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PATRIOTISM AND
THE SUPER-STATE

PATRIOTISM AND THE SUPER-STATE

By



J. L. STOCKS

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FOREWORD BY THE EDITOR

THE object of this series is twofold ; to disseminate knowledge of the facts of international relations, and to inculcate the international rather than the nationalistic way of regarding them. This latter purpose implies no distortion of facts. It is hoped that the books will be found to maintain a high standard of accuracy and fairness.

But their avowed object is not merely to record facts, but to present them in a certain light, and with a certain object. That light is Internationalism and that object the peace of the world. If the series is successful in its purpose it will contribute to what Wells has called the "international mind."

The object has been to produce the books at a price that shall not be prohibitive to people of small incomes. For the world cannot be saved by governments and governing classes. It can be saved only by the creation, among the peoples of the world, of such a public opinion as cannot be duped by misrepresentation nor misled by passion. The difficulties of that achievement can hardly be exaggerated, but ought not to daunt. And the editor ventures to hope for support for men of good will in this one attempt, among the many others, to enlighten the intelligence and direct the will.

PREFACE

THE following pages are an attempt to investigate the sentiment of patriotism in its relation to the State, the Nation, and to any international organisation by which States and Nations may be grouped into a coherent whole or wholes. The view is expressed in the last chapter that the required international organisation must be a real government, if it is to be a success, and that the most elaborate alliance—and our present League of Nations is hardly more than that—will never solve the international problem. But, even if this is true, it does not follow that the League of Nations is not entitled to claim our active support. It needs and deserves all the support it can get ; and the more support it receives, the sooner is it likely to develop into a genuine and democratic organ of government.

J.L.S.

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August, 1920.

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I

PATRIOTISM

Not she, the England I behold,
My mistress is, nor yet
The England beautiful of old,
Whom Englishmen forget.
The England of my heart is she,
Long hoped and long deferred,
That ever promises to be,
And ever breaks her word.
—WILLIAM WATSON.

§ I. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

THE praise which since the most ancient times has been so freely lavished upon the patriot has seldom failed to provoke some dissentient voices to declare that the attitude so praised is a dangerous and irrational, if not actually an immoral thing. From the earliest times the Greek did not fail to observe that his duties to his fellow men overleapt the walls of the city and the boundaries of those narrow lands which limited his political obligations. Plato and Aristotle were conscious of certain obligations as Greeks, and even as men. The later Greek philosophers who carried on the tradition of the great masters, were inclined for the most part in describing their ideal—the “sage,” who was the theme of so much eloquence—to substitute for the service of the city or fatherland the service of humanity, for patriotism cosmopolitanism. So, for instance, in what

can be deciphered of the works of Diogenes of Oenoanda (a follower of Epicurus), inscribed on stone for the benefit of the inhabitants of his native Lycian town about two hundred years after the birth of Christ, we find the following typical saying. He writes, he says, for his own people ; but equally for those who are wrongly called strangers or foreigners. " For though the several sections of the earth give different men different countries, yet this world in its whole circumference gives all men one country, all the earth, and one home, the world."

The cosmopolitanism of the later Greek philosophies has its historical explanation in the conquests of Alexander and the rise of the great Roman Empire. The city-state of the Greeks, it may be supposed, had done its work, and had therefore ceased to inspire in its citizens that intense and exclusive devotion which in its great days it had shown itself capable of arousing. The serenity of the sage, conscious as citizen of the world of surpassing the limits of his small city, the boast of the early Christian, admitted, with the elect, to the freedom of the city of God, seem to differ rather in kind than in degree from that early civic devotion. Patriotism, in these developments, is not merely extended but rather abolished or superseded. It is probably true that, after the break-up of the Greek system of free cities, the city was never again able to appear as the natural unit of political organisation and devotion for

all civilised mankind. In the Roman Empire the city remained ; but even the greatest of the provincial cities could not totally eclipse Rome, even to its own citizens. During the subsequent centuries there have been places and times when free cities have flourished, as in Germany, Switzerland, and Italy, and have succeeded in monopolising the political affection of their own people ; but they have not succeeded in imposing the city organisation, as an ideal for general use, on the thought of practical statesmen, or even of political theorists. The free city was sometimes envied, but it was regarded as an exception ; and Rousseau's rather tentative and parenthetical advocacy of the small state in the *Contrat Social* appears to have made little impression upon contemporary thought.

But when Rousseau wrote, the modern nation, the true heir of the city of the Greeks, though it had not yet completely vanquished its rivals, was already firmly established, and was just about to embark on that strange and chequered career, which, with so much bloodshed and after so many vicissitudes, was finally to establish beyond question its supremacy in the politics of Europe. In the nation men seemed to have found a form of political organisation which might be universal and even (for the illusion of finality is hard to kill) final and ultimate. The new historical development found its prophet and interpreter, in the early middle of the

nineteenth century, in Giuseppe Mazzini, whose dream of Italy came true, but not precisely as he wished, and whose society of democratic nations is still no more than an aspiration. Whether the years 1914-1918 will seem to the future to have been just one more tragic passage in the development of the national idea, or rather (as many already, perhaps over-hastily, assume) the birth-throes of a new order, cannot at present be certainly determined. But the recent experiences of these years, which, by the very fact that they have left no considerable fraction of the earth's population entirely unmoved, have proved the world to be actually in a sense one society, with a certainty which mere speculation could never have hoped to attain—these recent experiences are bound to provoke everywhere reactions which will seriously affect and modify the forms of political organisation, the conception of the State or nation, and the admitted claim of the State on the loyalty of its citizens which is commonly called patriotism. At this time, therefore, an examination of the notions of patriotism and nationality should have a particular interest and value.

§ 2. PATRIOTISM AS LOVE OF COUNTRY.

The disposition which is commonly called patriotism appears to contain three distinct, but closely related, elements—the love of country, the desire for its good, and the willingness to serve it.

The *love of country* finds its expression in contentment with the familiar physical features of the land, though other lands may be admitted to surpass it in beauty, and in a like complacency towards its people and their characteristic speech, manners, and institutions. It is apt to cherish particularly whatever is peculiar in these things, not because it is thought better than the ways of other countries, but simply because it is peculiar and unlike theirs. It will even claim a special quality and merit in things done at home which seem to an impartial observer to be done in the same way or with precisely similar variations in every country under heaven. It therefore uses with a special relish the national adjective, not merely of things distinctive, like English roast beef or German beer, but also of English good-sense and British courage, of German thoroughness and German honesty.*

* The following, from Alfred Austin's poem "Is Life Worth Living?" is a good instance of the use (and abuse) of the national adjective :

Not care to live, while English homes
Nestle in English trees,
And England's trident-sceptre roams
Her territorial seas !
Not live, while English songs are sung
Wherever blows the wind,
And England's laws and England's tongue
Enfranchise half mankind !

So long as flashes English steel
And English trumpets shrill,
He is dead already who doth not feel
Life is worth living still.

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Now love is apt to express itself in praise, and praise commonly asserts that a thing is good of its kind or superior at least to the average of its peers. Hence the patriot, as lover of his country, is expected to say and believe that his is a good country, or even the best of countries, and that many or most of its peculiarities are so many proofs of its superiority to others. So long as he maintains this general attitude, he is granted the lover's privilege of occasional criticism. Radical and persistent criticism, however, will, it seems, prove a man no patriot. Fichte, writing in the days when Germany (as distinct from Prussia) was a mere possibility, tells us of an acquaintance who made a habit of devoting half-an-hour every afternoon to what he called the practice of patriotism. Being asked by Fichte how he employed it, he explained that he searched the news sheet until he found some act of the government which he could praise; and on this he fastened his mind in joyful contemplation for the remainder of the allotted time. If none of its acts were quite satisfactory, he chose the best he could find. "For a patriot," he said, "must *praise*." The incident is intended to be farcical; but the test of patriotism suggested by it is still widely accepted. A man is expected to believe that his wife and his country are the best of wives and countries, as the platoon commanders of the British Army in France were repeatedly told during the war

that each must consider his platoon the best in the Army.

However much one may sympathise with the attitude of which such phrases are the expression, when it is genuine and not mere affectation, it is evident that it is open to the charge of irrational partiality, and it is not surprising that the critics of patriotism have pressed the point. "It is clear," says Tolstoy,* "that if each people and each State considers itself the best of peoples and States, they all dwell in a gross and harmful delusion." It is also clear that it is not good manners to go about boasting of the excellence of one's wife, family, or country. Tedious at home, it becomes offensive abroad. On the other side may be cited the instructive, but no doubt apocryphal, saying—"I do not like my mother, but of course I love her." If love and liking are not inseparable companions, there is hope that patriotism, considered as love of country, may be found to be separable from praise.

§ 3. PATRIOTISM AS DESIRE FOR THE GOOD OF ONE'S COUNTRY

The second element recognised in patriotism was *the desire for the good of one's country*. Here, of course, all the old quarrels as to the meaning of the word "good" break out and threaten to confuse the issue. It may

* *Patriotism and Government*, tr. by Aylmer Maude. The other quotations from Tolstoy in this chapter are from the same essay.

be true that all men in every action in some sense seek their own good : it may also be true that a good man in his most characteristic act follows what is in a sense another's good. It may be doubtful whether " good " can be distinguished from " useful " or whether it has any definite meaning at all apart from an accompanying will to pursue it. But we shall do well to evade these problems in this place. Let us therefore say that the patriot desires that his country shall be wealthy, powerful, civilised and just. Everything, probably, which a patriot commonly desires for his country, and rejoices that it should obtain, can be grouped under one of these four heads, and each term seems to have a definite and distinct meaning. There is however, a difficulty in the application of these terms to countries or nations, which must be here noted. It is not at all certain what is meant when a country is said to deserve any of these epithets. If the aggregate income of its individual citizens makes a country rich, then one fabulously rich man might make a community of miserably poor people the richest in the world. If, again, the test is the amount of money raised annually, per head of population, in taxes, then the country which spends most lavishly on armaments of war will almost certainly appear to be the richest. Similar difficulties may be raised concerning the attributes of power and civilisation, turning mainly on the question whether each is thought to belong to the

State, to the community as politically organised, or to its individual members, and if the latter, whether an average may be struck, or whether a test should not rather be found in the state of the least prosperous section of the country's population. These are real difficulties, and their solution cannot here be attempted. They are, however, answered sufficiently for our present purpose, if we remark, first, that common opinion in these matters is uncritical, not to say confused. The patriotic press will boast of the colossal size of private fortunes as disclosed by the Death Duties, and the unprecedented magnitude of receipts and expenditure in the latest Budget, or of the increased value of the exports from British ports ; it will rejoice in the successes of British rowing or boxing, in the discoveries of a British chemist or engineer, and in a triumph of British diplomacy or an extension of the British Empire. All that will bear the epithet British is fuel to its patriotism, whether the State has a hand in it or not. And, secondly, it is plain that to the patriot his country is personified as a kind of paterfamilias, who enjoys, and in a sense owns, the achievements of any of his children. My country's good is therefore not to be distinguished from the good of its citizens ; and the founder of a flourishing manufacturing business can be regarded as the benefactor of his town and country, on the one hand as making a fortune for himself, thus increasing his country's wealth,

on the other hand as providing regular and well-paid employment for a number of its citizens, thus adding to his country's power, and in virtue of both facts as enhancing the dignity and importance of the town in which he elected to establish his business. No direct profit to town or country as politically organised need be implied.

Of the four attributes above enumerated, power seems to be that most commonly claimed and desired by the patriot for his country. Increases of wealth, of territory, or of population seem to be welcomed in the main more or less uncritically, as evidence of increased power. Quantities of patriotic poetry of all dates could be cited as evidence of this.

Land of Hope and Glory, Mother of the Free,
 How can we extol thee, who were born of thee ?
 Wider still and wider, shall thy bounds be set,
 God, Who made thee mighty, make thee mightier yet.

—A. C. BENSON.

Power, however, is not generally accepted as its own justification. Strength divorced from wisdom and unaccompanied by virtue is a temptation to its possessor and a danger to others. The praise of power, therefore, is commonly accompanied by the assumption that the power is and will be wisely used. The patriot feels bound to credit his country with a civilisation superior to any other and a morality which is beyond reproach. Sometimes the claim is explicitly made. Englishmen

will laugh at the German's praise of German *Kultur* ; but though the boast may be commoner in their mouths, the belief is not peculiar to them. French and English imperialists no less are forced to make the claim, but often only by way of tacit assumption—a form in which perhaps, it is not less, but more, offensive to foreigners, who feel that the very absence of direct assertion indicates a higher degree of certainty. Of the German others may well reflect—"methinks he doth protest too much."

Civilisation and justice, then, if justice may be used as a summary term for national morality, are claimed by the patriot for his country as a title to wealth and power. They are spiritual goods, and to *desire* them for one's country is to involve oneself in no direct antagonism to the patriotic citizens of other countries. The desire for wealth and power on the other hand, in the forms which it most frequently assumes of militarism and economic imperialism, necessarily involves rivalry between nations ; and the *claim* to superior civilisation and justice is used, as we have seen, to justify the wealth and power sought and obtained. This claim is, of course, offensive to others, alike in an individual and in a community, and in reinforcing the desire for aggrandisement it leads indirectly to national conflicts and rivalries. But it is beyond question that the wish to secure these goods of the spirit for their country is active in many who make no such claim, and who think, rightly or

wrongly, that power and wealth, less crudely conceived, and given the second place instead of the first, become innocent objects of national ambition.

The critic of patriotism makes short work of all this. "Patriotism," says Tolstoy, "is not the wish for spiritual benefits for one's own people (it is impossible to desire spiritual benefits for one's own people only); but it is a very definite feeling of preference for one's own people or State above all other peoples and States, and therefore it is the wish to get for that people or State the greatest advantage and power that can be got; and these are always obtainable only at the expense of the advantages and power of other peoples or States. It would therefore seem obvious that patriotism, as a feeling, is a bad and harmful feeling, and as a doctrine is a stupid doctrine." The answer to this is that moral and other spiritual attributes are certainly credited to peoples or States, and that those who credit them with these are able to desire these for their own people (not necessarily for it *only*, but for it *specially*, since nearly all men are specially concerned with the actions of a single State); and secondly, that certainly the greater part of the power and wealth of any people is not in fact obtained at the cost of others. Thus neither of the two principles upon which Tolstoy relies is clearly valid, and his conclusion remains unproved.

§ 4. PATRIOTISM AS WILLING SERVICE

The third element in patriotism was *the willingness to serve one's country*. It is generally agreed that the best proof and test of love is willing service; and this is clearly right. For a mere liking which finds expression in word but not in act, an empty desire which is entirely without influence upon the will, seem to be unreal or at least very unsubstantial abstractions. Even the jingoism of music-hall songs expects a man to do something to prove his patriotism. When he has "finished killing Kruger with his mouth," he should at least "put a penny in the little tambourine, for a gentleman in khaki ordered south." And, at the other end of the scale, the memorials of those who have died in battle for their country, written on stone or, less perishable, in undying verse, are full of touching tributes to the ideal of service. Lowell's fine Commemoration Ode, recited at Harvard in memory of those who lost their lives in the American Civil War, ends on this note :

O Beautiful ! my Country ! ours once more !
Smoothing thy gold of war-dishevell'd hair
O'er such sweet brows as never other wore,
And letting thy set lips.
Freed from wrath's pale eclipse,
The rosy edges of their smile lay bare—
What words divine of lover or of poet
Could tell our love and make thee know it,
Among the Nations bright beyond compare ?

What were our lives without thee ?
 What all our lives to save thee ?
 We reckon not what we gave thee ;
 We will not dare to doubt thee,
 But ask whatever else, and we will dare !

A cooler and more calculating service is suggested by Browning's "Home-Thought"—"Here and here did England help me ; how can I help England ?" On the other hand the rhetoric of Frederick the Great hardly rings true. "I love my country ardently. It is to her I owe my education, my fortune, my existence, my all. Had I a thousand lives, I should with pleasure sacrifice them all, if I could thereby render her any service and show her my gratitude."*

The idea underlying patriotism in this aspect is quite simple. It seems to spring from the fact of association itself, and to involve no proposition that is easily challenged. It requires no personification of country, and no comparison with others. In every association, however limited in scope, there is a certain amount of work to be done, which can only or can best be done by the voluntary efforts of its members. In any large society any one member can refuse to take his part in this work, in complete confidence that it will nevertheless be done. And the reason why his confidence is justified is that so many men are patriotic, *i.e.*, feel in greater or less degree the obligation to such service.

* *Letters on Patriotism*. Translated from the French original, printed at Berlin. London : 1780.

The Abbé Lamennais once illustrated the nature of association, for the benefit of the working men of France, by a parable to the following effect. A traveller was walking along a narrow mountain path, and at a certain point he found it blocked by a large rock. After a number of unavailing attempts to climb over it or find a practicable *détour*, he sat down beside it and wondered what he should do. Other travellers arrived, one by one, each failing similarly, and a sort of council of war was held. During the discussion, which promised to be fruitless, the numbers gradually increased, and at last it occurred to someone that if they all pushed together they might possibly succeed in dislodging the rock. They pushed, and it gave, leaving the way clear, and the travellers were able to continue their journey.

In such a case it is unlikely that all pushed equally hard. It is very possible that one or two ridiculed the suggestion, and declined altogether to assist. But the abstention of some and the slackness of others might not affect the result. The obstacle was an obstacle to all, and its removal would benefit each, whether he contributed much or nothing to it. In any association of any size there are likely to be some who will take what they can get and give only what they must. These are apt to complain that the profits are small and the contributions vexatious. There are others who will give all they can. These seem to find satisfaction in the mere

association, the fact of common effort, apart from any results which it may bring. This is the spirit of patriotism in this respect.

The critic has not found it quite easy to dispose of this side of the patriotic spirit. Let us quote Tolstoy again. "Patriotism is an immoral feeling, because, instead of confessing oneself a son of God, as Christianity teaches us, or even a free man guided by his own reason, each man under the influence of patriotism confesses himself the son of his fatherland and the slave of his government, and commits actions contrary to his reason and conscience." Its inevitable results, he says, are externally, wars, and, internally, the strengthening of "the terrible bond called government." The quotation implies a double line of attack. First, it is urged that patriotism may lead a man to do what is wrong, just because his country sanctions or commands it. Secondly, it is suggested that the institution to which patriotism is an attachment, the State or Government, is a bad and un-Christian institution, which, therefore, no man is under any obligation to serve. The first point is sufficiently answered by the reflection that the same criticism can be made of any personal affection. The love of husband and wife has no doubt been the excuse for many crimes; but it is not therefore condemned as immoral. The second point is much more difficult. It is true that the attack on the State in the interest of anarchism

makes no wide appeal at the present time. Government, as such, is not regarded by many as an evil. But other hostile influences, less academic, have for some time been at work, which threaten to rob the State of its pre-eminent and over-riding claim upon the citizen's service, or even to destroy the State-organisation, as we know it, altogether. The battle-cry of 1848, expressed in the famous phrase of the Communist Manifesto, "Proletarians of all Lands, Unite," claimed that the oppressed workers of the world had a truer community of interest with one another than with the capitalist oppressors of their own countries, and thus directly challenged the claims of the nations. And though the unity of Labour in the sense desired has not yet been realised, many still think it will be realised, and that its realisation will mean the extinction of Patriotism. There are others who think that the idea underlying the recently founded League of Nations is necessarily hostile to patriotism, presumably because it postulates community of interests where the patriot sees only diversity or opposition, and because it threatens to establish an authority superior to the nation which the patriot is supposed to be unable to accept. Lastly, there are the advocates of a number of ingenious but still rather tentative proposals for what may be called the break-up of the State. It is evident that each of these lines of criticism leads into deep waters, into which we are not at present in a position to follow.

§ 5. RELATION OF THESE THREE ELEMENTS TO
ONE ANOTHER

We have distinguished in patriotism three elements, an affection, a wish, and the act of service. It remains to consider the relation of these three constituents to one another, and their joint application to political life.

In favourable circumstances all three elements are present, mutually reinforcing each other. The school-boy, for example, is expected to be fond of his school, to wish it success in any of its undertakings, and to be ready to help it in any way he can. The more he can do for it, the fonder of it he becomes and the more strongly he wishes it success. The school's recognition of his value to it reinforces his conviction of its value to him. No alteration in the terms seems to be required if (again supposing favourable circumstances) we think of our schoolboy in later years, as a citizen, in his relation to the State or nation. The beliefs, customs, and practices of the community are suited to him and he to them. He is fond of it, wishes it success, and is glad to serve it; and both its successes and his own will tend to strengthen the whole complex called patriotism. The crude and arrogant expressions of patriotism, with which we are only too familiar, should not blind us to the essential rightness of this attitude in the happy conditions imagined. For it is easy to see that these

are not necessarily involved, and that they are not justified by the facts. Affection, certainly, will express itself in praise; but praise need not and cannot justifiably become a claim that its object is the best of its kind in the world. The conditions required for comparison cannot be satisfied, since the relation of a schoolboy to his school or of a citizen to his country is necessarily unique. A man, or a boy, can only be a member of one at a time, and in all his life only, in any real sense, of a very few. To the schoolboy or citizen his school or country is, as his, differentiated from all others, and of special interest to him. If it satisfies him, he may call it good; but "best" is rhetorical hyperbole, not comparison. The wish for its success in competition with other schools or countries is a natural consequence; and this wish, with the acts in which it finds expression, only turns to the general disadvantage when competition is allowed to take forms which are necessarily harmful, or so far as the desire for the first place tends to predominate over finer forms of self-assertion. Some teachers hold that competition between boys and schools for University scholarships is a bad thing; but, while it continues, they consent to assist their schools in the competition, and wish them success in it. Similarly, nearly all men agree that war is a disastrous and avoidable form of competition between nations; yet, when war is joined, they wish for their

country's success, and are very ready to help it. In any sphere in which competition is recognised the patriotic citizen or schoolboy will back his own school or country, and do his best to help it. Such an attitude, further, in the ideal case imagined, is right and reasonable, and need involve none of the crudities commonly associated with patriotism.

But the ideal situation is of course seldom or never realised in this imperfect world. No school is quite satisfactory, even in retrospect ; and no State, either in its internal or in its external relations, can be expected consistently to behave in a way which will appear to a particular citizen wise, prudent, or just. And when in the eyes of any citizen the State seems to act wrongly or unwisely, the full realisation of patriotism is for him impossible. The more genuinely patriotic he is, the more wholeheartedly he has been accustomed to accept as his own his country's acts and purposes, the more difficult will it be for him in such a case to give assistance. Men of weaker and less energetic faith, less prominent and influential in the community, being less interested and less responsible, will be disposed to follow the majority without serious hesitation. For them little is at stake and compliance is cheap. It is precisely the keenness of his patriotism that makes the stake greater for him, and forces him to more vigilant criticism. Where he profoundly disapproves, he will be driven to

decisive action. If he is a Minister of State, he will resign his office, and, in a private station, he will withhold his customary service. He will not have lost his affection for his country ; for it is this which inspires his action : but he will certainly be accused of having lost it, and those who disagree with him will describe his action as unpatriotic.

What happens in such cases is that the patriotic complex is, for the time at least, more or less completely disintegrated. Affection becomes disaffection, success and failure acquire a fatal ambiguity, and any form of service open to the disaffected member is generally held to be disservice. Further, such disaffection may be no mere temporary incident, soon past and forgotten. It may be based on opposition of principle, and question the whole plan and structure of the community. Such fundamental criticism, persisting in spite of obloquy and failure, must surely spring from a genuine devotion, to which it is impossible to refuse the name of patriotism ; yet it will involve opposition to the Society in all its main activities, and a personal isolation and unpopularity which are at first sight the antithesis of the proper consequences of the patriotic spirit. When the association is limited and voluntary in character, as in private organisations for pleasure or profit, a social club, a debating society, a trading company, the opposition cannot become very acute, since a point is reached

sooner or later at which the disaffected member will resign membership. But there are associations in regard to which this course is practically impossible. The crucial case is that of the State; for though at most times a man is free to transfer his allegiance to another State, not only are the practical difficulties great, but by the time he is mature enough to make the decision his habits are so formed and fixed that he will be irrevocably marked in his new country a stranger and a foreigner. It will never be to him what his own country might have been, and he will never be to it more than a friend. For this reason, when the community is the State, the opposition of the members to the community acquires a peculiar degree of bitterness and intensity. But the contrast in this respect between the State and other associations cannot be pressed far. The difference is only one of degree. Every association, in proportion to the range and importance of its activities and to the length of its duration, tends to assume for the individual member a quasi-compulsory character. It is only in their initiation that some are voluntary, others not. It is only in few and unimportant cases that membership can be resigned without some irretrievable loss.

Affection is expected to show itself in acquiescence and assistance, and the paradox that it is equally shown in resistance and criticism, though familiar in every-day

life, is apt, when stated, to look like one of those subtle theoretical evasions which most arouse popular indignation and distrust. A patriot, we are told, like a lover, will praise, and a persistent critic is no patriot. But in truth mere acquiescence is incompatible with love, and criticism is more characteristic of it than praise. Affection is exacting, and never reaches the end of its demands. Satisfied or unsatisfied, these demands are a sign of a special interest in the object of affection; and the accompanying actions, whether of assistance or of resistance, show the same predominant interest by their uniform reference to that object. Acquiescence is natural only to those who are affected, but are not interested, and is evidence of indifference. In the case of nations, the realisation of the ideal of democracy would make such indifference more exceptional than it now is. At present the acquiescence of most citizens in what is makes democracy a mere shadow in times of peace, and in time of war allows even the pretence of it to be entirely withdrawn. It is this acquiescence, miscalled patriotism by politicians when it seems to them to be useful, which is the worst enemy of democracy and of true patriotism. Those who governed this country during the five years of war were so afraid of exhibiting the inevitable differences of opinion both among themselves and in the country generally, that they dared not even express a policy, much less ask the country for a

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“mandate.” They achieved an imposing pretence of unity in the general election of 1918. But there can be no real unity until the differences are allowed expression. Where the alternatives offered are acquiescence and revolt, revolt is bound to become increasingly attractive. In such circumstances the more democracy is professed, the more unattainable is the reality of patriotism ; and criticism, denied its customary and legitimate expression, turns to bitterness and violence. Thus democracy and patriotism are themselves forced to breed disaffection and revolution.

Thus we have two extremes ; on the one hand, patriotism satisfied, glad to be active in what is recognised as the country's service ; on the other hand, patriotism dissatisfied, expressed in bitter opposition and revolt against the ruling principles and practice of the community. The common fate of most active patriots lies somewhere between these two extremes, approximating now to the one and now to the other, sustained by a sufficiency of fruitful service and social recognition. It is an advantage of the administrative device known as party government that it gives public recognition to the fact that opposition to the government of the day shows no lack of patriotism, but is on the contrary a public duty for those who do not agree with it. It implicitly rejects the crude demand for unanimity as a condition of patriotism, and makes prominent a form of

division which is not inconsistent with real unity. To some, even in England, but still more outside it, such divisions are shocking, since opposition to the administration seems to them always unpatriotic and sometimes treasonable. So a well-known German student of English institutions, Professor Hasbach,* in a recently published essay on Parliamentary Government, seeking to exhibit the evils of the party system, recalls "the treasonable behaviour of the Whigs during the North American Revolution." He might also have cited the "treason" of Cobden during the Crimean War, and of Liberals, led by Campbell-Bannerman and Lloyd George, during the War in South Africa. The toleration of such "treason" is a condition of democratic unity, and makes possible an active instead of a merely passive patriotism.

§ 6. ETHICAL VALUE OF THE PATRIOTIC COMPLEX

Patriotism is often praised and sometimes blamed; by many it is applauded as a virtue, by others execrated as a crime. Some regard it as a duty, or as giving rise to duties; others see in it only an obstacle to their ideal of human perfection. This diametrical opposition is only due in part to a difference in the meaning attached to the word, or to a refusal by the one party to consider that purest form of patriotism on which the eyes of the other are fixed. There is a real problem involved, set

* *Die Parlamentarische Kabinettsregierung.* 1919. P. 141.

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by the fact that the patriotic spirit is apparently exclusive. It is a devotion to a particular community, and, as such, seems to involve potential injustice to other similar communities. Since no obligation can lead to injustice, it would seem to follow from this that patriotism cannot be a duty, or a source of duties, but is at most a natural disposition, neither good nor bad in itself, but capable of good service when properly directed and controlled. It is therefore necessary to attempt a moral valuation of the patriotic spirit.

It is at once evident that if any duty is rightly associated with patriotism it can concern only service. Neither a man's affections nor his desires are directly in his control. It is not true that a man ought to like or ought to desire this or that ; or so far as it is true, it is so only so far as by acting in a certain way he may bring himself to like or desire these things. Thus all duty or obligation concerns directly action, and action alone. But of the three elements into which we have resolved the patriotic complex the third, service, alone is action ; and it alone, therefore, can be a matter of obligation. The question is thus simplified. What we have to ask is whether the citizen is under a moral obligation to serve the political community of which he is a member. If that question is answered, the question of the value of the affection and the desire which are characteristic of patriotism will present little difficulty.

When a man is admitted with his own consent to any club or society, whatever its objects and character may be, he is commonly supposed to lay himself under some obligation to the society of which he becomes a member. A certain minimum service, in the form of a money contribution, is usually required as a condition of membership; and often this is the only positive requirement which the society makes of its members. But this is not thought to exhaust the moral obligations incurred. These are less definite; but they do not appear to involve any duties to the other members of the club as individuals. A member is not required to give his fellow members any preference or special attention, even in those fields of action in which the society is directly interested. Of course, since he and they are members of the society, in helping to decide the action of the society, he will be directly affecting every member, himself included, in a way in which he will not be affecting non-members. But his obligation is to the society which the members compose, and seems to be fairly summed up in this, that, as a loyal member, he feels it to be his duty to perform his share of its common work, to be present at its meetings, give proper attention to its business, and perform, so far as other engagements permit, any special tasks which it may ask him to undertake. Now most societies live in a world of similars; and each of them may at any time

be in friendly or hostile relations, in competition or in co-operation, with any other. It is important to notice that the obligations of membership, as above defined, do not involve a man in any conflict with other similar societies or their members. If exclusion is involved, it is at least necessary and harmless. It is necessary because human time and capacity are limited; and it is harmless because it is the expression not of preference or partiality, but simply of place and position.

All who are not pure anarchists, violently objecting to every form of association, will probably admit most of what has just been said as true, in general, of societies which are voluntarily recruited. But some will urge that the State, or political association, has certain peculiarities which make all comparison with other societies inadmissible. First, membership is for the most part involuntary in origin; secondly, it claims to exist not for a limited purpose or time, like all others, but without restriction in time and for all purposes; thirdly, it claims absolute right over all that is within it and admits no superior court to which appeal might be made from its decisions. With regard to the first of these points, we have already seen that the distinction between voluntary and involuntary associations cannot be pressed far, and that the difference of the State from other forms of association in this respect is only one of degree. The more involuntary character of the political

association might therefore be held to make the duties of a citizen rather less binding on the individual than obligations incurred by membership of societies which he joined voluntarily ; but it would be difficult to go further than that. And even this could be met with the paradoxical corollary that, if so, an alien, who being of mature age, deliberately adopts British citizenship, would be under a stronger obligation to serve his new country than those who were British born. Nor does the supposed duty of service appear to be essentially modified by either of the other peculiarities attributed to the State. Very few associations expressly limit their own duration or activities, and if they do, it is as a rule in their own power to remove any such limitation. Each of them does in fact perform a limited number of services for its members, and new members join as a rule less in view of the articles of association (if any) than in the expectation of a continuance of such services. But the State, equally, undertakes at any time only a limited number of services, and can restrict or extend their range, at least in modern times, only by a certain recognised procedure, after much deliberation and with full publicity. Finally, every society claims to be sovereign over its members so far as its own affairs are concerned, and the denial of this claim by a member is regarded as revolt or revolution. A society which authorised appeal by a member to a power outside itself

would be declining its proper function of regulating the affairs of its members, as members, in relation to their common undertakings. The demands which the Society makes upon its members and the benefits which they get from it are not as a rule sanctioned or enforced by any law but its own. The State, therefore, is not peculiar in its claim to supremacy, and it is not peculiar in refusing to limit its functions. Does any relevant peculiarity remain ?

“ The State,” it may be said, “ is peculiar in that it rests on force.” If it were true, this would of course be conclusive ; for force can create no obligation. But it is not true. The State rests on will, and if it employs force or expresses itself as force, so does all will and so do all associations. It may be true that it is the only form of association which uses an army or a navy, and which punishes refractory members by imprisonment or death, but a State without an army or navy is not inconceivable, and in some non-political associations, e.g., athletic clubs, the disciplinary element is prominent.* Force, therefore, cannot be regarded as a distinctive property of the political association.

* Clearly the modern State, speaking generally, enjoys a monopoly within its area of certain forms of force. But force itself is no State monopoly. Every association tries to use force, in some form, against refractory members. And it is not inconceivable that a State should exist which did not possess the right to imprison or execute refractory citizens. The territorial basis of the State is the fact which is primarily responsible for its highly compulsory character.

“The State,” it may be said, “is peculiar in this : that, while everything in the world is included in a State and subject, potentially at least, to its laws and ordinances, no State is included in any wider community or is itself subject to regulation from without.” In view of treaties which settle the boundaries of States, and sometimes their right to declare peace or war, or their action in case of war, in view of protectorates, suzerainties, guaranteed neutralities, and other diplomatic devices, this statement clearly needs much qualification, if it can be accepted at all. For these are not pathological cases, or the kind of exception which proves the rule. They show conclusively that absolute independence is not as a matter of fact a uniform characteristic of existing States, and either we must deny that, for instance, Belgium, Poland, France, and Germany, are in certain respects States, or we must refuse to accept independence in this sense as a necessary attribute of a State. The second alternative is clearly right. What is necessary to a State is supreme authority over its members in their common undertakings. That the relations of States to one another should be continuously regulated by a higher authority, as they have been intermittently regulated by mutual agreements in the past, is in no way inconsistent with the notion of the State. The State, therefore, may itself be subject to regulation from without.

Every attempt, therefore, to establish a distinction in kind between the State and other forms of association, which will invalidate argument from them to it, has now broken down. The State is particularly large, it is particularly various both in composition and in its activities ; it is certainly at times, but by no means always or everywhere, particularly exacting. But it can claim from its members only what any other society can claim, some small compulsory contribution to the common work and needs ; and it can ask further, as they ask, that its members will accept the obligation to give it more than this, as opportunity and capacity may enable them.

The citizen who accepts this demand as in general just accepts it inevitably only as one obligation among others. There are family obligations, business obligations, the call of friends, churches, trade-unions, on his time and energies ; and the mutual adjustment of all these is a problem which cannot be settled in general or for all men, but only from day to day in each particular case. But the acceptance of such a general obligation means that the interests of the community to which it refers will be attended to where they are involved, that its affairs will at least not be neglected or ignored. This is the essence of patriotism, and in this sense alone can the fact of association give rise to any duties.

Patriotism, then, is the effective recognition by an

individual of the obligation of service involved in membership of a community, and primarily, of a community as politically organised in the form of a State. The special mystery and magic still attaching to the forms of political unity may be explained historically in various ways, but must in the end be due to the fact that they have in the past played a specially important part in the development of human life. They have certainly won for themselves, not only willing service, but also warm affection, in rulers and subjects alike, at almost all periods of history and under almost every form of constitution. Such sentiments are of course a help to service, and grow with it. Like all other sentiments they are in themselves neither good nor bad, and the action for which they provide inspiration and energy may be morally either good or bad. If patriotism is taken to mean the sentiment of affection, and not the fulfilment of the obligation of service (whether accompanied or not by affection), then it is plain that patriotism is not a merit or a duty, but a fact which is in itself of no more moral significance than the sentiments which are its direct opposite. If two people are thrown together they may like or dislike one another, but they are not given credit in the one event or blamed in the other. The affection of a man for the house in which he was born, though a pleasing trait, is in itself of no moral value ; and, if it conceals from him defects

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palpable to others, may be a positive hindrance to effective action. Similarly, the mere sentiment of affection for one's country may have mischievous results ; but it is not thereby proved immoral. It is a normal feature of a healthy and happy life. Service, on the other hand, is a duty, if it is taken to mean, not mere acquiescence in the decisions of the properly constituted authority, but the free contribution of an independent citizen to the collective strength and wisdom. And such service, as we have seen, may sometimes seem and be disservice. There is, and can be, no guarantee that actions of the purest patriotism will not appear unpatriotic to most or many. Browning shows us his "Patriot," not among the roses of his popularity, but on his way to the scaffold, appealing from the verdict of his countrymen to the judgment of God.

II

NATIONALISM

In the sentiment of nationality there is nothing new. It was one of the main keys of Luther's Reformation. What is new is the transformation of the sentiment into a political idea. Old history and fresh politics worked a union that has grown into an urgent and dominating force. Oppression, intolerable economic disorder, governmental failure, senseless wars, senseless ambitions, and the misery that was their baleful fruit quickened the instinct of nationality. First it inflamed visionaries, then it grew potent with the multitudes, who thought the foreigner the author of their wretchedness. Thus nationality went through all the stages. From instinct it became idea; from idea abstract principle; then fervid prepossession; ending where it is to-day, in dogma, whether accepted or evaded.

VISCOUNT MORLEY, *Politics and History*, p. 72.

§ 7. MEANING OF NATIONALISM, AS FACT AND AS THEORY

NATIONALISM has two senses. It stands in the first place for a force or tendency which has been very prominent in the history of Europe during the last few centuries. By degrees out of the Roman Empire, a vast and fairly homogeneous system of government, extending over the greater part of Europe and beyond it into other continents, has developed a group of large independent States, each of which claims to be, not an Empire, but a Nation. It stands, in short, for the force or tendency which is supposed to be responsible for the Nation-State. It is natural that the term should

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also be used, secondly, of the theory, principle, or ideal implicit in this historical development. No one thinker could hope to express finally or adequately a mass-movement of this kind. Nationalism, as an operative force, has had many apologists and many antagonists : as an ideal it has had one prophet, Mazzini. In his *Duties of Man*, and in other writings, he attempted to express the idea of the Nation, the idea of Nationality, the part which the Nation was capable of playing, if men would rise to the opportunity, in the progress of the human race. Much that is inconsistent with Mazzini's ideal has been credited, rightly or wrongly, to Nationalism ; and we must, therefore, be prepared to make a distinction, where necessary, between the principle and its practice.

Both as a movement and as a theory Nationalism is primarily concerned with the political groupings of men. But it is to the political unit or State, as we have seen, that patriotism is supposed mainly to attach itself. Both patriotism and nationalism are expressed in forms which are not political or not purely political ; but these are of secondary importance. Nationalism, therefore, presents itself to us as a theory as to the proper unit of government, and therefore of patriotism, and as a historical tendency to develop such units. The unit in question is, of course, the nation. There can be little doubt that the nation is the dominating political

idea of the present time ; that it is essentially a new idea, distinctive of the period through which we are passing ; and that to-day anyone who wishes to appeal to the patriotic feelings of his fellow men will tend to use this idea in preference to any other. " Nation " has acquired a prestige and popularity far in excess of its possible rivals, " State," " City," " County," " Province," " Region." It is the fundamental social and political fact of the present day.*

* If an illustration of the obvious is permitted, I would cite the following striking letter, which appeared in the *New Statesman* on March 15th, 1919. Though the word " Nation " is not so much as mentioned, the idea controls the whole argument.

THE STATE.

To the Editor of the ' New Statesman.'

" Sir,—Why do supporters of nationalisation of industries allow their case to be effectively prejudiced by the phrase ' The State ' ? To the average man ' The State ' stands for such unpleasant things as laws, taxes, criminal trials, and the like. Laws, taxes and trials are all necessary, but in the abstract they are not popular, and by clever manipulation individualists, capitalists and similar obsolescent people have succeeded in conveying to the average man the idea that a semi-Satanic personality resides behind ' The State,' a personality unhuman if not inhuman, and against which it behoves all decent people to break a lance.

" Suppose that all through the war we had talked about ' The State.' Suppose we had said to recruits : ' The State needs you ' ; to our men in the trenches : ' Stand fast for the State,' or had emblazoned over the graves of our dead, ' He died for the State.' What irresistible enthusiasm would have been called forth, what glamour of loyalty ! Would Nelson have won the battle of Trafalgar if he had told his sailors what ' The State ' expected of them ?

" And yet we fight in our wars for the same entity as that to which we nationalisers now appeal. Call it ' The State,' and we make a present to our adversaries of an incomparable strategical position. But call it ' England ' (or if our Scottish friends prefer, ' Britain '), say that England shall own her own industries, demand that the workers

§ 8. THE NATION AS FACT

What is a Nation ? The question requires a double answer, according as we adopt the plane of fact or the plane of theory. Let us look first at the facts. Here the question means, what is the general nature of the various masses of humanity which call themselves, and are regarded by others as justified in calling themselves, nations ?

It will be wise to take our own country first, since we know it best. For international purposes it is known as England ; but it consists of four " countries," England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, disposed on two islands,

shall toil not for the good of a private employer, but for the good of all England, and who shall withstand so splendid a battle-cry ?

" And it is a sincere cry. What does England mean to each one of us ? It means every man, woman and child we meet, whether known to us or unknown. It means that, were our industries nationalised, every miner, every railwayman, every sailor, would know that each stroke of work he put in was for them ; that the appeal to him to do his best came from every woman and child in his country, and that if he did not fail them, they for their part—the much-maligned ' State ' of our opponents, but in truth our own dear England—would stand by the men who worked for them. And men will still respond to the call to work for England and for the happier homes of all her children.

" Does this seem a small point to your readers ? I would urge that, such is the force of prejudice, it is a vital point which may mean the difference between victory and defeat, or, at least, the indefinite postponement of our cause. The love of our country, by which we chiefly mean the love of our countrymen, is a true thing, which the working men of England have in their hearts, and can be taught to possess still more. If they are themselves allowed the conditions of a happy and healthy life, they will give of their best for their countrymen, but not for a limited liability company.—Yours, etc.,

" SOLDIER."

and is officially described as the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. (The British Dominions Beyond the Seas must be left out of the reckoning for the present). Why is this area supposed to include one nation? Presumably because its inhabitants are believed to form a homogeneous group, inhabiting a continuous area of land and united by real bonds which are not created but merely recognised by the existing unity of political institutions. The various groups within this group—the English, the Scotch, the Welsh, the Irish—though different from one another, are yet more closely related and inter-connected with one another than with any similar group outside these islands. These four main groups are themselves often dignified with the title of nations; but it will be convenient to reserve the term nation for such groups as possess or claim independent political status. We shall, therefore, describe the United Kingdom as a nation composed of four sub-nations. But here we are met by the case of Ireland. Most Irishmen are profoundly dissatisfied with the analysis implied in this description, and with the political status which follows from it. Many Irishmen claim for their country the completely independent status of a nation; and there is no known criterion which will decide with certainty whether this claim is or is not justified. Thus if Ireland is included, there is considerable doubt whether the political entity commonly

referred to as England is a single nation. If Ireland is excluded, we have what is perhaps as well attested a case of nationality as any in the world. The area which remains has been united for many centuries ; its boundaries are clearly defined by the sea ; and though more than one language is spoken within it, English is understood everywhere. There is thus good reason for saying, of Great Britain at any rate, that it is a unity recognised rather than created by political institutions. But, of course, we do not need to remind ourselves that this island did not always feel itself thus one ; that historically we are a fusion of races ; and that political institutions have in the past largely assisted in producing the unity which now they recognise and register.

Turning to the continent of Europe, we find that in the west most of the existing political groupings can be justified on similar grounds. In most cases it can be urged with more or less plausibility that the population united forms a homogeneous social group, which, while it exhibits a certain variety, yet contains no group of any size which would be likely to combine better into another political group, or which is dissatisfied with its present position and demands independent status. From south to north, there is Spain and Portugal, France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, and the Scandinavian countries. Portugal might easily have been a Spanish Ireland, but history has determined otherwise.

Belgium contains at least three distinct languages, and is probably the case most difficult to justify on *a priori* grounds ; but this only shows how dangerous in these matters such considerations are. The people of Belgium are content to be united, and they are resolved not to accept fusion with any of their neighbours. Each of the other countries mentioned has a distinctive language, current almost universally in its territories ; and there can be little doubt that at the present time community of languages is the main bond and sanction of political unity. The recent spread of representative institutions has very greatly accentuated its importance. It is mainly the factor of language which prevents the political arrangements of Europe from seeming arbitrary and fortuitous.

Excluding the British Isles and Scandinavia, the test of language gives us in Western Europe three main facts, *viz.*, Spain, France and Germany. Of these there are lesser variants, two of which, Holland and Portugal, have succeeded in obtaining an independent status. Small pockets of alien speech are of course found here and there, as in Brittany and in the Basque districts of the Pyrenees, and these are simply incorporated in whatever unit is geographically most convenient. Finally, certain frontier districts remain, of mixed language and therefore of doubtful allegiance. These sometimes, like Belgium, possess sufficient

importance and resolution to acquire and maintain independence ; sometimes, like Slesvig-Holstein and Alsace-Lorraine, they are bones of contention between the neighbouring powers. In any case, they lead a troubled life.

The further east one travels in Europe the more difficult it becomes to reduce the problem to its elements in this way. The small peninsulas of Italy and Greece are two definite facts ; but in both cases the land frontier is hard to define, and both peoples have crossed the narrow seas to the east and claim the coast-line of districts inhabited by men of alien race and speech, And where else in eastern Europe is a land frontier that is beyond dispute ? The difficulty, accentuated by the disappearance of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the collapse of Russia, and embittered by centuries of warfare and misgovernment, is to find the main facts which have a right to govern the solution. The division of Europe into two hostile groups during the recent war, and the fact that the settlement is now being dictated by one of those groups, complicate the present position still further, and make it unlikely that any settlement arrived at now will be more than a temporary makeshift. The main political facts of the past in this region were Russia, Austria and Turkey. Of these the two last practically exist no longer ; and the first, though it cannot disappear in the same sense, is for the moment

in chaos. Out of Russia, we have reason to believe, will come in time a nation. For the rest, one thing seems quite certain ; and if true, it is of cardinal importance for our enquiry. It is impossible to suppose that any ingenuity in defining frontiers will avail to create in the enormous area that remains nations of the western European type. Nothing less than a hundred years of strong and settled government could do that. The nations of the West have each been forged slowly and painfully into a unity by long historical processes in which forcible unification has played an all-important part. That has not been the fate of our Eastern neighbours, and it is too late in the day to set such forces at work now. The independent nation-state was a possible type for the new Italy, even with some modification for modern Germany ; but if that is the only idea available for the reconstruction of Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, Jugo-Slavia, and the other Balkan States, it will lead straight to disaster. A new form of organisation is wanted, which will at once satisfy the particularism of the various racial and linguistic groups and make possible their close political and economic co-operation. Homogeneous social units of adequate size and satisfactory geographical disposition simply do not exist.

Before ending this rough survey of the facts, we ought to pay a moment's attention to the case of Switzerland. The mixture of races and the variety of language

is greater than in Belgium ; and the internal communications are very bad, while in Belgium they are very good. Still there is an analogy between the two countries in that both formed buffer-states between great Powers, with each of which they had some affinity. The surprising fact is that, though Switzerland might appear *a priori* to be a purely artificial unity, without any other bond than its bare and snow-capped mountains, its people have on the whole led as happy a life, and solved their own problems as successfully, as any political group in Europe. It may be doubted whether one is fully justified in calling the Swiss a nation ; but it cannot be doubted that this country of lakes and mountains has made its own distinctive contribution to the civilisation of Europe. And this fact is bound to give pause to the fanatical advocate of nationalism.

§ 9. THE NATION AS THEORY : MAZZINI'S CREED

We have next to consider the theory of the Nation, the idea which Nationalism asks us to realise.

Mazzini must be reckoned among the very few thinkers who have believed quite literally the truth of the saying that the voice of the people is the voice of God. It was the central article of his creed ; and if to it is added a profound conviction of the reality of progress and of the supreme value of association the rest follows

naturally. Here are some of his sayings. Humanity is "a being whose life is continuous," "a man that lives and learns for ever," "the Word, living in God." We discover the law of God, "article by article, line by line, according to the accumulated experience of the generations that have preceded us, and according to the extension and increased intensity of association among races, peoples and individuals." "No man, no people, and no age may pretend to have discovered the whole of the law." "Morality is progressive." Hence "I believe in Humanity, *sole* interpreter of the Law of God on earth." It is through association only that the Law is revealed and progress made possible. Thus divine inspiration is to be found, not in the solitary meditations of supremely gifted individuals, but in the collective manifestations of humanity. Association is the sacred and saving fact.

Mazzini recognised the value of many kinds of association. He was dissatisfied, for instance, with the capitalist organisation of industry, and was strongly attracted by the idea, active in the France of his time, that industry might be transformed into free and self-governing associations of producers. But the two essential forms of association to him were the family and the nation, and these were conceived symmetrically, the family being intended to do for the nation what the nation was intended to do for humanity. "Inspired

but not enchained by tradition," family and nation were the fundamental institutions which made possible the continuous development of human life and wisdom. As the family created the citizen, and made him free of the accumulated treasures of the national life, so the nation created men, conscious of man's past, critical of his present, hopeful of his future, and devoted to the service of humanity. The nations might be regarded as the families into which God had chosen to divide his people ; nationality as a device intended to make the service of humanity easier and more fruitful by means of division of labour and diversity of method. " You are Citizens," he wrote, " you have a Country, in order that in a given and limited sphere of action, the concurrence and assistance of a certain number of men, already related to you by language, tendencies, and customs, may enable you to labour more effectually for the good of *all men*, present and to come ; a task in which your solitary effort would be lost, falling powerless and unheeded among the immense multitudes of your fellow beings." He was, of course, aware that in practice the family might fail to produce citizens, and the nation might fail to produce servants of humanity ; that each might employ the strength which it owed to the devotion of its members, in competition not co-operation with other like associations, for its own aggrandisement ; each might be, in short, " a more or less enlarged egoism."

But to such perversion all human affection is liable ; and if you cut away the affection you lose the strength which it supplies. Better even the perversion, he would probably have said, than the total absence of the bond itself. But in truth the bond was a fact, and the only question was, for what purposes the power which it generated should be used.

All this was addressed to the people of Italy, not then or for many years after Mazzini wrote, politically united. In their case he could fairly appeal to the common language and the common traditions which united them ; he could reasonably urge, as Fichte had urged earlier (1806) in the parallel case of Germany, that Italy was a " natural " unit in comparison with the artificial divisions enforced by existing political arrangements. Mazzini himself spoke in similar terms of dismembered Poland, and did what he could to assist the agitation for its reconstruction. And he clearly regarded England and France as true nations. But it was not his concern to generalise ; and it is difficult to find any passage in his writings which makes it quite plain whether he conceived nationality as a principle capable of universal or only of partial application. Austria was for him the supreme case of a system of rule in open conflict with the national principle. He contrasts it with England. Destroy the English machine of State ; England remains, a fact " engraven, so to speak,

on the solid substance of the globe.” But “destroy the system of rule centralised at Vienna, and there remains nothing at all in nature answering to the name of Austria.” One wants to know what exactly was wrong with Austria. There is little doubt that he connected the observed cynicism and immorality of Austrian policy with its lack of the purifying national flame, and that he wished to free from the Austrian yoke the Polish and Italian districts of the south and north. These to him were clear cases. But what of the rest of that vast and mixed population? Did he think that a system of rule embracing a variety of races and languages was necessarily an affront to morality and civilisation? Probably not. Probably he would have said that, while a community so composed was necessarily at a disadvantage, the same circumstances which excused its existence might preserve and sustain it; might even in the end create the national bond which was lacking. We have the ideal, therefore, of a world in which all States are Nations and all Nations are States; but we have no guarantee that this ideal can be fully realised, and no formula for the doubtful and difficult case.

Two points are of special importance in Mazzini's presentation of the nationalist creed; the mutual dependence of nationality and democracy, and the internationalism of his outlook. These are of the greater importance

because they serve to distinguish his view from a multitude of other versions of the creed, and because they involve him in flat contradiction with many familiar manifestations of what we call the nationalist spirit. The connection with democracy is plain, and has been admitted by almost all the critics of nationalism. It is a double one. In the first place, in regard to the formation of states, nationalism affirms that a population which feels itself one, and asks to be politically united, shall be given the political unity which it demands. This is simply an extension of the democratic principle to govern the settlement of boundaries and of areas of government; it requires that states shall be (so to speak) self-formed, as democracy requires that they shall be self-governed. In the second place, in regard to the actual conduct of government, nationality is in a sense a necessity of democracy, since a consciousness of real unity in the population is more essential to democratic than to other forms of government. The obstacles presented by mixture of races and languages, or by any permanent and fundamental cleavage, become more acute the more democratic the methods of government become. It is not surprising, therefore, that the ideas of nationalism and of democracy have a close historical connection. These two ideas, with socialism, form, according to Lord Acton, the main contribution to political thought and action of the "revolutionary

period" in European History; and of the three nationalism was the last and the most subversive. But whether his analysis of the revolutionary movement is accepted or rejected, the connection between democracy and nationalism, both in theory and in fact, is beyond question. Nevertheless, there have been forms of nationalism, as we shall see, which have been definitely anti-democratic in character; and at the present time many of the most ardent believers in democracy are highly critical of the idea of nationality.

Mazzini's internationalism raises more doubtful questions. Is there any reason to believe that co-operation between States would be made easier or more fruitful if every State were a nation, and every nation a State? There are many at the present time who would take precisely the opposite view, and maintain that the present strength of national feeling is the main cause of the perpetuation of the mutual jealousy and suspicion of States, and the chief obstacle to the effective realisation of a League of Nations. It is easy to see that a population supremely conscious of its own nationality and profoundly convinced of its superiority to its neighbours and rivals will be the more easily led into war for the defence or extension of that nationality and will the more jealously guard its independent status. The aggressive character of Prussian nationalism

was partly due to a consciousness of the weakness of Prussia's eastern frontiers, and of the danger arising from the superior numbers and inferior civilisation of the Russians. No one who knew Germany could doubt that the fear of Russia was genuine and widespread, and many Germans were quite aware that their own ruling class was prepared to exploit this fear in order to produce war-feeling when required. Further, it is easy in a country like England to create prejudice against any proposal to erect a super-national authority by appealing to an Englishman's sense of the superiority of his own nation. Since England is clearly superior to France, Spain, Germany, Italy, and the rest, it is argued that an assembly comprising all the countries of Europe will be on a lower level than one which is purely British. It is from the blind prejudice of nationality, it will be said, that such arguments derive their force.

All this is true. It is true, further, that the history of the nineteenth century shows nationalism as the tool of chauvinists and imperialists rather than as a cause of peace and co-operation. But it does not follow that Mazzini's principles are unsound, or his ideals self-contradictory. It was not a friend, but an enemy of nationalism, who said of it that it "forbids to terminate war by conquest," and empire is based on conquest. But the problem must be reserved for later treatment.

§ 10. CRITICISMS OF NATIONALISM.

The older critics of nationalism were alarmed chiefly at the threat to the existing order of things which they detected in the new principle. Nationality was to them a subversive principle, which threatened great Empires with destruction ; and their fear was proportioned to their belief in such units of government as a civilising force. Lord Acton* was perhaps mainly moved by the danger to Catholic Austria. Lecky† hints plainly at a danger to the British Empire. After noting, as a limitation of the principle, that “ scarcely anyone would apply it to the dealings of civilised nations with savages,” he further asserts that :

“ Every great Empire is obliged, in the interest of its imperial unity, and in the interest of the public order of the world, to impose an inflexible veto on popular movements in the direction of disintegration, however much it may endeavour to meet local wishes by varying laws and institutions and compromises.”

He urges, with questionable justice, that if the Americans of the North had been true Nationalists they would not have been able to fight the Southern States on the question of secession. He also sees danger

* See the essay of Nationality (1862), reprinted in the posthumous volume, *History of Freedom*.

† *Democracy and Liberty* (1896), ch. V.

for Belgium and Switzerland, and in general to that "belief in the sovereign authority of the State and in the indissoluble character of national [sic] bonds" which gives stability to political arrangements. He himself compares the question with that of marriage and divorce. As the marriage tie loses stability if divorce is known to be easily obtained, so political groupings lose authority if they are believed to be subject to re-arrangement on demand. Lord Acton's argument is more subtle, but similar in its main tendency. Nationalism is the rejection of law and authority. "There is," he says, "no principle of change, no phase of political speculation conceivable, more comprehensive, more subversive, or more arbitrary than this."

These critics were brought up in that curious combination of belief in the State and distrust of State action which was characteristic of nineteenth century liberalism. John Stuart Mill belonged to the same tradition. He, however, writing within a year of Lord Acton, accepted in general the nationalist claim.* The sentiment of nationality constitutes a "*prima facie* case" for a separate government. "This is merely saying that the question of government ought to be decided by the governed. One hardly knows what any division of the human race should be free to do if not to determine with which of the various collective

* *Representative Government* (1861), ch. XVI.

bodies of human beings they choose to associate themselves." And he observes that the case is only strengthened by free institutions. Nevertheless, he also recognises that the dislike and distrust of foreigners is a savage and uncivilised trait, and that "whatever really tends to the admixture of nationalities, and the blending of their attributes and peculiarities in a common union, is a benefit to the human race." This shows that he was aware of the dangers arising from national particularism, on which Acton dwells so strongly. At bottom the difference between Mill and Acton seems to be this, that Mill believed in democracy, while Acton did not. Both, of course, had in mind mainly the Italian renaissance; and, though modern developments of the nationalist spirit were hidden from them, Acton must be given credit for foreseeing the danger that nationalism triumphant might assert itself in tyranny and oppression against alien minorities within its territories.

At the present day it is not disintegration, or even oppression, which is chiefly feared from nationalism. It is not the weakening of the bond of State, but its excessive strengthening which is apprehended. Jingoism, militarism, aggressive imperialism—these are now said to be the fruits of the awakened national spirit. Professor Zimmern,* speaking in the second year of the recent war, could even go so far as to say that the

* *Nationality and Government*, esp. ch. II.-IV.

principle of nationality was "one of the most formidable and sinister forces on the side of our enemies, and one of the chief obstacles to human progress at the present time." He argues that nationality is only a sound and safe principle if wholly divorced from the State and restricted to the social and educational sphere. Government, in his view, should be based on nothing narrower than common humanity : but education requires a more definite foundation than this. The necessary background can only be supplied, outside the home, in the customs and traditions of the race. In education, therefore, nationalism is both necessary and harmless. He writes as a Jew, with the problem of the Jews, scattered over the world throughout all countries, in his mind, and with an eye to the American problem how to fuse into a single solid whole the heterogeneous overflow of Europe. The Jews, he thinks, are a nation, though for many centuries they have not formed a State ; and similarly the immigrants into the United States may avoid the demoralisation which awaits the *déraciné*, if each group is trained in its own home-traditions. It is not necessary that a brand-new American nationality should be forced upon them, with the waving of flags and the singing of patriotic songs. They will be better citizens if they are encouraged to bring with them to their new home the familiar treasures of the old.

It will be observed that the two lines of criticism

above sketched are to some extent mutually destructive. The opposition may be put in a sentence. By the first nationalism is felt to make empire impossible ; by the second nationalism is supposed to lead directly to imperialist aggression. And since a State which is also a nation is by definition one and homogeneous, and therefore necessarily not an empire, it might seem that the second line of criticism has completely missed its mark and confused two things, nationalism and imperialism, which, though they have happened to occur together, yet have no real connection with one another. But we all know that in fact this is not true. The nation of our day wants to be an empire, and the more conscious it is of its nationality, the more it wants this. The fact of British nationality may be something of which an Englishman is proud and conscious ; but that pride and consciousness does not necessarily involve any doubts as to the legitimacy of our Indian empire, however loudly the Indians may proclaim that they too are a nation. A group proud of its own national characteristics and achievements is not thereby forced to recognise the justice of a similar pride in another group, still less to refuse to undertake the economic exploitation of undeveloped areas, inhabited by coloured races, for the sake of an airy generalisation that every considerable and relatively self-contained unit of population has an absolute right to determine its own manner of

life and form^s of government. A nation, like an individual, is apt to refuse to apply to others the measures which it applies to itself. It will fight for its own independence, and yet deny the right of peoples it has conquered to fight for theirs. "Never deny your sister nations," said Mazzini. National conceit denies their existence. The intoxicated believer sees only his own nationality, unique, overpowering, incomparable. He is filled with missionary zeal. He will spread it over the world ; force its treasures on "the lesser breeds without the law." Thus self-conscious nationality helps to lend a cloak of philanthropy to Empire. Groups struggling for independence within the nation are ruthlessly suppressed ; and the religion of the "white man's burden" sanctifies the duty of seeking sunny places for the surplus capital of the home country. When all is finished, nationality is no longer the bond of union of a single homogeneous community, but the title to supremacy of a governing race. To Mazzini nationality was a people's special ways of thought and action, a natural and homely thing, creating neighbourliness and forbearance ; to the poet of Empire, to Swinburne, Kipling, and their lessor imitators, it is a bright and baleful star whose glory is to darken the lesser lights and dominate the heaven. In Swinburne's "Trafalgar Day," England is no mere local fact, but the glory of the whole earth :

As Earth has but one England, crown^o and head
 Of all her glories till the sun is dead,
 Supreme in peace and war, supreme in song,
 Supreme in freedom, since her rede was read,

Since first the soul that gave her speech grew strong
 To help the right and heal the wild world's wrong,
 So she hath but one royal Nelson, born
 To reign on time above the years that throng.

This drunkenness of national self-conceit, of which we are now frightened, will not be prevented by any refutation of the theory of nationalism. Reasoning in any case is of little avail against sentiment and prejudice ; but it throws away at the start its best chance of effect, if it begins, as it too often does, by denying the fact of nationality altogether, or by assuming that men can be educated to ignore it in practice. It will do best to accept national feeling, where it exists, as a sound basis and justification of political unity and self-government. It will then be in a position to bring home to militant nationalism the hypocrisy and self-contradiction involved in an attitude which denies to other groups that which it claims for its own. After all, the Irishman and the Indian get more comfort from Mill and Mazzini than from Marx and Professor Zimmern. The sober nationalism of Jaurès did more to hinder the European war than the theoretic anti-nationalism of the German socialists. If our States are too large, let us try to make them smaller ; if they are too proud, let us try to prick their pride. But nothing will be gained by any attempt

to ignore the truth asserted by the nationalist, that political boundaries must be determined primarily by the wishes and affinities of the populations concerned.

§ II. NATIONAL POLICY—IMPERIALISM AND DEMOCRACY

In Mazzini's pages the nationalist creed is combined with an ardent faith in democracy ; but in many of its practical developments nationalism meets democracy in open conflict. Germany before the war was strongly nationalist, but not democratic ; and in countries like England and France, in which democracy had become part of the official creed, it was the anti-democratic parties that proclaimed most loudly their nationalism. We have had for many years an organ of militarism and imperialism called *The National Review*, and we are now threatened with a " National Party " of similar complexion. The name of the " National Democratic Party " is also significant. This branch of opinion seems to have got into the habit of claiming a monopoly both of nationalism and of patriotism. The claim is of course fraudulent ; but it will repay us to consider rather more fully the circumstances which give rise to it.

At one time it was feared that the acceptance of the principle of nationality might lead to perpetual crusades by powerful nations on behalf of submerged and oppressed nationalities, and so permanently endanger

the peace of Europe. The troubles which accompanied the formation of united Italy and the nineteenth century settlement of the Balkans, gave some colour to this fear. Nor is the danger past even now in Eastern Europe. The evidence does not warrant much fear of disinterested action by Great Powers on behalf of oppressed peoples ; national heroism of that kind soon reaches its limits. The danger is rather that the rivalries of the Powers will find in the national principle a ready and popular pretext for a conflict desired on other grounds. A revived Russia may revive the Pan-Slavist propaganda against a resurgent Turkey or Austria, or an imperialist Italy or Greece, inspired not so much by the hope of any direct gain for itself as by the desire to cripple a rival. Nationalism, by bringing the race-relationships of peoples into prominence, lends a certain popularity to a conflict in which a racially related people is supported against another power. On similar grounds or pretexts, at the time of the last South African War, the German Government was on the point of taking up the cause of the Boers against the British. To such fears, however, the nationalist has a fairly complete answer. He will admit that, while political boundaries remain arbitrary and rest upon force, nationality must always be a disturbing factor, inevitably affording pretexts for the aggressive action of power against power. But he will say that the only possible safeguard here is the fuller

realisation of the principle of nationality itself. If political boundaries are everywhere based on nationality, or if (which comes in the end to the same thing) the principle of self-determination is universally admitted and acted upon, the spring of all these intrigues and agitations will be removed. Nationality may cause disturbance of frontiers, re-arrangement of units of government, but it does at least offer a prospect of finality in such re-arrangements which no rival principle offers. When the principle of nationality fully prevails, there will be no oppressed and rebellious racial groups.

It is obvious that the dangers just described arise from the existence of nationality unsatisfied ; and the defence amounts to this, that they would be removed if nationality were everywhere satisfied. This is plainly true ; but the defence cannot be accepted as complete until we have assured ourselves that nationality satisfied does not bring with it dangers as great. It is on this ground at the present day that nationality is chiefly attacked. It is the " national " policy of an established State which is distrusted ; and it is to this that we must now turn.

A national policy in this sense means, of course, a policy of national selfishness and aggrandisement, a " sacred egoism," made sacred, presumably, by the sentiment of nationality. Internally its effort is to strengthen and tighten the national bond by every means

in its power ; externally to make the nation feared or " respected " by a bold and firm policy, backed by a sufficiency of military force, and so obtain for it a share in the riches of the undeveloped portions of the earth's surface. It appeals to the cruder forms of patriotism. Its love of country turns readily into hatred of the foreigner, its desire for prosperity into competition for territory ; and the duty of service is interpreted as a duty to maintain national unity by unquestioning assent to every decision of government. The appropriate political ideas are instilled into the citizen by the machinery of public education and by compulsory military service ; and direct inducement not to surrender these ideas in later life is easily supplied if the State keeps control over appointments in some of the main professions, especially the teaching profession, and is liberal in its rewards to right-thinking leaders of opinion. Such a policy is necessarily the antithesis of nineteenth century liberalism. In the interest of national unity it will ruthlessly suppress dissentient groups within the nation, and will be prepared for whatever sacrifice may be necessary of the principle of free speech and thought. It will develop a national economy with all its machinery of tariffs, subsidies, and concessions. In every sphere it will tend to penalise the foreigner, in its colonies by frank preference for the trade and capital of the home country, at home by interposing obstacles to

immigration and naturalisation. The rulers of Germany perceived further that a certain measure of what is called State Socialism is of assistance to the objects of this policy, which are to make nationality overwhelmingly important to the citizen and so strengthen the hands of government. This leads straight to war, not merely because a strong government will tend to show its strength by threatening and provoking war, and will seek to increase its strength by piling armament on armament and training every available man in the use of arms, but more than all because war is the final proof of the value of strong government and of the importance of nationality. In time of war citizens are reduced to a proper dependence on their rulers, and men and women lose all civil rights, are imprisoned, even wounded and killed, for no other reason than that they are of another nation and owe allegiance to another State. War has no doubt its dangers and disadvantages, but, in the current phrase, it is the "acid test."

It may be doubted whether any country has ever been able to carry out such a policy in its completeness. In some countries it has been more dominant, in others less ; now this element, now that, has come to the front, with the ebb and flow inevitable in human affairs. But it cannot be denied that certain sections of the programme have been operative for many years in the politics of every one of the powers engaged in the late

war, and that they have survived into the years of peace. They are a present danger. While our civilisation cannot discover the cause and cure of these tendencies its very existence is imperilled. But the diagnosis is quite simple. Much of this is simply absolutism up-to-date, seeking support, where it has always found it, in human ignorance and superstition. The divine right of kings is dead (though William II of Germany had not observed it), but the divine right of nations has a fashionable air. If the nation can be deified without serious concession to the claims of democracy, governments will be assured of an intensity of popular support unparalleled in history. The difficulty is to intensify nationality without creating democracy; and it may be that this is in the long run an impossible task. Still the attempt is made and does for a time succeed, as we know well. War, and the fear of war, between nations is the main factor making for its success. This sham nationalism, allied with a sham socialism and a sham democracy, and resting on the primitive distrust of the foreigner, lives in the end by war.

The cure, then, is obvious. Remove or sufficiently relax the danger of war, and establish genuine democracy. Democracy is the child of peace, and we know by experience that in time of war it ceases to exist. Democracies will do foolish things. In the present phase of opinion

they would be only too likely to discriminate against foreigners and to fall into many of the other specious absurdities committed by their present rulers. They might add to these other fresh absurdities of their own. But they do not love war or military training, and they have a proper distrust of strong government. The worst kinds of internal oppression and exploitation they simply cannot commit. It is certain that, separated from democracy, nationality is a most dangerous principle. It is probable that, allied with democracy, its worst dangers would be removed. It is highly improbable that nationality can be deprived, as Professor Zimmern would desire, of all political significance. It will remain for the present a cardinal political fact. The only practical course is to accept this fact, to recognise its value, and to work, where we can, for the realisation of Mazzini's ideal of the democratic nation.

THE SOCIETY OF NATIONS

You are all soldiers in one army . . . God alone has the plan of battle, and He at length will unite you in a single camp, beneath a single banner.

MAZZINI, *Duties of Man*, ch. IV.

§ 12. BARBARIAN AND FOREIGNER—THE PROBLEM.

IN the Dialogue of Plato called the *Statesman*,* the leader of the discussion accuses his interlocutor of an error in classification. He is asked to explain. "The error," he says, "was just as if someone who wanted to classify the human race were to divide them up after the fashion which prevails in this part of the world. Here they cut off the Hellenes as one species, and all the other species of mankind, which are innumerable and have no ties or common language, they include under the single name of barbarians; and because they have one name they are supposed to form a single species." Later he adds an illustration: "Some wise and understanding creature, such as a crane is reputed to be, might in imitation of you make a similar division, and set up cranes against all other animals, to their own

* 262-3. Jowett's *Plato*, Vol. IV., p. 458-9 (translation slightly altered).

special glorification, at the same time jumbling together all the others, including man, under the appellation of brutes." The speaker was a visitor to Athens from one of the Greek settlements in Southern Italy, and perhaps he felt and resented the suspicion that one who came from those distant regions must be a barbarian, or at least soiled by contact with barbarians. He complains that this division into Greeks and barbarians is not a reasonable point of departure for the study of human affairs.

The citizen of every modern State performs a similar bisection or dichotomy upon the body of humanity. There are his own people and there are foreigners, the one familiar, intelligible, reasonable ; the other strange, remote, incalculable, uncouth. Englishmen who go to live in places like South Africa, where races are mixed, are forced to attempt some rudimentary classification of the varied mass of foreigners. A coloured man is not a foreigner at all, but a black or a nigger, and among whites he recognises a main distinction between " Dutchmen " and " Dagoes." But to the mass of men who have no contact with coloured races and do not live near a frontier, the supreme and overriding distinction, the point of departure in all thought that travels beyond their own Society, is the distinction between their own people and the foreigner. This distinction is in some ways more unreasonable than the one criticised in Plato's Dialogue. Greece or Hellas was not the name

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of any political unit, but stood for a civilisation, united by a common language, and scattered in small independent communities along the Mediterranean seaboard. The non-Greek populations, with which these communities were immediately in touch, were in general at a much lower level of social and political development. There was therefore some excuse for distrust and depreciation of the barbarian. There is no similar justification for the undertone of contempt with which the word foreigner is commonly used.* And there is more danger in such an attitude : for with us the distinction is political. Our countries are what Greece was not, solid and ambitious powers ; on whose ability to live in peace and friendliness with one another the happiness of the western world largely turns. Thus the patriotism which binds men to the State has reinforced the sense of nationality which joins together men of common language and traditions : and the resulting divisions are embittered by the memories of rivalry and warfare, of the bluff and boasting, the deceit and double-dealing, of generations of patriotic statesmen. Instead of a comparatively innocent racial pride, justified on the whole by the facts, we have the sensitive vanities

* In the summer of 1914 an eminent English general, addressing a School O.T.C. after an inspection, told them that their hair was too long ; it made them look like "foreigners or civilians." In fact, of course, men's hair is habitually cut shorter in most European countries than in England.

and incompatible ambitions of a number of large communities, inter-dependent and inter-related in a thousand ways, but each jealously guarding its exclusiveness, each strong enough to be a potential danger to the rest, and each convinced that the cause of civilisation is bound up with its own prosperity and aggrandisement. It might seem that, as compared with the Greeks of the fourth century before Christ, we have lost, not gained ; that the common dichotomy has only become more absurd and pernicious in the course of its history.

This sets the problem which we have now to face. Accepting patriotism as the duty to serve the State with a free man's service, accepting nationality as the determinant of State boundaries and as the natural complement and ally of democracy in government, we have to consider the resulting relations of the groups so constituted. There is, of course, a short way out of this difficulty. We are often urged to put aside patriotism and nationality as childish things, unfit for grown and educated men ; we are told that until this is done there is no hope that any international organisation can be anything but a covert scramble for power between the nations.* But we are already committed to a different

* This appears to be a very widespread opinion, at any rate in the middle classes, at the present time, though of course the conclusion usually drawn is not that patriotism and nationality must go, but that international organisations have no future. More than once recently I have taken part in examinations in which questions raising this point have been set. At least nine out of ten of the schoolboy candidates thought patriotism a serious obstacle to a League of Nations.

view. We cannot see our way to dispensing either with patriotism or with nationality. If, therefore, we are to help to build a wider organisation than that of the nation-state, it must be a society of nations ; and if such an organisation is to have real life and success, it must not merely not conflict with state-patriotism ; it must actually enlist this patriotism in its service. We have to convince ourselves that patriotism and national feeling can help in the foundation of an international order, and that the traditional dichotomy, so far as it is necessarily involved in these attitudes, may at least be rendered harmless and inoffensive. In short, our question is this. Given nations, or political units approximating to nations, what sort of a world will they, or might they, form ?

§ 13. THE BASIS OF GOVERNMENT. TWO ALTERNATIVES FOR THE SOCIETY OF NATIONS.

It must be taken for granted that every nation will in the main seek its own prosperity and advancement. All that one can hope is that these will not be too crudely conceived. Actions of generosity or self-abnegation are quite conceivable, but they will always be exceptional. It is therefore absurd to suppose that an international order can be made by appeals to the moral feeling of mankind. This is not cynicism ; it is common sense. Man cannot live by moral heroism ;

and before he can do anything else, he has to live. An organisation based upon nothing but moral and humanitarian sentiments has no roots. It could at most enjoy snatches of life in favourable conjunctions of circumstance. What is continuous and calculable in the life of communities, as in that of individuals, is the steady pull of the economic interest ; and on this in the last resort all government, all permanent organisations must be based. Before all else an organisation must pay.

The institution called the State (which may stand for government in general) is firmly rooted, if any is ; and we may therefore be certain that it pays, or has hitherto paid. It should help us to arrive at a possible form for an international order if we first consider what is the secret of its success. One of the first English writers who tried to answer this question, Thomas Hobbes, said that government was the only alternative to the endless warfare of man with man, which follows naturally, in the absence of government, from the desire of each individual for his own prosperity and advancement. Such warfare unchecked would reduce men to a state of utter misery and destitution. A century later, John Locke saw the secret of government in the provision that no man is to be a judge in his own cause. Both of these statements have a substantial truth, and fundamentally they are in agreement. When men quarrel and there is no third party authorised to intervene

on their invitation or without it, war results, and in war each is a judge in his own cause. But the institution of a third party, an umpire* or arbitrator, plainly does not prevent war, in this general sense of unlimited competition ; it only provides a machinery for cutting it short. If government consisted only of courts of arbitration, it might be an occasional, even a frequent convenience ; but it would not be the necessity which nearly all men now think it. The State in fact intervenes in private disputes not as an arbitrator but as a judge, declaring to the disputants the will and practice of the community, and enforcing its declarations where necessary. The advance lies in the existence of an enforceable will and practice, by inference from which individual rights can be determined and disputes thus avoided. Arbitration is occasioned by a dispute, and the umpire's vision is more or less narrowly confined to the matter of the dispute. Law puts whole classes of questions beyond the region of dispute ; and the crimes, wrongs, and differences actually brought into court are as nothing to the disputes and discomforts which law by its existence prevents. For law exists outside courts and independently of them, while arbitration exists only in them.

* " Umpire " is Locke's word. In his *Civil Government*, Bk. II., ch. VII., he seems to think of government primarily as existing for the purpose of settling disputes. But this is, of course, not the whole of his account of government.

The expression of a common will in the form of law is made possible by a rough and ready empirical discrimination between matters of public, and matters of merely private, concern. The distinction can only be temporary and empirical. To decide in general and for all communities what matters belong to either class would be impossible, and any attempt to erect the reigning distinction into a theory (such as J. S. Mill seems inclined to make in his *Liberty*) is therefore certain to be a failure. But in practice discrimination is not hopelessly difficult. In one matter after another unlimited competition between private individuals and corporations is found unsatisfactory. Sometimes, as in the England of the industrial revolution, the community finds itself threatened with disaster ; sometimes, as in the case of private tram and water companies in modern times, it is led to act merely by small inconveniences or by the perception that the public interest demands something which the motive of private profit will not supply. In either case the result is similar. The sphere of government is extended. Private competition in a particular region is either limited or altogether suspended. Factory legislation throws its ample net over the private employer of labour, and municipal trams and water come into being as communal monopolies. In general, if private competition in any sphere gives rise to sufficient inconvenience, and that

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inconvenience appears to be removable by common action, the appropriate action tends to be taken, and governments with their apparatus of law, justice and administration, exist to take it on behalf of the community. It follows naturally that when a government wishes to break out in a new direction, to regulate factories for the first time or in fresh ways, or to administer directly some business, like coal-mining, which has hitherto been in private hands, the burden of proof is with it. It has to show that the existing methods are irremediably unsatisfactory. For the same reason, its action, whether considered necessary or unnecessary, is commonly regarded as "interference." Governments, when they encroach in this way on private enterprise, are interfering with an established right or vested interest, deducible from the laws which their innovations disturb.

Apart from a few theoretical anarchists, whose proposed alternative is rather an aspiration than a considered plan, and in spite of much difference of opinion as to the proper forms and organs of government, everyone is agreed that government, in some such sense as this, is a remunerative investment. To the question, What is the most suitable area of government? not much thought has been devoted, and practice has differed widely in different places and at different times. Analysis of practice is complicated by the fact that there have always been governments within governments.

Even in the Greek city the parts often enjoyed a certain independence ; and in modern times organisations which to everything outside them are single wholes, may be composed of parts which, as in Germany or the United States, claim to be themselves States. This means that in practice the functions of government tend to be divided between the central authority, which speaks for the whole area, and locally restricted authorities, which divide up this area between them. But no two countries agree in the relation established between the central and local authorities, or in the fashion and degree of independence allowed to the latter ; some, like France, allow them very little independence. Thus political practice recognises different areas of government for different purposes ; and this makes it difficult to speak of the area of government in general terms. We may, however, say that an area is under one government when and so far as its people is able to act as a whole in some departments of policy, internal and external, and when all authorities within it, whatever their relation, derive their powers from a single source. The geographical areas called Germany, Switzerland, and the United States, are plainly each under one government in this sense ; but the British Empire is seen to possess unity only in a very slight degree, since the self-governing Dominions are independent of London in much of their external relations (*e.g.*, in regard to

tariffs), while the people of the non-self-governing territories are definitely subject communities, not forming an integral part of the whole. Further, the shadow of unity of government which exists is made still more unsubstantial by the fact that the responsible government in London, in which the central control is vested, is representative only of the people of the British Isles, and has therefore no moral authority to interfere with the action of the Dominions. Their peoples have no access to it, and it has practically no access to them, except through their governments. This fact sharply differentiates the British Empire from all Federal States. For in every Federal State the central authority has direct communication with, and is directly responsible to, the peoples which form the federation.

Leaving empires out of account, but including federations, we may say that history records a fairly constant tendency towards the effective enlargement of the area of government. Not only have larger areas been brought under a single government, but central authorities have tended to increase their range of legislative and administrative action. But the process of enlarging the area of government seems now to have reached an end, at least for the time being. The principle of nationality, though it helped the unification of Germany, has on the whole tended rather to the increase than to the diminution of the number of independent

governments. Out of Turkey and Austria-Hungary have been created, in its name or with its sanction, a number of comparatively small independent States ; and critics of nationality, beginning with Lord Acton, have appealed, in the name of progress, against nationality on this ground. Professor Zimmern,* for instance, says : " Sympathy with small nationalities has led many unthinking people to a wholly unjustified admiration for small States, regardless of the fact that, for all practical purposes, they are as great an anachronism in the large-scale world of to-day as the stage-coach and the sailing-ship, and other relics of a vanished past."

These are some of the facts and principles which have to be taken into account in considering the possibilities of a formally organised Society of Nations. They suggest a number of alternatives. The hypothesis of an Empire of the West under the rule of America, † or of some European power, may be dismissed. Like all empire, it would have an irreconcilable enemy in the nationalism and patriotism of every subject people. Apart from this, two main lines of development are possible. The nations which are able and willing to form the Society might be content to establish a common

* *Nationality and Government*, p. 71.

† It is interesting to note that this idea of an American conquest of Europe occurred to Fichte in 1806. He used the hypothesis as an argument in favour of the unification of Germany.

court of arbitration for the peaceful settlement of mutual disputes, backed perhaps by some kind of permanent alliance against enemies outside the group. Or they might be willing to go further, and attempt to bring their territories for some purposes under a single government. In this case they would probably associate on some federal basis. Our next task is to examine these two alternative possibilities.

§ 14. (i.) A LEAGUE OF GOVERNMENTS.

The first alternative is, on paper at least, familiar, since it is in substance the plan embodied in the existing Covenant of the League of Nations. The Covenant institutes for the nations which adopt it a permanent machinery for the settlement of disputes among them by arbitration, backed by a permanent alliance against aggression from without. There are phrases in the Covenant which contain suggestions of a more drastic plan ; but it was assumed, rightly or wrongly, by the framers of the Covenant, that no nation would tolerate any interference with its "sovereignty," and this assumption excluded the possibility of conferring on the League any of the essential attributes of a government. By Article 23, however, the members of the League undertake to "establish and maintain the necessary international organisation" for the maintenance of fair and humane conditions of labour, and also to "entrust

the League with the general supervision over" the armament trade and certain other matters. Article 24 provides that the League may take over existing international bureaux or commissions, and shall control any such bureaux established in the future. The registration of treaties (Article 18) may be regarded as incidental to the function of arbitration; but these permanent bureaux, in which the suggested labour organisations may perhaps be included, fall outside the notions of arbitration and alliance. On the other hand, since the bureau occupies only the position of an adviser of the various nations concerned, it is no less clear that its function is not government. This side of the League's work is a natural and valuable extension of the possibilities of voluntary co-operation between nations, which was already before the war a familiar fact in such matters as copyright. The advance lies in the provision made for the consideration, not merely of matters which occasion disputes between nations, but of common problems, of difficulties with which each government has to grapple in its own territory. On this side, therefore, the Covenant of the League may be said to contain, as it were in embryo, that notion of a common will and policy which is the backbone of government; but the absence of power to enforce this will leaves it in the embryo stage.

Another suggestion of a wider conception of the

League is contained in the provision for the government of certain territories by a member of the League under a mandate (Article 22). Principles and methods of government are to be laid down by the League and enforced upon the mandatory member. The territories concerned are those "which are inhabited by peoples not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world," but only if, in consequence of the late war, new rulers have to be found for them. Since the nations victorious in the war have already succeeded in arranging for the government of most of these territories without reference to the League, the power of mandate is not likely to be of much effect for some time to come. If vested interests had been less tenderly treated, and if the relation of the League to the Supreme Allied Council had been more carefully defined, this article of the Covenant would have been a new departure of the very first importance. Even as things are, much may come of it ; but it is equally possible that it will turn out to be an empty form. Anyhow, the power vested under it in the League is certainly of the nature of government. The independence of the constituent nations is actually limited, so far as they administer mandates under the League ; but, in the first place, it is empire,* and not government proper, which is in

* That is to say, subject communities. Government proper, however absolute it may be, is never a control imposed upon a community by another community in which it is not included

question, and in the second place, all existing rights remain unaffected. Thus the new conception is introduced in very tentative fashion.

It is unnecessary to enter into further detail as to the Covenant of the League. Our object is not to criticise the Covenant, or to suggest possible lines of amendment, but simply to define in general the relation established between the nations which have adopted it. We have probably said enough to show what the general conception is, which is embodied in the Covenant. The new organisation does not replace or render unnecessary any part of the existing machinery of the States concerned ; it is something super-added to that machinery, which is left entirely untouched. Embassies, foreign offices, and foreign secretaries retain precisely the positions which they held before. For them and their governments the League provides a permanent possibility of advice, an occasional resource in a difficulty, and certain obligations, analogous to those entailed by ententes and alliances in the past, which should exert a continuous influence on policy. It follows logically from this conception that the nations present themselves to the League as units or individuals, since the League is external to them.* Hence they have access to the League, and the League to them, only through their governments.

* " In relation to what is external to it, it [the body politic] becomes a simple being, an individual." Rousseau, *Social Contract*, I., vii.

It has often been suggested that the Covenant should have made provision for the representation of peoples as well as of governments in the parliament of the League. President Wilson is said to have supported this view. If those who framed the Covenant had intended to institute a super-national government, they would no doubt have made such provision ; but in that case the representation of governments would have been unnecessary, just as it has been proved unnecessary in existing federal constitutions. Since their ideas were rather those of alliance and arbitration, they were consistent in avoiding this complication. For these purposes the representation of governments is essential, and any popular assembly they might have devised could have existed only in a purely advisory capacity. A popularly elected assembly would give an opening to determined minorities in the larger countries which cannot logically be given them under the present Covenant. All that could be granted without confusion is the opportunity of airing grievances ; and the value of this is doubtful when there is no concurrent responsibility for remedying them.

This, then, is one alternative—a League in which each nation is represented by its existing government, standing for a definite policy, a League which advises and so influences policies in their formation, which mediates, and so breaks the harshness of their oppositions,

which arbitrates and conciliates, and so ends and compromises their occasional deadlock, a League to end conflict, after it has begun. National and patriotic sentiment may be touchy and stupid ; but surely, apart from excess of conservatism, it could hardly resist a League framed in this spirit. The nation, the State, even the Empire, remain what they were, with an enhanced security of existence, which would have been still further increased if the allies had taken the precaution of insisting that their former enemies should at once become members of the League. One might have expected that nationalism, where it is satisfied and victorious, would have rushed to join this League. If it did not, that is because our imperialists feared a League of another kind, a League which their own opposition prevented ; and because they are still not quite convinced of the completeness of their victory.

§ 15. (ii.) A FEDERATION OF PEOPLES.

The second main alternative offered was that of a federal union of nations, constituting a genuine super-national authority. The existing League of Nations is invited, as we have seen, to exercise in certain ways an influence upon governments, to correlate and advise them, even in certain circumstances to contemplate their coercion. A development or strengthening of the League would necessarily follow the same lines.

The conference of governments, of which the League essentially consists, might in course of time acquire power to enforce its decision on its members, and so come to exercise a quasi-legislative function. But any such development would inevitably be attended with endless friction and dissatisfaction. The matters with which the Conference dealt would necessarily be matters with which the Parliaments of the nations were also competent to deal ; hence the conference would find itself attempting to compromise differences instead of formulating a common will and policy. While it remains a conference of governments it will be, in principle, less a government than a Court of Arbitration. Compulsory arbitration is never a very attractive formula, even in the hands of an established government. In the hands of a League which is not a government, it would only be too likely to provide either the final proof of the League's impotence or the immediate cause of its violent dissolution.

The federal alternative would be sharply differentiated from the present League in two main respects. In the first place it would constitute an authority to be appointed by, and responsible to, the federating peoples, and to those peoples as a single whole, not as a number of separate national units. There might be a second chamber, as there is in most federal constitutions, in which the federating units were represented as units ;

but this need not mean that their governments are represented, and in any case the second chamber in most such cases plays a very secondary part. In the second place, this authority would have direct legislative and administrative responsibility in such matters as were entrusted to it ; and these matters would be beyond the competence of the national parliaments. There would, therefore, be no question of a direct conflict between the national and super-national authorities. They would be occupied with different matters. This would mean that within the federation the whole machinery of diplomacy would be scrapped completely. Within the federation there would be no question of foreign policy, and relations with countries outside it would be regulated by the central authority. It would mean also that out of the federating nations might be built a single community, with a will and policy of its own, and with a reasonable claim to the service and devotion of the individuals who found themselves within it. Within the limits of the powers entrusted to the central authority, war and competition between nations would be suppressed and the rule of law established.

It was presumably a world-embracing organisation of this character that floated before Tennyson's mind when he wrote of " the parliament of man, the federation of the world." Such a development is not of course

inconceivable ; but it is not a very practical possibility. The differences of opinion and of practice, of life and civilisation, among the various races which people the earth are so wide and fundamental, that it is hard to see how, even within a thousand years from now, the world could become one community in this sense. But, even so, a world-federation is not more difficult to conceive than a world-league of nations. Unified world-control of such matters as posts and transports, industrial raw material, even of import and export duties, is by no means impossible at the present time ; in regard to posts, indeed, international control is to some extent a fact.* It is in such matters as this that the necessary economic foundations must be sought for the future Society of Nations. Not by alliances of ever increasing range of complexity, like those which divided the world into two vast armies in the recent war, will the foundations of the future order be laid. Such alliances tend to divide precisely those who most need to be combined—France and England from Germany, Italy from Austria, Bulgaria from Serbia and Roumania. Nor by occasional conferences of Great Powers, seeking to “localise” conflict, and dictating to lesser powers the terms on which they may continue to exist. It is rather in such an institution

* For a survey of existing international organisations, see Woolf, *International Government*, Part II.

as the Universal Postal Union,* a genuine organ of government, with authority to make its decisions binding on the nations, that Tennyson's idea begins to be realised. Examples may also be found, among the lesser powers, of permanent combinations formed without reference to war and on a durable basis of common problems and interests.† Such groupings would no doubt retain their utility within a wider federation. Scandinavia and South America, for instance, offer in this respect a hopeful contrast to the unending rivalries of the Great Powers; and the pretences of the Concert of Europe are to some extent balanced by the realities of the Universal Postal Union. These instances suffice to show that super-national government is no mere chimera.

It has been frequently said in recent times that the only alternative to war is law. The statement is true and cannot be too often repeated; but its full implications are not always realised. When this statement is made in reference to the international problem, it is usually followed by proposals for what practically amounts to compulsory arbitration between nations, based on a conception of the relation of nation to nation which necessarily excludes a common law. A law is a rule of action framed by a community for itself

* For details, see Woolf, *l.c.*

† Particularly the Scandinavian and South American groups. See *International Politics*, by C. Delisle Burns, ch. II.

and enforced upon its members. A common law presupposes a common government. Our existing "international law" may be a useful and admirable structure, but it is not law : it is a form of agreement or treaty. An agreement ends or limits disagreement, and the disagreement of nations is in the end war. The institution of a common law and government does not, of course, remove the possibility of quarrelling and fighting, but it does at once remove the possibility of war, between the governed. The conflict gets a new name, rebellion or civil war, and is thought of as something portentous and disastrous, not as an unfortunate but glorious and heroic adventure. In the stage of treaties and agreements war is a permanent possibility, never forgotten ; it is indeed the ultimate ruling consideration ; but when once common government is established war is out of account ; its disturbing influence is removed ; and the real problems set by the actual complicated inter-actions of men can at last be faced and studied. While war is a recognised resource of national governments, military security will be the first consideration with the nations, fatally obstructing the solution of the urgent economic problems of the time. The no-man's-land between the nations will give capital its opportunity for extortion and exploitation, and enable it to escape the benevolent attentions of the home governments. Palliatives are possible, but the only

road to cure is the extension of government and the wider rule of law.

We know that government pays. We see that it commonly evokes from the governed a devotion which is inexplicable to many of its critics. We find that we suffer more from its limitation than from its defects. But treaties and alliances, courts of arbitration and conciliation, leave men cold. They seem to cause as much trouble as they save ; and they have no touch with the familiar realities of life. An organisation which is to have life and acquire a reputation must be given some necessary work to do and must be made responsible for doing it. It must be, in short, an organ of government, responsible to the individuals whom it governs.

This is the second alternative line of solution of our problem. By the general judgment of the present time it is regarded as quite visionary and impossible. The reasons given for this view are not our concern here, except in one respect. It is alleged that national patriotism, while suspicious of any international organisation, is inflexibly opposed to an organisation which in any way replaces national government or infringes its sovereignty. Our last task, therefore, is to see how the sentiments of patriotism and nationality are likely to be affected by a development such as has just been suggested. Will they help or hinder either the attempt or its success ?

§ 16. RELATION OF PATRIOTISM AND NATIONALISM TO THESE ALTERNATIVES.

It seems fairly plain that in the long run the idea of a federation of nations has less to fear from the patriot or the nationalist than the idea of a league of governments. The essential claim of the nationalist is that his group is a nation and should be given the political status of a nation. He is not committed irrevocably to any abstract theory as to what national status is. The same rights and privileges as other nations is what he demands. If it can be shown that some function of government requires for its exercise an authority embracing a number of nations, there is nothing in the nationalist creed which should lead him to hesitate to assent to the establishment of such an authority. National self-conceit would perhaps be reluctant to admit that there was anything which the nation was not competent to settle for itself; but this would be a challenge on the ground of fact which could be met. And it is not easy to see how nationalism should lead a man to fall out with this authority once established. No other nation would be interfering with the affairs of his nation; no external authority would be over-riding the decisions of his government. Certain matters would have been removed from the control of his national government, but from that of others equally, and placed in the hands

of a wider organisation responsible directly to himself and to all others concerned. It could hardly offend him that members of other nations should have a voice in deciding matters in which they were directly implicated; and national susceptibility could hardly be touched except in the unlikely event of national rivalries dominating the federal convention. In a League, on the other hand, national rivalries are perpetuated. The nationalism of each associated power is thus continually aroused and engaged in support of its own national policy. If a League attempted to coerce any of its members, the act would necessarily be an interference from without, which national sentiment might bitterly resent.

The difference may be illustrated by an instance which Mr. Woolf* uses for another purpose. "Nothing" he says, "could make a war between Austrians and Serbians as inevitable as a demand on the part of 'Austria' to interfere in the administration of 'Serbia.'" He is thinking of the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia which precipitated the recent war. He agrees that the Austrian demands were unjustifiable; but he suggests that they were made to appear more monstrous than they really were by a false conception of the State as "an isolated entity, a water-tight compartment of 'national interests,'" a conception "which does not mirror the realities of life and the world as they exist

* *International Government*, p. 114.

to-day." But surely no such conception is required to justify resentment at a claim by one national government to interfere administratively with another. No administration in history has ever admitted such a claim except through fear of superior force. The attempt would be equally resented, and with the same justice, if made by the County Council of Cheshire on the County Council of Lancashire ; but in that case the resentment would find practical expression in the Law Courts, and the conflict would be decided without recourse to arms. The matter is within the jurisdiction of a community of which the people both of Cheshire and of Lancashire are members, and for this reason the action of the court is not felt to be interference, or to be in any way derogatory to the county spirit of either local group. In the instance given, Austria was in fact claiming to be judge in its own cause. Serbia had offered arbitration. A League of Nations, if it had existed, might have enforced arbitration. A League, certainly, could have intervened with more authority than any single power. But nothing can intervene in such a dispute with full authority except a permanent and established government, the organ of a community in which the disputants are included, responsible, not to the councils or ministers who have fallen out, but directly to the peoples whom they claim to represent.

It would be foolish to deny or underrate the practical

difficulties which would confront any proposals for establishing a true super-national government, or federation of nations, in the world we know at the present time. It may well be that some kind of League, with rudimentary organs of government, is the immediate limit of our capacity and opportunity. But mere opportunist improvisation, distorted by present fears and greeds and jealousies, by debts of honour and hopes of vengeance, and unguided by any reflection on ultimate possibilities, is not likely to lay truly the outline of a Society of Nations. It is with these ultimate possibilities, and especially in their connection with the profound and masterful sentiments of patriotism and nationality, that we are here occupied. The main points which we are concerned to establish are two :

(1) What is wanted is government, not arbitration ; and this requires a federation rather than a League, an organisation of which the normal and essential feature is the representation of peoples, not governments.

(2) Whatever practical difficulties there may be in establishing or maintaining such a government, these difficulties are not likely to be seriously increased by opposition on grounds of sentiment from nationalists and patriots. These sentiments are in fact likely to be less troublesome to a genuine super-national government than to the growing powers of a League of Nations.

It is possible to go even a little further. The institution of a common national government does in fact secure that local rivalries within the nation are normally of direct profit to the nation as a whole, because the national government is in a position to prevent competition where it would turn to the disadvantage of the whole. In the present almost unorganised society of nations, much, perhaps the greater part, of the ceaseless competition of the members works similarly for the good of the whole. But its benefits are dwarfed and imperilled by the disastrous competition in armaments and empire, and by hostilities which, in the absence of government, competition is certain to create. In whatever sphere competition is allowed, the patriot will support his State and the nationalist his Nation. It is no remedy, even if it were possible, to eradicate these loyalties. This would be to destroy the good with the bad, and to reduce governments to lifeless bureaucracies, inspired by no force or principle except expediency. The remedy is to prevent competition where it is dangerous ; and this can only be done by establishing common government. If this were once achieved, the sentiments of patriotism and nationality would be to the advantage of the world. They would not, of course, lose their crudities, their curious and engaging absurdities ; the primitive dislike of the foreigner would no doubt survive, and sometimes give trouble ; but these aberrations would certainly

tend to diminish with experience in co-operation, and the sentiments themselves would on the whole work for the general advantage of humanity. Under government, the rivalry of England, France, and Germany, might be as profitable to the world as the rivalry of Yorkshire and Lancashire now is to England.

We are now, therefore, in a position to give some kind of answer to the queries raised as to the internationalism which in the mind of Mazzini was involved in the national idea. Nations, we say, will in the main follow what they suppose to be their interest ; and in the pursuit of that interest they will not shrink, if necessary, from "denying their sister nations." It may be that a nation has more generosity and public spirit than a mere political artifice ; but this alone will not carry it far. Certainly this by itself will not avail to solve the urgent international problems that call for co-operative treatment. If co-operation between nations under the forms of government were rendered possible, then nationalism and internationalism would be proved mutually consistent and complementary.

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