet operate upon their minds as a sort of independence."—"This idea," he goes on, "leads the man to lose many days' work, by which he gets a habit of indolence," and, "the surrounding farmers have neither industrious labourers nor servants, therefore the commons with the cottagers around become a great burden as well as inconvenience, for most certain it is that in all the countries where this is the case the labourers are generally indolent, and the contrary is the case where they live under the farmer in comfortable cottages with only a quarter of an acre of land, work every day in the year, and have their children taught to read and put

out to labour early." This was the prevalent idea of the farmer about the labourer in the later years of the eighteenth century. But, *en revanche*, what the farmer thought about the labourer, the landlord thought about the farmer. His ancient customs and independent tenures and rights or common were also a premium on inefficiency and indolence. Interesting evidence of the landlord's view may be found in Edward Lawrence's *Duty of a Steward to his Lord* (1727). "A steward," he says, "should not forget to make the best enquiry into the disposition of any of the freeholders within or near any of his lord's manors to sell their lands . . . especially in such manors by inclosing commons and common fields. . . . If the freeholders cannot all be persuaded to sell, at least an agreement for inclosing should be pushed forward by the steward." The steward, again, "should not suffer any of the lord's lands to be let to freehold tenants within or near his lord's manor," and he should "endeavour to lay all the small farms let to poor, indigent people to the great ones." Finally, "noblemen and gentlemen should endeavour to convert copyhold for lives to leasehold for lives." In short, the duty of the steward is to do all in his power to get the land absolutely into the hands of his lord, and to buy out and abolish the different kinds of independent tenures which stand in the way of this object. Edward Lawrence, however, was in favour of going slowly. "It is unwise," he says, "to unite farms all at once, because of the odium and increase of poor-rates" (an interesting admission). "It is much more reasonable and popular to stay till such farms fall into hand by death." But when the movement was once set going, the improvers were far too impatient to await the slow coming of death, and Parliament was freely invoked to overcome the obstruction of the recalcitrants. The movement meant that rural society was now definitely to be organized according to the triple division of owner, occupier, and labourer, and all conflicting rights to be got rid of by agreement or compulsory purchase.

The scientific agriculturist was, of course, perfectly right

from his own point of view. It was essential to agriculture that the various interests in the common field should be consolidated, and a survival of the old system would have been as bad for England as it was afterwards bad for Germany. What was not essential—what, in fact, was an irreparable disaster—was the wholesale extinction of common rights by which the consolidation was effected. If the movement could have been controlled by a far-sighted statesman, he would have seen that the problem consisted in introducing the new agriculture without destroying the old village community. But the movement was at haphazard, and no one was concerned for the village community. Before the eighteenth century was far advanced, the more substantial farmers were as convinced as the landlords that enclosure was to their advantage, and over a large part of the country it was easy for a combination of these two forces to overcome the opposition of the labourers and smallholders even without the aid of Parliament. The temptation of a little ready money, the fear of offending the squire and the big farmers, acted powerfully with humble people who did not realize, till they had lost them, the value of the rights they were bartering away. But in case of difficulty the aid of Parliament was easily got. We have only to glance through Dr. Slater's appendix to see the enormous number of the private Acts enclosing common fields which were obtained in the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth centuries. It was the deliberate policy of Parliament during this period to give facilities for enclosure on easy terms, and the process was cheapened and simplified by the General Enclosure Acts of 1801 and 1845, which enabled the parties to dispense with special Acts, and to employ the services of enclosure commissioners and the Board of Agriculture. Towards the end of this period Parliament began to grow uneasy about its own work, and select committees were appointed to discuss such questions as the provision of garden allotments and other means of mitigating the lot of the rural poor. In 1801 an Act was passed for the protection of commoners' rights; in 1827

the Select Committee on Emigration reported in favour of finding some substitute for the four million acres which, since 1760, had been forced off from the labourers' livestock. Acts passed in 1819, 1831, and 1832 authorized parochial authorities to devote land to this purpose. But whereas the Enclosure Acts had been compulsory, these remedies were merely permissive, and their practical effect was nil. The report of the Select Committee in 1867 revealed the fact that out of 184,893 acres enclosed during the previous twenty-four years, only 2,119 acres had been set apart as equivalent for ancient pasturage rights.¹

It would be fruitless to waste time in discussing on whose shoulders the chief part of the blame should rest, though when one hears modern landlords denouncing compulsory purchase as plunder and confiscation, it is tempting to remind them that their own estates more likely than not were created in their present form by compulsory purchase of the rights of the peasantry at prices which all competent authorities in later times have pronounced to be quite inadequate to the property acquired. And this not so many years ago that it can be quite complacently dismissed as ancient history. Mr. Russell Garnier goes to the length of saying that "in no single instance amongst the numerous so-called private Enclosure Acts of the Georgian period was injustice to the proprietary claims of the peasantry intended."² This in a sweeping negative, which shows more insight into the intentions of past times than historians usually claim to possess. Dr. Slater adds "various forms of force and fraud" to an otherwise uncontroversial summary of the various means by which enclosure was effected. Thorold Rogers, who acknowledges very handsomely the debt which English agriculture owed to the improving landlord of the Georgian period, reminds us that the repeal of the Act of Elizabeth, whereby four acres of land were to be annexed to every new labourer's cottage, was one of the incidents of the enclosure movement. Arthur Young,

¹ Russell Garnier, *Annals of the British Peasantry*, p. 348.

² *Annals of the British Peasantry*, p. 347.

who afterwards repented of his zeal, complains bitterly of the hindrance which these cottage holdings placed in the way of enclosing. As regards the labourer, it is almost sufficient to say that he was in most cases required to prove his rights against the clever lawyers who represented the landlords and big farmers before the commissioners when an enclosure scheme was being debated. He had no knowledge of law; he was opposing men whose favour was of enormous importance to him; his rights, though well established by custom, had often enough no legal form, and it was easy to reply to him that what he supposed to be a right was in fact a privilege which he had enjoyed on sufferance. In many cases the rights belonged, as we have seen, to the cottage, and the compensation went to the farmer or landlord who owned the cottage, and not to the labourer who suffered by the change.

We need not labour the question of intention or responsibility. Whatever was intended, it is not disputed that the condition of the labourer was immensely worsened by the enclosure movement. Dr. Slater quotes from a letter written by Lord Winchelsea to the Board of Agriculture in 1796, wherein is an extremely interesting classification of labourers in order of felicity. This is a document of great importance, for it enables us to see at a glance the various kinds of rights enjoyed by the labourer before the enclosures. The classification runs:

(1) Those who have a sufficient quantity of grass-enclosed land to enable them to keep one or more cows winter and summer and a garden near their house; a grass field allotted to a certain number being as advantageous, or nearly so, as separate small enclosures.

(2) Those who have a summer pasture for their cow and some arable land on which they grow the winter provision. This is slightly less advantageous than (1), because tilling the arable land takes up more time.

(3) Those who have a right of common for the summer keep of the cow, and a meadow or arable land, or a share of a meadow in common for the winter provision. If it were not that com-

mons are usually overstocked, this would be equivalent to (1) or (2).

(4) Those who have a right of common but no cow, and a garden. In this case geese and pigs can be kept.

(5) Those who have a right of common and no garden. In this case the value of the right of common depends upon whether fuel is obtained from the common or not.

(6) Those who have several acres of arable land, and no summer pasture for a cow. This, Lord Winchelsea maintains, is of little value, because of the large expenditure of labour necessary for cultivating the land, but he admits that many would differ from him on this point.

(7) Those who have a garden near the house.

(8) Those who have no land whatever. "This is a very bad situation for a labourer to be placed in, both for his comfort and the education of his children."

Whatever else may be said about the enclosure movement, this at least must be said—that when it was completed, the first six of Lord Winchelsea's classes were greatly diminished, and his eighth class correspondingly increased.

The advocates of enclosure generally faced this fact, but they set against it (1) that the labourer would be given compensation for any rights that were extinguished, and (2) that he would get increased employment from the improved agriculture. But the compensation in kind, *i.e.* by other land or other rights outside the area of enclosure, was generally quite inadequate, and the compensation in money—also generally quite inadequate—slipped quickly through his fingers, and did him no good. Moreover, both kinds of compensation went frequently to the farmers, and not to the labourers. The loss of independence and the destruction of the village community were not to contemporary opinion to be regretted at all, but posterity has rightly counted them to have been serious disasters. It is true that in the days of the French War, when agriculture was feverishly active under the influence of famine prices, more labour was temporarily employed, but it was dependent labour, and quickly became pauperized labour. The man who had to buy his food instead of raising it on his

own land suffered doubly in these hard times. It is, in fact, impossible to understand the condition of rural England under the old Poor Law without attributing a great deal to the enclosure movement. We have positive evidence of the facts in the General Report on Enclosures prepared by the old Board of Agriculture in 1808. That Report is wholly in favour of enclosure from the agricultural point of view, but it admits unequivocally that the poor have suffered. Thus the results are given of sixty-eight Enclosure Acts chiefly in the eastern counties, testimony having been obtained from the clergy and others supposed to be impartial witnesses. In fifteen cases it is asserted that the poor were not injured, in fifty-three cases that they were. In the latter cases their condition is said to have become much worse, and in particular it is alleged that they have lost their cows, and are unable to buy milk for their children. Dr. Slater gives a few of the more striking reports :

Ackworth, Yorkshire.—The parish belonged to near two hundred owners ; nearly the whole of them have come to the parish since the enclosure, or changed the quantity of their lands.

Todenham, Gloucester.—Nothing increases but the poor. Eight farm-houses filled with them.

Tingewick, Bucks.—Milk to be had at 1d. a quart before ; not to be had now at any rate.

Passenham, Northamptonshire.—The poor deprived of their cows, and great sufferers by the loss of their hogs.

Tulvey, Bedfordshire.—Cows lessened from 110 to 40.

Alconbury, Huntingdon.—Several who kept cows before were, upon enclosure, forced to part with them, and have kept none since. The cottage allotments going to the landlord were thrown together, and the inhabitants left without cows or land. Those who have allotments given in lieu of their rights, not being able to enclose them (because of the expense), were forced to sell, and became as the rest in this respect. Before enclosure, milk could readily be bought ; poor people could lay out a halfpenny or a penny every day, but nothing of the sort could be got since.

Such were the incidental results of the change which

uprooted the village community and substituted the modern farm. The improvers had at least been very heedless in their zeal, as some of them honestly confessed. Arthur Young, whose early views had perhaps been softened by his French experiences, published a pamphlet¹ in 1801 in which he insisted on the injury done to the poor by the enclosures, and urged that they should be allowed to absorb the smaller commons which still remained in the middle of enclosed areas, and so build up small properties for themselves. He also proposed that the larger wastes should be utilized for the same purpose by Acts of Parliament which should secure enough land for every cottager to keep a cow both summer and winter, such land to be inalienable from the cottage, and the ownership to be vested in the parish. Dr. Slater has discovered one Act which realizes his ideal for a village in Wiltshire. Similarly, we find an enclosure Commissioner, Mr. Forster, of Norwich, lamenting in the General Report that he had "been accessory to injuring 2,000 poor people at the rate of twenty families per parish." "Numbers in the practice of feeding the commons," says this Commissioner, "cannot prove their rights, and many, indeed most, who have allotments have not more than one acre, which, being insufficient for the man's cow, both the cow and land are usually sold to opulent farmers."

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Dr. Slater insists throughout on the importance of the distinction between Acts for enclosing commonable wastes, which he terms "Acts for extending cultivation," and Acts for the enclosing of open and common arable and other lands of a parish, which he terms "Acts for extinguishing village communities." The distinction between these two things is, indeed, very important, if we are to interpret the early history aright, and to discover, for instance, why enclosure is at one moment an acceptable policy to the

¹ "Enquiry into the propriety of applying wastes to the better support and nourishment of the poor."

populace, and why at another it arouses their keenest animosity, or, again, why in one part of the country it stimulates population, and in another reduces population. But when we get into Georgian times the two kinds of enclosure work together to the same result. The village community depended on the joint operation of a great variety of rights, and if any one of these were removed, the rest were likely to become unprofitable. Thus the smaller kind of farmer could get on tolerably with a few strips in the arable field if he had in addition the right of feeding an indefinite number of sheep and cattle on the common pastures or waste, but the arable without the rights of common was of little or no use to him. The enclosure movement killed the yeoman, and for this reason. The rights of common were the pivot of their system of culture, and nothing could compensate them for their loss. We hear perpetual complaints in the early years of the last century that farmers were falling into the ranks of labourers, and so increasing the competition among the latter that both together were becoming paupers. The appropriation and enclosure of the waste, moreover, prevented both the small farmer and the labourer from recouping themselves for the loss of rights on the common fields. The Enclosure Commissioners defended themselves against their critics by pointing to the amount of common land which, taking the country as a whole, was still available. They generally exaggerated the amount, and in any case it was small comfort to a dispossessed farmer or labourer in Sussex to know that there were unannexed commons in Wales. For large parts of the country the amount of available waste which might have been the subject of such experiments as Arthur Young suggests was inconsiderable by the beginning of the nineteenth century. We have proof of that in the admission of the General Report that the poor had suffered irreparably from the loss of fuel. Readers of Cobbett's "Rural Rides" will remember the lamentable picture which he draws of the sufferings of the villagers from this cause, and his vehement denunciations of the

cruelty of it. Clearly, in these districts there could have been no available waste to make good the loss of the rights of fuel.

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We are now in a position to grasp the main facts in this important piece of rural history. Let me endeavour to summarize them briefly. We see the enclosure movement stimulated at the beginning of the eighteenth century by the "new agriculture"; we see it warmly advocated as a necessary part of public policy before the end of that century. From about 1790 onwards the governing classes lived constantly in fear lest the population should prove unequal to the industrial and to the military needs of the country. To grow the utmost quantity of food with the least expenditure of labour seemed, therefore, from every point of view an object to be desired. We need not question the soundness of this opinion or the disinterestedness of those who advocated it. Thorold Rogers, who is no partisan of landlords, speaks of the "great and incalculable service" which the most prominent of these men rendered to English agriculture. The open-field system with its scattered strips was impossible under the new conditions. Professor Maitland speaks of it as a "ridiculous" arrangement even for the thirteenth century, and all that need surprise us is that it should have survived into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The open field, then, was doomed in any case, but the pity was that in abolishing it, the improvers also destroyed the village community, made life impossible for the smallholder, and divorced the labourer from the soil. When the end came, only the landlords and the larger farmers survived, and all the rest were day-labourers. The village had lost its cows, and was "too poor to buy milk for the children." It had also lost its independence and its old habit of doing for itself. Repentance came when agricultural depression set in, and the public began to grow alarmed about rural depopulation, as

it had formerly been about rural congestion. Then Parliament again took up with the allotments and smallholdings movement. But for the first seventy years of the nineteenth century the enclosure movement had done all that its authors predicted. It had greatly improved agriculture, enormously raised rents, and released the surplus of agricultural labourers for work in the towns.

According to eighteenth-century opinion, the increase of rent was by no means a concern merely of the landowning class. It was the test of good agriculture, the proper means of stimulating the farmer, who, in his turn, would stimulate the labourer. "There is no good industry without high rents," says Arthur Young, "and the landlords who, through a false pride, will not raise when they easily might, do an inconceivable injury to their country." This was, of course, very comfortable doctrine to the landowning class, but Dr. Slater perhaps overstates it when he says that "the increase of rent was the motive of enclosure." To Arthur Young and his school the motive was the improvement of agriculture, and the increase of rents the means to this end. These good men persuaded themselves that to stir the labourers and smallholders into life was good for them and good for the country. The arguments they used were not very different from the arguments we hear used in these days about the natives of South Africa. They were content with too little; they lived an indolent life with their cows and pigs and poorly cultivated gardens. Far better that they should do a good day's work for a competent farmer who would get the most out of the land. Others declared bluntly that the labourer could suffer no injury by the loss of his rights or the enclosure of the waste, because, if the worst came to the worst, the parish was bound to maintain him. Cobbett inverted this argument in later years, and declared that the new Poor Law would be a fraud on the poor unless the commons were first restored to them.

It is not easy to get accurate estimates of the displacement of labour through enclosure, but we have ample evidence that, where arable was laid down to pasture, it was very

large, and the hardship was greatly aggravated by the Act of Settlement which prevented the labourer from seeking employment elsewhere. Then came a period of high prices, which fell with crushing force upon a population which was now obliged to buy instead of raising its food. If we put these causes together, we have the explanation of the old Poor Law. Deprived of their rights of common, immobilized by the Act of Settlement, and unable to support life on their wages, the labouring class passed wholesale into the rank of paupers. During these years the labourers of the country paid even more heavily for the improvement of agriculture than the artisans of the towns for the introduction of machinery.

All this, it may be said, is ancient history, but it is history which must be understood if we are to take the right measure of the English land question. Though the facts are forgotten, the tradition of the old life lives on in the country and causes a dumb rebellion against the hard theories of proprietors' rights which are asserted in some quarters. We cannot restore the old conditions, but we can do something to satisfy the instinct for a rootage in the soil which is in the blood of our peasantry. And when we remember how comparatively modern is our present landed system, and still more when we look down the long list of Acts of Parliament in which compulsory expropriation (with but very slight compensation) was applied to yeomen and labourers for the benefit of landowners, we shall not be surprised or indignant if the legislature makes a moderate use of the same weapon in their behalf.

THE BRITISH PEOPLE AND THE GERMAN PRINCE CONSORT

THE idea that wherever he is domiciled a German is a German still and owes loyalty and service to his homeland, is not, as is sometimes supposed, a new Nazi doctrine, but has been held in varying degrees by Germans for many generations. It was held, not least, as is shown in a collection of letters ¹—many of them taken from the German archives and published for the first time—by the German prince who was the husband of Queen Victoria. Lytton Strachey more than hinted at it in his life of the Queen, but Dr. Jagow, the German editor of this volume, makes it explicit and evidently takes great satisfaction in it.

There was from the beginning a difficulty in the relations of the Prince with the country of his adoption. He was far too able a man to play the part of consort to a reigning Sovereign in the self-effacing and unobtrusive manner that would have been acceptable to British Ministers and, so far as they knew of it, to the British people. If Queen Victoria had been intellectually cleverer, and he less obviously clever—had they even occasionally clashed—the result might have been different. The evident fact that she idolized him and hung on his lips, and that he more and more was doing her business, was bound to make trouble.

But even this might have been overcome, but for the fact, which Dr. Jagow brings out, that throughout his life Germany remained the Prince's spiritual home. To do his duty as Consort to the Queen of England, but in such a way as never to forget that he was a German and a German prince, was his resolve from the beginning, and it remained so to the end.

"Albert," says Dr. Jagow, "unlike so many other German princes who have gone abroad, did not renounce his

¹ *Letters of the Prince Consort, selected and edited by Dr. Kurt Jagow.*

German national sentiments on assuming another nationality, he remained a German in the full sense of the word. It was at his suggestion that German was the language to be used in private with his Royal spouse, that it was employed in everyday conversation in his family, and that the German Christmas tree was lit up in his house at Christmas. From the same German standpoint Albert made it his political aim to forge an understanding between the two great Germanic nations, to both of which he equally belonged, which might develop in time into an Anglo-German alliance."

These were natural and even laudable ideas for a German prince, but they were very likely to make trouble for the Consort of the Queen of England. It could scarcely be agreeable to the English people to learn, as they quickly did, that German was the language of the Royal Household, and that "it was employed in everyday conversation" in the Royal Family. But still more the fact that the principal, and by far the most influential, adviser of the Queen was pursuing a deliberate policy of his own which might or might not be the policy of Her Majesty's Ministers, made a highly equivocal situation.

The Prince, it now appears, saw himself appointed by Providence to work for a British-German alliance. Not only this, but he was for years together one of the principal leaders in the movement for German unity, advising in turn King Frederick William and his successor, afterwards the first German Emperor, in a stream of confidential letters from Windsor and Balmoral. His ideas were liberal, and his letters are full of common sense, but again it was in very dubious accord with British practice that the Queen's husband should have been engaged in this business without the knowledge and consent of the Queen's Ministers or without making any attempt to ascertain whether his views coincided with their policy.

How much Palmerston knew or suspected can only be guessed, and in any case his method of warfare with the Queen and Prince gave them legitimate grounds for com-

plaint. But the facts, as revealed in this volume explain, if they do not excuse, his extreme exasperation. The aggrandizement of Germany under Prussian leadership, which was the Prince's aim, was certainly not an aim of British policy in any years in which Palmerston was either Foreign Secretary or Prime Minister. Very much the reverse.

The Prince professed great—and no doubt sincere—admiration for British liberal institutions, but it is doubtful if he really understood their central feature: the system of Prime Minister and Cabinet independent of the Crown in virtue of their responsibility to Parliament. In this system the constitutional Sovereign may play the very important part of mediator and moderator, but he (or she) cannot actively participate in administration. The boundary is clear in the English mind, but if we may judge from his correspondence with that strange *eminence grise* Baron Stockmar, the Prince never could understand it. His idea seems to have been to make the Sovereign—really in this case himself—a kind of permanent Prime Minister, who, by virtue of a longer and more continuous experience, would be the superior of the political figures who came on and went off the scene.

He was to be, in fact, very like Bolingbroke's "patriot king"—a very natural idea for a German monarchist. But it is safe to say that if the Prince had lived to old age, and had tried to work it out, he would either have retired beaten or have brought the monarchy into a dangerous collision with Parliament and people. As it was, he gave the British people a good dose of German efficiency and helped to arouse them to the importance of Art, Science and Education in the national life. They knew more about business and industry than any German could teach them, but in enterprises like the Great Exhibition he helped them to pool their knowledge and co-operate for their common advantage. Dr. Jagow's book seems to explain the seeming ingratitude of the English people for these considerable services.

Conscientious and industrious as he was in the service of his adopted country, he could not conceal the fact that his spiritual home was Germany. The dual allegiance which is so troubling the peace of Europe to-day is here seen exemplified in a crucial instance.

Yorkshire Observer, September 26, 1938.

THE PRESS IN WARTIME

*(Speech as Charter President of the Institute of Journalists,
March, 1940)*

WHEN the Institute laid its plans for celebrating its year of Jubilee, who could have imagined a situation in which the British press should stand almost alone in fighting for the freedom of the press in Europe? In happier times we might have spent this hour in looking back on our past, considering the special problems that arise for us in the conditions of modern newspaper production. As things are, the time may be more profitably spent in considering what has happened to our neighbours, and what we can do to stem the tide of tyranny which has swept over Europe.

The dictators have paid the press the compliment of treating it as their principal enemy when they come to power. Napoleon said that he would not survive for a month if he permitted a free press to continue in France. It is the belief of all his successors and imitators that their tenure would be equally frail if they permitted liberty of comment on their proceedings. Wherever the German dictator has established a footing, his first step has been to extinguish the freedom of the press. In Germany, Austria, in Czecho-Slovakia, Poland, Belgium, Holland, Norway, Denmark and France there is not to-day one single free newspaper. If the dictator stopped at that point we might almost be grateful to him, for at least there would be no deception. He has not stopped, he has seized and endeavoured to pervert to his own use newspapers of high reputation, and submitted to a ruthless persecution all members of their staffs and all those among their contributors who have had the courage to resist him.

We know as yet little of the details of this story, but we know enough to be sure that, when it comes to be told, it

will rank with that of any religious or political inquisitions of former days and be an evil memory of the cruelty of which modern and presumably civilized men are capable. In all the countries overrun by tyranny, honest men who have refused to bow the neck have been shot, imprisoned and tortured; and many have mysteriously disappeared. For others it has been a merciful fate to escape into penniless exile. Let us, assembling here to-day, remember these comrades of ours, veritable martyrs of our profession, and put on record a word of praise and sympathy in the hope that, wherever they may be, some echo of our voices may reach them.

But for the time being the persecutors have had their way and we must look full in the face the degradation to which they have reduced our calling over the greater part of Europe. The press in these regions is little more than a gigantic megaphone which the temporary master uses to confuse, distract and deceive the world outside. The question now asked is not whether what the controlled newspapers say is true, but why they say it—what is the motive of their master in disseminating this or that falsehood, in saying one thing in one place and something quite different in another. The answer to the riddle is often beyond guessing, but if we look carefully, we can see something of his methods. In France, for example, a large number of newspapers disappeared altogether at the moment when he entered Paris. But he appears to have made a special effort to keep certain famous French journals in existence in order that he might use their name and reputation to cover his designs. Thus we learn day by day that the *Matin* and the *Paris Soir* are praising German efficiency and expounding the complete Nazi doctrine, including its violent anti-Semitism, but we are not told that they are, in the common phrase, under entirely new management, and that their former staffs have honourably refused to be parties to this imposture.

There is a refined wickedness in some of these operations. In France the difference between occupied and unoccupied

territory gives the German manipulator an opportunity of using the controlled press to stir up strife between French and French. The *Matin* under its new management in occupied territory complains bitterly that "nothing is changed" in the unoccupied, and that the newspapers there are providing "too much English news." Others deride the Vichy Government and contrast its ineptitude and indecision with German efficiency as displayed in the occupied area. The appearance of conflict between the two is pure make-believe, for the unoccupied also are under the control of the German master and they must pipe to his tune. The general object to which both have to conform is to present a picture of France as bitterly repenting of her past, rising against the statesmen who let Britain drag her into the war, realizing, with the scales now fallen from her eyes, the greatness of nobility of the German leader and the wickedness of the international Jewish conspiracy now centred in London which seeks to thwart his purpose and inflicts misery on the French people by prolonging the war. This may excite derision in foreign countries to which Hitler's proceedings tell their own tale, but we cannot deny that, constantly repeated, it is likely to have a certain effect upon the French people in the adverse circumstances in which they find themselves.

In the other occupied countries the German method has been somewhat different. In Holland the press were assured, when the Germans entered, that there would be no censorship, but at the same time they were told that they "were expected to take account of the new situation." What this meant was soon discovered. Eminent Dutch journalists disappeared; the newspapers, including the famous *Standard*, edited by an ex-Premier, Dr. Colijn, were suppressed on the ground that they had been unable to "cease their one-sided propaganda on behalf of the Allies." In Belgium and Norway, the method was the same. In all these countries the press has either been extinguished or perverted into an instrument of Nazi propaganda. Even in the neutral countries its voice is subdued, for any plain-

speaking by journalists brings down upon their Governments the brow-beating and bullying which the Germans practise on all indiscriminately. Nothing can shake the Nazis in their belief that all Governments can, if they choose, control the press.

Corruptio optimi pessima. The corruption of the best is the worst. It is an appalling picture which the press of Europe presents to-day. A great and honourable profession which has won authority and prestige as an instrument of free opinion has been seized, throttled and perverted to the uses of mendacious propaganda—mendacity with a thousand tongues. The discovery has been made that the printing press ranks with tanks and bombs as one of the most formidable instruments of war, and that as a means of playing upon nerves and breaking down morale, it is even more subtle and penetrating than any poison gas yet employed. Wireless is its companion in misfortune, and the two necessarily fall under the same compulsion, if the imposture is to be kept up. Here we see opening up one of the great problems of the future. How in any new order can we guarantee the free interchange of honest opinion and truthful reporting of fact which are essential to peaceful and neighbourly relations between nations, how guard against the subtle undermining of confidence and deliberate sowing of mischief of which a perverted press is so deadly an instrument?

That is a question beyond my scope at this moment. I turn to our own position here in Britain, the last outpost in Europe of the free press, bearing on our shoulders the burden of justifying freedom against its assailants.

We too have to submit to discipline, the necessary military discipline of wartime. Our problem is, broadly speaking, to guard the frontiers of civil liberty against the encroachments of the military censorship. There is no cut-and-dried solution of this problem. Undoubtedly there are necessary encroachments on civil liberty in wartime, and we are not in a position to argue with the authorities who declare them to be necessary. But we can and ought to

warn them against the dangers of straining their powers. We have close at hand the experience of a country where the heavy hand of the censor descended abruptly on the press at the beginning of the war and by maintaining its pressure deprived the Government till too late of essential knowledge about the movements of opinion among its own people. While we submit to any necessary control we must keep the Government reminded that we play the part of eyes and ears for it and that it may be deprived of the organs of sight and hearing if it exceeds a wise and tolerant use of its powers.

Secrecy, or only such publicity as serves military purposes, is the natural demand of the soldiers in wartime. Shall they run the risk of plans being discovered, and the lives of the fighting men being imperilled in order that the public may be fed with news? In any given case the question may seem to admit of only one answer. Safety first, safety above all for those who are in the firing line—how can anyone object? Yet, if from an excess of caution the censor lets the enemy get a long start with false news, he may have done something which in the longer view will be of serious military disadvantage. I argued the case again and again with the ruling authorities during the last war, and came to the conclusion that a reasonable solution could be reached, if the views of journalists were invited and the doors of the censor's department were readily open to them. The great advantage we had in those days was that the principal official censor was that distinguished and highly experienced editor and journalist, Sir E. T. Cook. He and his staff were well acquainted with the mechanics of the press and its special difficulties in wartime. They knew that the suppression of facts threatened dangerous reactions in the public mind which had to be weighed against the military risk of disclosure. Now, as then, we have to ask our military censors to realize that the press is not a tiresome survival from peace which should be effaced in war, but a most potent military weapon, the right use of which is of equal concern to the soldier and the journalist.

More than once when I have addressed conferences of the press in recent years I have urged the need of a much closer relationship between the press and the Government in international affairs and have suggested that a body representing the press should be kept informed, through periodical conferences with members of the Government, of facts which cannot be stated publicly but a knowledge of which is essential to wise and intelligent comment on foreign policy. The same purpose should be served in wartime by an Advisory Council of press representatives in regular contact with the Ministry of Information. In the countries of the dictators the press is the slave of the Government ; in the free countries it must in some sense be its partner.

The early discovery of the uses to which the press might be perverted in wartime was an essential part of the long lead which the dictators obtained over the democracies in preparing for war. We on our side had no inkling of these ugly possibilities. In the year 1909, when we were laying our plans for the important conference of the Empire Press Union which took place that year, I asked a leading British Statesman to let me come and have a talk with him about the functions of the press in war—which was one of the subjects of debate down on our agenda. He was extremely polite ; he appointed a day for me to lunch with him and said, in his agreeable way, that he looked forward to a pleasant hour in my company, but that he ought to warn me that on the subject I proposed to discuss his views were short and simple. They were that in war the chief function of the press was to suppress itself. We have travelled far from this simplicity by the year 1940. At the opposite pole is the characteristic idea of Hitler, Goering and Goebbels that, controlled and manipulated by government, the press is the most potent engine for compelling a country to think what his masters wish it to think and for deceiving the enemy and undermining his morale. We in our free country with our free press have somehow to find the mean between these two ideas and to do it, if we can, of our own accord.

Here again there are no positive rules, but there are certain signposts which point the way. The first is that whether we like it or not we have imposed on us a sort of collective responsibility for giving the country a good show in the eyes of the outside world. The mere fact that we are called and call ourselves "the press" carries this with it. We, who look at the situation from within, know we are a multitude of separate newspapers and periodicals which have different characters and methods, and that a large part of our usefulness depends on our being able to give free play to these different characters and methods. It is nevertheless a fact with which we have to reckon that the observer from without insists on regarding us as a unity and draws large general conclusions about the morale of our country and its material conditions from what he judges to be our collective attitude.

While we claim our right to criticize, this is a fact which we are bound to bear in mind. In the transition from war to peace and in the organization of a free people for totalitarian war there will certainly be a multitude of just grievances which ought to be ventilated in the press. It is even the way of safety that they should be ventilated. Yet if too many newspapers feel it to be their duty to be very angry about something every day; if they assume that the Government must be wrong and its critics right and do not give it credit for what it is doing well, the collective result will be to create the impression that the country is in a quarrelsome and discontented and divided mood. If we then proceed to demand that the Government shall spend public money on propaganda to correct the impression which we ourselves have created, we are liable to a rather damaging retort.

In all the controversy about the much maligned Ministry of Information, one fact seems to me to emerge: The free press of a free people is its greatest propaganda, and there is no official substitute which can compete with it or do its work. If, for example, the idea has got lodged in the United States or elsewhere that our Government is half-

hearted or inefficient, no effort by the Ministry will overtake it. As between press and official propagandist, the latter is under the heavy handicap that all the world is warned against his efforts and that the warning reflects on him when he speaks the truth as well as when he is seeking to deceive, whereas the press the free press, is taken as the spontaneous self-revelation of a free people.

Even in time of peace, the handling of international affairs presents a peculiar difficulty. If a newspaper is quoted abroad, it has to reckon with two audiences, the British and the foreign, and the foreign may draw exactly the opposite conclusion from the same article to that intended by the writer. Let me take a simple illustration from my own experience when I edited the *Westminster Gazette*. In the years when the naval competition with Germany was coming to its climax, I used occasionally to publish signed articles and letters protesting against what the writer alleged to be excessive expenditure on armaments. Their object was to keep such expenditure within bounds in this country. But they served equally well the purpose of those who wished to inflate expenditure in Germany, and they were habitually quoted by German newspapers and the German Navy League to prove their thesis that Great Britain was embarked on a career of aggressive militarism which called for an increased German effort. Any examination of the European press in recent years would show this dangerous game of cross-purposes being played all over the field in international affairs. Any newspaper which criticized the conduct of its own Government was liable to find itself subpoenaed as a witness by some hostile or unfriendly Government.

To give too much weight to this consideration would be to paralyse our arm and extinguish all free comment. The utmost we can do in ordinary times is to bear it in mind as one of many factors in this peculiarly difficult form of journalism. In war a little more may reasonably be expected of us. We may be asked to consider whether certain arguments, phrases and headlines do not lend them-

selves to perversion by propagandists, and to sacrifice them, even if we lose a certain effectiveness in doing so. You may say that when the German propagandist invents an entire leading article and boldly attributes it to an illustrious London paper, all precautions of this kind are useless. But we have to think also of the neutrals and especially of the United States, where the unfriendly press and even some of the friendly have drawn heavily on British newspapers to present an unflattering picture of our activities. The handling of American affairs by the British press is just one of the affairs in which the Advisory Council which I have suggested would be helpful.

I should like, if you will let me, to say a word about the controversy which has arisen over the British Survey undertaken by the Ministry of Information. How far is this a legitimate activity of Government? In answering this question, I think we ought to distinguish carefully between the different functions of Government in war. There are its functions as controller of strategy and policy and there are its functions as manager and controller of an immense number of businesses which are left to private enterprise in peace-time.

In the second of these—the business operations—the method of the survey is not only legitimate, but desirable and useful. In such matters as rationing, the manufacture and supply of different commodities and the preferences that should be given to one kind of import over another, the Government is merely doing what every private manufacturer and distributor would do as a matter of course when he canvasses his customers to discover their tastes, wishes and complaints.

But we are on different ground when the official canvasser asks people's opinions on matters of general importance. At this stage we have no reason to doubt the good intentions of the official questioner, and when his questions seem silly, we must leave it at that. It is silly for an official interrogator to ask the butcher and the baker and the candlestick-maker when he thinks the war will end, and in

this country no more need be said. But anyone who has studied the subject will know that it is just by asking silly questions of ordinary people that the secret policeman begins his deadly work under the dictatorships. He lures them on from one subject to another and from their general demeanour judges whether they should be considered loyal to the administration or classed among suspects. The question as to the duration of the war would afford him an excellent beginning, and according as they answered it he would probably class them as defeatists or stout-hearts—men who in an emergency were to be hurried into concentration camps, or men who could be permitted to remain at large.

In all this business the analogy of the Gallup survey which is generally cited as the model for the Government Surveyor should be avoided like the plague. It is perfectly legitimate for the private investigator to extend his inquiry to discover, for example, whether the Government is liked or disliked, whether certain individuals in it are losing or gaining in popularity, and so forth. There is nothing scientific in this kind of survey, science cannot be invoked to justify wide generalizations from a few instances, nor can opinion be treated as the fixed quantity which the method assumes it to be. Private organizations may practise it, for what it is worth, but a Government which got involved in it would soon find itself engaged in an invidious inquisition into private opinion and liable to be dangerously misled if it drew large inferences from it.

Let us affirm then that the free Parliament and the free press—these two working together, Parliament through its touch with the constituencies, the press reflecting the varieties of opinion of their charges—are the appointed and trustworthy guides to opinion in a free country, and let us, as pressmen, beware of approving or conniving at methods which lead to our suppression in our proper function. It has fallen to this country to sustain single-handed the cause of liberty and democracy in Europe, and we of the press have no small part to play. *Noblesse oblige*. We have to

show that we can adjust ourselves to the necessary discipline of war and yet contribute the knowledge and the warning which honest criticism alone can provide. We have to realize that we have a collective responsibility for keeping up the reputation of the country in the eyes of foreign observers and that this requires generous appreciation of things that are well done as well as grumbling and complaining about things that we think are ill done. We must be ready to sacrifice some of our ordinary methods of dealing with news to the need of keeping nerves steady and heads cool. Ours is not in these times a sheltered or sedentary trade. Many of our members are taking all the risks of the fighting soldiers—and not seldom performing feats of signal daring—in an unceasing effort to keep the public informed. Even the seniors among us have to pursue the business of preparing and producing our papers in conditions which are much more than the ordinary tests of efficiency and capacity. The regular appearance of newspapers is one of the signs that the national organization is working smoothly; if it is to be maintained, we must be ready to take risks from which the ordinary citizen is rightly provided with the means of escape. We ask for no special considerations, but we do claim to be performing an essential service, and we rely on the public to help us in resisting any unnecessary curtailment of our liberties.

JOURNALISM IN THE FIGHTING LINE

My American mail brings me the following inscription which the editor of a daily paper (the *Austin Tribune*) in Texas has engraved on the corner-stone of his new office-building :

A free press is the protagonist and preserver of all rights, the foe and destroyer of all tyrannies. It insures every good cause a hearing and every false doctrine a challenge. It is the servant of religion, philosophy, science and art; the agent of truth, justice and civilization. Possessing it, no

people can be held in intellectual or political bondage ; without it, none can be secure against any form of enslavement.

Nothing could be more heartening to journalists than to see the flag of the press run to the masthead in these courageous and inspiring words. We may not be able to live up to it every day and all day, but it stands for what we would like to be and do so far as human infirmity permits. To British journalists, especially, it may serve as a reminder of the greatness of the cause for which they fought almost single-handed in Europe. Let me thank the Texas editor for this word.

In a broadcast the manager of *The Times* described in simple and modest language the daily problems which the producers of newspapers had to face in the conditions as they were in London and several other great cities. Only once in the last war did a bomb fall within range of the newspaper I was then editing, and we rather prided ourselves in working through the din and getting to press without too much delay. In this War it became a daily or nightly occurrence and it had to be faced with composure by the entire staff—editor, sub-editors, compositors, machine-men and the large numbers of men and boys engaged in distributing the papers when they come from the press. As a veteran who works in easier conditions I may be allowed to say what my junior colleagues might feel debarred from saying for themselves, that this was a great achievement which deserves not only the indulgence but the gratitude of the public.

We are all more or less in the fighting line, and the journalist would not claim any special consideration for himself in that respect. But this task differs from most others in that it has to be performed with absolute regularity and cannot be suspended for the short spells for rest and repair which without much harm can be permitted in other industries. Here, I think, it may be boldly claimed that the press has shown an ingenuity and adaptability which are a shining example to some Government departments.

I was living somewhere near the South-East coast, and the post office took five days to deliver letters from London. But I got my London newspapers regularly every day, often punctually and never more than two hours late. I should never have got them at all if the newspapers, like the post offices, had put up their shutters and suspended business every time the sirens sounded. Here we see the great advantage of a time-limit and how much can be accomplished by a team of active-minded men resolute to keep time.

We journalists were not wholly sheltered in the last War. Many of us had our spells at the fighting front and at one time or another contrived to see most of that terrible battle-line from Verdun to Ypres. But now the reporter and the news gatherer are in the fighting line all day and every day. The B.B.C. tells us that the "agencies" have reported this or that after a raid on London or some coastal or provincial town. The word conceals the fact that men (and women) in the service of newspapers and news agencies, and of the B.B.C. itself, have exposed themselves to heavy risks and often performed feats of great daring in their daily task of keeping the public informed. There are thousands of others who are rising splendidly to each challenge as it comes. I ask only that it may be borne in mind that many members of the staffs of newspapers are doing daily what in former wars was expected only of the most daring of war correspondents on the distant battlefields.

When the history of these times comes to be written, the story of the persecution of the press in the countries which have been overrun by the Nazi tyranny will rank with that of any religious or political persecution in former times. It, too, will have its calendar of martyrs and saints who have suffered for the faith. The dictators have paid the press the high compliment of treating it as their principal enemy wherever they gain a footing. Their first move is to demand its submission; their next, if it resists, to seize it and pervert it to their own base purposes. Many honest

men have refused to bow the knee and have been shot, imprisoned or have mysteriously disappeared. For others it has been a merciful fate to escape into penniless exile.

What remains of the press in these regions is little more than a gigantic megaphone, which the temporary masters use to confuse, distract and deceive the world outside. Famous newspapers, from which their staffs have been ejected or have honourably retired, are used under their "new management" to give plausibility to the imposture. We might suppose from the tone of these supposedly French newspapers that the whole French nation had forgotten everything that it had ever said about liberty and democracy and was now sitting in rapt admiration at the feet of its German enemy.

Just as it seems to be the German part to instruct the world in the poisonous and demoralizing possibilities of a slave and perverted press, so it is the British part to show by contrast the power and virtue of a free and honest press. Britain is its last fortress in Europe. So let us British journalists magnify our calling and say confidently that we will be equal to our task.

We submit without demur to all discipline that is necessary in war for the safety of the public and the fighting forces. But we remain the eyes and ears of the Government, and we ask it to bear in mind that it would run the risk of becoming deaf and blind if it encroached unnecessarily on our activities.

Yorkshire Observer, September 22, 1940.

THE USE OF WORDS

IN an address delivered at University College, Sir Henry Hadow, the Vice-Chancellor of Sheffield University, deplored "the prevalent lack of scholarship," and called upon the teachers of the country to grapple with it. By "lack of scholarship" he meant, as his address showed, the misuse of words and the use of incorrect and vulgar expressions. To drill us out of these in the days of our youth is, or ought to be, an important part of the teacher's duties, but it is not a very great matter, if methodically pursued. A sufficient list of common errors could be compressed into a small notebook and committed to memory in a few hours by an intelligent man. Anyone who took the trouble to do this—and it is well worth while—might be proof against the critics of grammar for the rest of his life. He would remember not to split the infinitive, not to say "meticulous" when he meant precise, not to use "like" for "as," not to put the adverb "only" in the wrong place, and so forth. These are very desirable accomplishments, but it is possible to have them all and still to be a pedant or a dumb dog when it comes to the use of words.

What are we to do about that, and where are we to begin on it? It is extremely important, whether we are talking to each other or putting pen to paper. A man's speech is the expression of himself, the handiest evidence of character that he offers to the stranger. "Language," says Ben Jonson, "most shows a man; speak that I may see thee. It springs out of the most retired and inmost parts of us, and is the image of the parent of it, the mind. No glass renders a man's form or likeness so true as his speech." As a beginning, I should like this passage to be put into the hands of the schoolmaster simultaneously with Sir Henry Hadow's instructions about correct speech. He will then know that if he is to teach his pupils the right use of words, he must see to their minds as well as their tongues.

The schoolmaster may do something, but the pupil must do more for himself. And the best thing he can do is to try to keep good company for at least a small part of his working day, not in the manner of prigs and pedants who despise common things and "common" people, but of the curious and alert who collect the good things that come in their way. The good things in words are everywhere, and if we get into the habit of looking out for them and treasuring them, and cultivating the faculty which is inherent in almost every man, woman or child, of taking pleasure in them, we shall insensibly acquire the instinct for the right and happy use of words. Our capacities, of course, vary. There are lifelong scholars who are incapable of expressing themselves in any manner which is agreeable or even intelligible to their readers ; there are humble and untrained men who speak with a vigour and simplicity which may well be the envy of the so-called cultivated.

Not many weeks ago I heard on a platform a speech by an agricultural labourer which seemed to me very nearly a perfect example of the use of words, a speech all the more impressive because the speaker was wholly unaware of his remarkable gift. But one thing was evident. This man knew the Bible, and belonged to a generation that was steeped in it at home and at school. I am afraid that in some modern schools the reading of the Bible has become a mechanical thing, imposed by an education authority and regarded as an obstacle to more practical studies. If so, we may discover one reason for the decay of speech. The teacher who knows his business has an inexhaustible opportunity in the Bible lesson, not only of conveying religious ideas, but of stirring thought, refining taste and drawing from the greatest well of pure and noble speech. The learning by heart of its greater passages has been for hundreds of thousands not merely edifying in the religious sense, but a purification of taste which has endured for a lifetime. Here is the simplest and most accessible of all the teachers of style, but what is true of the Bible is true of all the great masters of writing. There is no antiseptic like a

memory which retains only a little of the best. The model insensibly pulls us up and is an unspoken reproach when we grossly fall short of it in speaking or writing.

But many of us pass from school early, and few of us have memories which retain for long what we have learnt when young. How shall those who have scant opportunities of pursuing literary studies in a methodical way learn something of the craft of words, and perhaps in so doing discover and make serviceable the literary gifts which, as I am firmly convinced, are pretty evenly distributed among all classes. There is no one way which suits all temperaments, but I would strongly urge as a very useful way the keeping of a "commonplace book," as it is called—a book in which one may write down any passage of prose or poetry culled from whatever one is reading. Let everything be brought into it—the Bible, the Prayer Book, Shakespeare, Milton, the novel, even the newspaper. There is a virtue in the mere act of writing down. Things one thinks fine and beautiful have a sad habit of falling to pieces when one takes pen in hand and writes them out. Then there is the collector's zest in adding to the museum. Having first found the specimens where they live, so to speak, one begins looking about for them and reads for the purpose of enriching the collection. Then one looks back and compares them and discovers that some things which took one's fancy at the beginning look thin and flabby beside the best. A commonplace book, so kept, is a record of one's own taste and thoughts and a constant lure to imitation, which for most people is the beginning of writing on their own account. The first rule is to let no one dictate to you, but to write down without fear or shame what you really admire, and, if you like, let it be a secret between you and your book. Only in this way will it be a personal and self-educating effort.

I have an old commonplace book before me compiled nearly forty years ago, and a few pages taken at random may illustrate the method I suggest. I find a page beginning with the ever-beautiful appeal of Ruth :

Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee ; for whither thou goest, I will go ; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge ; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.

Where thou diest I will die, and there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me and more also, if aught but death part thee and me.

There follows a passage from Thoreau's *Walden*, which seems to me less admirable after the lapse of years than no doubt it appeared at the time, then a description of a little Dutch town from Thackeray's *Roundabout Papers*, sundry paragraphs from the *Stones of Venice*, then the great collect from the Prayer Book for the fourth Sunday after Easter :

O Almighty God, who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men : grant unto thy people that they may love the thing which thou commandest, and desire that which thou dost promise ; that so, among the sundry and manifold changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed where true joys are to be found.

After this is a passage from Stevenson's *Memories and Portraits*, Browning's *Guardian Angel*, and the stanza from *Holy Cross Day* beginning :

Thou ! if thou wast He, who at mid-watch came
By the starlight naming a dubious name !

Then the superb long sentence from Newman's *Apologia* : " To consider the world in its length and breadth, its various history, the many races of man, their starts, their fortunes, their mutual alienation," and so on to certain verses of the Gospels and certain of the petitions in the Litany intended apparently to illustrate the beauty of very simple words :

I was a stranger and ye took me not in ; naked and ye clothed me not ; sick and in prison, and ye visited me not.

The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the son of man hath not where to lay his head.

And they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd.

Watch ye, therefore, for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing or in the morning.

That it may please thee to preserve all that travel by land or by water, all women labouring of child, all sick persons and young children, and to shew thy pity upon all prisoners and captives.

I suggest that if simple people wish to understand a little of the use of words by the masters, they can do nothing better than commit to their book, and if possible to their memories, a certain number of these examples. Let them choose for themselves and not copy from anthologies or quotation-books; and let them choose especially the examples which show what magical patterns and haunting rhythms may be made out of the simplest words, words of common speech and daily use so worn and battered, it may be that we see suddenly and for the first time the depth of their meaning in some fragment of great writing :

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away.

A dozen of the most familiar words in the language bring us in this passage to the very summit of literature, and that miracle is performed for us not once but a thousand times in the great English version of the Bible and in the works of the great poets and prose-writers. This study will not make for pedantry, but rather, I hope, for simplicity and honesty. Great thoughts come from the heart and great words from great thoughts. It is given to very few of us to think great thoughts, but simple and sincere thoughts are within the compass of most of us, and they are the secret of all straightforward and effective speech. The wordy man or the finicking man who is thinking first about words reverses the process, and produces the impression that he is either a humbug or a dandy. That is why so much rhetoric is repulsive, and so much of what is

called culture barren and artificial. But simplicity in language is by no means the same thing as poverty. Shakespeare uses 15,000 words, Milton 8,000, but most of us manage to get along and even to write articles with a few hundred. We can without pedantry endeavour to enlarge our vocabularies, avoid using some words to death, bring new and serviceable words into use, provided always that we make them our own and do not merely bedizen our talk or our writing with borrowed plumes.

The language of expletives—most proper and serviceable on occasions—is extraordinarily impoverished. The objection to most swear-words is that they don't really swear. When there are only about three to express all the emotions from trifling annoyance to violent anger and righteous indignation, it really is not worth using them. Sydney Smith's denunciation of the Dublin fishwoman as an "isosceles parallelogram" is much livelier and more satisfying. These are merely hints of a fascinating study open to all of us, whatever our occupations, requiring no learning and very few books, a study which reveals ourselves to ourselves, gives new zest to any kind of reading, and may quite possibly lead to the self-discovery of literary gifts which will be of value to the world and open a new career to those who possess them.

IN REMEMBRANCE

*(Address delivered in Chelsfield Parish Church, November 11,
1934)*

THE late Lord Grey has related in his Memoirs how he and a friend were standing together at the window of the Foreign Office on the evening of August 4, 1914, and looking out into the sunset he said to his friend, "I see the lights going out all over Europe and they will not be lit again in our lifetime." I was the friend who was with him that evening, and the memory of that moment as we looked together into the sunset and saw the darkness coming on will remain with me, ineffaceable so long as I live.

After twenty years we look back through that terrible darkness and, seeing the present state of the world, wonder if it was not all a tale told by an idiot full of sound and fury, signifying nothing. If I have anything to say to you this morning, it is to ask you to resist this conclusion. Nothing that can be said about the horrors of war can exceed the truth. I have seen it with my own eyes, all along the battle line from Verdun to Ypres, in the trenches, in the batteries, with the surgeon in his dug-out, with the ambulances, in the hospitals, in the smoking villages of France, in a London street where a bomb has fallen. We who know cannot tell the story too often or labour too much to keep it alive in the minds of those who come after. But mingling with it are other memories equally vivid—memories of courage, endurance, self-sacrifice, heroism, surpassing anything that one would have thought possible to human nature. Before the war, as now, people used to talk about the decay of the rising generation. They were said to be feeble in body and frivolous in mind, given over to all sorts of sports and amusements which sapped their manhood and made them unworthy to belong to a great imperial race. And then we saw them going in their millions to this terrible ordeal, and

there displaying all the military virtues and adding to them such cheerfulness, good-humour and mutual helpfulness as won the hearts of all that led them. The clerk, the labourer, the shop-assistant, the van-boy, all proved true as steel in this furnace of affliction. We had 6,000 of them in our war-hospital, on the Kent coast not very far from here, and those who ministered to them can never forget how gallantly they bore their sufferings and learnt to look death in the eye.

So while we paint the horrors of war in sombre colours, we who know and remember must testify to this also and be resolute that we will not have a sacred memory smirched by violent and indiscriminate judgments which make all guilty of some meaningless crime. Go back upon that scene on the evening of August 4, 1914. Is it possible, even now with all our knowledge of the terrible sequel, to say that the appeal of the King of the Belgians to us to fulfil our treaty, when his country was invaded, was not the call of duty and honour or that we could have shirked it and kept our self-respect as a nation or as citizens? Looking at the state of the world to-day, will anyone venture to say that nothing was gained, when we saved our country and our friends from being dominated by the spirit and the forces that rule in Germany to-day?

So let none of you who cherish the memory of husbands, sons, brothers, friends who fell in the Great War torture yourselves by the thought that their sacrifice was vain. If we are a free and independent people, if our Commonwealth of free nations remains intact, if, compared with our neighbours, we enjoy a modest prosperity and have had the means to repair the vast wreckage of the war, it is to them, and to those who fought with them, that we owe it. It is good that we should come every year on this Eleventh of November, to renew our memory, express our gratitude, and thank God for what they did for us.

But there is another duty that we owe to them. "Never again" was the cry which went up from all of us on November 11, 1918. We had fought the war to end war. Now,

after sixteen years, we see all the Governments making ready for war, as in the old days, and the fear of war hanging heavily over the world. What can we, as one nation, or we, as individuals, do to prevent it?

It is not much use to say simply that we won't fight. If it takes two to make a quarrel, it takes at least as many to keep the peace. Even if we won't go to war, war may easily come to us. I can't imagine even the most ardent of pacifists saying he wouldn't fight, if Herr Hitler were coming with his storm troops to do to us and our Churches what he is doing to Germany and the German Churches. Dreadful as war may be, we should all say that it was better to suffer anything than this conquest of the spirit. To make peace secure we must have a state of the world in which we shall not have to make this dreadful choice, a state of the world in which justice will be done and honour, freedom, and self-respect saved without the slaughtering and maiming of human beings by the million.

This and nothing less is the aim, and, if we are honest with ourselves, we who won the Great War must confess that we have often fallen away from it in the sixteen years that have followed. Great victories nearly always make a bad peace. To be avenged on the enemy, to make him pay to the last farthing, is the unwise and the un-Christian impulse of the moment. In so far as the victor yields to it, he sows the seeds of another war. We yielded to it, our allies yielded to it, and much that is happening in these years is the result.

But it is not beyond repair and each one of us can do something to help. Let us not lose patience or say in our haste there is no God. We cannot suppose that men and nations will in a few years unlearn the habit of fighting and killing which they have practised during all recorded time.

But there is, I am confident, a new light in the world, however dim it may seem at some moments.

Sixty nations, big and small, are under a solemn pledge not to go to war until they have at least made a serious

attempt to settle their quarrels through the League of Nations ; all these have registered a vow that they will not use war " as an instrument of policy," which means, or ought to mean, that they will not go to war unless attacked ; five of the greatest are under a special bond never to attack one another and to come to the rescue of any of their number, if it is attacked. You may say that these are words and phrases which mean nothing. Do not believe it. Between them, these Pacts and Covenants set up a standard of peace such as the world has never had before, and it is your duty and my duty to see that our Governments and statesmen live up to it, and to give no countenance to idle talk which speaks frivolously or contemptuously of the great ideal which it sets before us.

These solemn pledges are at work, and I believe more powerfully at work than we sometimes realize.

All through my younger days everyone spoke of war as one of the inevitable things which had to be faced sooner or later, one of the legitimate weapons which statesmen kept in their armoury to increase the power and prestige of their countries. Again and again I have listened to speeches in which British Ministers hinted or threatened that if they failed to get their way in some disputes in China, Africa, Siam, the Indian frontier, war would be inevitable. None of them speak in this way now. There is instead a great awareness of the terrible nature of war, as science has made it, a universal warning note that it is no longer the short sharp adventure with a glorious ending which the statesmen of former times supposed it to be, but an unloosing of hell in which victory will be swallowed up in death, falling indiscriminately upon women and children as well as fighters in the field. We have passed from the stage in which most people thought war to be inevitable, and a good many welcomed it, to the stage in which all the world fears it.

This, so far as it goes, is a gain, but fear itself is a dangerous thing which often produces the result of which it is afraid, and we cannot stop at this point. Peace from fear,

peace merely from self-interest, is much less than may be expected from nations calling themselves Christian. We need the peace of the spirit, peace of mind, peace in our thoughts. That we shall never get by folding our hands and saying that we have no interest in the world and humanity outside our own country or empire. Whatever we do, the world will continue to take an interest in us, and if fighting goes on, we too shall have to fight to keep what we have. There is no solitary road to peace, but we in this country can give a lead on the right road, and we shall do so just in proportion as you and I support our Government in trying to make the League of Nations the great thing it ought to be and spreading the spirit of co-operation until by degrees it covers the whole field of national storm and contention. To do this, we must think for ourselves, and not be led away by quarrelsome newspapers and parties or join the clamour which will certainly arise when we are asked to make the sacrifices which all must make if the world is to enjoy peace and security again.

What is this but to say that we have each of us to do our part in trying to bring back to the world the religious spirit, the spirit of Jesus Christ? Some years ago when I had travelled across Asia Minor in the track of the terrible slaughter and destruction which Turks and Greeks and other races had inflicted on one another, I found myself on a Sunday morning speaking to a company of young people belonging to all these races, who were being educated together at the famous Robert College in Constantinople. There they were, Greeks, Turks, Armenians, Jews, Serbs, Rumanians, all living in perfect peace and friendliness with one another. I could find nothing to say to them except that if, when they went back to their homes, they would be as kind to each other as they were in that school, they would do more than all the Governments to bring peace to their distracted countries. So it is with English, Germans, French, Austrians, Russians. We have to think of each other, not as fighters and enemies but as fellow human

beings, all needing each other's help and comfort in the voyage of life.

"Greater love hath no man than this that he lay down his life for his friends." In the end we return to that. It is the thought which abides when all our controversies are stilled. The greatest of all the qualities in man is the inner witness which tells him that there are things more precious than life, things above him and beyond him, things eternal for which at any time he may be called upon to give his life and for which he judges life well lost. All through history we see a great company cheerfully giving their lives for duty, conscience, loyalty, even for some lost cause which has touched their hearts. And in the humbler story of the home, the workshop, the mine, the factory, we can scarcely pick up the day's newspaper without reading how someone has given his life to save his friends. These are the great witnesses to immortality, to the life beyond life which is greater than the earthly life. Let us cherish their memory and vow that, so far as we can, we will work for a world in which all lives will be dedicated to the service of God.

In that war there is no discharge.

GANDHI AND THE WAR

I HAVE long been a subscriber to Gandhi's periodical *Harijan*, the latest number of which has just reached me with an intimation that it is to be the last for the present. Gandhi explains that, having been advised that it ought to be submitted to the Censor, he has decided to suspend rather than make this submission or expose himself and others to prosecution by not making it.

His writings in this periodical have thrown so much light on the situation in India that I will ask your leave to add a general impression of them to what other correspondents have written to you about our Indian policy. In the summer of 1940 he seemed to be entertaining the idea of obtaining political advantages for India by her participation in the War, and this was then supposed to be the policy of Congress. India, so far as Congress could decide the matter, was to participate on condition that she received concessions variously defined as "complete independence" or "Dominion Status" either immediately or in the near future. On this basis the Viceroy and the Government of India proceeded to explore the ground and issued a proclamation which they hoped would, even if it were not immediately acceptable, prepare the way for further negotiations. But while the debate on this matter was going forward Gandhi was taking up new ground, and he now made it known that any participation whatever by India in the War was contrary to his principle of "non-violence" and must be barred in the forum of conscience.

The development of this idea and the mystification that it caused to his supporters may be traced week by week in the files of *Harijan*. He has invited all objectors to state their views and has answered them with unfailing patience and good temper. The charge of inconsistency leaves him

quite unconcerned. He frankly confesses that he took the wrong road about this, or was mistaken about that, but is passionately convinced that he is right now. Week by week he has enlarged his idea until he sees India doing a service not only to herself but to all the world by furnishing an example of the virtue and the value of non-violence. He protests that he dislikes Nazism and Fascism quite as much as we do and that he desires to cause us the minimum of embarrassment, but that in seeking to raise the conscientious objection from the idiosyncrasy of a few thousand individuals to the creed of a whole nation, he is doing a service to all humanity, and to us too, eventually. He sincerely believes that the dictators would quail before this manifestation, but if they did not and the way were open to them to invade India, he thinks that they would be helpless before this moral miracle.

I have found it profoundly interesting to trace his development of this doctrine week by week and have felt a very real respect for the unflinching courage with which he follows where his argument leads him. But at the end of it all he leaves us in a position in which there is no possible reconciliation with him short of adopting his views, that is, by going out of the war and promising to eschew violence in our future dealings with our enemy. Anything less would, from Gandhi's point of view, be participation in sin.

Where Gandhi leads, Congress follows. It is evident from the columns devoted to the debates between him and the members of his party that many of them are greatly perplexed both by his doctrine and by his explanations of it. To suppose that any large number of them are in any real sense conscientious objectors would, I am sure, be a mistake. But the relations of Gandhi to Congress much more resemble those of a dictator to his "party" than those of an ordinary political leader to his supporters. He, like Hitler and Mussolini, is "always right," and when he speaks he must be obeyed. We must take it for the present that non-violence is the policy of Congress. But if so, the

critics of our Indian policy may fairly be asked not to persist in the idea that the aspirations of India are being blocked by a Government of Colonel Blimps and imperialist diehards. This is the substance of German propaganda, especially in America, where Gandhism appeals to a generous and widely spread but uninformed opinion. It was never less true.

In fact Gandhi has presented us with a very difficult administrative problem. For he not only holds these opinions, as he is entitled to do, but has instructed an important group of his followers to go out and preach them—*i.e.* to denounce war and discourage recruiting with the consequence which he anticipates and invites that they will be arrested and sentenced to imprisonment. No Government at war can be expected to tolerate this, but the judge or magistrate who has to deal with these cases immediately finds himself in a dilemma. If he gives long sentences he will be denounced for harshness; if he gives short ones, the offenders will repeat their offences as soon as they are out of prison and have to be imprisoned again, which may seem even harsher. I suggest that the Government of India must be left to use its own discretion in deciding what it is wise to do.

There is no need for alarm. India—British India, as well as the India of the Princes—is making a handsome contribution to the War, both in men and materials, and she will yet get us more of both. Nor need we be at all discouraged in seeking a solution of new political problems by any of the political manoeuvres or catch-cries of the moment. “Complete independence” sounds formidable, but again and again I have had it explained to me by Indian politicians that if they can be free agents for only a week, their self-respect will be restored, and they will immediately make a treaty with us giving us all that we desire. The Egyptian model is in their minds. So far as political Indians are concerned, the root of the trouble is that they feel their self-respect to have been wounded when they were taken into the War without being asked.

That is the root of the matter. The War will, I believe, show them, as it will show others in the same position, the necessity of a partnership with a strong Power, but we must then more than ever persist in the endeavour to make it a real partnership in which they will have the sense of working on a basis of equality with us in controlling their own fate.

Letter to *The Times*, January 10, 1941.

THE COMMON CAUSE

A DISTINGUISHED English critic, writing on Chaucer, called him "a French poet writing in English, the poet of culture shared between England and France." At first blush it seemed strange that a poet whom Englishmen regard as the father of English poetry should be described as a "French poet," yet it is not far from the truth. Chaucer takes us back to a day—not so very remote as history reckons time—when England was governed by French kings and French was the language of the court and the law courts, and when all educated people not only spoke French, but behaved in a French way. These were the English origins and no Englishman disclaims them.

In the subsequent centuries, when the English lost touch with the French, many European observers thought that they had relapsed into barbarism. The Italian, Benvenuto Cellini, speaks of them as "English savages" who nourish "the force and ferocity of their instincts with great shins of beef." Others comment on their lack of manners and the pleasure they take in brutal sports—bull-baiting, bear-baiting and cock-fighting—and the savage penalties they thought necessary to keep the populace in order. English literature was admitted to have genius, but French critics saw it becoming violent and disorderly, swinging loose from the classical tradition which they cherished. Such, in the eyes of Europe, were the English without their French polish.

Subsequently it began to be discovered that the two nations had much in common and that each might supply the defects of the other with its special qualities. Throughout the eighteenth century admiration of English institutions in France went hand in hand with admiration of French culture and French manners in England. No English gentleman of the governing class was supposed to be educated unless he knew French, read French authors and

had travelled in France. In return, Voltaire, Montesquieu and the French Encyclopædists were close students and generally warm admirers of English Parliamentary institutions. To many of these, England was the home of the free, the country which had learnt to curb the power of kings, the country, says Voltaire, in his *Lettres sur les Anglais*, "where the nobility is great without insolence and without lording it over vassals, and where the people partake in the government without confusion." In these circles the English philosopher Locke was in high favour as the man who had stated rightly the doctrines of liberty and constitutional government.

English writers in subsequent years have considered some of these tributes overdone, but it may justly be said that the modern idea of freedom under democratic government is the joint product of English and French. Neither country can claim a bloodless victory in their advance to free institutions; the English had their great Rebellion; the French their Revolution; and each had a king to the scaffold. The English were the first in the field in ridding themselves of absolutism and after their "bloodless revolution" at the end of the seventeenth century have never been tempted to return to it. But their government in these times, though Parliamentary, was far from democratic. Throughout the eighteenth century and the first part of the nineteenth, the English Parliament was controlled by powerful land-owning families which nominated the members for the localities within their spheres of influence. But the passion for liberty never failed and was powerfully at work among the unenfranchised from the middle of the eighteenth century onwards. Liberty of speech, liberty of the press, liberty to meet and agitate were incessantly demanded by the masses and, when won, stubbornly maintained against reaction and repression. In these years the English learnt the lesson taught them by Burke that "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty."

The English may thus claim to have been first in the field in two respects: in the fight for liberty, and in the

development of the Parliamentary system known as "responsible government," *i.e.* of government depending on a majority in Parliament. This went on progressively during the nineteenth century and in many respects, and especially the ordering of finance, reflected the strict business instinct of the men of business who were now coming into Parliament. But the French, meanwhile, had in their Revolution contributed two of the other great ingredients, equality and fraternity, which enter into the modern idea of democracy. These spread all over the world and profoundly influenced the American constitution. In France, as formerly in England, the new ideas had to fight against dangerous reactions, and the stubbornness with which French democrats held their own makes one of the bravest chapters in nineteenth-century history. These ideas are far from exhausted, and nowhere is it better recognized than in Great Britain that more of the equality and fraternity upheld by the French pioneers is an essential part of the next advance towards the democratic idea of social welfare.

It is, therefore, no idle phrase to say that in fighting for democracy, French and British fought in a common cause. As realized in their institutions, democracy is a joint British and French cause, and its progress depends on the degree in which they can assimilate each other's ideas, the French learning something of Parliamentary wisdom from the British, the British taking more of equality and fraternity from the French. Nor is it only in political institutions that the two nations fulfil one another. British tenacity needs French *élan*; the French military genius gets its fullest opportunity when linked with British sea-power. United they stand, divided they fall. To divide them, to make the conquest of one the prelude of the downfall of the other was the avowed object of their enemy. When we look to the future beyond the present strife, their unity will remain the condition of their security.

But it will, we may hope, be a unity extending far beyond the necessities of military defence. For there are no two nations which can more help one another in the art of

living, or contribute more to restore the happy and peaceful life of which the world is still dreaming. War, as the Greek historian said, is a hard schoolmaster, but it is leading French and British to explore one another and to discover that beneath superficial differences and contrasts they have affinities deep-rooted in history and character which set their course to the same goal.

Saturday Night, Toronto, Canada, June 15, 1940.

SEVEN DAYS HARD

(Broadcast Talk, January 20, 1934)

MANY years ago when I was an undergraduate at Oxford I went to visit my tutor one day when he was suffering from a sick headache. As I hesitated at the door he said, "Come in, come in, but for heaven's sake don't talk about anything later than the French Revolution—I couldn't stand it to-day."

Now I am asked to talk about things not a hundred and fifty or even fifty years ago, but actually in the present week, and I am wondering whether you will stand it. The brilliant writers and essayists who have preceded me have decided not, for they have discoursed very eloquently and beautifully about Time and Eternity and the ways of Providence. Mr. Chesterton is, of course, quite right in saying that these are far more important than anything that happened this week or last, but I am a mere journalist who is asked to keep within the bounds of Time and Space—the very limited time and space of the seven days and the fifteen minutes to-night.

I don't share Mr. Chesterton's views about the corrupt nature of politicians, for I have known a great many in a pretty long life, and should be hard put to it to name half a dozen whom in any serious sense I thought to deserve that opprobrious epithet. But we are all conscious of each other's infirmities, and there is nothing which is interesting all the nations so much at the present time as the scandals of their neighbours. American newspapers have had reports running into pages of our fire-raising scandals, and to read them gives Americans a warm feeling that London is no better than Chicago. Now it is the turn of France, and during the greater part of this week Stavisky and his frauds and his suicide have held the whole French public breathless, and driven Disarmament, League of

Nations, and the quarrel with Germany right out of the picture. You know the story—how this convicted rogue and card-sharper raised an enormous bond issue on the security of a Municipal pawnshop in the little town of Bayonne, and how he somehow got away with it under the nose of the police and contrived to persuade very important people that he was a public as well as a private benefactor. There is now a great explosion of wrath which even threatens the Government and will lead in all probability to the washing of a great deal of dirty linen in public.

At least we should call it so; but the French, and I think it is to their credit, have never had the slightest feeling about the washing being in public. They say, when these things happen, it is mere hypocrisy to pretend they haven't happened. Let's probe them to the bottom, and if the foreigner, who is just as bad as we are, pretends to be shocked, who cares? In the famous Dreyfus case at the end of the last century, when they had once made up their minds that they had done an injustice, they went right on to the bitter end—an end so bitter that hardly any other country would have faced it. Step by step, and all in public, they reversed every process in the condemnation of the falsely accused man, down to the restoration of the last button torn off his tunic when he was degraded. Don't let us run away with the idea, then, that France is in any special degree given over to scandal and corruption. It is a country in which this special sort of crime seems to have special facilities, but it is also a country with a very real passion for justice, and where the maxim, "let justice be done, though the heavens fall," has a serious meaning.

I wonder if any of you have thought what may be in the minds of these great swindlers whom we have known in recent years, the Kreugers and Staviskys, and what must be their feelings as they see their doom approaching. Perhaps some day one of our leading novelists will take up the theme and try to tell us. Handled by a master it would probably drive all the other crime stories out of the field. I imagine the thing starting from comparatively small

beginnings, and the swindler gradually discovering his capacity for great crime, above all his capacity for playing on the cupidity and credulity of his fellow-beings. And then, step by step, I see him being led on to more and more daring strokes until one day, and before he knows it, he has passed the point at which escape is possible when his bubble bursts—the point of safety in all great swindles. But what when he begins to realize what lies ahead—his fame becoming a dreadful notoriety, the whole world screaming after him, wherever he goes, and nothing left but the dock or the short way out with the revolver?

Kreuger, for instance, the notorious Swede, whom men of the highest authority certified as one of the most daring and original minds in Europe, who was acclaimed for years together as one of the economic saviours of the world, but who all this time was a swindler on a colossal scale. I imagine some pride in his immense success in playing on the frailties of his fellow-beings, some perverted pleasure in the great operation for its own sake, entered into his feelings in the last days, and perhaps at the end he may have said, like Nero, "what an artist is lost to the world."

The other day I heard an interesting story about three notorious forgers who were convicted and sentenced at the Old Bailey some ten years ago. Two out of the three—two brothers—had started a bill-brokers' business under cover of which they were to launch the forged bills prepared by the third, who was a supreme artist in his delicate profession. To make the fraud possible, it was necessary that the bill-broking business should gain a reputation for scrupulous honesty, and the two brothers worked so conscientiously at that part of the scheme that it prospered beyond all expectations. This took them by surprise, but when they found it was actually a fact that honesty might be profitable they began saying to one another, mightn't it be better to stick to the bill-broking and earn what other people would call an honest living and drop the forged bills? Three days before the day appointed for floating these bills, they spent a long Sunday by the river, discussed

it from A to Z, weighing the merits of the honest life against the grand gamble of the other life, and decided to destroy the forged bills and become honest brokers. The next day they went to tell their partner what they had decided, but he, to their consternation, wouldn't hear of it. What! all his skill and craft to go for nothing! All those incomparable specimens of the graver's art to be thrown into the oven! What self-respecting artist would dream of it? How could he hold up his head in the profession if he consented to anything so mean? Having them in his power, the artist insisted on their going on, and the police nabbed all three, and both bill-brokers and artist spent the next five years in Dartmoor.

I fancy that all great criminals have some pride in their artistry and that this, not infrequently, is fatal to the business-like prudence which would cause them to stop before ruin becomes inevitable.

I pass now to what is the most interesting and may even in the end prove to be the most important event going forward in the world to-day—that is the struggle between the Nazi Government and the German Protestants. This also has developed during my seven days.

All the dictators in the world think it necessary to bring religion under control. They feel it to be an elemental force working in mysterious ways which may defeat them unless they have their hands on it. The Bolsheviks have gone the whole length of declaring religion to be the enemy, and have done their utmost to extinguish it—with results that have yet to be seen. The Fascists have made a compromise with the Pope, the object of which is to keep the Church strictly within its own boundaries and to prevent its influencing or questioning the acts of the secular Government—in fact to neutralize religion. The Nazis are going further and endeavouring to capture religion—to make German Protestantism a branch of what they call their "Totalitarian State"—a State embracing all activities—and to refashion Protestant Christianity into a German Christianity, adopting and propagating their well-known doc-

trines of State supremacy and race-exclusiveness, and excluding from its ministry all Jews and all who are not certified as of Aryan or pure Nordic descent. It is proposed to bring the Christian doctrine and the Scriptures into line with these ideas by removing the Old Testament from the use of the Protestant Churches, and declaring such portions of the New as conflict with these ideas to be no part of the German Christianity.

Many thousands of German pastors have replied that they will accept any pains and penalties, deprivation, concentration camps, imprisonment, rather than submit to these proposals. They say that the Christian doctrine is intended for all mankind, that the exclusion and persecution of the Jews and the preaching of racial hatred and violent nationalism is contrary to the spirit of their Master, and that the whole idea of a special German Christianity at the disposal of the German State is un-Christian. They have made their protest openly and publicly in the teeth of authority, and last Sunday the Protestant pastors of Prussia read from their pulpits, with the police watching, the powerful declaration of protest drawn up in common, which you have read in the papers. These devoted men are risking all for Conscience's sake, and even if we cannot help them we must watch with sympathy. They have hitherto proved too strong for the summary measures which the German Government have practised upon other dissentients. But their fate trembles in the balance, and upon their victory or defeat hang things far more important than a mere ecclesiastical dispute in one country. For these men are standing for the fundamental religious ideas on which the peace and happiness of the world depend, and their protest seems to me more important at this moment than anything which is happening in Geneva, Paris or London.

My time is nearly up and I have left myself only two minutes to speak of what is ordinarily called news—the things that stream and splash and roar and squeak on the front pages of the newspapers. Both nature and man have done their best and their worst in the seven days. We

have had great storms and terrible earthquakes ; we have heard the Prime Minister ; we have listened again to Sir Stafford Cripps, and we have seen President Roosevelt doing extraordinary things with dollars and gold. Several hundred dollars are due to me at the end of this month, and since my case is, so to speak, *sub judice*, I must refrain even from good words, though my heart burns within me. For a right judgment on this subject I must refer you to the experts. You will find that some of them are of opinion that what President Roosevelt has done is very good, others that it is very bad, and others that it amounts to nothing at all. All were agreed that the dollar ought to have fallen, and, just to spite them, the dollar rose. I can only say choose your expert carefully, or, wiser still, wait and see. I had a letter this morning from a gentleman in a mental hospital, who knows all about gold and currency, which I would have read to you if my time were not exhausted. But there is just a minute left to say one thing. I do hope that when the Governments have really tried and tested these new ways of paying old debts and making money out of nothing, they will issue some simple instructions which will enable us all to do the same in our business and our domestic budgets.

BRITISH FOREIGN POLICY IN THE REIGN OF GEORGE V

(Address given at Chatham House on May 14, 1935)

A GENERATION ago most Europeans spoke of British policy as King Edward's policy. In vain did Englishmen explain that the policy of their country was the policy of its Government which "advised" the King; to the foreigner the British Constitution was always a web of sophistry, certainly misleading, probably intended to mislead. It was so obvious and so much more dramatic to treat the Anglo-German contention as part of the quarrel between King and Kaiser, about which an unceasing stream of rumour and gossip ran round the whispering gallery of Europe. This was King Edward's misfortune rather than his fault, for whenever his conduct is examined, it is found to be strictly within constitutional limits; and it was certainly not a service to him or to British diplomacy that Anglo-German differences, which were serious enough in any case, should be interpreted in terms of a personal or dynastic quarrel between uncle and nephew.

No one spoke of Queen Victoria's policy; no one in these days speaks of King George's policy. And yet it would be a profound mistake to conclude that King George has played no part, or only a small part, in the tremendous events of his reign. It has been my lot in recent years to write the biographies of certain British statesmen, and to engage in other researches which have of necessity lifted the curtain on the action of the Crown, and on this occasion I ask leave to add my testimony, merely as a student of affairs, to a thousand others, that his contribution has been of the highest value. Plunge into the record on any critical occasion, domestic or foreign, and the King will be found wise, cool and self-effacing, with a remarkable faculty for rejecting bad advice, and a keen eye for the points of unity

and conciliation. Now and again in the German and Austrian documents we come across the confidential reports by Ambassadors of their talks with him, in which if anywhere he might be caught off his guard. The King has nothing to fear from these disclosures. They show him to be shrewd and observant, and more aware than some of his Ministers of the general drift of events. If the present practice of making full disclosures is continued in future years, the younger members of this audience will have full material for forming their own judgment, but I predict with great confidence that they will learn nothing to King George's discredit and a great deal that is at present unknown to his credit. Certain things they will not find. They will not find him pouring out rash, dangerous and wounding observations in the margins of dispatches. They will not find that he made boastful and blustering speeches on the parade ground at Windsor or the Horse Guards. They will find him frank in speech with those whom he trusts, but on all public occasions measuring his words, weighing his responsibilities, and thinking of the permanent interests of his country.

Ministers come and go; the King remains—the King with a continuous experience unequalled by that of any other sovereign or head of a State, and the great qualities of character that have enabled him in these momentous times to practise without challenge or criticism the very difficult art of Constitutional Sovereignty.

If we measured time by quality as well as by quantity there are very few centuries in history which would weigh in the balance against the twenty-five years of King George's reign. The first eight years witnessed the crash of four historic empires and changes in the political and economic structure which we are as yet only beginning to understand and may take generations to assimilate. The young ask in a bewildered way into what sort of world they have been born, and we, their seniors, can only say that it is almost as new to us as it is to them. There are abundant theorists who see deep underlying causes at work—Marxian Cal-

vinism working its predestined doom on capitalism, the Spenglerian cycle turning upon an exhausted phase of civilization, and so forth. Just as an airman sees ancient earthworks or the outlines of Roman villas which are invisible from the ground, so at some future time may historians trace long-lasting causes and tendencies that are hidden from the contemporary observer. There are temptations here to speculations which easily become grandiose and pretentious in incompetent hands. For my present purpose I will try as far as possible to anchor myself to facts as they seemed to a contemporary, but in passing let me just say this. It is, of course, true that the pursuit of wealth has entered into the politics of these times as into the politics of all times, and no student of them would dream of denying that competition for the remaining places in the sun grew keener as they became fewer, but to ascribe to economic causes and to something called "capitalism" all the occasions for strife which arise from pride, passion, sense of wrong or failure of statesmanship is surely to strain language to the point at which words cease to have definite meaning.

British policy in King George's reign inevitably divides itself into two parts—pre-War and post-War. I see the first part broadly as the period of doubt whether Great Britain was, like her neighbours, a Continental Power, ending in August, 1914, in the decision that she was. Certain landmarks on this road were laid down before King George came to the throne, and in order to understand the sequel, it is necessary to dwell on them, for one moment. By the year 1894 the Bismarckian policy of isolating France in the name of German security had definitely broken down, and Europe was divided into the two camps of Dual and Triple Alliance. For ten years longer Great Britain nursed her independence, and her great Foreign Minister, Lord Salisbury, for whom respect grows the more the period is studied, placed a check upon those of his colleagues, and especially Mr. Chamberlain, who favoured an alliance with Germany. The memorandum, printed in the British docu-

ments, in which Lord Salisbury examined the final effort to frame an Anglo-German treaty of alliance in the year 1901 sounds to modern ears like the swan-song of splendid isolation.

It will be noted, however, that the major premiss of this memorandum is that the British fleet will be equal to any possible or probable combination against it; only on that assumption does the argument hold. But the German Navy Law of 1900 had already thrown a shadow on certainty in that respect, and before he ceased to be Prime Minister Lord Salisbury had consented to the Anglo-Japanese Treaty, which sprang from a serious doubt whether without an ally the British fleet would be able to cope with the possible combinations against it in the Far East.

In the next two years we may see this doubt extending to our situation in Europe, and Lord Lansdowne and Mr. Balfour gradually coming to the conclusion that we could not afford to remain in the unfriendly, not to say hostile, relations to both European groups that we had been in since the South African War. Simultaneously the French saw themselves being reduced once more to a position of isolation by the commitment of their ally Russia to her Far Eastern adventure. The natural, one may even say the fated, result was the British Convention or Entente of 1904.

The consequences of this were very imperfectly understood at the time. The European judgment was that Great Britain had given her casting vote—the great unawarded prize of Europe—to the Dual as against the Triple Alliance; the British judgment was that nothing had taken place except the friendly settlement with a now friendly neighbour of sundry vexatious colonial and oversea questions. Lord Lansdowne and Mr. Balfour laid special stress on the fact that nothing more had been promised than diplomatic support. There was a rude awakening in the following year when Germany, taking advantage of the defeat of Russia, struck back at France and, choosing the Morocco issue, on which this support had been pledged, compelled

her to sacrifice her Foreign Minister and very plainly threatened her with war.

Coming into office in December, 1905, Sir Edward Grey found himself at once faced by the French Ambassador with the question whether diplomatic support would in the last resort be backed by military assistance. Grey parried the question, as he was obliged to do, but after consulting the Prime Minister, and the one or two senior Ministers who were then in London, he consented to "military conversations" between the two General Staffs—which was the minimum of precaution, if war had even to be contemplated as possible. That was enough. The word went out that Britain was at the back of France; the Germans withdrew, and the Algeciras Conference ended in what the world judged to be a signal success for British diplomacy.

Thus began the welding of the Entente, and in the next two years successive crises, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Casablanca, coupled with the German naval programmes, carried the process still further and awakened the slumbering instinct which told the British people that the dominance of any one Power in Europe, and above all a Power which threatened their naval supremacy, was a menace to their Empire and even to their existence. The addition in 1907 of the Russian to the French Entente confirmed the Germans in their suspicions, but the Russian agreement, like the French before it, was accepted by Englishmen generally as a welcome relief from trouble and friction in distant regions and only criticized by a few radicals who said that the Tsar was an evil tyrant with whom a free country ought not to have intimate relations. British Ministers continued to say that they were free from European commitments, but behind all their assurances lay the question whether we could purchase security by European partnerships and yet be absolved from the obligation of giving our partners assistance in arms if, as seemed increasingly probable, they were exposed to reprisals for having made friends with us.

The year 1910, when King George came to the throne,

was a year of comparative *détente* in the European strain. The naval quarrel with Germany which had been fought out on the floor of the House of Commons in the previous year—the year of the eight dreadnoughts—had died down ; the Bosnia-Herzegovina crisis ended in March, 1910, in the collapse of Russia, which was incidentally a serious reverse for British diplomacy ; the Tsar visited Potsdam and appeared to have buried the hatchet with the Kaiser ; the French made an agreement of their own with the Germans about Morocco which, it was hoped, would make an end of that dangerous question. But early in 1911 all the old troubles flared up. The French marched to Fez ; the Germans protested that that was outside their recent agreement with France and a violation of the Treaty of Algeciras, and demanded a large slice of the French Congo as compensation. In the middle of the negotiations which followed, the Germans sent the gunboat *Panther* to Agadir.

Great Britain and France and indeed all Europe interpreted this stroke as another thrust at the Entente, and it was thought specially to be aimed at Great Britain, since the *Panther* appeared to be pegging out a claim to a port on the Atlantic coast of Morocco, where the British Admiralty least wished Germany to be. The Cabinet was united in taking a serious view of the affair, and Mr. Lloyd George, then thought to be the leader of the pacifists in the Government, surprised his colleagues with the full-throated zeal with which he spoke on their behalf and that of the British lion in his Mansion House speech on July 21, 1911. Whatever the intention of the Germans may have been, Agadir was now beyond doubt the test of the Entente which Ministers had taken it to be, and the weeks that followed were a nightmare of uncertainty and anxiety. The tense struggle between the two Houses of Parliament was at its climax while the Admiralty was warning the fleet to be ready for a German attack. The day before the final scene in the House of Lords I happened to meet Metternich, the German Ambassador, at dinner, and he asked me to walk back with him across the Green Park to the German

Embassy. As we walked he told me he thought it possible, even probable, that our two countries would be at war before the week was over, and he took me into his confidence about a message he was sending to his Government that evening in a last effort to save the peace. Though the worst result was avoided the crisis dragged right on to the middle of October, and was settled only just in time to enable the King to sail to India for the coronation Durbar.

The dispatch of the *Panther* to Agadir was beyond doubt an outrageously bad stroke, as all German historians and commentators admit, yet it is the one occasion on which a reading of the German document suggests a doubt whether the British interpretation of it was correct. When it was over the German Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs explained to the British Ambassador that it "was really meant to make it easier for the French Government to defend any compensation they might be ready to give, and which they had expressed their readiness to give, before the French Parliament." The Ambassador not unnaturally treated this explanation as a pleasantry. Yet again and again in the records we see the ineradicable belief of the power-politicians of Berlin that a timely display of the mailed fist was part of the technique of diplomacy at which no sensible Government would take offence, and that they did so believe on this occasion is more than suggested by their private communications with one another. "What the devil are we to do now?" cries the Kaiser, when the expected favourable impression on France and Britain does not follow. "What a fix we are in," says Kiderlen-Waechter to Bethmann-Hollweg; "remember," says the Kaiser's personal Secretary, "that it will be very difficult to obtain his consent to any steps which he thinks might lead to war." None of these eminent people apparently had given a thought to the next step if the dispatch of the *Panther* failed to have the persuasive effect that they seem to have expected from it.

That, however, is incidental. Whatever the right interpretation, it is strange that the experience of Agadir con-

veyed no moral to the Germans. Here was an occasion of no great intrinsic importance, and yet at the appearance of the concrete fact—the dispatch of one gunboat to a port in Morocco—the whole British Government had lined up to resist. Might it not have suggested the extreme unlikelihood that this Government could or would remain spectators while Germany invaded Belgium? Reluctance to act before the fact and sudden resolution in face of fact were once more shown to be characteristics of British policy.

We touch here a question of method and manners which greatly complicated the relations of Germany and Great Britain in these years. The Kaiser was persuaded that to shake his mailed fist, to pile up his navy, was, as he said, “the right way to treat an Englishman.” Only make him fear you and he would drop his infatuation for France and eat out of the German hand. Nothing up to the very end could persuade him this was not the right way to treat the English. It was a singularly unfortunate way to treat the Englishman who was now Foreign Secretary. Grey, with his public-school spirit, his sense of chivalry and other simple qualities which the *rusés* statesmen of Europe thought so naïve as to be quite incredible, shuddered at the thought of deserting a friend under this pressure. This sentiment, in which Grey faithfully reflected the feelings of his countrymen, came into play whenever the Germans applied their pressure, and was seen powerfully at work at the eleventh hour when Grey and Asquith indignantly repelled the final German overture for British neutrality. We have nevertheless Bethmann-Hollweg’s word even on that occasion that no offence was intended, and he was an honest man.

After Agadir we note what on looking back seems a strange inconsequence in British policy. Mr. Lloyd George tells us that in 1912, barely a year later, the majority of the members of the Cabinet were “aghast” on learning that military conversations had taken place between British and French. “Hostility,” he says, “barely represents the strength of the sentiment which the revelation aroused; it was more akin to consternation.” These Ministers had

lived through the Agadir crisis, they had been parties to Mr. Lloyd George's Mansion House speech, they had had at least three times to contemplate the possibility of war in alliance with France, and yet they were "aghast" to learn that the two War Offices had discussed together the concerted action which would have been necessary if war had actually taken place. One would rather have expected them to be aghast if they had learnt that this precaution had not been taken. I think Mr. Lloyd George has let his memory add a little colour to this occasion, but it is undoubtedly a fact that British Ministers suffered a sharp reaction when the Agadir crisis was over. The islanders, having astonished themselves with their sally, fell back behind their moat, and the old fear of European entanglements set in. Grey has described how, in order to reassure his colleagues, he sat down with them in Cabinet and drafted the letter to Cambon on November 22, 1912, laying down in precise terms that the military and naval conversations did "not restrict the freedom of either Government to decide at any future time whether or not to assist the other by armed force"—the British part of the famous Grey-Cambon correspondence. The fate of this correspondence is one of the classic instances of the dangers of definition. Wishing to get free, British Ministers had entangled themselves more than ever, for while its contents remained secret, the news that the correspondence had taken place went all over Europe, and it was believed or assumed that the Entente had been confirmed and extended. In spite of the fact that Grey's account has been on record for ten years, that version is still deeply embedded in foreign histories and records. Herr Brandenburg and Herr Pribram accept it without question. Poincaré, in his Memoirs, seems actually to claim it as a feather in his cap.

Through all these doubts and hesitations Asquith and Grey held firmly to the point that Great Britain could not afford to look on at the defeat of France by Germany, and in the search for formulas to appease Germany, carried the whole Cabinet with them in declining any which would

have bound us to neutrality in the event of a German attack upon France. It was perhaps natural that when Ministers talked of their freedom, the public should think of them as standing aloof, but whenever it is tested it will be found that the freedom for which they stipulated was freedom to intervene as well as freedom to stand out. It was precisely on this point that the Haldane Mission broke down, for the "political equivalent," as Tirpitz called it, which the Germans demanded for a naval agreement, turned out, when examined, to be British neutrality in the event of a war between Germany and France. Isolationists and pacifists always stopped short of this.

Being baffled in their efforts to compose the naval quarrel, and being obliged to accept the failure of the Haldane Mission as definite on that point, the British Government endeavoured to strike out on new lines. Might not the venue be changed and a settlement be reached with Germany, as formerly with France, on colonial and oversea questions? And if she could do nothing else in Europe, might not Great Britain play the part of mediator between the two Alliances and play it the more effectively since she was uncommitted and had no direct interest in many of the questions that troubled the peace of the other nations? Thus in the last eighteen months before the War we see British policy concentrated on two objects: (1) to keep the peace by mediation in the troubles of the Balkans, and (2) to negotiate a settlement with Germany which would remove that chronic rock of offence, the Bagdad railway question, and make an end of other vexatious questions about colonies in Africa and elsewhere. These negotiations were conducted in an atmosphere of great good-will and resulted in an agreement which was only not published to the world because differences arose at the last moment about the method of publication.

Mediation was a different matter, and it seems to me important to consider rather carefully the attitude of other nations to Great Britain in her capacity as mediator. Grey had burnt his fingers rather badly in 1908 when he stood

out for a European Conference to regularize the situation and bridge the gulf between Russia and Austria after the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. He had predicted, quite truly, as the event proved, that a wide door would be opened to mischief if no steps were taken to vindicate public law after this breach of the Treaty of Berlin, but in 1908 no one wanted public law vindicated. What all the Governments, the French included, wanted, was that the British Government should end a vexatious question by permitting Russia to take compensation at the expense of Turkey through the opening of the Straits to her warships. Grey, who felt great sympathy with the Young Turks, who had just carried through what seemed to be a promising revolution, set his face against this and insisted that the whole affair should be submitted to a European Conference. Scarcely anyone thought him sincere. Thirty years earlier Bismarck said, speaking of Gladstone, that whenever he heard a statesman talking of his duty to Europe or appealing to international law, he knew he was up to mischief; and so said all of them now. The editors of the Austrian documents published in 1930 repeat as undisputed fact that in 1908 England endeavoured to promote a war in which, standing aloof herself, she would gain by the weakening of her neighbours and rivals. Though more charitable in their judgment, the French were greatly annoyed, and Clemenceau improved the occasion by long lectures on the limitations of British policy. Britain, he said, had no right to take a high line in European politics unless she equipped herself with a conscript army and was prepared to appear in the same force as other nations on the continental battlefield. Otherwise she might make a nice hole in the sea by sinking the German fleet and leave Paris at the mercy of the German army. On these terms she was too dangerous a partner for France. He still more abounded in this sense in the following year, when it turned out that British remonstrances were not backed by force and, failing the support of her friends, Russia succumbed to a German ultimatum.

But the European mood had changed by the winter of 1912. Everything that Grey predicted in 1908 was now happening. In the name of compensation the rivals of Austria, great and small, were following her example. Italy began by seizing Tripoli; the Balkan States followed by falling on Turkey when exhausted and bankrupt after her struggle with Italy, and their unexpected success astonished, embarrassed and alarmed all the Powers in different degrees. Austria could with difficulty be restrained from attacking Serbia. Being unready for war, Russia, Germany and France now cried out for a Conference, and this time all insisted that it should take place in London and that Grey should preside. The Governments themselves stood at a distance and nominated their Ambassadors to represent them, with happy results. All knew each other intimately and could speak with the utmost frankness about their difficulties and the idiosyncrasies of their Governments. It was the least formal and most successful of all pre-War Conferences; it sat at intervals from December, 1912, to August, 1913, dealing with fluid material which changed from month to month, almost at times from day to day—the second Balkan war, the third Balkan war, the breach between the Balkan allies—and the unceasing emergencies which arose from these events. Grey won golden opinions by his impartiality and resourcefulness, and no one who has read the Austrian documents or the Memoirs of Conrad von Hötzendorff can doubt that for this year at all events the Conference saved the peace.

The success of this Conference was none the less extremely misleading—especially to British statesmen. It led them to believe that the worst was past, whereas it was only beginning. The peace was kept not because Britain mediated, but because for the time being both Germany and Russia wished to keep it. Grey's criticism of his own policy, and I still think that which has most weight, was that he missed the road at this point. Having seen Germany restrain Austria during all these months, he assumed that she would continue to do so, and trusted to Austria

to follow where Germany led. In fact from August, 1913, onwards this situation was more and more reversed, and before the winter was out, Austria, being in despair about her empire, was whipping Germany to action with alarms about the Russian peril. On October 26, 1913, the Kaiser had an interview with Berchtold in Vienna, and told him that from henceforth anything that issued from the Austrian Foreign Office would be to him a command. During the next nine months German and Austrian military chiefs were consulting each other about the coming war, and the Kaiser himself was declaring it to be inevitable.

In his *Twenty-Five Years* Grey asks himself whether he ought not to have kept the London Conference in being, whether, if he had done so, he might not have restrained Austria. His answer is worth careful consideration :

“ It did not occur to any of us to suggest that we should be kept in existence as a Conference, as a body ready to be called together at any moment, to which future Balkan or indeed any troubles between the great Powers might be referred. We could not have suggested this officially ourselves : it was not for us as a body to magnify our own importance. Still less could the British Secretary for Foreign Affairs have proposed that there should be a permanent body in London, with himself as President, to settle Continental troubles. Such a proposal would have been resented as giving Britain undue predominance and advantage.”

Between the lines of this we may read the haunting and continuing doubt whether Britain was in the same sense as her neighbours a European Power. Within a year it was to appear that Great Britain alone stood between Germany and the conquest of Europe, and that her choice was as decisive for Europe as for herself, yet Grey speaks as if it would have been an intrusion—a claim of undue predominance in Continental Europe—for her to insist on prolonging this conference.

The result of this attitude was that the British voice was almost unheard in Europe during the last months before the War. Being unwilling to commit herself deeper, and being

aware that, unless she did, her advice or remonstrances would be unacceptable, Great Britain became what is now called an "observer" during these months. Once more she retired behind her moat. The clatter of the armed competition now reaching its climax in all the European states, the heated appeals to fear and jealousy which had become necessary to keep taxpayers up to the mark, the quarrel raging in the newspapers of Berlin and St. Petersburg between Russia and Germany, the gradual raising of the military voices until they drowned the civilian—all this came to British ears as murmurs from without, affecting little if at all their own improved relations with Germany as seen in the colonial negotiations. Not to involve themselves unnecessarily in the quarrels of Eastern Europe seemed good sense and followed logically from the non-committal attitude which British Ministers were striving to maintain. The question raised by the experience of these months is whether falling back on the attitude of observer may not prevent British influence from being used to keep the peace and yet fail to save the country from being involved in war.

It should be added that British nescience was matched in these months by Austrian ignorance of the British point of view and the nature and value of British naval and military power. Conrad's Memoirs scarcely ever mention Great Britain, and neither he nor the German Chief of the Staff, Moltke, seem to have given any serious consideration to the effect of British intervention on their joint plan. Had that intervention been deliberately contrived as an element of military surprise, it could scarcely have been more effective in that respect than it proved to be.

We reach the last stage with the tragedy of Serajevo and, after a deceptive pause, the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia. Great was the consternation of British Ministers when Germany, in Grey's phrase, refused to "press the button for peace," but her action followed strictly from what we now know to have been her pledges to Austria and was strongly backed by the military staffs of both countries,

who held war to be inevitable and painted lurid pictures of the avalanche threatening from Russia if she were given time to develop her military power. I will not go over this familiar ground, but the twelve days of pre-war diplomacy showed all the characteristics of British policy during the previous years—the doubt whether this Continental affair concerned us, the attempt to mediate as an uncommitted and relatively disinterested Power, the hope that our sea-power might save us from the necessity of fighting on land, even if we were compelled to fight at sea, and then the sudden line-up on the overwhelming fact of the invasion of Belgium. The French agonized while Great Britain went through her characteristic phases, exhausting all the possibilities before she declared herself—but in no other way could she have been brought to her conclusion. That conclusion covered all issues. Honest and generous as was the sentiment which stirred the British people on her behalf, the question of Belgium was never the purely sentimental issue it is sometimes represented as being. It was to an immense number the climax of the whole argument, the final proof of the enemy's intention and its incompatibility with British interests as well as with British honour. The Germans forgot that the Belgian Treaty embodied one of the few settled traditions of British policy, viz. that a hostile Power in possession of Antwerp would hold a pistol at the heart of England. On August 4, 1914, England decided that she was a European Power.

The idea that British policy in these years was an entanglement, an accidental commitment, the result of secret diplomacy, fades out of the picture as we look back on it. If anything looks destined on the lines on which the Powers were moving, it was that Germany would find Great Britain in her path. From the year 1900 the Anglo-German contention on sea-power had been one of the major issues of Europe, and its effect may be traced over the whole field of policy. Look at the story in the Austrian documents of the Crown Council at Vienna on the eve of the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Aehrenthal, the Austrian Foreign

Minister, is asked by the other Ministers, "What will Germany say?" His answer is, "We need not trouble about that, for since the Kaiser has just refused to come to terms with England about the fleet, she is absolutely dependent on us." The Kaiser, it seems, had been foolish enough to boast about the snub he had administered to Sir Charles Hardinge when the latter raised the question of the fleet at the notorious Kronberg interview. This was on August 8, 1908, and ten days later (August 19), so sure was Aehrenthal that Germany would be bound to follow where Austria led that he did not even tell the Kaiser, let alone ask his consent, before he announced the annexation. All through the following years we find the same argument on the lips of Austrian statesmen. Since Germany will not make friends with England, Germany must follow where we lead, and so on to the final phase in which Austria led to disaster.

I have spoken of British policy, using the word as it is commonly used, but when we ask exactly what it means we are in a difficulty. Sir Thomas Sanderson once said to Lord Salisbury that there was no such thing as a British policy, and Lord Salisbury said he was perfectly right. Policy in the sense that Bismarck understood the word—the long and deep game directed to a given end, the driving of wedges, the playing off of Power against Power, in the interests of the player—will be looked for in vain in the British record. Eagle eyes have scanned the documents so admirably presented by Drs. Gooch and Temperley, and found none of the revelations, the exposures of chicane and trickery, so common in the records of certain other Governments. British Ministers and officials do not confess to one another that they are deceiving other Governments or take pride in clever sharp practice. The British augurs do not wink; they do not assume that the morals of diplomacy are on a different platform from those of the private life. British dispatches are candid, truthful, straightforward, and when we read them we find that things are very much what we thought them to be. I think an

Englishman may take some pride in that. No record has leapt to light which shames him.

But, as we read, the definition of British policy more and more eludes us. What we see are not the converging lines of a strategic plan, but certain modes of action to which the British people and their Ministers, to whatever party they belong, are extraordinarily true. They will take action most formidably on the fact, but they will not anticipate the fact. They hope against hope that they will not be involved in the quarrels of their neighbours. They will not have compulsory military service in time of peace; they will accept it in war, but insist that it be revoked the moment that war is over. They require proof for each step, proof especially that all alternatives have been exhausted before warlike action is taken. But they have certain abiding intuitions on the points on which they consider their safety or their vital interests to be touched. They will not have their sea-power challenged, they feel in their bones that the mastery of Europe by a Power hostile to themselves would be fatal to their independence. They see, or in those years they saw, foreign policy in very simple terms, and expected their leaders to see it in the same way.

I would claim for Grey and his Chief, Asquith—the two men who were most responsible for carrying Great Britain through these perilous years—that they thoroughly understood these British modes of action and by that understanding won the confidence of the British people at the supreme moment. There were many cleverer men than Grey on the European scene in these years. Bülow was cleverer, Aehrenthal was cleverer, Isvolsky was cleverer, Mr. Lloyd George is so much cleverer that to this day he is lost in amazement that a man so different from himself could have held the commanding position that Grey undoubtedly held in the eyes of his countrymen. Those who knew him and saw him work during these years find it less difficult to understand. He was worthy to be trusted. He was simple, loyal, straightforward; he was patient, wise and forbearing. He spoke without rhetoric but with rare conviction and

persuasiveness ; always true to the fixed points on his own compass, he so conducted affairs as to persuade his countrymen that there was no other course open to them than that which he counselled.

I have been over the ground with him many times in subsequent years and have sometimes asked him whether, if he had had a free hand to commit his country to a military alliance with France and Russia, he thought he could have done better. His answer, as I recall it, was that in the existing conditions in Europe it was always doubtful whether such action on our part would have encouraged the militarists of one group or discouraged the militarists of the other. He also regarded British freedom as a useful guarantee that our friends in Europe would not adopt a policy which was unlikely to obtain the support of the British Parliament or people. But the question seemed to him one which was scarcely worth asking. He, the British Foreign Minister, had in his time and generation to work within limits which made the supposed military alliance impossible. No Cabinet or Parliament with which he had to deal would have accepted it. It was, in his view, the chief part of his business to carry Cabinet, Parliament and country with him, for otherwise he risked the greatest of all calamities—national disunity in or on the verge of war.

Not long after the War I came across a review in a German periodical by one German on a book by another German—a very absurd book seeking to brand Grey as the Machiavelli of Europe, the Machiavelli who deceived by telling the truth. The reviewer wound up with these words : “ You seem to forget, my friend, that, judged by results, Grey was rather a good Foreign Secretary compared with ours.” I do not think Englishmen will say less.

I have left myself very little time to speak of British policy after the War, but deliberately so, since I am dealing with ideas and tendencies for which all the pointers come from the past. Great allowances are necessary in forming judgments on the subsequent years. The wreckage of the Great War

was stupendous and the work of reconstruction was beyond the capacity of the human brain. The immediate task was to bring some provisional order out of the chaos which would enable life to go on, and it was carried out in an atmosphere of passion and bitterness. Even at the time immense numbers in Great Britain only accepted the Treaty of Versailles in the belief that by instituting the League of Nations it created a new order and provided the correctives of its own mistakes.

There is much to regret, and especially that rash pledges to an angry electorate disarmed us from playing the traditional British part—the part most congenial to the normal British character—of moderator in the hour of victory. But there is a moral to be drawn here which ought not to be quite forgotten. Combatants cannot drench each other with poison gases, throw bombs from aeroplanes on defenceless cities, sink without trace, and then, when a truce is called, sit down calmly and consider what is best to do. If wars are to be waged by these methods, we must make up our minds that any peace, when it comes, will be a ruthless peace, an unwise peace. Beyond all doubt the War proved, if proof were needed, that there was no profit in victory, but no less certainly the peace proved that defeat was an immeasurable calamity. “We want armaments,” said Bethmann-Hollweg in one of his last speeches to the Reichstag, “not because we want war, but because we want to win if war comes.” There is no more evil legacy from the year 1919 than the branding of this thought into the consciousness of Europe.

Great mistakes have been made in the subsequent years, above all the mistake of deferring disarmament, about which, or the separate responsibilities for which, the historical judgment has yet to come. After seventeen years we have between us brought Europe to the point at which she is perilously near repeating pre-War history, and again going the way of armed alliances and balance of power. Nevertheless, I think on the whole we may claim that British Governments have been feeling their way towards

the light. They set their faces against the disastrous expedition into the Ruhr; they led the way downhill into disarmament; if they deemed the times unripe for the Protocol of Geneva, which still remains the model of "collective security," they gave us Locarno and brought Germany into the League of Nations, and would, I think, have kept her there if their views had prevailed.

If their views had prevailed. At the end one asks, Can nothing more be done to make the British view, which I believe to be essentially that of moderation and forbearance, prevail? Will the old attitude of semi-isolation serve in the new world—the world seeking peace, as we hope it will, through the League of Nations?

This is no easy question for practical statesmen to answer. After, as before, the War a British Government still finds it necessary to hedge its policy with restrictions. It is still uncertain whether it could mobilize its people for action unless when the time came it could convince them on the particular case. It believes it could not convince them if the occasion was a dispute in the Balkans, a flare-up about Memel or the Polish Corridor. Accordingly, it will not commit itself to Eastern pacts, to the Geneva Protocol, to engagements covering the whole ground. Great Britain, according to its theory, is European, but only western European. Its boundary is the Rhine.

Again, and equally important, a British Government has to carry the Dominions with it, and at the present time many of them are suffering from the same anti-European reaction as is passing over the United States of America. Not long ago I heard a distinguished representative of one of them say that he was "terrified" at hearing British statesmen speak of themselves as "good Europeans." He—and he said he spoke for all the Dominions—wished Great Britain to have no commitments or entanglements in Europe, and she must be warned that she could not rely on their support in any war which arose out of these entanglements. But almost in the same breath he went on to say that the true policy for Great Britain was to throw

the whole of her weight behind the League of Nations and the Kellogg Pact.

The Dominions have their own representatives at Geneva, and these, I imagine, will have told their Governments that it is impossible for Great Britain to throw any sort of weight behind either the League of Nations or the Kellogg Pact unless she has a European policy—a policy, let us hope, which may fitly be described as that of “good Europeans.” But the necessity of convincing all these followers and supporters invests British policy in foreign eyes with a mist of doubt and uncertainty. Foreign Governments take all the risks with their alliances east and west. Why, they ask, should not Great Britain do the same? Often, when I have been reading French newspapers in recent months, I have seemed to hear over again the debate which raged over Grey’s action in the affair of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1908. If Great Britain will not pledge herself to action, if she will not take the same risks as we do, she must not, say the others, mount the high horse, dictate to us, claim to mediate between us.

These are inevitable difficulties, and I do not pretend to have any cut-and-dried solution of them. Great Britain in her conduct of foreign affairs resembles a powerful tug with a long string of barges in her wake. She moves slowly; her captain looks anxiously behind him to see if his barges are keeping line. Others in the fair-way want to know what he is doing and where he is going. Diplomatic courtesies need to be observed, or the language would at times be explosive. And yet, I suppose, most of us have the thought in our minds that if the British Empire could put the whole of its weight behind the League of Nations and keep in touch with the United States for an agreed interpretation of the Kellogg Pact, a long step would be taken towards securing the peace of the world.

We may hope that the consultations now going forward with the Dominion representatives in London will help to clear up this situation. What should we say, if any of them repeated the speech from which I quoted just now—

the speech expressing apprehension and alarm at our European commitments? Something, I submit, of this kind : we should say, " If we were only an island in the North Sea having no one to think of but ourselves, we might be tempted to turn our back on Europe and seek such security as is enjoyed by countries like Sweden, Denmark or Holland, through a policy of non-intervention. But since we have to consider our Empire and the interests of Dominions and Colonies which all over the world have points of contact and of possible friction and collision with our European neighbours, it is to their interest as well as to ours that we should have a good European policy, a policy which makes for peace in Europe. For there is almost no possible war between our greater neighbours in which we could guarantee that our Dominions and Colonies would not be involved, and it is even as likely as not that we should be involved through them as they through us.

If that is so, it is of supreme importance that we should have a common policy on lines which will be intelligible to our neighbours and on which they can rely. The one thing to avoid is a perpetual zigzag with an appearance of doubt whether our Empire or our public will follow where our statesmen lead, the appearance of being drawn reluctantly in one direction by the pressure of French, Italians or Russians, and pulling back on the counter-pressure of isolationists at home or in the Empire. That is to waste the strength of the British Empire and revive the old doubt whether it has any policy, or can be trusted to act in the hour of need. Now as before we have to beware lest too much hedging with insularity should prevent us from speaking decisively for peace and yet fail to save us from being involved in war.

In fairness we must realize that, however much we may explain and justify it to ourselves, the element of uncertainty in British policy was and is a disturbing factor in any attempt to organize Europe for peace or for war. It was, and to a certain extent still is, in European eyes the x of the equation. Let us try to reduce this unknown quantity

to a minimum, for reasonable certainty about the action of Great Britain and the British Empire is a condition of anything that can be called collective security. It is beyond my scope to enter into details about our present situation, but a clear understanding that we shall be found in the path of peace-breakers and war-mongers, and that we shall use all our influence for disarmament, seems to me to follow from any honest adherence to the League of Nations and the Kellogg Pact. It is the existence of these instruments which differentiates our situation now from our situation before the War.

It is easy to criticize after the event. Those of us who have survived to see sequels and consequences have a comparatively easy task in passing judgment. Few battles would have been lost and few great mistakes have been made if generals and statesmen had possessed the same knowledge as their critics. Let us remember that the men of the hour were groping their way, as we do now, through fog and darkness to uncertain conclusions, and that for them, as for us, the visibility was always bad. We do well to search the past for light on the future, but the faults we find in the past must never blind us to its achievements. I believe that when the time comes for impartial historians to deliver judgment, they will say that, in spite of all the faults we may find in it, one of the bravest chapters in British history—perhaps *the* bravest chapter—was written in the first twenty-five years of the reign of King George.

THE TEACHER IN THE MODERN WORLD

(Address delivered to the Conference of the National Union of Teachers, April 2, 1934)

I WAS brought up to hold schoolmasters in high respect, and I have done so all my life. After fifty years in which I have mixed with all sorts of people, I still think of my old Headmaster as the most remarkable man I ever knew, and it is a pleasure to me to remember that, though he lived to be ninety-four years old, I never passed a year without paying him at least one visit. There is no surer mark of the ill-educated man than a low opinion of the great profession of teaching. I am tempted to quote to you, even at the risk of seeming pedantic, a burning passage from the great Roman poet and satirist, Juvenal, who was kindled to wrath by the sight of the starving teachers in the Rome of his day. You will see that parts of it are very modern :

“ Grant, O Gods, that the earth may lie soft and light and the sweet-scented crocus and a perpetual spring-time bloom over the ashes of the men of old who deemed that the teacher should hold the place of a revered parent. Who gives even the most distinguished teachers as much as their labours deserve ? And yet small as is their fee, smaller than the fee of a junior Counsel, everyone nibbles something off it. But give in, O Teacher ! suffer the diminution of your wage, if only it do not go for nothing that you have sat from early dawn in a hole which no blacksmith would put up with, that you have snuffed up the odour of as many lamps as you had scholars in your class thumbing a discoloured Horace or a begrimed Virgil.

And yet be sure, ye parents, that ye impose the strictest laws upon the teacher. He must never be at fault in his grammar ; he must know all history and have all the authorities at his finger-tips. Require of him that he shall mould the young minds as a man moulds a face out of wax with his thumb ;

insist that he shall be father to the whole brood, so that they shall play no nasty game and do no nasty trick—no easy matter to watch the hands and sparkling eyes of so many youngsters. See to all this, you say, and when the year comes round, receive the fee which is paid for one race to a winning jockey.”

“Submit to all this,” says the poet, you will observe, “if only it do not go for nothing,” that your calling is a high and honourable one, that for so many hours every day you are moulding the young minds as a man moulds a face out of wax with his thumb. The National Union of Teachers has very rightly the duty of seeing that you do not have to submit too much, but it has also the duty of seeing that your calling, as the poet says, does not go for nothing—that it is held in the high respect due to it. The two things, in fact, are one. Just in proportion as the public respects the calling of the teacher, it will see that the teacher has justice.

So I suggest to you to-day that one of the chief necessities of these times and one of the principal duties of this Union is to educate the public about education—a duty which in these times cannot be taken for granted. If you can bring home to the public what this business of moulding the young on which you are engaged actually is, show its difficulties, its responsibilities, and its enormous importance to the future of the country, you will be doing far more than a merely professional service.

The times demand an awakening on that subject in the British people, for if we look abroad we find others only too much awake. The most portentous fact about these new forms of State organization, Communist, Fascist, Nazi, which are puzzling all of us to-day, is, I think, the complete confidence of those who are promoting them that by using or misusing teachers they can create types of human beings to suit the kind of society they have in mind. Others look for institutions which fit the human material; these seek to subdue the human material to the institutions they propose, and their instrument is the teacher.

How do they proceed about this business? They rely

upon the infinite suggestibility of the human material. The child is to be worked upon in the nursery with toys, symbols, gestures, pictures which suggest that the world is really what these masters wish it to be ; it is then to be taken in hand by the elementary teacher who will do the first part of the fashioning process, and passed on to the secondary teachers and university professors who will do the finishing stages in the exact manner prescribed for each. The finished product will thus exactly accord with the original model, and in this way it can be turned out in the largest quantities in the shortest time.

I do not commend the model or the method. The method is repulsive ; the model is that of the perfect Robot drained of character and responding to the touch or the whip of its masters. It is, as the Nazis say, to " think with blood " and not with its head, which means that it is not to think at all. Those who imagine that they can stamp human nature with patterns of their own making betray a profound contempt for their material. I see these experiments as both an example and a warning—an example in so far as they assign a high place to the teacher in human society, a warning of what may happen if the teacher is made a mere instrument of the State, and his noble art debased and corrupted. It falls more than ever to this country, which prides itself on being the home—I hope we may not have to call it the refuge—of free institutions, to give the free teacher the opportunity of educating the free citizen. It more than ever falls to you to keep the British people informed of the nature, the responsibilities and the difficulties of this task.

Magnify your office—yes, always, but not in the boastful and aggressive way which has become the habit with some professions. And not merely in general terms. Tell the parents how you go about your work, what it means when economy requires you to teach classes of unmanageable size, tell the Government what the inevitable results must be if you are put in the strait-waistcoat of some code which has been framed, not on your experience of what children

really are and how their minds work, but on somebody else's idea of how they ought to work. Tell the public boldly that many, if not most, of its ideas about education are wrong.

This will bring you into collision with the practical men, the men of business, who are always saying that this or that subject should not be taught because it is of no use in after-life. Leonardo da Vinci, who was a very practical man, a great engineer as well as a great artist, breaks into scorn at the Philistines who talked in that way in his time. Speaking of his own book of Aphorisms, he says: "I know that many will say this work is useless. Often when I see one of these take this work in his hand I wonder whether, like a monkey, he will not smell it and ask me if it is something to eat." The practical man is always asking whether education is not something to eat. Your answer must be to say defiantly that your object is to promote human happiness, which depends enormously on the possession of a mind quickened in its interests and thoughts, seeing the world as the wonderful thing it is, filling its leisure with new discoveries in nature and human nature—the openest and widest of all fields—having its own refuges from the storms without. The practical man need have no fears. The child who is brought up in this way will be the aptest and readiest to receive the useful instruction which in due time, he must, of course, have.

In the last ten years it has happened to me to lecture to large numbers of young people in new countries—young people brought up in the secondary and technical schools with which so many of these countries are so admirably equipped—and what has struck me about them is their hunger for the kind of education they have not had. They listen to some passage of history or some quite simple account of how men behave and think in countries not quite like their own with all the fascination that they listened in their nurseries to fairy tales. They throng about you, ask voluble questions, beg you to tell them more. It mattered very little what the subject was, almost anything

remote from their practical studies kindled the interest which one recognizes as the atmosphere of education. On one occasion in the Middle West of America I lectured to a group of students "working through college," *i.e.*, working in their admirable way for half the day to earn the money to get educated during the other half. The next morning, as I was leaving by train, I was waylaid by three lads—part of my audience the previous evening—but now porters at the railway station, and they took me into the baggage-room and begged me in the few minutes that remained before my train started to tell them more about what Bismarck did in the old Europe. You could scarcely imagine anything more remote from their practical interests or less "useful" according to the businesslike standard. Yet I felt richly rewarded—better rewarded than for almost any other effort I have made to influence my fellow-beings, and I went away hoping that I had done just a little to create the atmosphere of education in that place.

This is not beyond the reach of any sort of teacher in any grade. I know from observation what the good teacher in the village elementary school can do to spread happiness. He can open the eyes of the children to the beauties of the countryside, to the ways of birds and beasts and growing things. From the children at school this interest will spread to the children who have left school and to the parents. We talk a great deal in these times about land policy, and quite rightly, but at the back of it all is the need of rearing a population which will be happy on the land and find their interest in living in the country. These will resist the drift to the towns, and these in the end will be the good agriculturists and the successful allotment holders. In the making of these the village teacher is the indispensable man.

I take this as a handy illustration, but in a hundred ways the teacher is at the back of policy. He, more than any man, moulds the public opinion of the future, has it in his power to make it intelligent and wise or to leave it at the

mercy of stunters and cheap-jacks. At a time when the responsibility for educating it is less and less acknowledged by those who cater for it and exploit it and take its pennies, that responsibility falls more and more upon the school-master. I would urge this Union to keep telling the public and the Government that this is a much bigger business than finding competent teachers to teach useful and technical subjects—important as that is—that it demands the best brains and the highest characters, and must correspondingly be held in honour.

I have spoken rather vaguely of “moulding public opinion”; let me now try to suggest certain ways in which teaching may be most helpful. If I were asked to say what is the chief characteristic of an educated public opinion and what chiefly distinguishes it from an ill-educated public opinion, I think I should reply “seeing things in perspective.” Our newspapers present us day by day with a picture of the world in which the least important and the most important things are jumbled together, and in which a film star gets more of what is called publicity than a Prime Minister, and the controversy about body-line bowling occupies more space than the League of Nations. We have to pick our way through a glittering variety show before we can discover what are the really important things on which our peace and our happiness depend, and even when we get to these we find that the loudest voices and the coarsest appeals have a great advantage over the quieter exponents of sense and reason.

Popular entertainment is a legitimate part of the functions of newspapers, and to provide it, subject to certain standards of decency and propriety, may be a public service. But if a young man or woman starting in life is to have any settled ideas about what is going on in the world, and what in all this mass of unsorted material is of serious importance to him or to her, he must have certain standards of judgment, and these his education should supply. Those who, like myself, have had no practical experience of teaching, must always be very careful in advising teachers about the sub-

ject matter of education, but I will venture a few observations which strike me as a looker-on. Cannot something be done to give the child entering upon life, say in this year 1934, a general idea of his place in time and history, of what lies immediately behind him, and what problems are shaping for him and his generation to solve? Suppose, to begin with, he had firmly in his mind certain simple facts, such as that the population of England is 700 per square mile, compared with the 40 per square mile of the United States, the 183 of France and 340 of Germany—a fact which immediately differentiates the position of his country from that of most other countries, and supplies one essential criterion of its policy. Suppose next he had in his mind some simple figures showing the total income of the country and its distribution between wage-earners and the different classes of income-tax payers and sur-tax payers, and accompanying these a simple graph showing the general course of wages in the last hundred years. If he had only this very simple knowledge—far easier to impart than most propositions of Euclid—he would be able to form some estimate of the available wealth, to place himself and his family in the general scheme of things, and to bring an independent judgment to bear on a vast deal of writing and speaking by people who appear to be ignorant of them. All manner of inferences would of course be possible, but they would be inferences anchored to facts and not a mere spinning of cobwebs.

Again, is it impossible to treat recent history—which for the rising generation is the most important of all history—in the same impartial way? All education, elementary, secondary and higher, seems to be governed by a historical Cowper-Temple clause which, I think, is a disaster for the young people. The history books generally stop at the Boer War, and nothing later must be taught for fear of trenching upon politics. And yet in the subsequent thirty-five years the most portentous events in all history have taken place, events of which some clear knowledge is imperative, if our young people are to begin to understand

the shattered world in the re-making in which it is their good or bad fortune to be born.

Even the young historical student generally knows much more about the Punic Wars or the reign of Queen Elizabeth than he knows about the history of these years. They are his blind spot, the interval when he was in his nursery or at school, the subject of a purely oral tradition scantily bridging the gap between the point at which the history books stop and the point at which he began to read the newspapers and take an interest in affairs on his own account. It has been my privilege to lecture occasionally to young people on the events of these years, and they have told me quite frankly that the very simple facts which I put before them were entirely new to them. How, when teaching is deliberately limited, could it be otherwise? Yet the vacuum thus created must be filled somehow, and into it there rush all sorts of crude and hasty generalizations such as that which dismisses the whole historic process as a sinful conspiracy of old men against modern youth.

There are risks on either hand, risks of ignorance on one side, risks of getting involved in the tricky thing called politics on the other, but of the two the risk of ignorance is far the greater. I plead for no special interpretation of history, but I do plead for knowledge of the comparatively simple facts which will enable the youth of the day to compare the present with the past, to understand broadly the difference between the idea of a balance of power which dominated pre-war Europe, and the idea of the League of Nations which is painfully struggling for a footing in the world to-day. To dismiss the past as the madness of an unregenerate old world which, since it is madness, it is useless to explore or diagnose, is the least promising way of preventing the recurrence of the malady. This, nevertheless, is a very common habit of the youth of to-day, and they are in consequence taken by surprise and fall into despondency when they find that the new world, the world from which the sinful old men have departed, suffers from the same passions, ambitions, fears and jealousies as the

world which preceded it, and that youth in the countries where it is supposed specially to be at the helm is no whit better in these respects than the elders of the former times.

I speak as one who is in the last lap of life, and I would appeal to teachers to try to combat the idea of a sudden cleavage in the stream of time between old and young. We are all in the same boat on the same stream, and the idea of a moment before the war when the boat was filled with old men, and some moment after it when it was filled with young men is a pure illusion. We were of all ages before, as after the War; the pre-war Governments were, I think, of a slightly lower average age than the post-war Governments; our Governments and our policies were determined then, as now, by men of all ages; when we went into the War, we did so on a united impulse, and the young, if I remember rightly, were quite as bellicose as their elders. I find it difficult to persuade my juniors that I was once as young as they are, and yet it is a fact that I was appointed editor of a morning paper in a big commercial city at the age of twenty-three. I can sympathize with young men when they say that business and politics are too much dominated by old men, but this is a complaint not of this time only but of all times. It has at all events no relation to the idea that the present generation is in some peculiar sense expiating the sins of the elders and doomed through no fault of its own to a haunted and shadowed life.

This saps character, instils bitterness, and by shutting the door on understanding, destroys the right perspective which is the most precious possession of the educated man. I would have the teacher banish all these fatalistic ideas and dwell instead on the enormous interest and challenge of the modern world for those who are on the threshold of life. Let him show candidly the nemesis which overtook the pursuit of power divorced from justice, but let him also show the historical causes which generally make men in the mass unaware of what they are doing, and make it

difficult to apply the ordinary moral standards to political action. He will then see what the difficulties and dangers are, and will not spend too much of his time denouncing those who went before, richly as they may deserve it. His knowledge of the past will be concentrated on the future—on how to surmount the difficulties and dangers which beset the present time as they beset former times.

We may debate about many things in the teacher's life—the ways of teaching, the subjects to be taught—but if we wished quite briefly to distinguish the good teacher from the bad, should we not say that the former has and the latter has not succeeded in planting in the minds of his pupils the idea of the good life—the life within reach of the vast majority, to whom a modest competence must, materially speaking, be the limit of ambition? We all know examples of it in all ranks of life. To kindle that idea in the minds of your pupils, to make it burn with such a steady flame that it will burn on when they have left your hands is, indeed, the greatest of the objects of all teaching, whether secular or religious. It is specially an object in these days when so many things conspire to undo the teacher's work on the child as fast as he does it, and so many exploiters of public taste are in league to degrade it on the plea that they must give it what it wants. I hope that some day the teachers will follow up their efforts in the schools by raising their voices in organized protest against this defacement of their handiwork by these tradesmen.

Let their voices also be heard in support of all the movements which carry education forward into the adult life, the provision and, still more, the wise use of public libraries, museums, picture-galleries, the encouragement of drama and music, so that they may have the widest spread and be brought within reach of the poorest. We are behind many countries in our respect for these things. Too often the cry goes up that we are too poor to afford these luxuries. This precious ointment should have been sold and given to the poor! I should like on these occasions to hear

the teachers say in chorus that we are never so poor that we can afford to starve the mind.

When they had enfranchised the workmen of the towns, the old politicians put their heads together and said: "We must educate our masters," and they seemed to have no doubt that their masters, when educated, would think the thought that they thought. Some of them lived long enough to be rather surprised and not a little disconcerted at the result. For the children were coming out of school with all sorts of strange ideas in their heads. They were not growing up to be the docile, obedient, unquestioning, Sunday-observing citizens that they were expected to be. They were betting on horses, reading trashy novels, refusing to read improving books, and doing all sorts of other things that only "gentlemen" were expected to do. And some of them were thinking dangerous thoughts, reading undesirable books, breaking out of their class, coming into politics, challenging the gentlemen on their own ground. Evidently education was not quite the composing draught which some of the authors of the first Education Act supposed it to be. It was the exciting, surprising, incalculable thing which makes it so profoundly interesting to the teacher and so important to the rest of us. The disposition now is to round on the teacher and hold him responsible for all the breakages in the household. If I were a teacher, I would never deny this imputation. But I would tell my critics that unless they realize the importance of my work, hold it in honour, and provide ungrudgingly what is necessary to make it what it should be, a great deal of their best china will undoubtedly be broken.

So I come back to the point from which I started—educate the public about education.

THE DEBATE ON EDUCATION: THOUGHTS OF AN OUTSIDER

I have no title at all to speak as an expert on the technical questions raised in the monumental Report on Public

Education which has been the subject of such interesting debate, but a great many young men have passed through my hands in the course of my working life. I have had much friendly talk with working lads about their trades and occupations. This is my excuse for offering a word from the outside.

I feel a growing distaste for the various kinds of education by which older people seek to fix their ideas in the youthful mind when it is too young to resist. The totalitarian method, as practised in Russia, Germany and Italy, which takes children in the nursery and follows them up in school and university with the sole object of making them submissive items in an all-powerful State, is an outrage on the human spirit.

Reading again the classical passages on education in Plato and Aristotle, with their subtle and persuasive argument for hypnotizing the young with sights, sounds and suggestions of the meaning of which they are unaware, I feel that these modern instances have somehow taken the bloom off them.

Let us boldly say that in the free countries the object of education is the precisely opposite one of enabling youth to think for itself.

We try to make our free constitutions fit human nature, not bend and twist human nature to fit our constitutions.

I have no recipe for this amiable thing, but I can still hear the voice of my old schoolmaster: "Don't take it from me; fudge it out for yourselves," and what most comes back to me is the endless debate, first in school and afterwards in the headmaster's study, that he encouraged about everything.

Whatever the subject may be, the fruitful kind of education is, I am sure, in some sense a debate in which the good teacher draws out rather than puts in.

The vast sums of money spent even in this country in putting ideas into the young are mostly waste. These are precisely the ideas against which youth rebels when it comes to what it considers to be years of discretion.

If this kind of education is to succeed it must go all the way back to the cradle and teach discipline and obedience as the first and last duties of the young.

But to think for oneself is an art which needs learning. The young people of to-day are launched into a vast jumble of unsorted things and thoughts presented by competing advertisers who make no distinction between the trivial and the important, the spurious and the real, base metal and sterling.

To be able to distinguish, to see things in proportion, is the first need of the educated citizen in a free country. Otherwise he will be an easy prey of impostors and windbags and the great tribe of adventurers who make their fortunes out of folly.

Not very long ago I met a young schoolmaster—an admirable young man, very serious in his profession—who complained bitterly that certain highly-circulating newspapers undid his work as fast as he did it. They exalted everything that was mean and vulgar and foolish, everything that he had spent years in trying to get out of the minds of his pupils.

The young man had no sympathy with Fascism, but he got himself to the point of saying that if democracy was to survive some measures would have to be taken against these corrupters of youth.

The better way, and the only way for the free states is to send youth out into the world better equipped with the means of protecting itself against the corrupters and exploiters.

Just as the Fascist countries try to make the young submissive, so must the free countries educate them to choose for themselves.

Choosing, means having standards of comparison, ideas of right and wrong, of what is worth striving for in life and what is not worth our strife.

We may banish denominational education from our schools, but if we leave a mere vacuum in the place which it attempted to fill, we are on very uncertain ground.

Again I have no specifics, but I have seen enough of the products of the schools to know the difference between those who have passed through the hands of good teachers and those who are the product of educational failures, however efficient.

But leaving this high ground, I am tempted to suggest that something more might be done to provide the young with standards of comparison which may help them to see things steadily and see them in perspective.

Is it impossible to furnish them with some simple knowledge of the picture of human life which science, history and archæology are more and more presenting to us? Cannot history be so taught as to bring it up to our own times and make current events appear as history in the making.

One of the disasters of education, at least in the higher branches, is that economics, so-called, has got relegated to the category of special studies instead of being treated as essential to the understanding of our daily life.

In all schools I would ask for some simple teaching on the nature of wealth and credit under modern conditions; on the distinction between what can and what cannot be transferred from one country to another; on the process of exchange; on the intensive co-operative effort on the part of producers, importers, merchants, bankers, and retail trades needed to realize "plenty" as the modern world understands it; on the meaning of such words as "inflation" and "deflation."

Similarly, a little apparatus of knowledge about population, its distribution and density, its increase and its relative changes in the chief countries, would be useful.

These things may not have any educational value in themselves, but they are the framework of fact which is essential to the formation of useful opinion. For lack of it much thought goes to waste on projects which are mechanically impossible. Many distinguished men are as ignorant of these essential facts as children in an elementary school.

"Nobody," says Aristotle, "knows whether the young should be trained in such studies as are merely useful as a means of livelihood or in such as tend to the promotion of virtue."

To judge from the recent report, the debate on this subject still goes on after more than 2,000 years. The ideal education would, I suppose, at one and the same time produce the virtuous citizen, the efficient worker, and the happy man or woman.

Aristotle in the end lays his stress on education for leisure—one of the greatest ingredients of happiness—and in this he thinks music should play the chief part, provided always it does not lure you on to be a professional musician, for that, he says, "unfits you for the exercise and practice of virtue."

The two great hindrances to any education that can be called ideal are the early age at which, owing to poverty, children leave school, and the incessant demand of parents for the education they call "practical."

When Leonardo da Vinci had finished his book of aphorisms he said that, if he showed it to the men of business in the city of Florence, they would take it in their hands and smell it and ask if it was good to eat.

That is the attitude of many parents to-day when they are asked to let their children be taught languages and literature and, worst of all, to have the education called classical.

It is largely a question of natural aptitude. There are, of course, a great many young people who will never get far in literary studies, and it is useless to force them in this direction. But there are a great many others to whom these studies are the foundation of their success in life as well as the chief source of their happiness.

Looking back on my own education, the one thing I would not have changed is the time I spent on Greek. Even that much derided occupation, the writing of Greek verses, was, as I remember it, great fun—and there must be some element of fun in all education.

Greek and Latin are still foundation studies for those who have to use their pens, and they are also education for leisure since they have the peculiar quality of abiding with one in after years.

But I have outrun my intention and rashly committed myself on a subject on which I have no title to speak.

Yorkshire Observer, January 27, 1939.

FREE VERSE AND RHYTHM

(Letter addressed to Mr. Stephen Spender and published in "Horizon," May, 1940)

I HAVE been asked to say frankly what I think about modern poetry. This is rather a deep pit to have dug for me, but I am going to fall headlong into it.

I had an unexpected lesson in literary criticism some weeks ago when reading one of Walter Bagehot's literary essays, written in the year 1864. For in it, to my astonishment, he quotes as an example of grotesque ugliness which can only appeal to an "insane taste" that beautiful and moving poem "Holy Cross Day," in which Browning describes the feelings of the Jews in Rome who on that day were forced to go to church and listen to a Christian sermon. It is a poem which comes to life with new and poignant meaning in these times, and if I were a Jew I should have it by heart as the most profound statement of the Jewish case against the Christian. Yet Bagehot, who was an intelligent and highly educated man, quotes a large part of it, including the lovely stanzas "Thou, if thou wast He who at mid-watch came, By the starlight naming a dubious name," which bring tears to my eyes whenever I recall them, and leaves it without comment as a self-evident example of the wilful grotesque. And over against it he sets the "Pied Piper" as a perfect specimen of the legitimate "bizarre" and "fanciful" and begs Browning to stick to that in future.

Never again, I said to myself on reading this, would I be tempted to pass judgment on any modern "obscure" poet. Unintelligible as he may be to me, he may have a meaning to other people or a meaning which may come to life at some future time. So if you ask me what I think about Mr. A's or Mr. B's poems, which you say are very highly thought of by you and friends, I will leave it at that, with just this word of warning. Only a very small

fraction of the poems condemned by contemporary critics as grotesque or obscure have succeeded in establishing themselves in this way in after years, and to cultivate the obscure and grotesque on the chance of being one of the survivors may easily be a snare for the young poet. Many young poets in the 'nineties flattered themselves that because Keats had been killed (if he was) by a *Quarterly* reviewer, to be slaughtered by a modern critic would be their passport to immortality. Unfortunately there was what logicians called an undistributed middle in this syllogism. The implied middle term "I am a budding Keats" was seldom true.

But Bagehot said something else which set me thinking. He said, writing in the early 'sixties, that poetry was very much "down" at this time. If so, it was very much "up" a few years later. When I began to read poetry, in the 'seventies and 'eighties there was an established body of poets, Tennyson, Browning, Swinburne, Matthew Arnold, and others not quite in the same rank, as William Morris, Coventry Patmore, Rossetti, Meredith, and later Robert Bridges, who between them had a profound influence on reasonably educated people and filtered through these to all classes. We waited breathlessly for their coming volumes, had large chunks of them by heart, quoted them freely, if we were writers, discussed them interminably. They were of all sorts and we could take our choice, sniffing at some, idolizing others. Towards the end of the century Francis Thompson and even William Watson carried on the tradition, and during and at the end of the War there was a little burst of topical poetry which kept within it. After that it all seemed to fade out, so far as we ordinary folk were concerned. Poetry no longer came to us. If we wanted it we had to pursue it into backwaters and corners where it was doing something all by itself.

Now this is a great loss to us, and a great loss, I think, to the whole country. How has it come about? Is there any way of restoring the communication between poets and public, a public composed of people like myself and

my friends? Or do you write us off as old dogs who cannot be taught new tricks? Let me, very diffidently, offer a few comments on this situation.

I read all I can of modern poetry and come to the conclusion that there is no lack of poetic talent. But it seems to live a secretive life, live in the company of like-minded critics, who will not have the communications restored; who praise it for what ordinary folk think to be oddities and obscurities, and decry any lapse into common sentiment—even dismiss as “tosh” and “tripe” things that we sincerely admire. This shuts the door into the ordinary world and encourages what may be called literary inbreeding. One sees groups of young poets constantly imitating one another and confirming one another in what other people think to be eccentricities. Some of these are rather like “signature tunes” on the wireless, denoting the fact that the performer belongs to a particular band.

These things irritate. Not infrequently I read a modern poem and am enchanted by it up to the point when it is suddenly defaced by what is to me an unintelligible passage with a verbal ugliness which sets my teeth on edge. The effect on me is as if a schoolboy had suddenly lost his temper and upset the ink over a fair-copy. Some young people seem to be dreadfully afraid of being thought pretty or sentimental. There is a superstition in avoiding superstition.

If I am asked what I think about the “modern forms,” mainly, I suppose, “free verse,” I can only reply that my difficulty is to ascertain what these “forms” are.

Free verse is a splendid art of which the finest examples are to be found in the Bible and Prayer Book. It is specially suited to prophets, priests and psalmists. To use it for less exalted purposes is quite legitimate, but there are several drawbacks. For one thing it opens a wide door to impostors and amateurs, who would have been choked off by the discipline of metre and rhyme. For another, it tempts the new poets to avoid the grind at prosody which must be good even for those who choose in the end to practise free verse.

These are schoolmaster's observations which may, quite properly, be disregarded by genius. The chamois must not be expected to travel by the mule-path. But "free verse" also offers great difficulties to the reader (and possibly to the critic).

It cannot easily be memorized or quoted—in itself a serious obstacle to poetry getting into the language. Quotation of modern poetry, which was almost universal among reasonably educated people when I was young, has almost ceased in recent years. The rhyming poets seem to have been quenched by the vogue of free verse ; the free versifiers do not capture memory.

There is no agreement about the standards by which free verse should be judged. "Rhythm" is said to be the test, but everyone has his own ideas about it. Does "rhythm" require me to accept as good poetry what by any other test I should regard as bad prose? A few good writers may dispense with rules, but for the others this freedom is an invitation to anarchy.

I am asked whether I think politics a good subject for poetry. That depends on the poet and what he means by politics. There is of course an immense mass of political poetry of one sort or another, Aeschylus, Euripides, Aristophanes, Dante, Shakespeare, Milton, Dryden, Swift, Pope, Akenside, Churchill, Shelley, Byron, Wordsworth, Browning, Swinburne, Thomas Hardy and many other moderns are in one sense or another political poets. But no political poetry survives unless it has got beyond the politics of the hour and expressed emotions—exaltations, agonies—of which politics are the symptoms. So beware of sectarian political poetry. "Left-wing" poetry, Marxist poetry, is on a par with Nazi poetry, Nazi science, Nazi art. It is a characteristic totalitarian idea.

I am only a journeyman whose pen has been a tool in the daily work of practical affairs, I have, therefore, no right to speak dogmatically about the art and craft of imaginative writing. But I am one of a considerable number who look to poetry for comfort and sustenance in these times, and

we expect you and your kind to minister to our needs. I would beg you, therefore, to bring your gifts into the open, put aside the theories and sophistications which in recent years have made poetry so much a hole-and-corner business, and as Burke advised the oligarchs of his time, "identify yourselves, incorporate yourselves" with the main body of your fellow-citizens.

Be pessimistic if you must, but don't be misanthropic. Man, after all, is the king of beasts, and if you wish to influence him, you must treat him with respect. He "lives by admiration, hope and love"; you must give him something to admire, something to hope for, something to love. I speak as an impenitent traditionalist.

THE POST-WAR WORLD

THE Liberal Party is rightly much concerned about the organization of international life when the War is over. We must bend our thoughts to that, for it may be too late to think steadily and wisely if we wait for the end.

I own I read with some uneasiness books and articles which seem to suggest that certain amendments to the League Covenant, or the subscription on paper of Governments to certain new principles, will put us on the right road. We must, I think, bear in mind that the whole situation in the two years before the War was governed by the discovery so sensationally disclosed by Mr. Baldwin in his speech to the House of Commons on November 18, 1936, that the dictators had gained a two years' start of the democracies in certain essential armaments. Having been a member of the Royal Commission on Armaments, I had certain clues which enabled me to translate this speech into a more or less precise knowledge of the actual position ; and this again led me to the conclusion that the forward policy which most Liberals desired on its merits could not be pursued until the worst of these deficiencies had been made good. My own opinion would be an unimportant personal matter, not worth recalling if it had not been linked up with another conclusion which has an important bearing on the future. This was that the League of Nations could not compensate for this deficiency in armaments by any concerted action on the part of peaceably disposed nations, though numerically they were in an imposing majority. There was no safety in unarmed and comparatively unarmed numbers against resolute and well-armed aggressors.

It was the deliberate decision of the founders of the League, in 1919, not to give it a military appearance by providing it with international police, General Staff, Intelli-

gence Department, joint use of strategical bases and other things necessary for military action. There seemed to be good reasons for this at the time, but it proved to be a fatal weakness when the test came. In planning for the future, it seems to me that the first lessons to be learnt from this experience are: that the machinery for military or warlike action cannot be improvised at the eleventh hour to meet an unexpected emergency, that the League, or whatever institution fills its absolutely essential function, must from the beginning have behind it sufficient organized military power to deter all would-be aggressors, and that it must keep this power in repair. Other lessons no doubt there are, but these seem to me the most important suggested by the experiences of the last years before the War. Where can this power be found?

Some day we may hope in Federal Union, but for immediate purposes we shall probably have to rely on a firm military alliance between the principal democratic Powers—Britain, the United States and Russia. Experience suggests that nothing is gained by adding to the number of the guarantors of peace. What is everybody's business tends to be nobody's duty. What we need is not an overwhelming majority of guarantors, but a concert of strong Powers which can be relied upon and have already laid their plans to act together. There is no more encouraging feature in the eight points of the Atlantic Charter than that which enables us to hope that Britain and America will act together in enforcing disarmament after the War. With security thus guaranteed, we shall be able to work out quietly and dispassionately the larger international problems which will then confront us.

When the peace terms have been laid down and security has been guaranteed, I see the next step as the convening of what may be called a constituent assembly representing all the nations, and composed in much the same way as the League of Nations—possibly the League itself adapted to meet the new conditions. I think of this body sitting, not for a few months like the Paris Peace Conference, but

meeting and adjourning and meeting again, and by degrees evolving into an international authority and gathering to itself the power and prestige of instructed opinion the world over. From the beginning this assembly will have to remember that the restoration of their freedom has been promised to the nations temporarily conquered by the Germans, and that this must include freedom to manage their own affairs so far as they do not threaten the security of their neighbours. This will preclude all Hitleresque ideas of a central authority imposing a uniform New Order upon the rest of the world.

Nor will this assembly suppose that it will solve its problems by writing a logical and symmetrical constitution on paper and declaring it to be the Law of Nations. Durable constitutions are a growth of usage and experience, and though we may hope that the experience of war will shorten the process of education, it would be folly to suppose that we can dispense with it. There is already a voluminous literature on the subject of Federal Union, but we have only to read, *e.g.* the latest books by Mr. Streit and Professor Catlin to see how intricate and difficult are the questions it raises, and how far we are as yet from agreement between the different schools about the next lines of advance.

By all means let this literature be carefully studied, but let us beware of getting bogged in it and so having our attention diverted from simple and practical next steps. We and the United States have shown what can be done, in spite of the supposed obstacles of national sovereignty, by pooling our naval and air bases, and acting together in Iceland and in the North Atlantic. It has scarcely been realized how great an advance this is on conventional ways of thinking and acting in international affairs: but here there is a clear example arising out of experience and practical necessity which can and ought to be followed up.

Much educational spade-work has yet to be done before even the democratic peoples learn to think internationally. Not world interests or world peace, but "vital American

interests " are, as we have seen in recent months, the tests of United States policy. The two may coincide, but until the American people are convinced that they do, they will not enter the "shooting war." Numerous correspondents who have written to *The Times* and other newspapers about American affairs take for granted that this is the right and necessary way for a Government to think and act when war and peace are in the balance. It was, in fact, the universal way of thinking and acting before the League of Nations came into existence and taught the international doctrine. Here, too, we may hope that war will help to bring the conviction that national interests and world interests are one. But the upholders of the League doctrine must not merely wait and see. They must be active in preaching it and not let it be drowned in the clamour of war. There was far too little of the preaching of the doctrine in Europe after the last war and it was consequently a surprise to us to discover how slight a hold it had upon France and the smaller nations when the test came. Britain, thanks to the admirable propaganda of the League of Nations Union, was far in advance of her neighbours in this respect, and it will fall to her to take and keep the lead. Wireless will enable us to make our voice heard far out in the world.

I would add one other lesson from our past experience. In 1919 we thought of peace far too much as something static, which had only to be established to remain established. In fact, the material which we had to handle began to change almost as soon as the ink was dry on the Covenant, and within a year the withdrawal of America had removed one of the chief assurances of a peaceful future. In later years the increase in the means of air and mechanical warfare brought new problems hardly thought of in 1919. At the same time Article XIX of the Covenant, on which we relied to mitigate what was harsh or unworkable in the post-war treaties, became a dead letter. Whatever authority is charged with guarding the peace will have to watch over the whole scene in perpetual session; it

must unlearn the habit of side-tracking or postponing difficult and dangerous questions and make Article XIX or its equivalent its main instrument. I remember, somewhere about the year 1920, making a list of the danger spots of Europe, to serve as a sort of agenda for the League of Nations. The League did a great deal of useful work of an uncontroversial kind, and settled many minor disputes, but it handled hardly one of these major issues until they were beyond the point of peaceful settlement.

It may be said that these are discouraging reflections. I think, on the contrary, that, rightly considered, they should be an incentive to Liberal effort. The eclipse of the British Liberal Party was one of the major disasters after the last war. A strong Liberal Party, even if it had been only the principal Opposition, might have prevented the Reparations folly and the plunge into economic nationalism which did so much to create the war atmosphere. A steady stream of Liberal criticism must have kept the country warned of the dangerous cross-purposes which were developing between Britain and France, and of the inevitable results of the endless shilly-shallying about disarmament. At the end of the last war there was far too much disposition to think that the Liberal cause had triumphed because Germany had been defeated. We had used much the same language about her during the last war as we have during this war, and it seemed to follow that when the great enemy of liberty had been crushed in the military sense, the cause of liberty had been won in the political sense. We must not repeat that mistake. It will be a great effort to bring the world back from the atmosphere of war to the atmosphere of peace. When we have won our security against its greatest enemy, we shall still have to work for a world in which it may not be necessary to brand "appeasement" as a crime—a world in which we may praise and encourage the nations that settle their differences in an amicable spirit of give and take, and keep their hands off their hip-pockets.

I read the other day a resolution passed by a Liberal

association to the effect that the Liberal Party must demand the instant restoration of civil liberty when the War is over. If this means only that the restraints on liberty which are necessary to the conduct of war should be removed, it is, of course, agreed. But there are certain methods of government learnt in war which may be of great value in peace. One of these is the method of the priorities. Suppose that after the last war we had declared housing to be a priority and proceeded to plan it out, assign to it the labour and material necessary to make good the shortage of two million houses within a given period, would it not have been far better than to leave it to do itself in the aimless sprawling way which has defaced the countryside and left us with an immense number of ill-built, crowded-together little houses to make the slums of the future?

An efficient modern Government should have as one of its tools a census of production kept up to date year by year. This would enable it to see both the quantity and the quality of production and to enable it to judge how far the quantity fell short of providing a decent standard of life. It should also help us to get rid of the misleading slogan "Poverty in Plenty." All recent economic analysis has shown that even in the most advanced industrial countries, production is still far short of providing the great majority with a good standard of living, and that we must look for advance to increasing production rather than to redistributing the existing product. A census of production would help us to judge how much of the total national effort is going out on luxuries and superfluities, and taxation. The officials and experts preparing this census might be asked to present an annual report on the material progress of the country and so afford independent guidance to politicians working at social policy. We need much more precise knowledge of the actual conditions of the country, and it should not be left to a few public-spirited individuals to provide it.

If I remember rightly, Liberals gave rather a frigid

reception to proposals made a few years ago for limiting profits. In spite of the obvious difficulties, I think these proposals will need very serious consideration in the future. It is just that the workers should get a share of the increase that is due in large part to their effort ; to give them such a share will be to provide a new incentive to increase production. I believe, also, that good economic and monetary results would follow, but argument on that subject would take me too far afield.

We should, I think, be wholly on the side of the workers when they demand a larger share in the management of industry. Absolutism in industry cannot any longer be reconciled with democracy in politics. The production of wealth is a co-operative effort of hand and brain, and there is no hard and fast distinction between the two. It is not sufficient that employers should choose among hand-workers those whom they think fit for promotion ; the workers themselves may fairly ask to have a voice in choosing their own representatives. The rigid line of demarcation between employers and employees is far more than any mere snobbishness a cause of class-distinctions ; to break it down and provide for a real equality of opportunity in the management and control of industry must be one of the aims of Liberal policy.

The general aim of that policy must be to provide a decent minimum standard of life for all, but beyond this to interfere as little as possible with the enterprise of individuals to work for themselves in their own way, provided this is not an anti-social way. I have suggested certain limitations, but I believe that the power of increasing wealth is such that these will leave ample opportunities for individuals and even in the long run be to their advantage. What I have called the decent minimum standard can never be defined in positive terms. In a healthy society it will always tend to rise. As men and women earn more and are better educated, they will want more. In recent years an unemployed man has received as much in insurance and public assistance as a fully employed unskilled labourer

before the last war; but so long as 33 per cent in one area, as has been reported, are still living in poverty, we all recognize that it is not enough. Whether the right way to relieve them is by family allowances may or may not be agreed; but that somehow they must be relieved, if we are not to have a new generation living in slums and growing up in squalor, is a right and humane thought.

Most Liberals have, I imagine, listened with some impatience to broadcasters who speak as if the discovery of poverty was something new and peculiar to themselves. It has, on the contrary, been the leading feature in domestic politics during the whole of my working life, and it has led—largely through Liberal effort—to a system of social services which, however imperfect it may be, is far in advance of that in any other great industrial country. By all means let us make it a starting-point for new endeavour, but we are under no necessity to reproach ourselves for having neglected what has been the chief subject of our thoughts for the last fifty years.

At the end of this war, as at the end of the last, we shall probably be told that the appalling state of finance forbids any advance which calls for expenditure. This ought not to intimidate us. In spite of the burden of debt and the depressions and slumps, there was a great aggregate increase of wealth in the twenty years following the last war. War in some measure compensates for its destructiveness by teaching men methods in industry which enable the ground lost to be recovered in a comparatively short time. Post-war finance may well be a special study in these times. It is even possible that we may learn something from Dr. Schacht's handling of German finance.

There will, of course be room for the most rigid economy in many departments, but there will be many others in which to spend will be the way to recovery. Money spent on raising the school age and improving education is of this fructifying kind; there is no surer source of wealth than a well-educated population. We must solve the religious problem in such a way as to enable "common

Christianity" to be taught in all schools. No civilized State can afford to let its youth grow up uninstructed in the foundations of religion and morals. Expenditure also may be profitable in transport, and above all, in agricultural policy. Farmers who have made large changes to meet the wartime emergencies cannot be left simply to fend for themselves when the War is over. But there is all the difference between a relapse into protection and food taxes which will impoverish the poor and a policy which will aim at improving the yield by better and more scientific methods of farming. Here, too, we may for a time have to carry on the war methods of subsidies and price fixation. The Atlantic Charter holds out the hope of a new system of international trade which will supersede and wind up such impediments to the equal distribution of primary products as our Ottawa preferential duties. But again, do not let us suppose that this will realize itself unless behind it there is a strong Liberal effort to counteract the powerful Protectionist interests which at present stand in the way.

It is impossible to say what will be the condition of the parties at the end of the War. There may be the prospect of new combinations which, so far as they promise to restore Liberalism to a position of power, we ought to welcome. At various times in the twenty years between the two wars there were possibilities of an accommodation between Labour and Liberals which would have brought a strong Progressive Party into existence, and given it its share of office and influence. This was prevented, not by any irreconcilable differences about the next steps in policy, but by the theory which British Labour has borrowed from Continental Socialism, that it should be a class-party and not permit itself to be compromised or contaminated by association with middle-class parties. This theory is alien to the British Parliamentary tradition, which has always favoured accommodation between parties of kindred opinions to the end that the Queen's or the King's Government may be carried on. Peëlites coalesced with Whigs

and Liberals in the nineteenth century, and by so doing saved government from the instability which was threatened by the rise of a third party. By refusing to follow this example, Labour reduced its own share of participation in government in the years between 1918 and 1924 to short, precarious and ineffective periods of less than three years in all, and installed the Conservative Party in power for the rest of the period.

Reflection on the results of this proceeding may induce a different attitude at the end of this War, and if so, we should keep an open mind to it. But, in any case, Liberals must continue to press for at least the measure of proportional representation recommended by Speaker Lowther's conference in 1916. In the eighteenth century nominations to the House of Commons were in the hands of a group of Whig and Tory families; in the twentieth century, the appointments to "safe seats"—all the seats which offer the prospect of a continuous Parliamentary career—are in the hands of the Conservative Central Office on the one side and of the Labour Organization on the other. The former selects safe men who can be relied on to subscribe to party funds, and the latter gives the preference to trade unionists and the small number of intellectuals who accept the whole of its policy and submit to its discipline. Both in effect combine to exclude the Liberals, who represent a powerful body of opinion in this country and have in past times supplied Parliament with its ablest and most promising recruits. The eighteenth-century method is commonly called oligarchic, and that of the twentieth century democratic. But it is a very imperfect kind of democracy which to all intents and purposes shuts the door of entry to the House of Commons on this large class of politically minded and politically instructed men and women. So far as the generally current opinion that the personnel of the House of Commons has declined and interest in its proceedings has diminished is well founded, this is the principal cause. In refusing to widen the door of entry into the House of Commons, Parliament has shown too great deference to

partisan interests and too little regard for its own welfare as a Parliament.

If I have a word to say specially to young Liberals, it would be to avoid all those bitter and angry thoughts which after the last war clouded the minds and thwarted the efforts of so many of the rising generation. Young and old, we have all been involved together in the greatest upheaval recorded in history, and we waste our time in recrimination about the past unless it helps us to find a better way in the future. To the young Liberal, the future presents a hopeful challenge of enormous interest, and an old man's chief regret in passing from the scene is that he has lived too soon to bear a part in it.

Westminster Newsletter, October, 1941.

BETWEEN THE HEADLINES

(J. A. Spender's last published Article)

COMPARING now and before the War, I get the sense of a remarkable difference between the newspaper as it was then and as it is now. Then, according to its daily record, the world had little or nothing to say to the average European. Sound it, if I may so speak, and on nine days out of ten there was no reply. Now you scarcely venture a touch for fear of stirring something that wrings your heartstrings—a ship gone down, a fort destroyed.

Fortunately it is not all these dismal things that are yielded up. Our newspaper correspondents are highly accomplished writers, and they give us the opportunity of visualizing the performance of heroic deeds and spreading them abroad which we have never had before. I pick up a recent copy of my daily newspaper and can hardly imagine a more romantic geography lesson than a competent schoolmaster could have made out of it.

I find its correspondent in Burma astride the most majestic scenery in the world, having performed incredible feats of twisting and winding through snake-infested jungle with vistas of snow mountains in and out of its tangled greenery. Up there he joins hands with General Wavell, who tells him all about our splendid young fighters, their endurance through the terrible heat and their determination to keep the road open between India and China. Did not the Chinese Commander-in-Chief so gallantly promise "the convoy shall go through"?

After all, mountaineering has its uses. These are the sort of men who drove the great road through the hard rock of Central Asia into Persia. They have suffered some injustice by comparison with hard-faced Germans and have been scolded unfairly for their supposed incompetence in dealing with the forests of Burma and the rubber plantations of

Malaya. But as the campaign goes forward, we are likely to gain from the large number of them who are just holding on and biding their time in a grim determination to get their own back. Hunters and planters as well as mountaineers equal to all emergencies of jungle and forest life !

I turn another page and come upon a picture of England under scientific farming. England all but self-supporting from her own soil, growing enough wheat, potatoes, rye, beet to save her from the need of having to import any of these comestibles—therefore from the daily or monthly anxiety of sinking ships. A scientific expert draws up a list of things to eat which he declares are more wholesome and more agreeable than the things we have been eating and gets quite angry with some imaginary being who thinks that they are very nasty.

He describes to me a wide stretch of country from which he looks down 600 feet over five or six miles of thousand-acre fields, all neatly tractored and divided into myriad perspectives of mathematical beauty which throw him into ecstasies as he looks at them from different angles. It is all scraped clear of untidy flowers and ferns, not an inch is wasted in its predestined object of producing food. If I am permitted a few inches for what he calls decorative purposes, then they are strictly proportioned to the population and the balance of the sexes, flowers for women, vegetables for men.

No doubt quite right, but I am beginning to feel as if I cannot live and breathe in this very orderly world of straight lines and fixed boundaries when the page turns again and I am listening to a charming recital of all the Elizabethan flowers which are being grown at Kew Gardens this summer as well as "essential herbs." Happily this is not the British opinion.

The page turns again and I listen to the story of mixed pasture and crops with the woods fitted into the valleys and the manor in the hollow and the churches among the hills. Through it all runs the practical English sense. Scarcely a paper which fails to tell me what the children are doing or

trying to do to help on the countryside—weeding, sowing, pricking out, gathering, using herbs, millions of little hands joining to do the work of big hands.

What will come out of the vast upheaval of the War defeats prediction, but that we shall have made a big change out of an old life cannot be in doubt. Let us hold on to this and begin to familiarize our own people with their own country. From that we can begin to make them at home. To make good each step is as much as we can hope. It is only in this gradual way that nations change their character.

Yorkshire Observer, June 11, 1942.

FRAGMENTS

WE have had the age of faith and the age of reason, and now we seem to be coming to the age of emotion. The modern Press is a constant appeal to the eye against the brain, to the feelings against the reason, to the impression against the thought. The crowd feels but does not reason, and the writer or speaker who would appeal to it must express his thoughts in its feelings.

The modern psychology which exalts the latent and unreasoning processes of the human consciousness is subtly condemning the belief in reason. If two-thirds of our mental life is buried in the sub-conscious self in the Freudian under-world, why trouble so much about the remaining third?

The age of emotion will last at least until the modern nations have assimilated the millions of enfranchised women. A generation ago most men feared that women would be "unsexed" by being brought into politics; all wise men now hope that they will be. The feminine side of human nature is exaggerated in both sexes.

To make good politics "they twain must be one flesh."

The age of emotion can only be cured by the religion of the spirit.

In the age of emotion the education of feeling is all-important. The modern child leaves school to become the victim of the film, the newspaper and the demagogue. Religion alone can fill this gap.

War is an orgy of the emotions. The immense partisanship that it requires extinguishes reason and prepares the ground for the demagogue when peace comes. The belief that an opponent may be half-right is fatal in war and essential in peace but is only recovered with difficulty when war ends. Hence the extreme bitterness of post-war politics. The various parties transfer to their opponents the sentiment that they formerly felt for the enemy. It is

useless to suppose that a world which has fed on passion for four years . . .

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One must go to a new country to realize the charm of an old one.

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The idea of property is a modern mysticism. 1918

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What do we really mean when we speak of the magnitude of a calamity? In what sense can suffering be multiplied? Important for those who speak of civilization perishing.

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"The war is the great watershed of modern history, and after it all the waters will flow into new seas." So in my haste I wrote in my diary in the year 1918. After some years it is mostly false. Human nature is in a deep conspiracy to drive them back into the old channels.

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To the young man the belief that life is a drama of which he will see the fourth act and finale is almost irresistible. He sees the plot laid out and things passing from their beginning to their end, the problem to its solution, the struggle to its victory, within the term of his own life. The waning of this belief is the sign of middle age and its disappearance means that old age has settled in. The old man knows that there is no last act.

To impose this pattern on life is the effort of all creative minds, and it matters nothing to them that the human

comedy is without beginning or end, or that their part in it is an infinitesimal part of one scene in one act. Their struggle to pack the whole plot into their moment on the stage of it is an unending cause of war, revolution, and cataclysm in the lives of their neighbours.

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“St. Hubert’s preference of the forest to the city, which he had shown in life before his conversion, was illustrated by the particular grace or miraculous service for which, more than for any other, he used his glorious intercession on high. He is famous for curing those who had suffered from the bite of wild animals, especially dogs of the chase, and a hospital was attached to the abbey for their reception.”

I came across this sentence last week in an essay of Newman’s on the Benedictine Order, and it pulled me up sharply. There is something rather engaging in the idea of this holy man devoting his after-life to the cure of dog-bites on earth, and the notion of saints specializing in this fashion is quite in keeping with mediaeval fancy. But that Newman should have thrown it in, so to speak, as if it were a well-known historical fact requiring neither evidence nor comment, and right in the middle of an essay which is full of learning and literary charm—this is what arrested me. Nothing that I have come across in that amazing man’s writings has more convinced me that the contemporary critics were wrong who supposed him to be a sceptic fleeing to Rome for refuge from himself. No one could have written this sentence who was not drenched in mediaevalism.

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The public man is the last man to know what the public really thinks of him. Criticism of him he discounts as part of the party business, and praise he accepts at its face value.

Between the two there is scarcely anyone to tell him the truth.

In politicians the passion of self-justification is stronger than love or death. Most of them will go to the last extremes of subterfuge and sophistication rather than admit themselves wrong.

Mr. Gladstone, though a passionate believer in the after-life, qualified his belief by the doctrine of conditional immortality. Had he discovered, when departing this life, that he was about to be extinguished, he would still have had the consolation of being right.

The most beautiful encomium in the language? How's this?

He hath so planted his honours in their eyes and his actions in their hearts, that for their tongues to be silent, and not confess so much were a kind of ungrateful injury; to report otherwise were a malice, that giving itself the lie, would pluck reproof and rebuke from every ear that heard it.

(*Coriolanus*. Act i. Scene 2.)

This gem of praise and thanksgiving Shakespeare characteristically puts into the mouth of the "second officer," whose sole appearance in the scene is to "lay cushions" at the capitol preparatory to the election of consuls.

Even the disdainful Coriolanus must have taken off his hat to this. One likes the hero to be modest, but I confess my sympathies go out to the well-meaning Cominius in the violent snubbing that he gets from the object of his praise—

You shout me forth
In acclamations hyperbolical;
As if I loved my little should be dieted
In praises sauced with lies. •

His retort is dignified and just—

Too modest are you ;
More cruel to your good report than grateful
To us that give you truly.

Coriolanus certainly tried his friends nearly as high as his enemies.

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The saviours of their country are in fact, for the most part disagreeable and dangerous people. As history shows, it is almost as great a misfortune for a country to be "saved" as to be ruined outright.

When a country has been saved, the saviour should, like the poet in Plato's Republic, be crowned with garlands and conducted to the frontier.

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It is difficult to realize that each generation was to itself the latest born, the heir of all the ages, the finished product of civilization.

That ancient times had no sense of being ancient, or the middle-ages of being mediaeval, or the eighteenth century of being behind the nineteenth century in science and mechanics—this is the hardest of all things for the historian to realize, yet a primary necessity if he is to get his period into its right atmosphere.

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The extraordinary instinct of men in all ages to create a monopoly for religion, of all things the most intimate, the most various, the least subduable of human emotions.

Where there is a monopoly of religion atheism abounds.

There is a complete monopoly in this village for an incumbent who is evidently not a Christian.

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What really distinguishes man from the brutes? The sense of purpose.

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The prophet most right when he is entirely wrong.
Isaiah and the Israelites.

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The idea of progress is the shadow of God in the mind of man.

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"Take this out of capital." The familiar consolation of the unthrifty.

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In England relations cannot live together.

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Haeckel asks : Is the Universe friendly?
Christ answers : God is love.
Science answers : Nature is indifferent.

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The precious ointment argument.

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Theology mostly an exploration of the mediaeval mind.

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To recover God for the modern world is to strip Him of the material garments that the mediaeval world has woven about Him.

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Democracy needs different kinds of leaders for different emergencies, but in 1938 it specially needed a man who was ready to take up and pursue steadily, in the face of misunderstanding and misrepresentation, the seemingly unheroic task of resisting rash and premature action. It is a lesson which many have since learned in suffering and tears that ideal politics, no less than aggressive ambitions, require in these times a sufficient military power behind them if they are not to be wrecked on a miscalculation of the forces opposed to them.

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The British people have been tried in the fire and not found wanting. The whole world has been impressed not only by their courage in standing up to German bombs, but by their adaptability to circumstances which, if they had been described in advance of the facts, might well have been thought ruinous to any orderly life.

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A fair and wise settlement needs an atmosphere of goodwill, or if that is not possible, at least a suspension of ill-will while the mediation is given a fair trial.

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Whatever of value and permanence there may be in the expression Federal Union we shall reach it not by framing constitutions in advance of the facts and attempting to

impose them on other peoples, but by laying stone upon stone as experience proves them to be necessary and wise.

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We cannot order everything as we wish or prevent everything that we dislike. I share most of the wishes and aspirations of the Liberal and Labour oppositions and most of all I should like Nazis and Fascists to be made over again and made differently. But I object to being told that I have disgraced myself and betrayed my principles because I am unable to re-shape the world to my own pattern.

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It is especially exasperating to see ideal causes wrecked for lack of a little of the wisdom of this world. If we are not prepared to fight for them and fight if necessary single-handed, we must steer our course accordingly.

To use language that is taken to mean that we are ready to take all risks and make all sacrifices in a great cause and then to draw back on the ground that somebody else refuses to share the risk, is to expose ourselves to all the worldly scoffers and in the end to bring the cause into great disrepute.

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A very little research into the past would provide a long list of prophets without honour in their time but of great repute afterwards, of others with too much honour in their time and reduced to their proper stature afterwards.

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The whole effort of civilization as we understand it is that of bringing public action up to the level of the decency

and humanity at which we aim in our private lives. There could be no more disastrous reaction than that which would reverse this process.

I have often heard the retort made by Germans that they had as good reason to fear our "hegemony" as we had to fear theirs. Who were we to talk to them; we with our command of the sea and our claim to include a good quarter of the globe in our Empire? The answer is that no one feared our command of the sea as everyone feared Germany's command of the land. We never talked of our will and our determination to use our mailed fist if it were resisted.

There was, no doubt, at times, grumbling at Britain's unchallengeable position, but there was never anything approaching the fear that was aroused at the prospect of Germany obtaining supremacy in Europe. It even helped to peace and goodwill that we should be regarded as a nation of shopkeepers. This reputation, if less flattering, was far more serviceable for our practical purposes than if we were thought to be a nation of heroes in shining armour.

The most fundamentally religious, not to say Christian, instinct in man is that which tells him that there are many things more valuable than his temporal life.

With the rarest exceptions all the pacifists I have known have been ardent to fight in some cause for which they made an exception to their general rule.

We need to aim at a condition in which the masses of the people will *live* at peace in an atmosphere of peace, and consider the settlement of disputes by friendly give and take

instead of by war or threats of war as the right and normal method in international affairs. For this the absolute condition is that aggressors must be disarmed and kept disarmed. That work must be undertaken by a few Great Powers in firm alliance.

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The world of democracy is, in fact, the world of peace, and its methods and ways of thought can only with great difficulty be adjusted to a world laid out for war. In the great reckoning of history this may be accounted to it for virtue, for otherwise the life of man would be perpetual tyranny in intervals between wars.

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It is a chief part of self-knowledge to discover the limits of mental culture. Each mind has its zone of maximum efficiency beyond which it will not stretch and short of which it remains undeveloped.

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No greater danger in climbing 300 feet than 50 feet. A fall from either will kill you dead. When once you are at the point of ultimate danger be daring.

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Martyrdom : Persistently doing what you don't want to do under the idea that you are sacrificing yourself for others may so embitter the character as to render you intolerable to others.

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The completely sane man is inhuman.

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Charity believeth all things, but so do envy and malice and jealousy.

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The so-called paradoxes of the Gospels are generally the height of worldly wisdom, *e.g.* take no thought for the morrow.

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Many people are like the decayed gentlewoman in the *House with Seven Gables*. When reduced to keeping a shop they only take down one shutter and fly into the back parlour when a customer comes in at the door.

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A silly name makes a silly child. Parents should consider the effect which a foolish name will, by force of suggestion, have upon the child's character and other people's opinion about the child. Every child should have the right of changing its name when it comes to years of discretion.

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Truisms may be defined as neglected truths.

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Where does the flower get its scent from? I have had a narcissus bulb growing in a pot in my room. I have watched it send up its shoot and come into bud and till the very last moment when the bud opens and it breaks into flower I have not been able to discover the faintest trace of the coming scent. Then in a moment it comes from nowhere. A human being will suddenly perform this

miracle for us, like a flower. Compare what Thoreau says : "I do not value chiefly a man's uprightness and benevolence which are, as it were, his stem and leaves. I want the flower and fruit of a man that some fragrance be wafted from him to me and some ripeness flavour our intercourse."

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This is the method whereby a man braces himself up to an inquiry. He first asks and ascertains what has been said about the subject by others ; then adds his own meditation and with much mental turmoil appeals to his own spirit and invokes it to open its oracles to him.

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We have a code which encourages stoicism in physical pain and discourages it in moral pain. It is thought to be the sign of a hard heart not to display your emotion. In my Utopia you must no more cry out for a broken heart than for a broken leg.

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It was a most courageous social act of Herbert Spencer to provide himself with ear-stoppers. We need ear-lids as well as eye-lids.

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The difference between vanity and conceit : Vanity may go with very great qualities ; conceit is always a mark of inferiority.

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Culture is intermittent in the same person. Most of us have moods in which we are very vulgar.

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Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's. If you can fathom this saying you will have the whole of Christian worldly wisdom.

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They say the world is getting too crowded. Is it? The whole population of the world could find standing-room in the county of Wiltshire. There are crowded countries where the population is congested and there are empty countries where the population is not allowed to go—congested districts side by side with sporting estates. The whole world is like a landlord-ridden country on a large scale and its wars a species of agrarian outrages.

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Conceive your life as an unfinished biography and try to discover the next chapter and the end.

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History is past politics; but it is harder and more important to conceive present politics as current history.

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Memo for humanitarians: Sympathy, like strength, must be economized. ✓ He who pities the whole world will relieve no one.

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The just man bears most easily what he knows to be his own fault.

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When men say that they have rights they usually mean that they are suffering from wrongs.

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It is as important for a country to have great unrepresentative men as to have great representative men. Socrates, St. Francis, Dante, Luther, Giordano Bruno, Newman, were all unrepresentative. The founder of Christianity was the supreme unrepresentative man. ✓

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There are no secrets in politics. But don't mix your worlds. Indiscretion consists in telling truth to the wrong people.

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If a child hasn't enough sense to see through his teacher, it really doesn't matter who teaches him or how he is educated.

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✓ Treat men as if they were children and children as if they were men.

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Always take out your watch when a child asks you the time.

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Rule in conversation : Never re-open a finished subject in order to tell your story or fire off the repartee that failed.

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Very clever nimble minds are not good for politics. They get bored with ideas long before they can convince the average man of their utility; the persistent defence of the commonplace, which is an accepted duty of the politician, seems to them mere stupidity.

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If you want to form an opinion whether man is progressing morally, you must study ancient documents and get yourself into the atmosphere and thought of ancient writers.

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Those whom the Press makes it very seldom respects.

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H. has not a strong will, he is merely wilful: a very different thing. He spends an inordinate deal of his time in getting his way about things that don't matter, but you can turn him round your little finger in things that do.

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In the future Science will provide the theology and Christianity the ethics of the world.

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We are returning to the pictograph. The headline supplanted the article; the photograph supplanted the headline; finally the newspapers will tell their "stories" by a hieroglyph of pictures without words.

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We can more or less change our hearts but our *spots* are terribly stubborn.

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A great many men are conscious of shortcomings which they imagine they are concealing from their neighbours. I never knew anyone succeed at this in the long run. I learnt accidentally to-day that my subordinates consider me kind but stand-offish. That is the truth about me but till to-day I imagined . . .

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Faith is the repose of the Soul; dogmatism the sign of its unrest.

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He that is won with a nut may be lost with an apple.

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Two ideas of religion. One in which God is conceived as immanent; the other in which He is conceived as Lord and Master.

Excess of the one leads to absolutism emptied of meaning, excess of the other to an unnatural self-abasement . . .

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How extraordinarily difficult it is to realize that people you disagree with can hold their views with the same sincerity that you hold your own. I was passing along Pall Mall one day and came upon a group of young Tariff-Reformers just breaking up after a meeting of that pestilential thing the Tariff Reform League. I have had the greatest difficulty in thinking of them as honest, but there

they were, grave, serious, zealous, slightly flushed, obviously still talking of the last subject at their meeting, and treating each other with the good camaraderie that distinguishes Englishmen in league for patriotic purposes. As I passed I heard the name of a distinguished Free-Trader mentioned with an epithet which revealed to me more of their thought about the school to which I belong than a hundred Protectionist leading articles. Till then I could never get it out of my head that they must in private throw off the mask and admit the correctness of my opinions, whatever they might say on platforms or in newspapers. And then, in a flash, it came over me that they did habitually think like that and talk like that even to the length of imputing to me and my distinguished friend the abysmal heresies which I impute to them.

