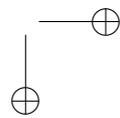
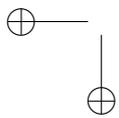
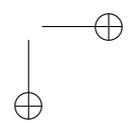
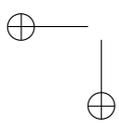
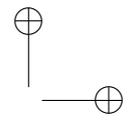
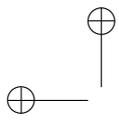
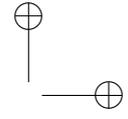
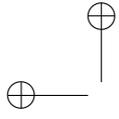


Begin Here
A War-Time Essay



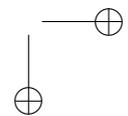
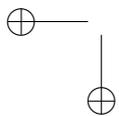


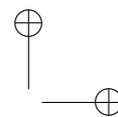
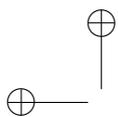


Begin Here
A War-Time Essay

Dorothy L. Sayers

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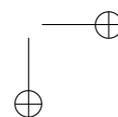
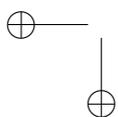


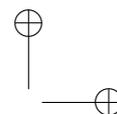
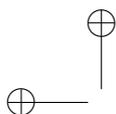


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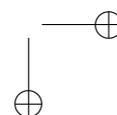
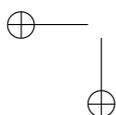


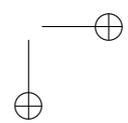
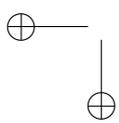
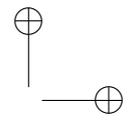
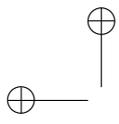


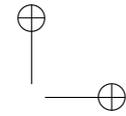
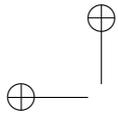
PREFACE

The great Economic Obsession, by which (as I maintain) the world is too much governed, dictates that books must be got out in time for the New Year. Consequently, this particular book has had to be written with indecent haste. I have had no time for the careful verification of references, or for submitting the text to expert criticism, as I should have wished to do. Much in it might have been more clearly expressed, and many repetitions might have been avoided. Even so, in the few weeks between writing and proof-correcting, sentences have here and there become out-of-date. For instance, there are now more theatres open (p. 96) than there were in November, and it is no longer true (p. 65) that Germany is free from unemployment. I hope, however, that the book does, on the whole, express what I believe to be the truth about our present troubles, and it will serve its purpose if it suggests to a few readers some creative line of action along which they, as individuals, can think and work towards the restoration of Europe.

D. L. S.
December, 1939.

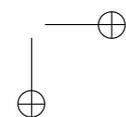
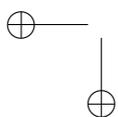


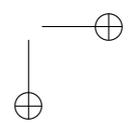
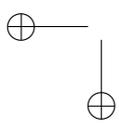
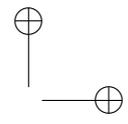
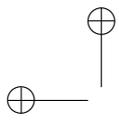


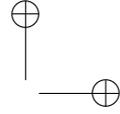
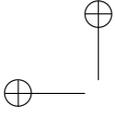


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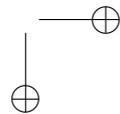
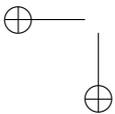
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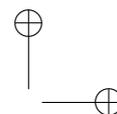
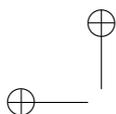
THE SERIAL DRAMA OF HISTORY

Men had determined to know good as evil; there could be but one perfect remedy for that – to know the evil of the past itself as good, and to be free from the necessity of the knowledge of evil in the future; to find right knowledge and perfect freedom together; to know all things as occasions of love. – CHARLES WILLIAMS.

Of the two evils, devitalized labour and devitalized leisure, both sufficiently conspicuous in these days, I count the latter as far the wider spread and the more formidable. – L. P. JACKS.

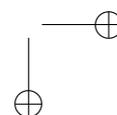
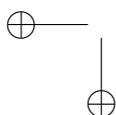
War is an ugly disaster; it is not a final catastrophe. Whatever men may have said in their haste and terror, let us get that fact firmly into our heads. There are no final catastrophes. Like every other historical event, war is not an end, but a beginning. Nobody can wish to minimise the evil wrought by war; it stares us in the face; but we must not so exaggerate the power of evil as to fall into lethargy and despair. This is not to give the devil his due, but to hand over the whole business to him, lock, stock and barrel. Many conscientious prophets, rightly alarmed by the way things were going, have in the last few years uttered impressive warnings of the terrible future opened up by a world war. They did well to bid us pause and think; and the nations would have done well to heed them, and to avoid the clash of arms by putting man's house in order in good time and by some more reasonable means. But it is not so well if the prophets have succeeded beyond their intentions and

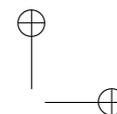




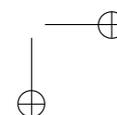
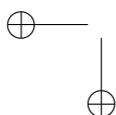
have persuaded us that there is now no future to look to. While time lasts there will always be a future, and that future will hold both good and evil, since the world is made to that mingled pattern. It is important, I think, to realise that the future does not exist “in the future,” vaguely and far off, but here and now. Second by second it is upon us, and every moment in our lives is a fresh beginning. The end of one civilisation is the beginning of another, and it is the men who are living through the collapse of the first who will decide the nature of the second. When things look dark and difficult, there is a very natural tendency to procrastinate – to push the future away *into* the future. “We can’t do anything about it now,” we say; “when the war is over it will be time to begin.” That will not do. Whatever it is we are fighting for, now is the time to see about getting it. Otherwise, when the war *is* over, we shall find ourselves unprepared, and the aim we set out to achieve will remain exactly where we put it – far away in the future. Indeed, it is not too much to say that, whoever wins the war, the peace will be won by those who, throughout the struggle, remained alert and ready, with a clear idea of what they wanted and an active plan for bringing it about.

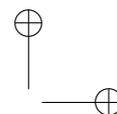
While a war is going on it is, of course, more difficult for the peace-minded to remain hopeful and energetic than it is for the war-minded. The general atmosphere is unfavourable to quiet, constructive thought, the whole nation is organised and directed towards the immediate object of getting the war fought, destruction appears far more urgent and important than construction, and any effort at planning for the new order is made to appear untimely and out of place. We ask ourselves, “What is





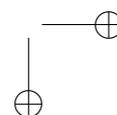
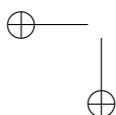
the use of making schemes that may never be wanted?" The answer is that they *are* wanted, that we want them now, and that if we want a thing badly enough, we can make it happen. If we let ourselves be discouraged, that is a proof that our wanting was inadequate, and that the future lies in the hands of those who, more energetically, wanted something different. The fact that we failed in the past must not deter us. In 1918 we were given an opportunity to rebuild Europe on better lines. We bungled that as we have bungled other opportunities from time to time. That cannot now be helped. We need not therefore think that we are innate and predestined bunglers, for whom a release from bungling is in the nature of things inconceivable. To think so is, to be sure, the surest way to make us so, just as, if a child is nagged into looking upon himself as a hopeless butter-fingers, he will inevitably tend to drop everything he touches. The cure for all such paralysing thoughts is resolutely to think otherwise, and, indeed, to brood as little as possible upon what happened last time. The whole set of ideas connected with the word "sin" is nowadays considered old-fashioned; it has become more usual to regard our actions as automatic reactions or responses to the pressure of varying environment. This view, however interesting, is apt to make us feel very helpless. There is a good deal to be said for the opinion that a sin is a sin and an error an error; that both should be examined, admitted, repented of, and then put out of our thoughts. Repentance is, in fact, another way of saying that the bad past is to be considered as the starting-point for better things. We bungled the last opportunity; very well. Let us admit that and try to do better with the new one.

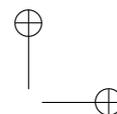




We have just spoken of wars – the last war and this – as opportunities; and this is what they are. When we say that war brings good as well as evil we do not so much mean that good things, such as courage, patriotism, devotion and so on, come into it alongside with bad things like poverty, pride and cruelty, though that is true too. We mean more than this – namely, that the evil itself is good or can be made so. War is the breaking up of security and habit, and the letting-in of energy upon the things that had become static and corrupt. The great obstacle, in times of peace and prosperity, to improvement in the social order is the inertia that society presents to any kind of change. The reformer spends nine-tenths of his energy in endeavouring to make his voice heard above the snoring of well-cushioned indolence, to smash his way into the closed circle of vested interests, to disturb complacency and generally to overcome the disposition of his hearers to let sleeping dogs lie. But war does this part of his task for him. All the dogs are up and barking very loudly, and nobody can possibly pretend to ignore them. The world is startled awake, complacency is destroyed and even the vested interests are rocking uneasily on their foundations. His chief difficulty now will be to catch the distracted attention of agitated people and get it focused on what he has to say.

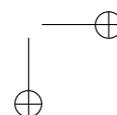
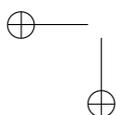
There is one thing that he very definitely must not say: on no account must he be tempted to advise a return into the past. Just because every evil is also an opportunity of good, the past is irrevocable and ought not to be otherwise. It is useless to trace our present troubles to Munich or Versailles or the German re-occupation of the Rheinland, and try to re-establish things as they would

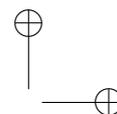




have been if these events had not happened. For one thing, it cannot be done, and nobody seriously believes that it can. For another, there is no point in history to which we can go back as the ultimate and indisputable beginning of misfortune. Everybody has his own particular bogey on which he likes to put the blame for all subsequent disorders: the emancipation of women, the industrial revolution, the reformation, the collapse of feudalism, the rise of feudalism, the fall of Rome, the crucifixion of Christ, the intrusive appearance of Christ, the influence of Greek philosophy, the fall of man, or – in the last resort – the creation of the world. Further than that we mercifully cannot go. All these events have happened and cannot now un-happen. What we have to see is that in every evil there was and is always a good, which is the positive side of the evil. We must take all the developments of history as they are, and from the existing good and evil we must hammer out the Positive good.

We shall not, of course, go so far as to say that evil is ever good in itself, but only that it can, in every sense of the words, “be made good.” This is a view of the matter in which the Christian religion has, so to speak, specialised. It would no doubt have been well if the world had altogether refrained from evil; yet, the evil having occurred, the opportunity appears to make out of that evil a still more noble good; the second Adam is greater than the first Adam could ever have been. If Jerusalem had accepted Christ, the world might have been redeemed that way; since He was crucified, the cross is the means and symbol of His triumph. But, Christians or not, if we think realistically at all, we shall have to



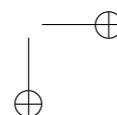
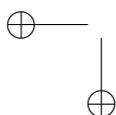


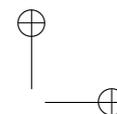
face the fact that we cannot sit still, we cannot go back, we *must* go forward.

“Quite so,” we may say; “but in that case, who is to lead us?” We have fallen a good deal of late into this habit of asking for a lead. We feel that “the State” ought to do something about it, or that “the Churches” should take a definite line. Why don’t they?

If they do not, there is at least one excellent reason for it, namely that we – you and I – are not taking a line or doing anything. “The State” is not the Prime Minister or the local M.P.; “the Church” is not Bishop Somebody or the curate of the next parish; *we* are the Church and *we* are the State; these bodies have no existence without ourselves. Statesmen are the representatives of the nation; they do not constitute the nation; we do that. The priesthood is not the Church, still less is the opinion of an isolated ecclesiastic the voice of the Church. It is absurd, when a man takes Holy Orders, to say, as we usually do, that he is “going into the Church.” He cannot do that, because he is there already; all baptised people are “in” the Church; they *are* the Church.

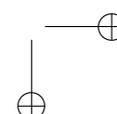
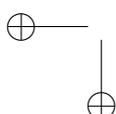
What we are doing when we talk in this loose way about Church and State is to identify those bodies with the professional element in them. This is a careless sort of thinking to which we have lately grown very much inclined. Starting from the perfectly reasonable idea that the specialist should be allowed to know his own job, we have drifted into a lazy tendency to let the specialist take over our job and do it for us. It is true that in certain cases this is a good thing. Cloth, for example, can be woven faster, in greater quantity, and on the whole better, by power-looms in factories designed for that specialised

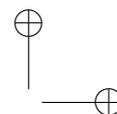
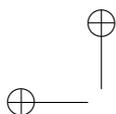




work than by individual housewives in their own homes. It is wiser to take one's watch to the jeweller for repairs than to investigate its interior personally with a pin. But because a thing is right on four occasions out of five, it does not follow that it is necessarily right in the fifth case. There are things that the professional cannot do for us, and others that, though he can, he ought not to be permitted to do. He cannot, for example, feel our emotions for us, and he ought not to do our thinking for us. If we hand over these departments of our lives to him – as we are continually trying to do – we shall get some very odd and highly undesirable results.

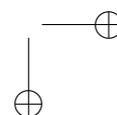
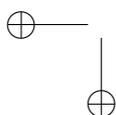
Is it ridiculous to say that we try to let specialists feel our emotions for us? I think not. The sentimental novel and the sentimental film are evidence of the attempt, and so is the “thriller” in all its forms. They represent an escape from our own feelings into an unreal world where we sit passively while the professionally manufactured emotions of phantoms are, as it were, poured over and into us without stirring us to activity. We do not turn to these distractions in order to feel, but to have our feelings done for us. We are not really moved; we only enjoy the sensation of emotion without experiencing it. The difference between this kind of thing and the emotional power of great literature and drama is precisely that the one does really disturb and move us, whether to delight or pain, while the other only soothes us into a forgetfulness of feeling. Great literature calls upon us to remember what we are, and so rouses us to questioning and action; sentimental literature invites us to forget what we are and to be content with inactivity.

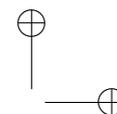




Happily for us, it is not possible wholly to hand over our emotions to other people. Our bodies see to it that we do from time to time experience real pain, real hunger and fatigue, as well as the enjoyment of actual physical skill and exercise; while the fact that we are members of a community ensures that we cannot wholly avoid genuine sensations of love and hate, anxiety and relief, jealousy and generosity, and so forth. All that comes of the attempt to escape is a weakening of the capacity to cope with our feelings, a fear of them, and an attempt to apply ready-made solutions of a sentimental kind to the situations in which our real feelings land us.

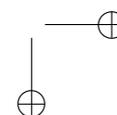
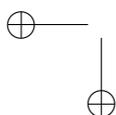
The case is not quite the same as regards thought. It is far easier to get through life without thinking than without feeling. Indeed, it is hardly an exaggeration to say that many people contrive never once to think for themselves from the cradle to the grave. They may go through the motions of thinking, but in fact they solve all problems either by the dictate of their emotions, or by accepting without enquiry the ruling of some outside authority. Even quite well-informed people do this. The acquisition of knowledge is not the same thing as thinking; it is only the first step towards it. Knowledge does not become thought till we have made it part of our lives by relating it to our experience and acting upon it. Thus, we may know and repeat upon authority that a motor-car is driven by an internal-combustion engine, but the recital of that fact does not mean that we have ever seriously *thought* about internal-combustion engines. Only when we are called upon to make an engine or to mend one that has gone wrong do we begin to think our knowledge into action and so make the principles of internal combustion

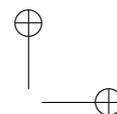
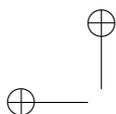




a real part of our lives. As with the emotions, the test of thinking is that if it is real, it makes us not passive but active. We do not just suffer ourselves to be filled with miscellaneous facts, like a bucket from a pump, we assimilate the facts, like a man drinking water, and turn them into energy. Full or empty, a bucket is a bucket; the water does not change it, nor can it change the water; but water can give life to a thirsty man, because he possesses the metabolism that changes it into energy. Thought is what changes knowledge into energy, and if we do not use it, all our knowledge becomes stale and stagnant and fit for nothing,

How does the war affect our attitude to emotion and thought? In two ways. First of all, it gives us a great many things to feel and think about that cannot be grappled with by traditional ways of thinking and feeling. It jerks us out of the passive contemplation of the world as a kind of external show and forces us into close personal contact with elementary realities. It sets us asking whether the things we have always taken for granted ought not to be examined and actively thought about. Possibly we were wrong in taking them for granted: they may be false or dangerous; it may turn out that they were delusions and never existed at all except in our imagination. Or possibly they are the right things, and the only trouble with them is that we have *merely* taken them for granted, never genuinely felt or thought about them, and so failed altogether to act upon them. Or again, we may very likely discover that though we thought we were taking them for granted we were not really doing so, but acting upon an entirely different set of beliefs, whose very existence in ourselves we had not so much

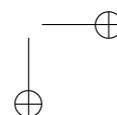
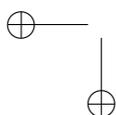


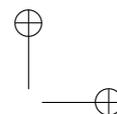


as suspected. War, by dropping a metaphorical bomb into the structure of our lives, puts our foundations to a critical test, and offers an unequalled opportunity for finding out whether our house was built upon rock or upon sand.

And secondly: the very conditions of modern warfare deprive us automatically of a great deal of the “dope” that we had previously accepted as a substitute for experience. We are all going to be very much poorer, and unable to afford the usual means of “getting away from ourselves.” Even if we could afford entertainments, there will be fewer of them; and black-outs and restrictions will make them more difficult to get to. For the majority of civilians, there will be long hours of enforced leisure at home, with little outside company and with a diminished amount of entertainment on the wireless. There will, we hope, still be books; but there will be fewer and thinner newspapers and magazines, and far less of what is generally known as “ephemeral literature.” In short, there will be fewer professional people to pour amusement and information into passive eyes and ears; and in default of being entertained, we shall be driven to entertain ourselves.

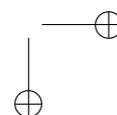
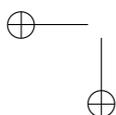
What are we going to do about this? I hope we shall rise to the occasion and receive it as an opportunity and not as a catastrophe. I am the last person in the world to wish to put professional entertainers out of a job; I am one of them myself, if it comes to that, and many of my best friends are professional actors. But it is one thing to say that we should appreciate a better supply of entertainment if it can be arranged, and quite another to cry out lamentably that unless we can be professionally

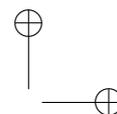
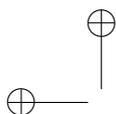




entertained from morning to night we shall lose our courage, our wits and our self-respect. If that is all our elaborate and highly organised technical civilisation has done for us, then clearly the sooner it comes to an end the better, and I for one should hesitate before putting out a finger to save it. Indeed, one might reasonably argue in that case that the war had come in the nick of time to destroy a menace to humanity worse than itself. Everything goes to show that the logical product of an age that does its work by electric power will eventually be a state whose members all enjoy a very great deal of leisure – perhaps as much as twenty hours in the day. If we cannot now employ ourselves sensibly during an evening's leisure, what in the world could we do with ourselves for twenty hours? Obviously, if we were to be kept out of the mischief proverbially provided for idle hands, one set of people would have no leisure at all. Professional entertainers would be kept working overtime, while the rest of us grew to feel and think less and less for ourselves, till we ceased to be recognisable as human beings.

Doubtless, if a nation so deprived of initiative managed to survive, and not be swept away by some barbarian invader with a more vigorous notion of living, this alarming situation would rectify itself in time. More and more people would enter the entertaining profession for sheer despair at finding nothing else to do, and we should become a nation of entertainers, all busily engaged in amusing one another. And the moment we took up the active end of entertainment we should be forced again into thinking and feeling for ourselves; otherwise our entertainment would be very dull stuff. For the truth is,



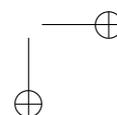
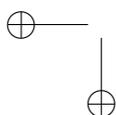


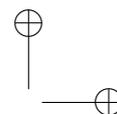
that man is never truly himself except when he is actively creating something. To be merely passive, merely receptive, is a denial of human nature. “God,” says the author of Genesis, “created man in His own image”; and of the original of that image he tells us one thing only: “In the beginning, God created.” That tells us plainly enough what the writer thought about the essential nature of man.

It is because of this that, in a mechanised civilisation like ours, the average man and woman find themselves – despite a multitude of comforts and conveniences – unhappy, at a loss, and disorientated. They feel obscurely that they have been cheated of something, whose deprivation makes them feel in some way less than themselves. What, without knowing it, they chiefly miss is the power and opportunity to be actively creative. Their work becomes more and more automatic and repetitive; the pressure of an exclusively economic social structure diminishes their natural satisfaction in having children; and they have allowed even their entertainments to become progressively mechanised. The things which, unconsciously, they chiefly valued have been taken from them, and they do not know how to make a concerted effort to find new fields for creative energy.

Those who are engaged in the work of education know this well enough. They feel the difficulty and they see still worse trouble looming ahead; but they cannot do as much as they would, and could, to put matters straight, because of the economic pressure that at present directs national education to purely commercial ends.

One of the constructive aims for which a war and the consequent revaluation of social elements may, and



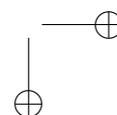
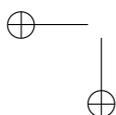


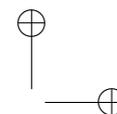
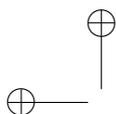
ought to, provide an opportunity, is the discovery of a basis for our common life that shall not be purely economic. With the enormous resources of material and leisure that technical knowledge puts at our disposal, that aim should be possible of achievement. But it will not be so unless we really begin to think out how we can control economics instead of letting economics control us; and that will mean a great upheaval in our cherished habits of thought. We cannot even begin to do it unless we practise the arts of imagination and of active and courageous thinking.

Now is the moment to begin practising. We may start in a small way with finding out how to entertain ourselves by our own efforts, and by seeing to it that our reading and listening are carried on, not aimlessly or passively, but in a genuinely constructive way. The criticism in which we are so fond of indulging must not be a series of vague grumblings, but directed to the idea of the kind of society we want to see constructed. And we must think out for ourselves what kind of society that is, if we are to have any chance of getting it.

If we make this use of our enforced leisure in war-time, we shall find that we actually enjoy our entertainment, our reading and listening, and our own company very much more than we did when we merely accepted what was done and thought for us by other people. What disheartens us is the sense of our individual helplessness and insignificance in the grip of uncontrollable outside forces. Passivity of mind merely fosters this sense of helplessness; it is activity that drives it away.

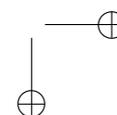
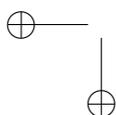
There is another thing that ought, I think, to be said before we go on to consider the kind of life we want

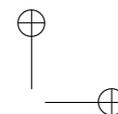
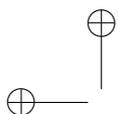




and the means to bring it about, and that is this: That mental activity is a thing we can do better and enjoy more as we grow older. Bodily activity is a delightful thing; but the body ages long before the mind. We cannot play football as well at forty as we did at twenty; the time comes when we find ourselves relegated to the rôle of spectators, with the result that we begin to feel “out of it.” Feeling “out of it” is just the thing that makes us most resentful against life and dissatisfied with ourselves; it is what produces that strained and peevish expression on the faces of the men and women who are trying desperately to prolong their physical youth into middle age. But at forty we should be able to think better and more actively than we did at twenty. I have never yet heard any middle-aged man or woman who worked with his or her brains express any regret for the passing of youth. On the contrary, most of them would agree that life only began to be really exciting when youth was past.

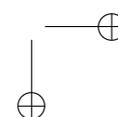
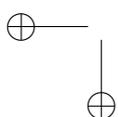
Nothing is more cruel to the young than to tell them that the world is made for youth. It is a lie that we do not believe; or why do we lament so bitterly for those whom war or accident has cut off in the flower of their manhood? That kind of talk is the “escape-mechanism” of the lazy-minded, who want to shuffle off their responsibilities upon the shoulders of the young. It is not true that we become mentally ankylosed at forty – that is, it is true only if we allow ourselves to become so through a mental indolence that stiffens the mind as bodily indolence stiffens the muscles. But what encouragement do we offer the young if we tell them – for that is what it amounts to – that all life has to

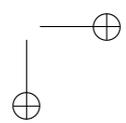
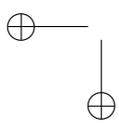
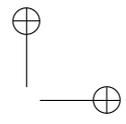
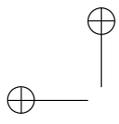


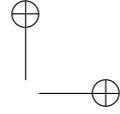
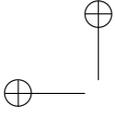


offer them is the alternative of an early death or a stuffy, dreary and disappointed middle age? I want to say, here and now, to those of my own age: That is a lie; do not utter it; and to the young: It is a lie; do not listen to it.

All this is but another aspect of the statement with which we set out. We must not keep pushing the future into the future. It is we, and not the next generation, who must deal with national and international reconstruction. It is now that we must start to work for it, and not "after the war." Life is an interminable serial story, packed with exciting episodes. We cannot read up all the back numbers in full, nor can we wait to see the end before we begin to read it. At the head of every instalment stands the summary of the past which is called History, and the exhortation in the largest of type: BEGIN HERE.





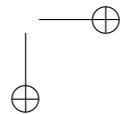
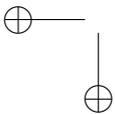


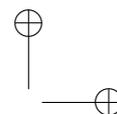
III

BY THE AUTHOR OF —?

Although, formally considered as part of the State, every act of his can be referred to the common good of the State, man, considered in the absolutely peculiar and incommunicable quality of his liberty and as ordered directly to God as to his eternal end, himself enjoying the dignity of a whole (to a more eminent degree than the entire physical universe, because God is much more intimately the end of a soul than of the whole universe of bodies), under this formal aspect escapes inclusion in the political ordination: Homo non ordinatur ad communitatem politicam secundum se totum et secundum omnia sua. (St. Thomas Aquinas, Sum. Theol. ii-ii, 58, 5.) – JACQUES MARITAIN.

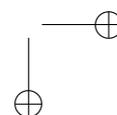
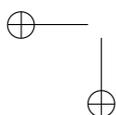
In order to live a complete and satisfying life in the world, a man has to do two things: to get his own living and to get on with his fellow-men. More and more, as civilisation develops, he discovers that the first of these things depends upon the second. Only in a few remote corners of the globe is the provision of a man's livelihood still a question of planting a little patch of ground and living on the produce, or eating the meat killed by his own hand. With the discoveries of science, that increase the yield of the earth and spread a network of rapid communication all over the world, food and shelter and clothing have become items in a huge system of trade exchange. So that for us to-day, man's two problems have, in practice, been reduced to one: the construction of a form of society in which every side of man's nature,

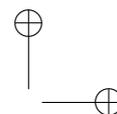




including his physical necessities, may find complete and satisfactory fulfilment.

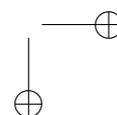
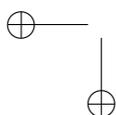
Before going further, I want to make it quite clear that when I say “Man,” I mean, not a generalised figure representing the Human Race, but the individual man. I mean you. I mean me. I mean your grocer, Mr. Brown, and my charwoman, Mrs. Smith. What we all want is a society in which you and I and Mr. Brown and Mrs. Smith may all live in the enjoyment of a reasonable standard of physical comfort and in the full and useful employment of all our faculties, such as they are. Further, we want a society in which Monsieur Lebrun and Frau Schmidt may be equally happy and comfortable. We should also like to see these privileges extended to individual men and women with similar, though less pronounceable, names in Russia, China, the Indies, and those complicated and confusing states that lie between East and West. It is extremely important to remember that all these people are separate persons and not racial types or units in a statistical table of population. I perfectly well recall the astounding moment when the realisation broke in upon my infant mind that every other person in the world was “I” to himself or herself, as I was to myself. I was being convoyed along the promenade at the time – can it have been at Broadstairs, or a year or two later at Hunstanton? – and I immediately communicated the startling intelligence to my escort. I do not think they were impressed. I fancy they replied, with maddening insensitiveness, “Yes, of course, dear,” and begged me not to loiter. “Yes, of course”! How right they were to take it for granted, and how many bitter wrongs have been inflicted on men and women because all of us have

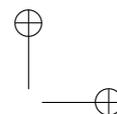




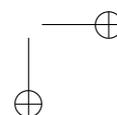
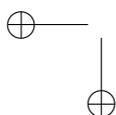
taken it for granted and not acted upon the assumption. All the same, I am glad that once in my life I did make the discovery, whether I have since acted upon it or not.

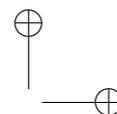
It is to the credit of the particular civilisation to which we belong that it has at least always recognised the value of the individual in theory, even if it has sometimes lost sight of it in practice. For good or evil, and whether we like it or not, we have to recognise that our civilisation – the civilisation whose existence is now at stake – is Western, Mediterranean, and Christian. It has not been affected in its development to any great extent by Oriental conceptions of man and the universe. Nor yet have the “Nordic” origins of some of its member states set their characteristic stamp on its culture and institutions as a whole, despite recent German assertions to that effect, and despite a well-meant attempt by certain Victorians to restore our ancient Nordic tongue by referring to an omnibus as a folk-wain. The days of our week are indeed named after Woden and Thor and Freya, and the forms of English law are Anglo-Saxon; but for all that, we are more at home in the Iliad than in the Niebelungenlied, while Saturday lifts up its voice in a plaintive reminder that the gods of Rome were worshipped in Britain before the days were named. Christian we are also, both in our assertions and in our assumptions – so thoroughly steeped, indeed, in Christian thought that our most vigorous revolts against Christianity are made on grounds for which the Christian religion is the earliest, and the only rational, authority. In particular, the doctrine that all individual souls, of whatever nation, rank or sex, are equal in their value and in their right to freedom and self-fulfilment is Christian and rests on the Christian





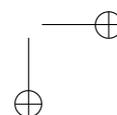
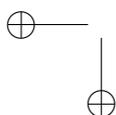
doctrine that all are equal in the sight of God and each individually responsible to Him. It is true that the nations of Europe have not assimilated this doctrine very thoroughly or acted upon it very consistently. We ourselves, to go no further, apply the doctrine of equality in a very restricted and arbitrary manner to women workers, blacks, and people who drop their aitches. Nevertheless, in principle, we do admit the ideals of liberty and equality, and on the whole our reforms have moved in that Christian direction, though not always under Christian leadership. Only two European nations have gone so far as openly to repudiate the Western-Mediterranean-Christian civilisation, and these are the two to which it came latest and in which it was least firmly rooted. Even with them, the repudiation has been only partial. Russia, which was always more Eastern than Western, has publicly abolished the Christianity and the liberty but has retained (theoretically at any rate) the international and personal equality. Yet her Christianity was strongly Oriental in ritual and theology, while the equality derives from Western sources, so that her repudiation is in itself a form of allegiance to European standards. Germany has abolished the personal liberty and the international equality, and seems to be in process, not so much of officially abolishing Christianity, as of making it impossible in practice. Yet she did these things in the name of national freedom. On the whole, and up till now, the problem which Europe has set itself to solve has been that of inventing and maintaining a kind of state in which every man and woman should enjoy freedom and equality while yet sharing in an orderly communal life which should ensure the control of a means of livelihood

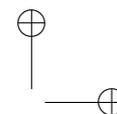




for all. Further, it is becoming increasingly evident that the states themselves must likewise be free and equal partners in a world-community, if the delicate internal and external balance of freedom, equality, and the means of livelihood is not to be continually upset.

Various theoretical structures of the state have emerged by way of solution to the problem, all of which have failed to a greater or less extent when put in practice, though all have achieved a certain measure of temporary success and all have contributed some positive good to the development of Western civilisation. None, of course, has ever been put in practice in the thorough-going simplified form of the text-books. Text-book sociology always presents a hard-and-fast unassailable case; it is only in the performance that the thing breaks down. For one thing, the text-book tends to assume that the new sociology can start from a blank sheet, with no prejudices to overcome and no political or economic hang-over from the last social experiment. This happy situation never arises in real life, however thorough the purge by which the new order may seek to clear the channels of enterprise. For another, it is possible for the text-book to deal with human abstractions, such as "the rational man," "the voter," "the worker," "the economic unit." But in practice the state has to deal with stubbornly individual human beings, who cannot be summed up under any such characterless description. Almost invariably, when a social system comes to grief, it does so because it has failed to allow for the full complexity of the individual person, with his disorderly habit of demanding satisfactions not included under the scheme. A sociology which treats "man" as a mere unit in a social machine ends

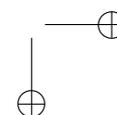
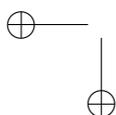


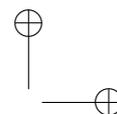


by producing a society intolerable to that mixed and complicated creature, Tom, Dick or Harry, who wants his glass of beer, his back garden, his religious opinions, his grumble at the government, his bit of fun, his love-affairs, his artistic emotions and his creative outlet. On the other hand, *some* form of organised society there must be, since sheer individualism can only produce a chaos in which Tom and Harry grab in a disorderly manner for the beer and spill the pot between them.

The earliest kind of history-book, which persisted right down to the childhood of many people now living, presented the story of civilisation in terms of kings, battles, and anecdotes of great men. This view of history became discredited, and was succeeded by Constitutional History (which is the history of forms of government), Social History (which is the study of the behaviour of large groups and classes of men) and Economic History (which is the study of how man's life is affected by the problem of the means of livelihood) – roughly, in that order. We may notice two things about this. First: that the importance to history of the individual personality is given a less and less central place as historical theory develops. Secondly: that as year by year historians tend to minimise the importance of battles, the actual wars of mankind become bloodier, involve more people, spread wider over the earth's surface and produce more catastrophic results. It looks as though it might be worth while to consider whether the decreasing attention given to the individual and the increasing frequency and extent of wars might not, somehow or other, be connected.

The first structure of Western-Mediterranean-Christian civilisation which presents itself for our examination was

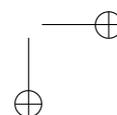
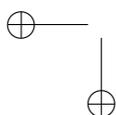


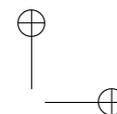


theological. It lasted, as the theoretical basis of European society, from the Christianisation of Europe to the Reformation. It differs in two ways from any succeeding theory of civilisation: It referred all problems to one absolute Authority beyond history and beyond humanity; and as a scheme for the satisfactory fulfilment of the individual and the world-community it was and remains complete and unassailable. I must expand that second statement a little. Theological sociology broke down in practice like its successors, but for a different reason. It did not fail because the theory itself collapsed when brought into contact with real life; but because the human instruments who had to carry it out failed to realise the implications of their own theory. The shards and fragments of this shattered structure – the most grandiose, the most universal and the most exact ever planned since the beginning of history – are with us to this day, and are built into every edifice of society erected upon its ruins.

In this tremendous conception of human life, nothing was omitted or neglected; nothing was too great or too small for inclusion. It embraced the world eternal as well as the world of time; it provided minutely for the most trifling acts of daily life as well as for the rule of empires, and it regulated all human activities alike by the same universal law. The adultery of a peasant was not a merely personal affair; it was a crime against society and against society's Supreme Ruler: the oppression of a province was not an accident of political necessity; it was the king's personal sin against God.

It was international. It acknowledged no sovereign state. There was only one sovereign in all the world,

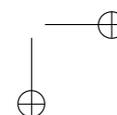
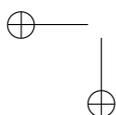


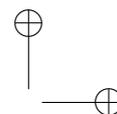


and He was not of the world. The individual man was responsible to his feudal lord, the lord to the king, the king to the Church, and the Church to God, sole source of all authority. And at any point in the chain the individual man had (so to speak) free access to the Head of the firm. From his immediate superior he could appeal direct to God, whose ruling on the matter was immediately ascertainable through the Church authorities, ordained to expound and enforce it.

Freedom was understood, not in the sense we are inclined to give that word to-day – that is, as an exemption from all external restrictions – but in a more philosophical sense: the freedom to be true to man’s real nature, that is, to stand in a right relation to God. As a stone, left free to follow its own natural law, falls to the ground, so the spirit of man, made free to follow its own natural law, flies to God. The stone, if set free, is not free to follow some erratic direction; it will only do that if compelled from without. “The earth,” says Professor Eddington, “goes anywhere it pleases” – in other words, it obeys its own nature, and so do all the heavenly bodies; and the result of that freedom is to present to human view “the army of unalterable law.” It was in that sense that theological society understood freedom.

Equality also was understood theologically. It was a spiritual equality; and if, as the cynic might point out, it was located in another world, where its claims could not inconveniently conflict with temporal expediency, yet it did not have to be claimed and fought for as a right; it was there already, the admitted and unchallenged cornerstone of society. In the temporal world, it displayed itself neither as political nor social equality, nor yet as

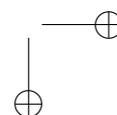
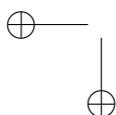


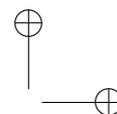


an equality of natural endowments, but rather as a vast interlocking network of reciprocal duty. As man was bound to God by the law of human nature, so, by the very essence of His Divine nature, God was bound to man. At every point, theological society exhibited the working of this universal law. The people owed service to the king, and the king owed protection to the people – not in reason of any mutual contract expressed or implied, but because both owed service to the same universal law.

Lastly, and in some ways most important of all, theological society was *rational* through and through. It admitted no blind necessity, no erratic chance, no arbitrary and unpredictable workings of purposeless demonic forces; for it rested upon one great act of faith: that God was a Reasonable Being and that His whole creation was reasonable. Christ was the Divine Logos, the eternal Reason, “by whom all things were made,” and also *verus homo*, the true Man, “of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting.” All Christendom, in this world and in the world beyond, was the body that housed the eternal Reason that was God.

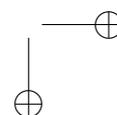
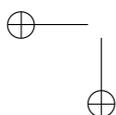
In this majestic theological structure there was, essentially, nothing that could impair the full development of every side of man’s nature. No liberty was condemned except that of falling into sin and error. Nor could even this liberty be denied, since it was a consequence of man’s free will; it was only stigmatised for what it was: a subjection to bondage and a repression of man’s true and natural freedom. Nor was any scheme of social and economic equality incompatible with spiritual equality or with the Divine constitution of society, provided that equality of mutual service was retained in conformity

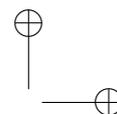




with the Divine pattern. The sanctity of the material world and the holiness of human emotions were expressed in the very nature of sacraments. Arts and learning were venerated as being the human counterparts of God's rationality and creative energy, and were especially taken under the protection of the official Church, which, both in monasteries and in the universities, made it her business to see that no obstacle was put in the way of the poor scholar. Nor was one type of man considered intrinsically more valuable than another; prince and labourer, trader and landowner, soldier and contemplative – each class, and each individual in that class, had an appointed place in society, an especial importance in the kingdom of God on earth.

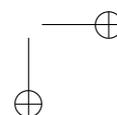
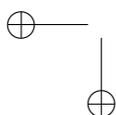
I do not suggest that mediaeval society ever in practice, or at any moment, conformed to this ideal pattern. The Christian civilisation, no more than any other, was able to “start from scratch.” Europe was christianised piecemeal, over a long period of time, and in every district had to impose its social structure upon an already existing heathen structure in full going order. Parts of Germany were, in fact, not christianised at all till the 14th century, when the theological society was already showing signs of disruption. Like any other, Christian society had to struggle with unregenerate humanity and with the inertia of resistance to change. Moreover, there were practical administrative difficulties inherent in the structure itself. Theoretically, there was one all-embracing world-state, the Church of Christ, and all earthly states were contained within it, each self-contained, yet answerable to the whole community, like a private family within a civic borough; but this arrangement of a state within





a state has always presented administrative difficulties, especially where the large community has no police force sufficiently powerful to impose orderly behaviour on the smaller. The Christian world-state invoked a Divine authority; but in the event of rebellion, how was that authority to be exerted? To be sure, there were ecclesiastical sanctions, but if these failed, what came next? The rulers of the Church resorted to two means, both perhaps questionable, as involving that confusion between the things of Caesar and the things of God that Christ Himself had been so careful to avoid. They put themselves in a strong financial position, and they availed themselves of the power of the temporal arm. Possibly they would have done better to abide by their spiritual weapons and trust that God would work His purpose out in His own way. The financial power gave rise to some very scandalous abuses and to a great deal of understandable resentment; while the temporal arm dragged the dignitaries of the Church into the tangle of political intrigue and subjected the Divine authority to worldly expediency, so that the Pope frequently appeared, less as the supreme head, under God, of a world-state than as one prince struggling, among a crowd of his equals, for the possession of political advantage.

Before passing judgment on the mediaeval Church, there are one or two things we ought to bear in mind. We may remember that the first attempt at uniting the North American States failed disastrously, and that the Union was successfully accomplished only when federal taxation and the establishment of a federal military and police force furnished the central government with the temporal power to enforce its authority. Nor shall we

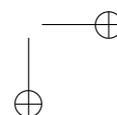
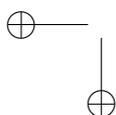


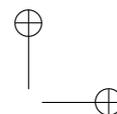


overlook the experience of the League of Nations, when it was discovered that high ideals and moral sanctions are helpless to ensure compliance if the central authority has no temporal arm to which it can directly resort, but is obliged to proceed by invoking the self-interest of its component members. And when we press for a United States of Europe, we shall remember that this is no new thing: it existed once, with all the advantages that a common religion, a common culture and a universal authority could give it, and, nevertheless, it broke down.

What was the real reason of its collapse? I do not think it was altogether the purely administrative difficulty about temporal power. That might have been got over, if only the official Church had remained true to her own theology. What disrupted the theological world-state was not any local disharmony between its separate members, but something that affected the whole body. It was the appearance in the world of a new way of thinking, which led to the demand for an entirely new manifestation of human liberty and equality. It was the rise of the New Learning, which led eventually to the Reformation, to the Renaissance and to the invention of Scientific Method. It was the demand for individual liberty in the spiritual sphere, in the emotional sphere and in the sphere of the mind.

Now this revolution in thought is often represented as a revolt against the authority of the Church, and so it was; but not quite in the sense commonly supposed. The Church had only one Authority, and that was God Himself; and the New Learning was not a revolt against God. Nor did it come from outside the Church, but from within, for the Church was all Christendom; that is why

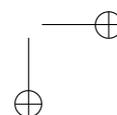
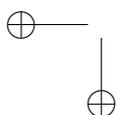


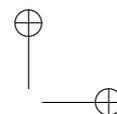
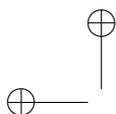


I have been careful to distinguish between the Church and her officials. It was the official Church that had not the courage of her own convictions and by that timidity broke up the structure of Christendom.

The explanation usually put forward is that the theological state rested upon a particular set of doctrines which could not be altered and had to be interpreted in a particular way by a particular set of people and along a particular line of thought; and that it fell to pieces when certain individual people, working along a new line of thought, brought those doctrines to the test of experimental enquiry. There is a great deal of truth in this explanation, but it is not the whole truth. It is quite true that the state rested upon the truth of God's revelation in Christ; but the rest is only partially true.

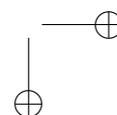
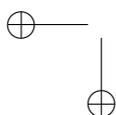
What actually happened was this. The Church had fallen into the same lazy habit which we discussed in the first chapter. She had allowed the professionals to do most of her thinking for her. And the professionals had become old-fashioned in their method of thinking. It was certain amateur thinkers who hit upon that new method of thought which we now call "scientific"; by which we mean the method that collects facts by observation, uses them to form a theory, and then tests the theory by fresh experiments with facts. This method they applied to the material world, by way of astronomy and physics; to the world of art and letters, by way of exploring classical sources; and to the spiritual world, by way of linguistic and critical research into the Scriptures. In all these fields, the results were both fruitful, and disconcerting to the professional ecclesiastical thinkers. Astronomy and physics offered explanations of the material universe that

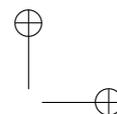




did not appear to agree with the story of Genesis; art and letters not only encouraged an unseemly enthusiasm for physical beauty, but unearthed unexpected beauties of thought among heathen poets in a way that seemed to threaten the Christian foundations of ethics; while a critical examination of the Scriptures shed certain doubts upon the official interpretations while at the same time throwing a glaring light upon the behaviour of ecclesiastical officialdom as compared with that of the first Apostles.

Officialdom was alarmed. Not all officialdom, for many of the greatest exponents of the New Learning were churchmen. But as a body it was alarmed and uneasy, just as (for example) official Medical opinion is alarmed and uneasy when a Lister or a Pasteur arises to challenge its traditional methods of practice. It could not see that, if it really trusted its Supreme Authority, it had nothing to fear. If God was eternal Reason, then any valid method of reasoning must be a manifestation of Himself; if He could display Himself in a material Sacrament, then all material beauty was His tabernacle; if His Spirit had been with men from the beginning, then any beauty of spirit wheresoever and whensoever was the work of His presence; if the Scriptures were truly His Word, then the most stringent examination could only confirm their truth. But a radical change in methods of thought is always terrifying, as the Pharisees realised when Christ interpreted the old Law in a new way; it sounds and is dangerous, and the immediate reaction is to resist it. And there is always this to be said for the specialists' side of the controversy: that when you open the closed ring of interpretation, you may let in a Pasteur, but you

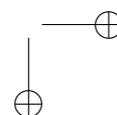
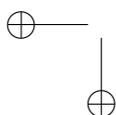


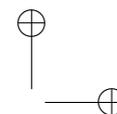
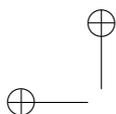


may also let in all the quacks. Long and often painful experiment is then necessary to weed out the false from the true. The official Church was as genuinely afraid of the effect of quack religions upon people's souls as the most careful medical practitioner of the effect of quack medicines upon their bodies.

At any rate, the New Learning was an adventure of the spirit, and the professional Church was not ready for adventure. She thrust the Reformers out, or let them leave of their own accord. And through the open gate marched in the hosts of Caesar. Church and world ceased to be coterminous, and the separate states, in which a feeling of national solidarity had been gradually growing, asserted their independence of the world-state. Now all the Church's ugly chickens came home to roost – the abuse of money, the abuse of the temporal arm, the chicane; the careless lives of some of the clergy, and the fear of the human body and human mind which had been allowed to grow up in others in contradiction of the claims of their Divine Head to have made both mind and body. Henceforward, it was the turn of the Church herself to become the state within the state.

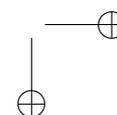
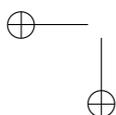
I have given so much space to the consideration of the theological state because, as I said earlier, it was the first state that ever claimed to be a world-state, and the only state that (in theory) made room for the full development of the whole man in an ordered community; and because our present aspirations and preconceptions about the desirable state are all derived from that immense, rational, never-fully-experienced conception. I shall now leave it and try to trace briefly what happened to its scattered fragments of doctrine. But I will add one

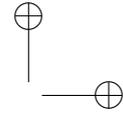
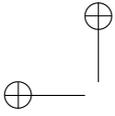




word for those who believe that the Christian world-state is still the only possible solution for our troubles.

We cannot go back. We cannot now unlearn the new way of thought, and it is not desirable that we should. It is not true, as men of science sometimes allege, that religious doctrine cannot be put to the test of experiment; it can; but only by living it. If the doctrine is true, it will survive the test, though perhaps only by the method of exhaustion, when every other possible theory has been tried and found wanting. I will put the same thought theologically. All great upheavals of the human spirit are judgments of God; and there are two ways of dealing with judgments. They may be accepted and “made good,” in which case they are manifested in love; this is the way of the Gospel. Or they may be resisted and proved upon us in our own despite, in which case they are manifested in wrath; this is the way of the Law. If Jerusalem knew not the time of her visitation, she must suffer the assaults of her enemies till the fulfilment of all things brings in the New Jerusalem, to be like, and yet unlike, the first.



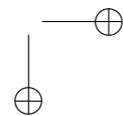
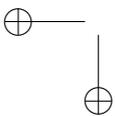


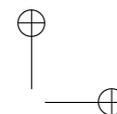
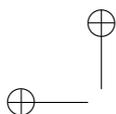
III

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING INSTALMENTS

To confer upon the individual that absolute, unqualified character which had been denied to any realm transcending the temporal order did too crude and obvious violence to reality. Some aspect of man's life in the actual historic process slyly insinuated itself into the position of the displaced transcendent. In one phase reason was given absolute sovereignty, and now, in reaction, biological life is the source of meaning for existence. Industrialism, in its Capitalist and Bolshevist phase, was an economic absolutism... And... the dogma of the sovereign people is a form of the dogma of becoming which overcomes some of the tragedies in which the dogma of the sovereign individual has involved humanity. The whole modern world in those aspects of it which really affect the lives of men, is a field of conflict between various forms of demonism, as we may call the attempts to give some element in the temporal order the absolute value which only belongs to the transcendent. – V. A. DEMANT.

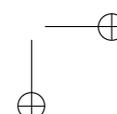
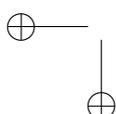
It is not easy to give an orderly account of the last three hundred years in terms of the relations between the individual and the community. Chronology and geography are confused: ideas put forward in one country and century produce their results in another – results often quite unlike those intended by the original thinker. We must also reckon with man's incorrigible habit of guiding himself consciously by one set of ideas and unconsciously (at the same time) by a different and conflicting set. Thus liberal thought in the 19th century, while openly proclaiming a doctrine of individual liberty, was unwittingly influenced by a biological theory of human development

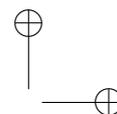




which seemed to show that the individual could not be a free agent at all.

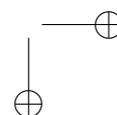
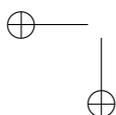
This is perhaps a good place in which to deal generally with the influence of the scientific method of thought – that one outstanding and unquestioned achievement of Western civilisation from the 17th to the 19th century. Once that method was discovered – observation of fact, formulation of theory, testing of theory by experiments providing fresh observations of fact – the laying bare of all the hidden workings of the universe was only a matter of time and patience. The inorganic world was the first to be tackled. It lay farthest from the citadel of human personality, and researches in that direction were the less likely to be obstructed by prejudice and the fear of change; also, they seemed to offer good hopes of giving control over that fundamental preoccupation of all flesh, the means of livelihood. It is this department of science that has brought us, among other things, the age of machines and electric power. Next, science went on to deal with the organic world – with living plants and animals; it thus put at men’s disposal better methods of agriculture and stock-breeding, together with immense improvements in medicine. The latest territory into which science has penetrated is psychology – the study of human behaviour; and here again we look to it for important benefits in education and mental therapy, and a better understanding of the workings of the group-mind. Scientists, however, do not confine themselves to the acquisition of merely “useful” knowledge, much as our timid minds would like them to do so, and strongly as we urge them in that direction by pecuniary inducements. They have an uncompromising reverence for all kinds of

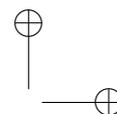
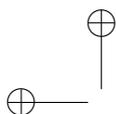




facts, and cannot be persuaded to suppress them, however startling, humiliating or inconvenient they may be. Thus, Galileo insisting that the earth was not the centre of the solar system; Darwin proclaiming that man, lord of creation, was only an elaborated ape; Freud asserting that proud human reason was more influenced than it supposed by unconscious processes of an irrational, not to say unedifying, sort: all these in turn startled, humiliated and inconvenienced established society by the production of highly unexpected rabbits from the respectable-looking scientific top-hat.

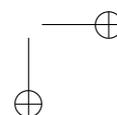
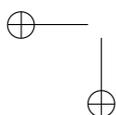
Nevertheless, once the initial shock was over, the results were accepted. More than that: each time science presented to view a new aspect of the orderly working of the world, the passion for simplification (which, as we shall see, is a perpetual nuisance and stumbling-block in man's road to wisdom) caused it to be hailed as a complete explanation of the universe. The findings of physics, showing that a beautiful mechanical order penetrated all material things, were condensed into the comprehensive slogan: "The universe is a mechanism"; while God was presented in the rôle of "the Master Mathematician." The findings of biology, extended with no very good warrant to cover all experience, including inorganic matter and the soul of man, were epitomised in the phrase, "The universe is an organism"; God making a new appearance as the Life-Force. The findings of psychology have not yet, I think, issued in a generally-accepted slogan: perhaps the ordinary man's opinion on the subject might best be summarised in the words: "the universe is a dream"; with God and man, like Alice and the Red King, figuring indistinguishably as the Dreamed and the Dreamer.

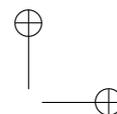




Throughout this development of scientific thought, one result has remained constant. In no field of experiment has science been able to reveal any purpose in the universe. Always, men have hoped that by investigating the mechanism, the organism and the dream, science would discover the use of the mechanism, the goal of the evolving organism, the interpretation of the dream. Always, the enquiry has ended by returning upon itself, like the symbolic serpent of eternity, and exhibiting, as it were, a self-confined universe, infinite indeed but closed, without beginning of descent or end of days. And always the priests and the philosophers have denounced the scientists as enemies to God and humanity, and have tried to retire into the area in which science was not yet at work, saying: "The purpose is not in matter, it is in life; the purpose is not in life, it is in the soul." But there is no room now for further retreat; science has penetrated the last defences, and once again it has brought back no news of a purpose, but only of a system of working. And men are asking in desperation: Is existence, then, without meaning or purpose? Are we helpless puppets in the hands of irrational forces fighting furiously without a cause and ceaselessly speeding hither and thither without direction?

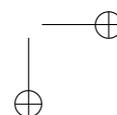
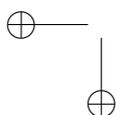
But indeed the despair is unfounded and the whole quarrel between science and philosophy a quarrel about nothing. The silence of science about purpose is certainly not a coincidence, but neither is it a proof that purpose does not exist. It proves nothing either way. Purpose is simply not within the terms of scientific reference, and can no more be investigated by science than colour by a microphone. Science is, in fact, a method for discovering

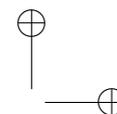




Why things happen as they do; it is not concerned or equipped to discover Why things should happen at all: that enquiry calls for philosophic method, which is especially directed to the discovery of purpose, including the purpose of science. Thus, it is science that is the state within a state; it is itself a department of philosophy. The unnecessary quarrel has been greatly exasperated by well-meaning but ill-informed partisans on either side rushing out to do each other's work by their own methods. The philosophers have behaved like a man crying querulously to his chauffeur: "Do you mean to tell me that this machine of yours is just as capable of taking me to Hanwell as to Harrogate? The thing's a public menace. I don't believe you know your job. Give me the spanner." The scientists, on the other hand, have been too apt to retort: "There's nothing about Harrogate in the specification of this car, and you can take it from me, you silly old cuckoo, that Harrogate doesn't exist, except in your own mischievous and superstitious imagination." (I thus record my personal impression that, on the whole, the philosopher is the more chicken-hearted and the scientist the ruder of the two.)

We must, then, bear in mind that, throughout the period we are considering, men's minds were greatly dominated by the scientific outlook, and by the alternations of hope and failure in their quest of purpose along scientific lines. The theological state had, of course, acknowledged a Divine Purpose outside history, of which enough was revealed to guide men's actions at any moment of history. As the theological basis of society became gradually undermined, it became more and more necessary to find some purpose ascertainable *in* history; for people were

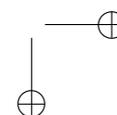
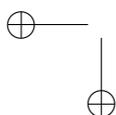


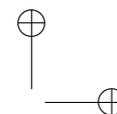


still sufficiently influenced by Christian habits of thought to feel that existence must have a rational purpose of some kind. Indeed, as the years go on, the effort of society is seen to be directed more and more, to retaining the great Christian principles without the support of the Christian dogma on which they were founded. We will take as examples the principles of Authority, Freedom and Equality, and see what became of them.

(1) The Reformation and the Renaissance were the forms taken by the revolt of the individual against ecclesiastical authority in Church and State; but it was perfectly clear to all concerned that one could not do without authority of some kind. A glance at the “natural world” presented no support for any authority save that of brute force, and the hold of Christianity was too strong to make that acceptable. Nor was it the intention of the Reformers to reduce religion to complete chaos. God was still recognised as the supreme Authority; what was claimed was the right of the individual man and the individual state to derive their authority direct from God and not through the mediation of the professional Church.

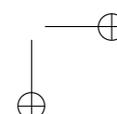
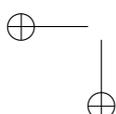
For practical purposes in the religious sphere, direct access to God was held to be direct access to the Bible, which was supposed to contain everything necessary to be known about God. Thus, for the infallible Church was substituted the infallible Book. True, it was the Church that had made the Book; but this difficulty was surmounted by the theory of direct inspiration: God had spoken directly to the individual writers, and the Book spoke directly to the individual reader. Every reader had a free and equal right to interpret the Book in the light of

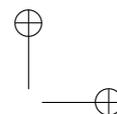
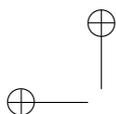




his own knowledge and of the Divine Grace that came as an individual gift to each particular soul. What, perhaps, had not been sufficiently realised was the extraordinary variety of individual interpretations that might be put by individuals on individual passages of Scripture. The professional distrust of quack religions turned out to be fully justified. They arose and flourished, especially among the Anglo-Saxon population, in astonishing numbers and in every conceivable kind – including some kinds that one might suppose to be quite inconceivable. But in most parts of Europe, common-sense and the instinct for order grouped those who shared certain leading interpretations into organised churches and bodies possessing a communal life, such as the great Lutheran and Calvinistic bodies, which held opinions in common on the important questions of grace and free-will, and the Church of England, which clung to the Apostolic Succession and Catholic sacraments, while admitting a wide freedom of interpretation on other points of doctrine. Large bodies of men in each state, and many whole states, remained, of course, faithful to the theory of the theological state, though the temporal power of Rome was gradually whittled away as time went on.

The Protestant countries, having reduced the Church to the position of a state within the State, had now to find some authority for the State itself. The ruling power held its warrant direct from God – but how? That shrewd lady, Queen Elizabeth of England, who had as keen a nose as anybody for the way the world-wind was blowing, looked forward as well as back in her reply to the Spanish ambassador: “It is the people who have placed me in the position I at present hold as the declared successor



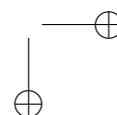
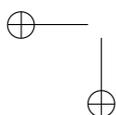


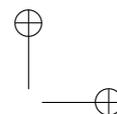
to the Crown.” A clear hereditary right she could not advance, nor could she claim the Papal sanction; but election by the people had been the old way of choosing a candidate for the Pope’s approval, and Henry VIII, when he devised his crown to his three children in succession, had seen to it that the arrangement should be ratified by Parliament. In this his daughter saw the authority that the world would hold valid in time to come. The voice of the nation could speak direct to God and God would sanctify the choice. “Thou hast raised and exalted me to the throne through Thy providence, and hast crowned me with peace to govern Thy people.”*

She saw truly. There was to be some confusion of theory – a little dallying with the doctrine of Divine Right; a long period of legalism, which attached absolute authority to the accident of birth; a stubborn warfare over the right to rule as distinct from the right to reign; and revolutions that abolished kings in favour of republics – but within three hundred years, the supreme source of authority in every leading European state was to be vested in the Sovereign People.

Not all at once, and not everywhere. The change took place gradually, as the various peoples developed a communal national feeling. We in England were politically rather precocious, and got our history over remarkably early and with comparatively few complications. History, like first love, produces less devastating effects in adolescence than when it attacks those of maturer years. France, for example, espoused popular sovereignty

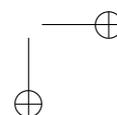
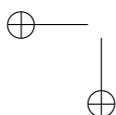
*Prayer in French from Queen Elizabeth’s Prayer-Book, written in her own hand.

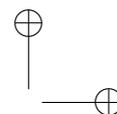
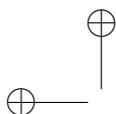




somewhat late in life, after a stormy courtship and tempestuous honeymoon marked by several attempts to “go back to mother” in the shape of autocracy. Germany did not become a united nation at all till 1871; in 1919 she contracted a sort of *mariage de convenance* with democracy, and now, after a hasty divorce, has apparently run away with a pirate. Russia, to carry on the metaphor, was suddenly rejuvenated by a devastating passion of love at the moment when she seemed about to decay of old age; and it is not yet known whether her partner really is the Sovereign People or a pretender masquerading under that title.

Within the state, the chaos of individual claims could be reduced to order by the solidarity of a growing national consciousness, and by the various Means successively devised for ascertaining and carrying out “the will of the Sovereign People.” But as between states, each of which now stood forth to claim absolute sovereignty in its own right, the establishment of a world-authority was not so simple. All attempt to locate such an authority was, in fact, abandoned. The appeal to force remained as the last resort in case of failure to agree; otherwise, there remained the appeal to those original Christian principles which nobody as yet was prepared to repudiate – such as justice, mercy and peace – backed up by mutual contract, whose validity rested again on the moral principles of faith and truth grounded upon an essentially religious sanction. Further, as with expanding trade the economic structure of the world became ever more complex, the nations were brought to realise how closely they depended upon reciprocal good-will for their means of livelihood; and it was hoped that, if moral prin-



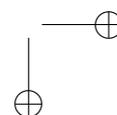
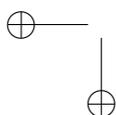


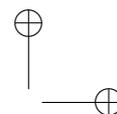
ciple failed, enlightened self-interest would keep them together.

(2) Leaving for a moment the question of the proper seat of authority, let us see what was happening to the concept of Liberty.

The first struggle was over freedom of conscience. Strangely and disappointingly, religious wars and persecutions did not end with the dissolution of the theological world-authority, but became more intense. Protestants and Catholics became the pawns of national politics – dissident minorities, that might be used by one state to weaken the internal authority of another. The long fight for religious toleration was only won – or seemed to be won – when the religious fervour of individuals and of religious bodies had become subdued to the national interests; the fear of Catholic internationalism survives in England to-day in the law of the Protestant Succession; and wherever religious unity can still be invoked to oppose national unity, the political tension resolves itself into religious persecution. Jewish internationalism is the excuse for the brutalities of the Nazi State in Germany; in Russia, the Christian Church was persecuted in the name of an internationalism of a different kind. In the whole long history of religious oppression, from the Massacre of St. Bartholomew in 1572 to the Jewish Atrocities of 1938, we may hear the note of one terrible slogan: *All organised bodies of opinion are a menace to the State.*

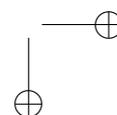
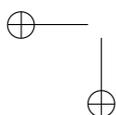
The theological state, while it had certainly recognised that heresy presented a threat to its own authority, had also considered the danger in which it might involve the individual soul. But when once the principle was

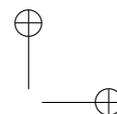
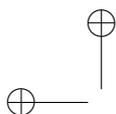




recognised that every man had the right to go to Heaven (or to the devil) in his own way, religious liberty was seen to be only one item in the general political problem of a democracy, viz. how much liberty of any kind could be permitted to the individual without destroying the solidarity of the state? The Democracies have attempted to solve this problem by gradually admitting more and more of the people to an effective control over the state while at the same time endeavouring to educate them to a proper sense of responsibility in the matter.

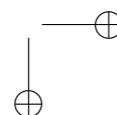
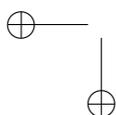
It will be noticed that when we talk of “liberty” we are concerning ourselves with the liberty of minorities. This is what is meant in a democratic country by “liberty.” It is, in fact, this care for the liberty of minorities, and for the individual man in his “minority of one,” that constitutes a democracy, and not its form of government. Indeed that form of government which consists in counting a majority of votes is actually opposed to the spirit of democracy, since in theory it gives the majority unlimited authority over the minority. Parliamentary representation aims at controlling this system by giving the minority the right of criticism and the opportunity to win over the majority, if possible, by argument. The majority is also made responsible to the country by the system of periodical elections. Within a democracy, the liberty of the majority to do exactly as it chooses has never been asserted; though it has recently been asserted elsewhere, and has come to be used as a justification for the most arbitrary forms of tyranny. But throughout the history of the rise of democracy, it is always the liberty of the individual that it is sought to protect, within the order of the state.

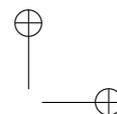




(3) The concept of Equality is closely bound up with that of Liberty. Both rest on the dogma of the value of the individual soul. "All men," said Abraham Lincoln, "are created equal." But are they? The brutal fact is that they are not. If you take away every kind of artificial inequality and restriction from the newborn child, you are still faced with a diversity of natural gifts and the chains of hereditary constitution. Education will not wholly abolish either the one or the other. Nothing is more strange than the appeal to "Natural Law" to back up the doctrine of freedom and equality, for the "natural" order shows nothing but the domination of physical force and instinctive cunning over the weak. The theological law of equality and freedom was a direct assertion of the unique spiritual nature of man as contrasted with the nature of the rest of creation. What the Equalitarians and Libertarians really asserted was the claim to *equality of opportunity* and freedom from artificial checks upon that opportunity. Whether this was likely to result in reducing or in emphasising natural contrasts was for history to show.

Certain kinds of equality were obviously attainable. Political equality, for example, is a wholly artificial thing. It exists only inside the artificial structure of the state, and can be made or unmade by a stroke of the pen. In England, it was conceded gradually by the ruling power in response to claims, from below, to the right to share that power. And it did, in effect, follow the gradual redistribution of effective power in the state. The right to sit in Parliament and to elect to Parliament follows the shift of power from landowner to merchant, from country to town, from the ten-pound householder

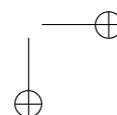
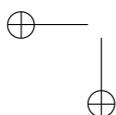


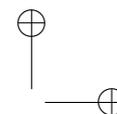


to the individual worker and finally to women and the whole adult population. It thus appears in practice as being not altogether the result of the theory of individual value (though that theory was always at hand to give its claims moral support), but rather – and especially from the point of view of the successive claimants – as a series of concessions wrung unwillingly from the actual governing classes under sanction of power. The point to notice is that it was, in practice, always coupled with power and therefore with the notion of responsibility; and that it was progressively accompanied by the extension of education to the classes newly enfranchised or about to be enfranchised. This coupling of the two notions of Responsibility and Political Equality has guided Britain's policy in dealing with her colonies and dependencies, and has issued at length in the Statute of Westminster, which gives to her most politically advanced Dominions equal and independent status with Great Britain,

Two other points call for notice; first, that the *idea* of political equality has become inextricably bound up in the British mind with a particular *form* of government, viz. parliamentary representation; so that we are inclined to believe that any country with a parliament is a democracy (that is, one in which the Sovereign People exercises effective power) and conversely, that any form of government other than parliamentary is inevitably opposed to the will of the people. Neither of these propositions is necessarily true.

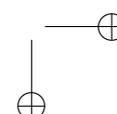
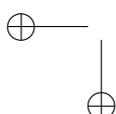
The second point is this: that if political power is only an expression of effective power in a state, it is desirable to find out what that effective power actually is; for with the abandonment of an absolute Authority outside

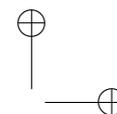




history, the seat of absolute authority within history tends to become identified with the seat of effective power. The disappointments experienced by political Democracy are chiefly due to the fact that, while the politicians were not looking, the seat of power, and therefore the absolute authority, has been shifted to a point where there is no connection between it and the will of the people.

Midway, as it were, between “natural” equality (which is impossible) and political equality (which is artificial) stands the idea of social equality. So long as we value one kind of man more than another, some kind of social aristocracy is bound to exist. It will be “natural” in proportion as we value intrinsic gifts and artificial in proportion as we value the accidents of position. A state which especially valued wisdom, virtue or physical beauty would find itself with an aristocracy of wise, virtuous or beautiful people, and the only effort that could be made to establish social equality in such a state would be to raise the general level of culture as high as possible, so as to diminish the contrasts between the generality of mankind and those with outstanding natural gifts. This ideal was at the back of the claim to “equal opportunity”; it is also at the back of all educative effort. Unfortunately, the idea of political equality works in practice in a totally different direction. It proceeds by counting heads, irrespective of the brains inside them or the beauty of feature outside. An aristocracy of talent or beauty or virtue remains a purely social aristocracy – we may admire it, but it is not allowed to govern. There exist, in fact, many sub-aristocracies of this kind within the limits of any society. The film-star and the footballer

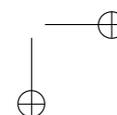
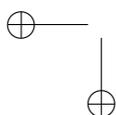


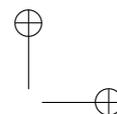
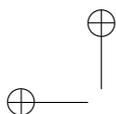


enjoy a social prestige among the lovers of physical beauty and prowess, but are despised in a society of university dons, who grant social prestige to learned men and the heads of academic bodies. In the state generally, however, social power, like political power, tends to attach itself to the seat of effective power.

Bearing this in mind, let us again note two points before passing on: First: that any form of government based on majority rule will tend to suppress the natural aristocracy of talent, since, despite all educative effort, outstanding talent will always be in the minority (or it would not be outstanding). Thus we find ourselves face to face with the great paradox of individualism: that the more value we attach to an individual *as* a numerical individual, the less value we place on his individual personality. And secondly: a social class, because of the standard of values it shares in common, tends to become an organised body of opinion; and *all organised bodies of opinion are a menace to the State*. Here we come up against a second great paradox: the classless society, founded upon a strong sense of the value of the individual, is at the same time a form of society exactly adapted to stifle all expressed or organised opinion within the body of the state.

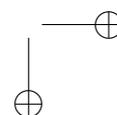
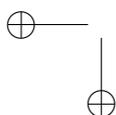
A third kind of possible equality is economic equality. The monstrous contrasts between rich and poor had troubled the conscience of Western-Mediterranean-Christian civilisation from the beginning. The revolt against the concentration of financial power – that is, of the control of the means of livelihood – in the hands of the official Church, was followed by revolts against the feudal lords, against the king, against the landed aristocracy, all in the

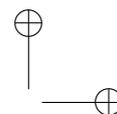




same cause, as each class in succession snatched financial control from the other. From the land-owners, the power passed into the hands of the industrialists, and this time with a difference. Church, King and Land-owners had all recognised a certain responsibility attached to wealth, which had to some extent acted as a control upon power. It is only with the rise of industrial Capitalism that we find Wealth acknowledged as an absolute authority in itself, uncontrolled and irresponsible. With this location of the seat of authority, the other great principles began to fall into line. Equality defined itself as an equal right to the means of livelihood, and political equality was claimed by the worker on the ground that because he produced the wealth he had an equal right to share its privileges; equality of opportunity came to mean an equal right to make money, and education became commercialised. Liberty became the right of the individual man to make his own career in free competition with others; and its subsequent history is that of a desperate attempt to reconcile this freedom of the jungle with the retention of any kind of spiritual, mental or personal liberty worth mentioning.

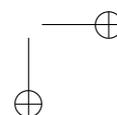
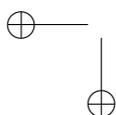
Now, while all this was going on, science had been busily at work to alter man's general ideas about himself. The theological state had, as we have seen, become untrue to its great conception of the Whole Man, and the concept of Spiritual Man had gone out of fashion with the collapse of spiritual standards as an absolute authority in world affairs. The Humanists, struggling to maintain the authority of the Whole Man, remained, and remain to this day, as champions of that conception, but acquired an increasingly secular outlook. The Whole

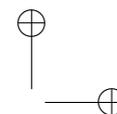
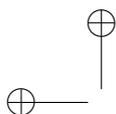




Man – Man as such – came to be considered by them as an absolute value in himself, apart from any outside standard. But the triumphs of scientific method in the material world now tended to give importance to another separate aspect of man’s complex nature. In place of spiritual man there arises in the 18th century the idea of the Rational Man. Every problem, it is held, can be solved by Reason, and any problem which cannot be so solved has no “real” validity. Thus the “Age of Reason” is accompanied by a “rational” kind of religion and a “rational” conception of art and literature. The mystical paradoxes of Christianity are lost to view in rational theism, expounded in logical terms and without “enthusiasm”; the poetry of Pope and Boileau, the ordered symmetry of neo-classical architecture, the formal garden, all express the dominance of rationality in man’s notion of himself. God (the Master-Mathematician and Fount of Reason) is considered as having made a neat mechanical universe, into which everything and every person is fitted according to a rigidly determined plan.

From this impressive, but rather chilly and exacting conception of humanity, there was, as might be expected, an emotional revolt. At the very moment that the state was adapting itself along the lines of the Social Contract, and the French Revolution was overthrowing the churches to establish the figure of Reason as the supreme object of human devotion, there was a literary outburst of sentimentality, romance and the cult of the wildly picturesque. Gothic ruins and the *Castle of Otranto*, Ossian and Châteaubriand, Byronic glooms and the tempestuous fantasies of the *Sturm und Drang* drama, Lake Poetry, the cult of wild nature and the *Idiot Boy* – all these



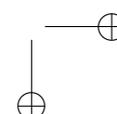
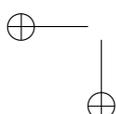


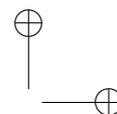
protests of the emotional side of man's being against the arid classicism of the Rational Age burst out and flourished madly in all directions as the 18th century gave place to the 19th. But the real blow against Reason was being struck by science behind the scenes, as it proceeded from physics to biology, from the mechanistic to the organic conception of the universe.

The theory of Evolution was upsetting to more things than religion. For a universe of ordered being it substituted a universe of perpetual becoming; for the doctrine of "whatever is, is best," a doctrine of "whatever is going to be, will be better." The perfect world was no longer presented as a static ideal, attainable here and now by the exercise of virtue or reason; it was pushed away into the future. For the first time the word and the idea of "Progress" became associated with the course of history.

Religion, though it protested very loudly, found that it could, after all, adjust itself to this idea. It was all a question of method. If God had chosen (there was really no reason why He should not) to create a universe that developed itself according to plan, instead of making everything piecemeal by separate acts of creation, then the duty of the religious man was to believe that the eventual goal of humanity was "somehow good" and to co-operate consciously with evolution to achieve that good end.

Reason, however, before it could proclaim the "perfectibility of man" was forced to make an act of faith, since – if one left God out of the picture – there was no evidence whatever that evolution was bound to end in *moral* perfection, or in perfection of any sort, for the human animal. Other animal types had remained static,

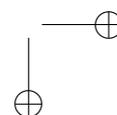
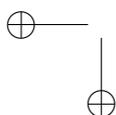


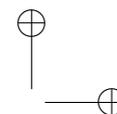
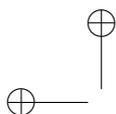


or had degenerated and been superseded, and why not *homo sapiens*? The act of faith was, however, made; and reason professed belief in its own perfectibility, though at the cost of denying its own authority.

But now the organic theory of the universe, which had seemed to offer an escape from the inevitability of the mechanistic theory, revealed an inevitability of its own. Progress was seen to be the product of heredity and environment acting inevitably upon the organism. Free competition (it was asserted) resulted necessarily in the survival of the fittest. The fittest for what? and competition for what? The answer given to these questions by the observer contemplating the history of evolution was: the fittest to survive in free competition for the means of livelihood.

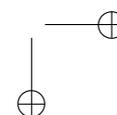
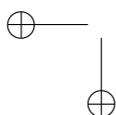
Thus the biological view of human society seemed to fit in with the doctrine of individual freedom, provided that freedom was given a purely economic interpretation. Any bounds that religious or esthetic scruple might wish to set to the free-for-all scramble for wealth were made invalid by the doctrine of "equal opportunity." The only "real" structure of society was seen to be economic, and the individual man was to be left free to climb to the top of the edifice. Science was already inventing the machinery needed for the free development of industrialism; all that was necessary was to remove such artificial restraints as protective tariffs and minimum prices from the wheels of economic progress, and let natural development have its way. To the reluctant masses, who beheld with alarm and despair the removal of such little security as they had, the hope was held out that the free economic state would result in the equal economic state. To be sure,

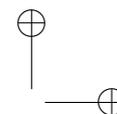




the analogy of the “natural” world offered no very good guarantee of this; it was, however, pointed out that “there was always room at the top.” It was, in fact, supposed that increased production would automatically result in increased consumption all round, as the wealth of the community accumulated.

It was, therefore, in the sacred name of progress that industrial Capitalism was given its head to lead the people to social and economic equality by the road of economic freedom. As we can now all see, it led in no such direction. Instead of social equality, there appeared the mass of the labouring classes, living in appalling insecurity, huddled together in the ugly and insanitary towns rushed up without planning or control by speculative builders engaged on their own account in a “free competition” of commercial building. Above these developed the new middle-class, a complicated hierarchy of rigid caste-prejudice, each little sub-class intent on defending itself against encroachment from below while trying to clamber on an economic ladder to the sub-class immediately above. At the top, the fittest in the economic struggle survived and flourished in increasing wealth and power. Eventually, the “fittest” organism to survive proved itself to be, not the individual business, exhausting its strength in the fight with its competitors, but the big mass-production monopoly, which enjoyed free development by the simple and logical process of devouring and so eliminating competition altogether. As an instrument for creating wealth, and for exploiting world-resources, Capitalism has been an unqualified success. No system has been found to equal it for producing great quantities of goods, at the minimum expenditure of

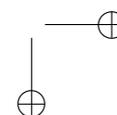
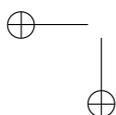


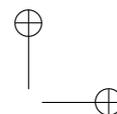


time and labour, to sell in the cheapest market. But the evolution of consumption has developed unsatisfactorily. There has been, without doubt, a general increase in consumption: the standard of living is on the whole very much higher throughout the population of the capitalist states than it was a hundred years ago. But it is liable to enormous fluctuations – periods of boom and slump – which destroy all security, and which no artificial methods of controlling prices seem able to overcome. And indeed, the whole idea of controlled wages and prices is a denial of the theory of “free” economic development, in which the boom and the slump appear as necessary and natural phenomena. Goods are produced cheaply by cutting down labour costs (*i.e.*, by employing few workmen or paying lower wages); but this automatically reduces consumption because fewer people can then afford to pay for the goods. Therefore, Capitalism can only be approved by humanity so long as the production of wealth is regarded as an absolute good-in-itself; if it is regarded as a means to social and economic equality, it is not justified by its results.

The protests of Religion, Humanism and Reason against the effects of Capitalism were greatly hampered by the fact that they themselves had capitulated to the biological theory of “progress.” They could make no effective stand against economic liberty as such; all they could do was to mitigate its worst results by palliative measures, and do their best to uphold their spiritual, esthetic and rational standards in a world which seemed to deny them all meaning.

But worse was to befall them. Religion, as we have seen, had always insisted upon the validity of reason,



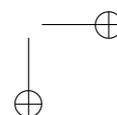
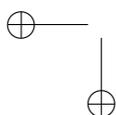


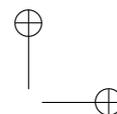
since it believed that God was rational. Humanism also had upheld reason as an integral part of the complete man. Reason, supported by its own triumphs in the realm of science, continued to believe in itself as the final authority in its own right. But now, science turned its attention to sociology and psychology, with alarming results. Sociology minimised the importance of the individual man by presenting history as the study of mass-behaviour, determined by the pressure of economic events. Psychology showed art and religion to be but forms of this behaviour, and, by emphasising the part played in behaviour by instinct and the unconscious, dealt a staggering blow to the sovereign validity of Reason. Thus the final achievement of Reason was to destroy itself. Nothing seemed to be left in history but the interplay of irrational events.

We will try now to sum up what had happened to the chief principles of the theological state when cut loose from their supporting dogma.

Individual Liberty, pursued as an Absolute end in itself, had come into collision with the national state in the sphere of conscience, but had achieved a moderate recognition in the sphere of politics, and complete recognition in the field of economics only.

Equality had attained considerable success in the sphere of religious toleration, but only as and when religion became subordinated to nationalism as a source of social solidarity. In politics, it had been to all intents and purposes solidly established, so far as the purely formal elements of government were concerned. But social and economic equality had come up against Economic Freedom and found their Waterloo.



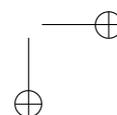
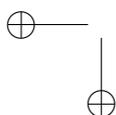


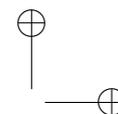
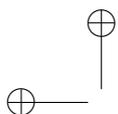
Absolute Authority had been sought in the Bible, where it found itself subject to a variety of individual interpretations; in the Sovereign State, where it was under the control of international economic conditions; in the will of the Sovereign People, which amounted in practice to the vote of the majority; in Sovereign Reason, which was at length being undermined by scientific investigation; in the goal of Evolution, which remained unknowable. The only authority which could lay any claim to be considered absolute at the time of the Great War was that of Economics. There were, of course, minority protests against this authority, as there have been at all times against all authority. But the great majority of people in Europe accepted – and for that matter still accept – the authority of Economics as absolute, and considered the only “real” history of the universe to be Economic History.

Finally, we may tabulate the changes that had occurred in the concept of Man himself, considered as the basic unit in the structure of the state. We have, in succession:

1. The Whole Man, the image of God – (theological man).
2. The Whole Man, a value in himself, apart from God – (humanist man).
3. Man the embodied Intelligence – (rational man).
4. Homo Sapiens, the intelligent animal – (biological man).
5. Man the member of the herd – (sociological man).
6. Man the response to environment – (psychological man).
7. Man the response to the means of livelihood – (economic man).*

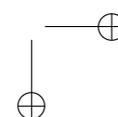
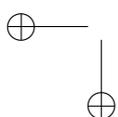
*Historically speaking, “Economic Man” might, perhaps, be placed a little further up the list, for he began to emerge in the sixteenth century and was well established as a concept in the nineteenth. But it was not, I think, till behaviourist sociology and the psy-

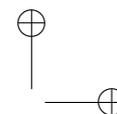




The most noticeable thing about this gradual development is that the more man knows, scientifically, the less he understands the purpose of existence, and the less is his individual importance in the scheme of things. It is symptomatic that in earlier days, the individual nearly always put the blame for his unhappiness upon personal oppressors; but economic man, almost invariably, blames "the system."

chology of the unconscious had been invoked to deprive man of his last shred of individual initiative that a concept which reduced all history and all humanity to a mere expression in economic terms could be generally accepted without protest.



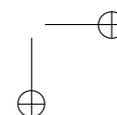
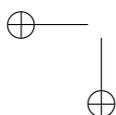


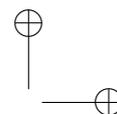
IV

WHAT HAPPENED IN THE LAST CHAPTER

Not only do the dialectical movements of the human spirit indicate an eternal pivot in human existence which runs into the here and now from a super-temporal order of being. Recognition of this truth as a dogma that affects men's habitual thinking is necessary for far more urgent reasons than the satisfaction of understanding what is happening to them. It is urgent because the conflicts generated by the alternative positions man takes up are becoming more and more violent. Each position is fought for not as a corrective but as absolute truth. This violence of opposition is inevitable if men do not believe that the unconditioned ground of being is transcendent to the world order. For men require significance, that is, a sense of intimate relation to unconditioned being. Without a dogma of transcendent being they will be seeking it by giving absolute value to one position thrown up in the historic process. This appears to them not one possible attitude among others, but the unquestionable assumption of all thinking and acting. Life becomes, then, increasingly a struggle of naked energies between the upholders of opposite positions on one plane. All contrasts become antinomies, and, when they are the underlying dogmas of political movements, a war Situation is engendered. There being no common conception of anything outside the struggle to which appeal can be made, these develop a growing conflict of wills, which easily slips from being a conflict for an attitude to life into an expression of those wills in themselves, abstract, empty, and violent. The war is carried on less and less in order to defend a position, more and more the position is held in order to sustain the war. If the terms of a contrast in human affairs are seen as alternatives, then one of them will be clothed in the unconditioned validity of the divine, and when this is defended against an opposite number with the same pretensions, there is war to the bitter end.

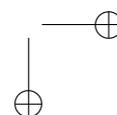
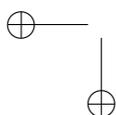
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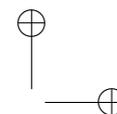




We now come to the emergence, after the War of 1914–1918, of the great Totalitarian societies.

One thing we shall, I think, have noticed in the last chapter: that the attempt to assign *absolute* value or *absolute* authority to any one principle or any one social unit was continually checked and thwarted by the value assigned to some other principle or social unit. Thus absolute individualism (or anarchy) was checked by the desire for the ordered community; *absolute* nationalism by the desire for international peace; *absolute* equality by the cult of economic freedom; *absolute* freedom of the majority by the principle of political equality; and so forth. This is not surprising, since the principles belonged to a theological conception whose very essence was that no principle could have *absolute* value or authority within the course of history. The Absolute was, in fact, to use the physicist's phrase, "absolutely elsewhere"; all temporal values were relative – a point in which theology showed itself entirely in accordance with the later findings of science. Theology, however, with an admirable consistency, added that relativity itself must not be considered as an Absolute; that all values were relative to the absolute standards that existed outside history. Theological society was a great paradox, subsisting in a condition of perpetual tension, in which every principle was to be given the utmost possible value, without conflicting with or destroying the rest. Thus, the opposition to making any one principle an absolute in itself was due to the recollection in people's minds of the counter-principle – a recollection inherited from the old theology, even when belief in that theology had been abandoned.



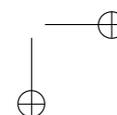
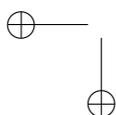


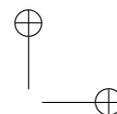
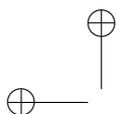
Seeing that these principles, left to function on their own, produced so strange and insoluble an antinomy, the logical mind could come to only one conclusion: without the theology, the principles have no authority. There is no reason whatever why, having abandoned the theology, we should not abandon the principles. We shall then be free to make our own absolute.

This is the reason why the opponents of Democracy have also hated Christianity. They recognise it, and quite rightly, as the ultimate source of opposition to the establishment of any absolute temporal value or of any absolute temporal authority.

Anarchists, for example, who assign an absolute value to individualism, dislike Christianity because of its insistence upon the value of the ordered community. But the practical objections to anarchy are so great that this school of thought has found very few whole-hearted followers. It is otherwise with those who assign absolute value to the state. The Absolute or Totalitarian State is now being tried out in two forms: in Communist Russia and in the Nazi-Fascist states of Germany and Italy.

Communism, as displayed in working, presents great difficulties to the observer, because its practice differs very considerably from its theory. It began by the assertion of two absolutes: internationalism and equality. The workers of the world were to unite to overthrow the authority of the sovereign states and found a world-community based upon social and economic equality. In point of fact, the workers of the world have so far failed to unite. In 1914, national solidarity proved far stronger than social solidarity, and after the revolution of 1917, Russia was obliged to carry out the experiment

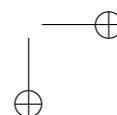
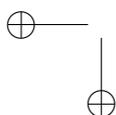


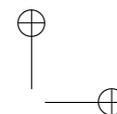


of the equalitarian state in a limited way within her own borders. Communists still believe that Capitalism and Nationalism will perish by their own confusions and so bring in the Communist world-state. In the meantime, however, the experiment as practised in Russia is turning out rather unexpectedly.

The basis of Communism is Marxian Socialism, and the equality aimed at is economic equality, which would (it was supposed) produce social equality. We need not pause too much to consider the incidental brutalities by which the equalitarian state was brought into being. Such brutalities accompany all revolutions, and are part of the effort to “start from a clean sheet” which any new régime is compelled to adopt when making a violent and sudden change in the constitution of society. What is important at the moment is the particular dogma upon which Russian Communism is founded. It has been claimed for the Marxian theory of society that it is “entirely free from all dogma”; but that is nonsense. All theories of society are founded on dogma – what causes a dogma to go unrecognised is its unquestioned acceptance; it is not recognised, that is, as dogma when it has sunk so deeply into the structure of our thought that we take it for granted. The dogma in this case is the absolute authority of economics.* Equality – even social

* “The premises with which we start,” says Marx, “are not arbitrary: they are not dogmas; they are real premises from which abstraction can be made only in imagination.” And he starts from this premise: “Men may be distinguished from animals by consciousness, religion or anything else; they begin to differentiate themselves from animals as soon as they begin to produce their means of subsistence.” The other principles of distinction are



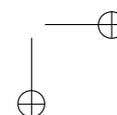
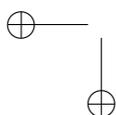


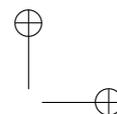
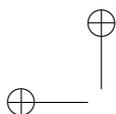
equality – is conceived in economic terms; the theory is that economic equality will automatically produce social and political equality.

Now, economic equality cannot, as we have seen, co-exist with economic freedom. It requires that the full control of industry shall be taken over by the state. This means that individual liberty is abolished in the very sphere which is declared by the dogma to be the sphere of man's, and the state's, essential nature. The individual must therefore be coerced or cajoled into surrendering not only his economic liberty but all his individual economic values to the state. This is not all. He must also subjugate all individual liberties to the economic machine. He must, of course, not own his own land or make personal profit; he must also live where the state appoints, work wherever the state directs, and for as many hours as the state appoints, at whatever work the state chooses to put him to. Further: he must sacrifice liberty of opinion. And for this reason; that where there is free expression of individual opinion, there will arise organised groups of people sharing that opinion, and *all organised bodies of opinion are a menace to the State*. Wherever the state, as such, is held to be an Absolute, there can be no individual liberty of opinion.

This holds good of all totalitarian systems. It explains the elaborate system of police spying used by totalitarian states to suppress independent organisations and the expression of individual opinion and criticism. The only liberty acknowledged in the totalitarian state is the

held to be not real but ideological. The dogma that economics constitutes the sole reality thus underlies the entire structure of Marxian philosophy.



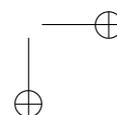
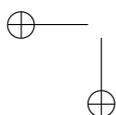


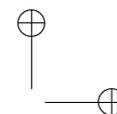
liberty to find the expression of man's whole nature in service to the State.

It will be seen that this has some analogy with the suppression of heresy in the theological state, and with the conception of liberty as liberty to obey the law of man's nature. It is so; and it is interesting to find that those who abuse the Catholic Church most loudly for her proceedings against heresy are very often the same people who most loudly applaud the suppression of political heresies in totalitarian states. There is, however, one distinction. The theological state is itself bound by the eternal standards which it acknowledges; the totalitarian state is bound by nothing. It may change its aims or its policy at any moment, without giving a reason. Its own caprice is its only law, for it is itself the Absolute.

We shall see this more clearly when we come to consider the Nazi-Fascist state; though we may note in passing the entirely new direction silently given to Russian Communism under Stalin, and the unexplained appearance of what looks uncommonly like a Russian Imperialism very different from the original internationalist aims of Communism. But a question that presents itself is this: we have been speaking of "the State" as though it were distinct from the Sovereign People. What is the Totalitarian State – or rather, *who* is it?

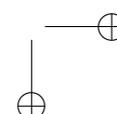
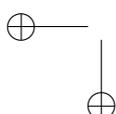
It is the suppression of individual opinion that does, in fact, make the Totalitarian State something apart from the People. The whole job of thinking has been handed over to the professionals. The state, under Totalitarianism, consists of the professional state officials: it is, in short, a Bureaucracy, responsible to nobody except itself, since the machinery for making it responsible to the peo-

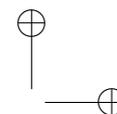




ple has been destroyed by the suppression of organised bodies of opinion.

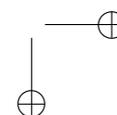
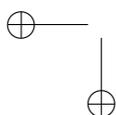
In Italy and in Germany, the totalitarian state has reached very much the same result as in Russia, though along different lines. Here, there was never any attempt to introduce internationalism; from the start, the Nation is taken as an Absolute. Nor is economic or social equality made the basis of society; on the contrary, the forms of Capitalism and a social hierarchy have been carefully preserved. Individual freedom is, however, understood in the same sense as in Russia: the deliberate sacrifice of the whole self to the state. Indeed, the pronouncements of Fascist and Communist on this subject are so closely alike that they are practically indistinguishable. There is in both systems the same system of police-spying and the same suppression of organised bodies of opinion. In Germany, organisation of any kind, however innocent and non-political, is firmly discouraged except in connection with, and affiliated to the Nazi party; from the Christian Churches to the village glee-club the acknowledged aim must be the expression of the party spirit, and all the party organisations, such as the Frauenbund, or the Strength Through Joy movement, exist primarily as a means of political control over the groups (*e.g.*, the women and the workers) who form their membership. The dangerous influence of the family, as an organised group independent of the state, is kept in check in Nazi society by that of the various party organisations for Children and Youth, which ensures that the younger members of the family shall act, in effect, as political spies upon their parents. In fact, the whole system of party organisations tends to break up family union by

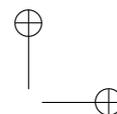




deliberately arranging the times of the men's, women's and children's meetings so as to keep the family scattered. Similarly, while attendance at church is not forbidden by law, party meetings (from which it is dangerous to absent one's self) are carefully arranged to coincide with the hours of services. This system is subtler than, and probably quite as effective as, the Communist official denunciations of religion and marriage which have roused so much opposition in countries outside Russia. Strong support for the Nazi system has been gained in Catholic and Capitalist countries by its retention of the outward forms of religion and family institutions as well as of the exterior structure of private ownership; and it has thus been enabled to cash in upon the fear and hatred felt for Communism by giving itself out to be opposed to the Communistic theory in all these respects. That, in fact, the two systems are fundamentally similar was realised some time ago by a number of religious thinkers, and by certain economists, who prophesied that, far from making war on one another, the two leading totalitarian states were bound to form an alliance. These thinkers were in no way surprised by the Russo-German pact; and it is now abundantly clear that, if the Soviets and the Nazis do in the end come to blows it will be on account of a conflict, not of ideologies but of imperial aims.

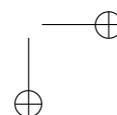
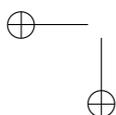
The economics of Totalitarianism rests on a principle precisely opposed to that of modern Capitalist economics. The latter seeks to get rid of depression and unemployment by increasing consumption. Totalitarian economics in Germany and Italy, and also in Russia since the period of the first Five-Year Plan, seeks the same end by ruthlessly cutting down consumption in order to force money

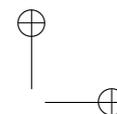




into capital investment under state control. It is quite true, as their respective apologists proclaim, that there is next to no unemployment in either Russia or in the Nazi-Fascist states. What is less loudly proclaimed is that full employment in these countries is dependent upon the maintenance of consumption (the “standard of living”) at the lowest possible level. In Russia, which at the time of the Revolution possessed a very small industrial middle class, these economies in consumption (designed to produce savings for forced investment) had to be practised at the expense of the peasants and unskilled workers. Here, however, progressive industrialisation and the cult of economic progress have resulted in economic inequality, and the bureaucracy which has emerged to constitute the effective ruling state is rewarded with economic privileges. There is, in plain fact, a new economic middle class, though it claims no social superiority.* In Germany, it was the already existing middle class that suffered most from the levelling-down of consumption; and here the standard of living was particularly affected by the effort to achieve “self-sufficiency” in a country very poor in natural resources. Under Nazism, where not economics but a militant nationalism is the accepted

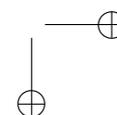
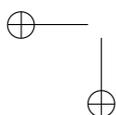
*It is only fair to say that, according to Communist doctrine, the domination of the Proletariat as the effective power in the state is held to be only an interim stage, which will eventually make way for a completely classless society and the total disappearance of “the State.” (Though how the stateless society is to survive is not clear, in view of the essentially dialectical basis of the Communist theory of being.) In the meantime, the emergence of a bureaucratic bourgeoisie with ruling powers and economic privileges looks like an unforeseen development in what purports to be the period of Proletarian domination.

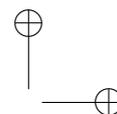




“absolute,” the ruling classes of military and party organisations can be rewarded with a purely social prestige and privilege. We have therefore the curious result that, under Communism, the attempt to achieve economic equality has led to the appearance of an economically privileged class without marked social prestige; whereas under Nazism, which attempted to preserve the outward structure of private ownership, the ruling and socially privileged classes are being forced into economic equality with labour.

In both kinds of totalitarian community, the social services and entertainments which in the democracies are largely left to individual enterprise are taken over by the state, and thus made readily and cheaply available to all. These amenities (ranging from housing, education and medical services to state theatres and travel facilities) are, like everything else in these states, well organised, and provide considerable compensation for the curtailment of individual liberties and economic profits. The arrangement carries with it this advantage to the government: that education and amusement can be firmly directed to the encouragement of “correct” political opinion, and become, in fact, an elaborate medium of unrelaxing propaganda. As regards the arts and professions, nothing is lacking except that liberty to be themselves which gives them a universal value. They were firmly suppressed at the beginning of the Soviet régime, and only returned to circulation and economic privilege when judged to be so thoroughly impregnated with government dogma that they could offer no dangerous criticism, and when the people were themselves so thoroughly reduced to uniformity of opinion as to be impervious to criticism.

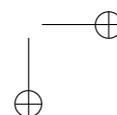
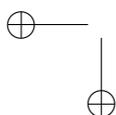


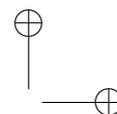


This condition of things is no doubt aimed at also in Germany; Hitler has stated – probably with perfect truth – that he is eager to encourage art and learning, though he is ready to suppress them for fifty years for the sake of establishing Germany in her rightful supremacy; in other words, he will restore them when he is satisfied that they are impotent. Unfortunately, neither art nor learning takes kindly to impotency, since power is their essential nature and the condition of their existence. (In a democratic state like our own, where the stifling of criticism is recognised as a crime, the failure to put good entertainment and educational facilities within reach of the people argues a grave neglect, and for the muddled condition of our housing and medical services there is no conceivable excuse.)

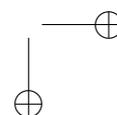
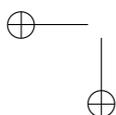
Communism, being based upon Economics, can retain belief in its own authority so long as economic productivity is accepted as sufficient – or, perhaps, so long as war does not come to disturb the economic balance. Nazi-Fascism, on the other hand, being based upon Nationalism, must assign an “absolute” value to war, which is the logical expression of absolute Nationalism. The ideal in whose name the Nazi-Fascist states accept the sacrifices necessary for the functioning of totalitarian economics is *Wehrwirtschaft* – the organising of the whole nation on a war basis in assertion of the mystical value of nation and race. War must be made to seem rational – more: the supreme end of human endeavour – and self-sacrifice must be accepted as a good-in-itself, the supreme virtue of the warrior in the warrior state.

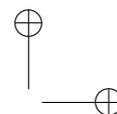
But logic is here in a difficulty. The doctrine of mystical self-sacrifice works well enough for the individual: “it





is a sweet and seemly thing to die for one's country." But it cannot be a valid expression of the aims of a whole society, if that society is held to be an "absolute" in itself. A nation cannot be ready to perish for its own preservation, for that is nonsense; it could only sacrifice itself for some greater, external cause. Therefore the Nationalist state is forced to proclaim such an outside cause as the aim of its self-sacrifice, and so, in effect, to acknowledge an "absolute" outside itself. That is why the German government, in perfect good faith and in obedience to an iron necessity, asserts unceasingly that it seeks to establish peace in Europe. It is obliged to identify the triumph of German Nationalism with the triumph of Peace. Even if it were rational to assert that war is an absolute good-in-itself, it is doubtful whether any people, however coaxed or coerced into submission, could be made to accept such an "absolute." In fact, ever since the war of 1914–1918, the peoples of Europe have been inclined to bestow an absolute value on Peace. Therefore Germany has to lay public claim to the intention of establishing peace by force of arms. Once again, before sitting in judgment upon this proposition, let us remember that precisely the same claim was made by the League of Nations, also on the supposition that Peace was an "absolute" value. The difference is in the method. In the one case an "aristocratic" minority (Germany = the chosen race) seeks to impose its will-for-peace upon an inferior majority; in the other, a "democratic" majority ("collective security") seeks to impose its will upon a dissident minority. It is, indeed, very possible to argue that the erection of Peace into an "absolute" is bound, in the long run, to lead to war. Actually, the

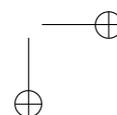
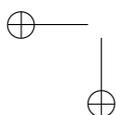


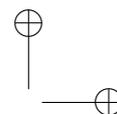


attempts of the League to impose peace by force were abandoned over and over again when it was seen that they threatened to provoke a world-conflagration.

A further effect of accepting Nationalism as an absolute principle is seen to be the abandonment of several other great European principles besides that of liberty. There is, for instance, no reason whatever to be surprised, or even shocked, by violation of treaties or ill-treatment of minorities in a Totalitarian Nationalist state, nor yet by cynical and inconsistent changes of policy. When once we have grasped the full implications of the statement that “whatever serves Germany is right” – and Heaven knows it has been reiterated often enough and loudly enough to attract our wandering attention – then we see that breach of faith, cruelty and opportunism are merely the natural results of that statement of principle. We continue to be shocked and surprised because the old Western-Mediterranean-Christian principles are still strong in us: we *cannot* believe that any set of people could genuinely abandon them and hold it right to do so. We keep on thinking that the German state is the old-fashioned Christian kind of sinner that knows what is right but does what it knows to be wrong; we are unable to conceive that more desperate condition of sin that honestly believes the wrong to be right. This is what Christianity calls “the sin against the Holy Ghost,” which cannot be forgiven because it cannot be recognised or repented. It is the sin of sins, that *necessarily* brings all others in its train.

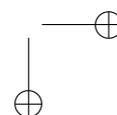
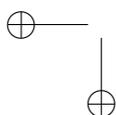
It is for this reason and no other that we may, with much humility and a profound sense of our own shortcomings, say that the war against Germany is a just, and

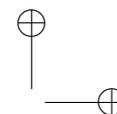




in the most terrible sense, a holy war. It is other things as well; a war for our national existence – though not (one hopes) for national profit – and for the existence and liberation of other nations. We must remember while we wage it that we ourselves have in time past often been the oppressors. Our hands are not clean – the hands of no man are clean. Our internal administration is very faulty: we have acquiesced in the exploitation of the weak, in the adulation of wealth and power, in the trickery of the crafty; we have allowed ourselves to become selfish and lazy and to drift into disintegration of thought and effort. Our world-record is stained: we stand accused of commercialism, of hypocrisy, of oppression, of greed and many other sins which abash us. But we must not be too much daunted either. “I,” said St. Paul, “am the least of all the Apostles, that am not meet to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God”; yet he did not, for all that, give up trying to be an apostle, but “laboured more abundantly than they all.”

We also, bearing in mind our own frailties, may yet remember this for our own encouragement: that though we may have denied our faith over and over again, more often than St. Peter and, like St. Peter, with an oath, we have never wholly abandoned it. Though we may have despaired sometimes of ourselves, we have not really despaired of our European heritage. However blindly and feebly, we still hold on to those great principles that sprang from the eternal standard of values; and when it came to the point, with much distress of mind, with much searching of heart, we were yet willing to die for them.



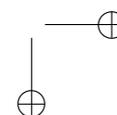
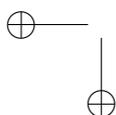


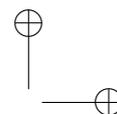
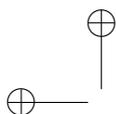
BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE CHARACTERS

What a piece of work is a man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a god! – WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

A European Democracy,* once it is established, is bound always to be at a certain disadvantage in defining its aims and ideals, whether in war or peace. It cannot put forward any sweeping and spectacular simplification of principle to whip up its adherents to a fanatical frenzy of emotion, since, as we have seen, its whole object is to preserve a balance between one principle and the other. Its difficulty is to keep moving forward while still preserving this balance. The balance of a moving object is indeed a very adventurous and precarious thing, as any one may see by watching a spinning top, or feel acutely

*By a “democracy” I do not mean any particular machinery of government, but any state or nation that acknowledges as the ruling power the will of the whole people, ascertained and carried out under conditions that allow the expression of free criticism. Parliament is a device for ascertaining the will of the people through free debate among freely elected representatives; party government, a device for expressing the will of the majority under control of free criticism by the opposition. Government by party (as in the Nazi state) is not “democratic” if the opportunity for free criticism is denied; nor, on the other hand, is an absolute monarchy necessarily “undemocratic,” provided that the monarch takes pains to find out and act upon the freely expressed will of his subjects.

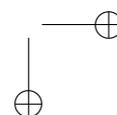
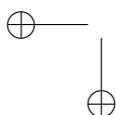


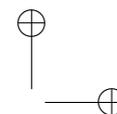


for himself by walking along a high parapet. The whole business is, in fact, so delicate and dangerous that there is always the temptation to abandon the attempt and sit down. Instead of balance we then get inertia, which is a very different thing. Inertia is precisely the accusation brought against the democracies by their opponents – often with great justice. In an inert democracy, balance becomes “compromise” in the most compromising sense of that rather discredited word. A democracy, which lives by listening to criticism, should pay attention to this criticism from outside and amend its behaviour if it sees due cause.

In times like the present, when we see the principles we have acknowledged attacked, and their foundations undermined; when doubts about the rationality and purpose of the universe have been sown in our minds; when we are led to see ourselves more and more as the helpless puppets of world-processes which we do not understand; and when we are in addition fatigued and harassed by constant wars and upheavals, we are desperately tempted to try and call a halt to the march of events. “Give us stability!” we cry; “we do not want this perpetual change and disturbance; we want stability.”

But there are two kinds of stability. The spinning top is stable so long as it keeps moving; when it stops, it falls into inertia. Let us face the facts courageously. Unless the democracies keep moving, and unless they can preserve the vital balance of all their principles, they will become inert and useless, and will be swept up and carted away by the next moving thing that comes along. We are like a man riding a bicycle on a tight-rope across the Niagara Falls: we cannot go back, we dare not stop,

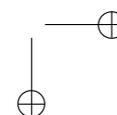
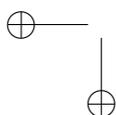


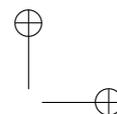
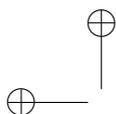


we must go forward and keep our balance if we are not to fall to destruction.

That being so (and we shall probably feel better if we once accept the situation and resolve to deal with it energetically), it may be helpful to look once again at the various conceptions of man as shown to us by historical development and see whether we cannot form some plan for knitting them up again into that Whole Man who is the full expression of each and every one of us. The new Whole Man will be, or ought to be, an advance upon the original conception of him, because we now know more about the various aspects of him than we did in the Middle Ages. It was doubtless a good thing that we should thus, as it were, take him to pieces and have a look at the works, but the time has now come, I think, for putting the pieces together, with any improvements that our new knowledge may suggest. This is, indeed, a perfectly scientific way of proceeding: from synthesis to analysis, and from analysis to a new synthesis – so we need not feel that there is anything unpractical or mysterious or “idealistic” about it.

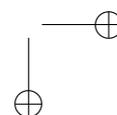
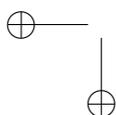
Let us start with our latest, most simplified, least human conception of ourselves – that humourless, passionless, sexless unit in a vast financial system – Economic Man. In one sense, this is man in his most primitive aspect, a being wholly conditioned by his means of livelihood. It is strange and ironic that our idea of man should have been reduced to this at the very moment when control of the means of livelihood has ceased to be a problem. This great thing science has done for us: it has placed in our hands methods by which the stubborn earth can be made to yield abundance for all its inhab-

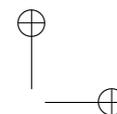




itants – enough food, enough clothing, enough shelter for every man, woman and child in the world. There is no longer any real reason why anybody should go short: we know how to make the barren places fruitful, how to make clothes faster than we can wear them out, how to build in spots that seemed formerly inaccessible, how to combat diseases which used in former days to destroy whole civilisations. If there should be a temporary shortage in one district, we know how to transport all our requirements quickly from districts in which there is a good provision of them. So far as sources of supply go, there is no longer any economic problem.

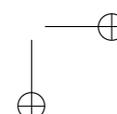
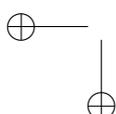
The control is ours, only we do not know how to use it. We see some people so surfeited with luxuries that they are sunk in the physical, mental and spiritual sloth of mere gluttony – they literally do not know what to do with their possessions; side by side with them are slums, poverty and undernourishment, sometimes extending to whole peoples. At one spot, we find town-dwellers forced to pay prohibitive prices for fish or fruit; while at another apples rot in the orchards and fish are used for manure, because the cost of their transport to town makes their sale a dead loss to fisherman and farmer. We have planters forbidden to grow the rubber or cotton that their land would reasonably yield, because there is a hitch in the distribution of rubber or cotton manufactured goods; and we have at the same time greedy over-production of crops that robs the soil of nature and nurture, or reckless deforestation of great tracts of country, leading to droughts and floods and the destruction of life and property. One does not need to be an economist or an agriculturist to know that

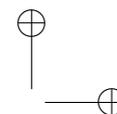




such contrasts are monstrous and that such wanton ill-treatment of the earth and its products is both wicked and wasteful. The totalitarian states are quite right to condemn the system that produces such results; right to reduce the violent extremes of wealth and poverty, right to introduce prudent and careful agricultural methods, right to treat waste as a crime. It is good to learn from our opponents, and if democracy cannot admit criticism and learn from it, then it is no longer fit to be called democracy. If it is necessary to face a complete change in our way of life, then we must face it; we are ready enough to face change in time of war – is there any reason why we should refuse to face it in time of peace? Somehow or other, we must bend our minds to grapple with this question of production and distribution, and to do it better than the totalitarians have done; to get it equitably settled without revolution, without sacrificing our liberty of opinion, and without reducing the standard of living to bare subsistence level. This is not a book about economics, or about means and methods in industry and agriculture; but it is obvious that a reasonable equalisation of the means of livelihood at a decent level is possible, for the very plain reason that we do now know how to produce enough to go round, if we can only learn to distribute it.

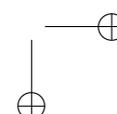
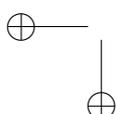
But we must beware of over-simplification: we shall not conjure away the problem all at once by the pronouncing of some brief financial formula, or by juggling with currencies. To suppose that any human problem can be disposed of out of hand by the solemn invocation of some such minor deity as “social credit” or “the land for the people” or even “abracadabra,” is to believe in

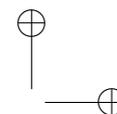




magic. The world is as full of wistful sorcerers to-day as it ever was, all anxious to find the philosopher's stone that will transmute earth into gold without further effort. What is needed is a different approach to the subject itself and, in particular, a resolve to regard the means of livelihood as a means of life and not as its chief end and sole determining factor. Economics is not a kind of demon from which we can shelter under protective spells; it is nothing so irrational. It is when we think of it as something irrational and outside our control that we tend to identify economic trouble with some human scapegoat, such as "the Jews" or "the bourgeois," under the impression that to sacrifice the scapegoat or drive it into the wilderness will exorcise the demon. This also is to believe in magic.

A very favourite scapegoat with people of a romantic turn of mind is "industrialism." It is suggested that all the economic troubles arose from the use of machines, and that if we were to destroy the machines and return to an innocent life with hoe and spade, the demons would vanish. This is the kind of magic that tries to turn time backward. It is, for one thing, not true that primitive peasant communities are, or were, all healthy, happy, comfortable and enlightened; on the contrary, they have always lived hard and painfully, with little leisure for education or amusement. It is the electrical machines that alone make possible a world in which the means of livelihood can be made enough to go round without soul-destroying labour. We must stick to the machines, but we must learn to use them more sensibly. We must not concentrate them all in one place or allow them to gather about them dirty, squalid and overcrowded

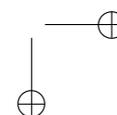
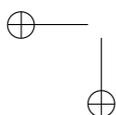


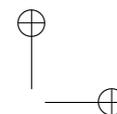


towns; there was an excuse for this when transport was slow and infrequent – to-day it is a bad relic from an outmoded past.

Similarly, it is ridiculous to decry mass-production, as though it were a diabolic agency for destroying beauty and individual enterprise. No system can rival mass-production for making goods available cheaply and quickly to the multitude. We must only see to it that the goods are of a kind suitable to be produced by that means and that the people employed in producing them have other opportunities of developing their own creative talents. I see no reason whatever why such things as (for example) cloth and electric-light bulbs and pencils and cigarettes and printed books should not be produced in the mass: they are things where standardisation is desirable. The same thing applies to cheap motor-cars, cutlery and gramophones; those who require special hand-made designs in such goods are willing to pay extra for them, and there is no reason why they should not. Other things do not benefit by standardisation – violins, for example, and cathedrals.

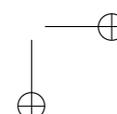
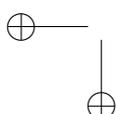
I do think we ought to institute some form of control over the mass-production of ugly nonsense – useless gim-cracks, shoddy finery, ill-made utensils of quality too poor to stand up to wear. But these things are not the fault of the machines, but of the people who buy them. This is the same kind of question that we came up against in the matter of the professional and the amateur; we must not be lazy whole-hoggers; we must take the trouble to discriminate; it is our business to decide *which* things should be mass-produced, *which* things should be hand-made, and *which* things ought not to be made at all.

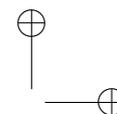




We must not allow machinery to become an “absolute.” It is our business to keep the balance even. It is our business to think what we want and then to take the steps to get it.

And we must resist strongly the tendency to regard Economics itself as an absolute standard of value. We shall hardly realise how deep this tendency has rooted itself in our minds till we stop to examine the language we habitually use and see how often, for instance, we use the word “work” as though it meant the same thing as “gainful employment,” how instinctively we talk of “a big film,” meaning no more than that it cost a great deal of money to produce. And we see it in this; that nowadays, when the working man demands his rights, he does so, not in his personal right as a mortal man or an immortal soul, but on the sole ground that labour, which makes the money, has a right to spend it. There are still communities within the community that do not regard economics as all-important. If you want to realise how deeply the economic standard of value has bitten into the public mind, you should witness the desperate attempts of a scholar or artist to explain to some one who has given him an order for work that he is not primarily concerned with the money, but with getting the work properly done. If, for example, a novelist receives an offer for the film-rights of his book, and is prepared to sell *on condition* that he has a voice in the production, the purchaser instantly and instinctively regards this stipulation as a bluff, and offers, not control, but more money. If the author still insists, he is thought to be a kind of blackmailer. If he ends by refusing the offer altogether, he is adjudged insane, and most even of his





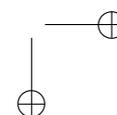
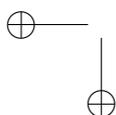
friends will call him a fool. Nevertheless, if he is prepared to stand fast by his values, he will end by breaking the power of money and will get his own way; though he may have to wait till he is as old as Mr. Bernard Shaw.

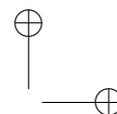
The truth is that we shall never be able to escape from the pressure of economics till we have put it in its place as only one of the necessary conditions of man's existence, and not as its determining factor. Science has shown us that economics can be controllable; and it is our job to exercise that control.

But can man control anything? How about that strange, bewildered creature, Psychological Man, making conditioned responses to his environment, and dominated by an unconscious self that dictates his behaviour without his knowledge or consent?

Here, I think, much of our bewilderment is due to an entire misunderstanding of what the psychologists have told us or can ever tell us about ourselves. Science is the study of means and instruments; it cannot deal with ultimate values or with intention. When the scientist turns his attention to man's psychological make-up, he is studying it as the instrument of man's intention. He does not assert that we are necessarily the slaves of the unconscious; far from it: such a slavery is a sign that something has gone wrong with the instrument, and the whole object of psycho-therapy is to bring some motive or emotion that has slipped into unconsciousness back into the active control of the conscience.

It is true that man is dominated by his psychological make-up, but only in the sense that an artist is dominated by his material. It is not possible for a sculptor to carve a filigree brooch out of granite: to that extent he is

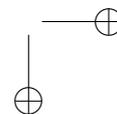
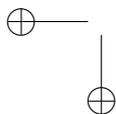


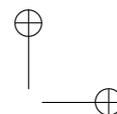
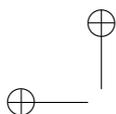


the servant of the stone he works in. His craftsmanship is good precisely in so far as he uses granite to express his artistic intentions in a manner conformable to the stone's own nature. This is no slavery, but the freedom of the sculptor and the freedom of the stone working together in harmony. The better the sculptor understands the true nature of his raw material, the greater is his freedom in using it; and so it is with every man, when he uses his own mind and emotions to express his conscious intention. The more we know about our own nature, the better instruments we shall be for the free expression of ourselves, and this self-knowledge is the valuable contribution made by the scientific psychologist to our individual self-control.

To say, as a man once said to me, that the murder of one's mother-in-law and the writing of a detective-story about the murder of a mother-in-law are essentially the same thing, because both are the expression of the same unconscious impulse, is plain nonsense. Granted that the raw material is identical in the two activities, the difference lies precisely in the fact that the unconscious impulse is translated by the conscious into two wholly different activities. The significant change is made at the moment when the unconscious impulse passes over the threshold of the conscious. Everything of real significance in man's life is done by the conscious.

About a quarter of a century ago, it was still very much the fashion in academic circles to take some great story – such as the story of Tristan and Iseult, which had given inspiration to many conscious artists – and trace it back to its primitive origins. One freed the “real story” from the successive “accretions” that it had acquired in the

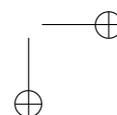
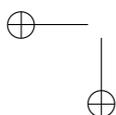


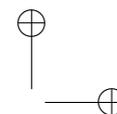
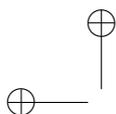


course of centuries; and the general assumption was that the older form of the story was always the “purer,” until at length one arrived at the oldest and purest form of all. This was an entertaining game; but the most curious part of it was that, invariably, by the time one had arrived at the “oldest and purest” form of the story, the story had somehow ceased to be great. “In its oldest and purest form,” we said in our Oxford essays, “*Tristan and Iseult* is one of the many ‘marriage-by-capture’ legends in which Celtic folk-lore abounds.” Quite so: but what has now become of the strange power and poignancy that have made of that story one of the great stories of the world? The greatness and the power were not in the story, but in the imagination and the conscious art of the poets who made it their own. The magic of *Tristan* is not in the “marriage-by-capture” legend, but in Berol and Eilhart, in Thomas the Englishman and Gottfried von Strasbourg, in Malory and Tennyson, in Arnold and Swinburne and Wagner, and in the poets yet to be.

All knowledge is stuff for the creative artist’s use, and the knowledge we gain through scientific psychology is but the raw stuff from which every man may fashion his own life according to his conscious intention. The ordinary man needs that scientific knowledge more urgently than the artist and the poet, who possess it already by what we call “intuition,” which is a name for direct experience; it is only important to remember that it is knowledge, and therefore, like all knowledge, an instrument for our use, and not an arbitrary and unmanageable power working upon us from without.

It is also, from an immediately practical point of view, well to bear in mind that the psychology of the uncon-



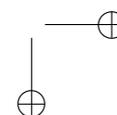
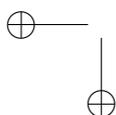


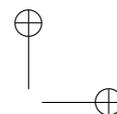
scious is the instrument of all mass-hysteria and propaganda. It is particularly when we have failed to make creative use of our unconscious impulses, when our conscious lives as individuals or as a nation have been repressive, inactive, conventional and lacking in purpose and awareness, that we become the ready victims of the demagogue. Thus revivalist preachers exercise their most powerful influence in drab and puritan communities that are poor in worldly goods and in mental or æsthetic outlets; and the exponents of mystical political creeds, in nations that have lost faith and hope. If we read about conditions in Germany during the decade or so that followed the last war, we shall see exactly how it was that Hitler gained his enormous power over the souls of his countrymen.

“The German people had been broken in body and mind by the sufferings they had undergone – four years of war; starvation and the blockade; the collapse of their ideals before what they called ‘a stab in the back’; enemy occupation of their land; 2,000,000 dead and the survivors coming home to face street fighting; humiliation on humiliation; reparations; the loss of their colonies and ‘10,000,000 Germans torn from the living body of the Reich’; inflation and collapse; and the consequent wandering of the people along a path without hope and without faith. All they had in exchange was a cumbrously working Republic which seemed incapable of giving the people the unity and the inspired leadership they wanted. . .

“The trouble was that the Republic lacked what Wolff called ‘the sacred fire.’ Forgetting the power of inspiration it sank in the quicksands of dullness. . . Hitler wagered all on the strength of emotions. So he succeeded where a more capable mind, a more profound thinker, would have failed. His triumph was that of emotion and instinct over reason; it represented a great upsurge of the subconscious in the German people.”*

*Stephen H. Roberts: *The House that Hitler Built*.

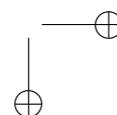
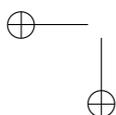


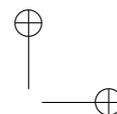
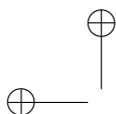


I have quoted this because the writer has put his finger so exactly upon the inner cause of the Weimar Republic's fall. True, the Allies hastened that fall by their failure to assist and encourage its efforts towards national reconstruction; but the root of the trouble was in itself: it never found out how to deal creatively with the subconscious. Its leaders, many of whom were men of great mental ability, were beaten by the man who went behind their reasoning and made his appeal to the herd-instinct.

Hitler was enabled to do this all the better because he was a man of very average intellectual attainments. Himself largely governed by the unconscious, he was able to express the unformulated desires of the masses. For it is always in masses of people that the unconscious manifests itself most strongly. This is natural, since, as we have seen, it is the raw material common to all mankind. Consciousness is a much more individual affair, and much better developed in some people than in others. The immediate reactions of a crowd to any stimulus are very much more primitive and emotional than the separate response of any individual in that crowd would be if he were addressed at home by himself and given time to think. That is one reason why plays and public speeches have to be written in a much less subtle and much less coldly rational way than books intended for private reading; they have to provoke immediate response from a crowd: therefore they must appeal to that lowest common multiple of apprehension which all men have in common – in short, to the “herd-instinct.”

Students of Sociology have seen the immense importance of this herd-instinct in determining the develop-

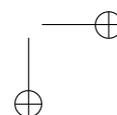
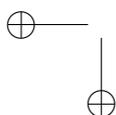


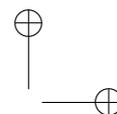


ment of human societies. They see society as primarily “behaviourist”; that is, as responding automatically to the appeal to the unconscious, and leaving the resultant action to be “rationalised” somehow or other by the conscious intellect. It is quite true that there is a very large element of behaviourism in all communal activity, and Nazi Germany is a striking example of what happens when thinkers neglect to take this into account. As in the case of the individual, the only possible way to control the unconscious urge is to recognise it for what it is, and instead of trying to repress it, to see to it that when it emerges into action it does so in a form of which the conscious intelligence can approve.

To recognise it – that is important. A thorough knowledge of ourselves is the best defence against the unscrupulous exploiting of our hidden urges; it will also assist us to examine our own arguments, and to discover how far these are truly rational, and how far they are “rationalisations,” in the undesirable sense, of prejudices and uncivilised impulses which we should hesitate to acknowledge. The psychology of the unconscious, rightly used, is no enemy to our old friend, the Rational Man; on the contrary, it is a weapon to strengthen his hand, and he only weakens himself by refusing to employ it.

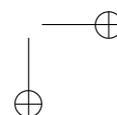
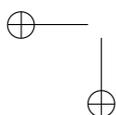
What are these dark desires, these unavowable instincts, that lurk in the unconscious ready to spring upon us unawares? And why is there something within us that is ashamed of them and tries to thrust them back, or to transmute them into seemlier forms? Biological man can tell us something about them, I think – about the sex-urge, and the urge to kill one’s father and mate with one’s mother, and all the rest of the things that are

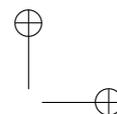
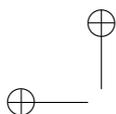




done so innocently by the unselfconscious animal and that self-conscious man at one and the same time desires and condemns. It always seems to me very curious that religious people, brought up on the Book of Genesis, should feel so uneasy about biology and psychology, which re-tell, in scientific terms, the ancient legend of the Fall. Theological man ought not to find this difficult, and would not, perhaps, have done so, had not Puritanism and the Rational Man intervened to confuse his ideas. Puritanism was imbued with the idea (borrowed from the Gnostics) that there was something intrinsically evil about the flesh, and imagined that the Fall of Man was a fall into sexuality, which makes nonsense of the whole story. The Fall was a fall into a particular kind of knowledge – the knowledge of good and evil which is called self-consciousness and is peculiar to man among all the animals on earth; and its first result was to make him ashamed of his animal passions. The psychological conflict in man is not a plain fight between good and evil; it is a disharmony between two kinds of good – the simple animal innocence, which he hankers after but can never enjoy again, and the more complex and victorious good which comes of using self-conscious knowledge to build up a richer and fuller experience than the other animals can attain. The Puritan, by hating the flesh, and the Rational Man, by despising the emotions, are always trying to push the Animal Man into the unconscious, from which, as the psychologists tell us, he is liable to burst out in strange, disguised and uncontrollable forms.

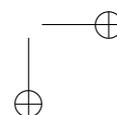
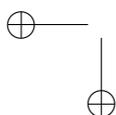
The violent assertions of man's right to his animal nature which we find in many modern writers, and in the theories of those educationalists who demand complete

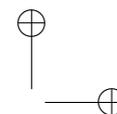
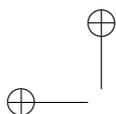




self-expression (even if it manifests itself in kicking one's pastors and masters or taking off all one's clothes in public), are a revolt against past systems of thought which repressed Biological Man. Like most revolts, they tend to go too far in the other direction and create an "absolutism" of their own.

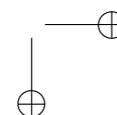
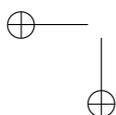
It is essential to remember that we can never go back to the past. It is impossible for us to abolish self-consciousness by pretending that it does not exist, or to live like simple animals when we are no longer anything of the sort. Having once begun to think consciously about sex, we can never again treat it with the unashamed innocence of the ape; we can only exalt it into romantic love, in the Western-Mediterranean-Christian way, or debase it into bestiality, which is something that no beast knows. "Bestiality" is the name we give to behaving like a beast deliberately and with the conscious mind of a man. No man can be merely pitiless, like a cat playing with a mouse; he can only be pitiful, or else wantonly cruel. Indeed, we have no word to express the animal's lack of the sense of pity; when we say "pitiless," we mean at the very least "bereft of pity" – deprived of some feeling that we ought to possess. Even those who repudiate the virtues of meekness and mercy, and obey Nietzsche's command, "Be hard," have to learn cruelty like a lesson and practise it in full knowledge of what they are doing. It is true that the lesson is easily learnt; but that it *is* a thing learnt and a thing unnatural to humanity is seen by the general deterioration brought about in the character of a man by habitual indulgence in cruelty. The cat or dog does not become less generally amiable through the daily killing of rats and mice, but

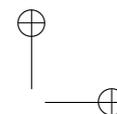
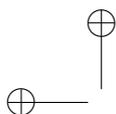




the cruel man degenerates in all his human attributes, and so does the habitually sensual man. The same is true of all animal appetites in man; for good or evil, they have become self-conscious, and must remain so. We cannot achieve complete innocence even in the enjoyment of food and drink; we have learnt to become gluttons and drunkards, and, on the other hand, we have learnt how to dine. Both of these things are utterly alien to the beast.

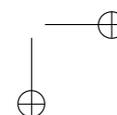
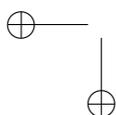
For the same reason, we have to recognise the impossibility of turning back now from the way of self-conscious development to the old way of unconscious evolution. According to the biologists, the physical constitution of the human species, like that of the cedar or the crocodile, has become fixed, and they do not seem to think it likely that any spontaneous mutation in cellular structure will, at this time of day, present the earth with an entirely new species of living creature. The idea that man himself, or that human society, is an organism inevitably predestined to “evolve” somehow or other into a higher state of being is a wistful fancy, founded on an inaccurate analogy. Man can undoubtedly change himself to some extent; he can even, if he likes, profoundly modify his physical structure; but if he does so, the process cannot be called “evolution,” because the element of conscious purpose is bound to enter into it. Even the unconscious part of his nature can no longer “evolve” in the strict sense of the term; for he has now become conscious of his unconscious, and so, to some extent, has achieved conscious control of it, whereas the essence of evolutionary change is that it is a change produced without *conscious* control or *conscious* intention. Thus, we say that the bird was evolved

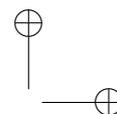
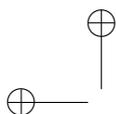




from the reptile, or that primitive man was evolved from a line of ape-like ancestors; but we cannot correctly say that the bull-dog was “evolved” from the wild dog, or “William Allan Richardson” from the wild rose. These later variations were not evolved; they were deliberately *made* by man, in fulfilment of a conscious purpose. True, neither the dogs nor the roses were aware of the conscious purpose that over-ruled their unselfconscious nuptials, nor does the finished product betray its purposeful origin. The proverbial “observer from Mars,” surveying the eccentric and entertaining shapes of the bull-dog and the mandrill, might reasonably suppose that the same lively imagination had designed them both, but he would be wrong; he might suppose that the same exuberant fancy that produced the parrot tulip had also contrived the still more astonishing orchids that decorate the virgin swamps of the tropics, but he would be wrong. If any conscious imagination or purpose underlies the colourful flamboyance of the orchid and the mandrill, it is a purpose and an imagination not of this world. Conscious purpose can indeed produce effects that closely resemble those of evolution, and can work by the same natural means upon subjects unconscious of that purpose; but from the moment that self-conscious man took a hand in the affairs of the world, his conscious purpose becomes an inalienable factor in all his actions, and affects everything connected with him, including his own unconscious. Every manifestation of the beast in man is complicated by his peculiar awareness of his own beasthood.*

*Incidentally, the conscious use by man of the natural mechanism of life to produce such “manufactured” phenomena as the bull-dog or the garden rose shows that the evolutionary theory contains

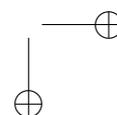
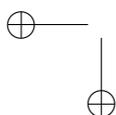


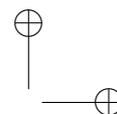
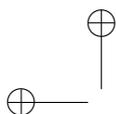


Yet the beast is with us and must remain with us. It is as fatal to ignore him as to ignore our conscious humanity. We shall not be Whole Men unless we give reasonable liberty to the beast; indeed, we shall become his victims, for caged beasts are dangerous. We must beware especially of the economic cage, which holds so many people's biological selves trapped and restless to-day.

Here again, we must take pains to preserve the balance. It is amusing and instructive to see how each successive reassertion of the human animal's claims is accompanied by an emphasised cult of the body. We had a very vigorous one in the 19th century, following upon the interest in Darwin, and manifesting itself in a mania for cold baths, open windows, and games for girls. In the inter-war period we have had another, heralded by literature about free love, and blood, and the Life-Force, and issuing in an outburst of physical jerks, shorts for hikers, bathing Lidos, and newspaper articles on vitamins and how-to-keep-fit-for-beauty. These things are admirable; and with the wealth of new knowledge that science has given us about our bodily selves, there is no reason why Europe should not be peopled with strong and comely men and women. What is less admirable is the sloth of mind and contempt for learning that have begun to accompany the cult of the body. The totalitarian states are pre-eminent for the care bestowed on the physique of their nationals; is it not a little sinister that they should be at the same time a by-word for their cramping

nothing to contradict the doctrine of a conscious purpose in the universe; if anything, it supports it.

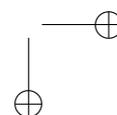
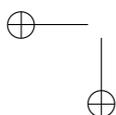


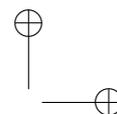
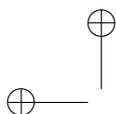


influence upon the arts and sciences? Art and science are the great “internationals,” knowing no bounds of race or country. When we are told that art and science must be “Nazi art and science,” we know that this is to make a mock of learning. Tyranny does well for itself when it cultivates the physical at the expense of the mental, for physical fatigue brings slumber to the brain; there is one foe within his own gates that every tyrant fears, and that is the Rational Man.

The Rational Man is an austere figure, and perhaps a little forbidding to the world in its present mood; but he is essentially noble, and a strong tower of defence against triviality, vulgarity and mass-hysteria. It is not by accident that the domestic architecture of the “Age of Reason” is so dignified and restrained in outline and so well designed for seemly and unostentatious comfort. It is typical of the rational minds that built it. In a city like Bath, for instance, there is no capricious sprouting of such architectural freaks of fancy as one may see at Clacton; yet both streets and houses have character; they are not machine-made replicas of one another, like the ugly purlieus of a Victorian industrial town. For reason is at once personal and communal; it is the thought of an individual, but it is disciplined thinking. It is the kind of thinking that scientists must use; but it ought not to be confined to scientists.

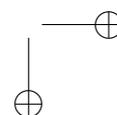
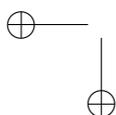
There are signs in Britain to-day that all is not well with the Rational Man. I am perpetually disquieted by the popular appetite for what is (horridly) called the “personal angle” on every question. This irrational obsession pervades the newspapers, makes the lives of public characters a burden to them, distracts public worship

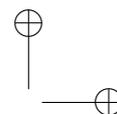
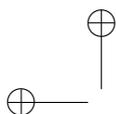




from its proper object, and is rapidly destroying the intelligence of the people. It is as though nobody cared for what is said, but only for who says it. An unsigned article in a newspaper carries no weight, however sound its arguments; except in those few national organs that are still read by highly educated people, articles on theology, drama, science, sociology, poetry or any other special subject have to be sponsored by “a name” if they are to attract attention – nor does it seem to matter in the least whether “the name” knows anything about the subject or not. This is preposterous. The only thing that really matters about a writer is whether he is qualified to deal with his subject or not, and whether what he says is false or true. To say to a lecturer (as is said daily – believe it or not – by well-meaning secretaries of societies) that “our people won’t mind what you talk about; they only want to see you,” is a damnable insult to the lecturer, to the subject and to human reason. To discover (as I have before now discovered) that some enquirer is “so much interested in what you say about Christianity,” but has never so much as taken the trouble to read the Gospels, is the kind of thing that makes one despair of the rational intelligence. We are growing far too ready to take anything said by some popular favourite as authoritative; far too lazy about examining the facts themselves and using our critical faculties; this craven submission to personal authority is a public danger – that way lies dictatorship.

Our reading and thinking are undisciplined. We read at random a book about religion, an article about social conditions in the Rhondda Valley, an angry newspaper correspondence about red-tape in government offices, a

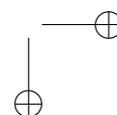
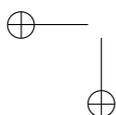


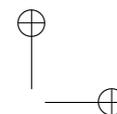
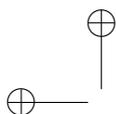


piece of poetry and a novel about big business in America; we approve and disapprove of them all in separate compartments of our minds, and it never occurs to us to put the whole lot together and see what bearing each of them has on the rest.

We let our reason rust while we run about the country in cars, go to professional entertainments (the lighter the better), watch other people playing games, or “knock down time” with a detective story; in the meantime, all kinds of agitating things happen to us – wars, income-tax, trade depression, strikes, financial frauds, agricultural unrest, apathy in the churches, slumps in the theatre, and what not – and, taken by surprise, we are left helpless and indignant. It is entirely our own fault if we will not use our wits to find out what is happening and get at the truth about it. A little more attention paid to the Rational Man would deliver us from panic and propaganda, and incidentally from such plausible quick-wits as the share-pusher, the fraudulent company-promoter and the gentlemen who promise impossibilities at general elections.

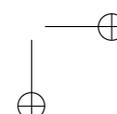
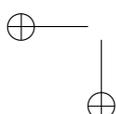
It is a strange thing indeed that in an age which loves machines, the reason should be neglected, and its enjoyment left to scientists and university dons. The beauty of the reason is like that of a machine – a smooth, impersonal functioning of finely-fitted parts. The delight of seeing an argument put together, stage by stage, from the particular to the general, from analysis to synthesis, from the first proposition to the final conclusion, when the last equation is delicately slipped into place to lock the whole structure into unity, ought surely to please a generation that builds aeroplanes and engines. Perhaps it

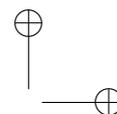
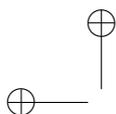




does. Perhaps the vogue for detective stories (the genuine kind, I mean, where the reader is given all the clues and can work out the solution for himself) is the faint and feeble demand of the starved reason for *something*, however limited and trivial, into which it can set its teeth. If so, the ordinary man is a fool not to enjoy the use of his wits in a more extensive field. But when I come to think of it, the readers of detective fiction are a very small, though devoted, band as compared with those who read sentimental novels (the average sales run respectively from 6,000 to 10,000 and from 30,000 to a quarter of a million in the library edition), and many of them are professional people who use their wits in any case. I fancy that reason is another of those things that we are lazy enough to leave to the professionals.

And yet, deep down in our natures, we honour reason, and protest against the irrationality of the world as it presents itself to us to-day. We are lost and unhappy in a universe that seems to make no sense, and cling to science and machines and detective fiction, just because, within their limited fields, the problems do work out, and the end corresponds to the intention. And there is proof of this. The first persons to grasp and face the fact that the rational foundation of the modern world was lost were the poets and artists, the men of creative imagination. They were aware of what was happening long before we woke up to it, and expressed their knowledge in the surrealist pictures and the strange, chaotic verse and prose which interpret the chaos of the unconscious. The aim of surrealist art, in the words of M. Henri Berranger, "is re-creating, which will be in no way inferior to mental derangement. Its ambition is to lead us



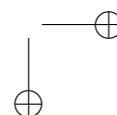
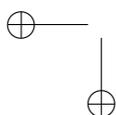


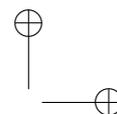
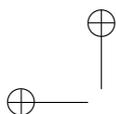
to the edge of madness and make us feel what is going on in the magnificently disordered minds of those whom the community shuts up in asylums.”* This may look like mere perversity; but it is not. It, and the art it speaks of, are a true expression of the sense of irrationality that afflicts us, and which the artist recognises with the deadly certainty of direct apprehension; for the reason may deceive itself (and that is its danger), but the imagination has its own record of events, which is always a record of immediate truth.

But the common people refuse peremptorily to accept this madhouse view of the universe; they will not and dare not believe it, because it is destructive of all faith and leaves the world without either intention or ultimate meaning. That is why, for the first time in European history, poetry has become divorced from humanity. It has held the mirror up to man as he is, and man has rejected the picture with cries of rage and despair. The poet is right; his truth is a valid truth. The common man is right also, for he knows that the poets' truth makes life intolerable, and feels sure that there must, somehow or other, be another kind of truth that the poets' truth denies. In short, the common man, still clinging blindly to his traditional standards, believes by faith in the rationality which he can no longer see. When he surrenders that belief, we shall have reached the end of Western-European-Christian civilisation.

It is utterly disastrous that the poet and the common man should thus have lost touch with one another, for

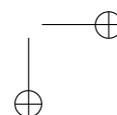
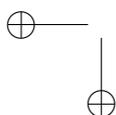
*Quoted by Sir Reginald Blomfield in a broadcast discussion, Feb. 1935.

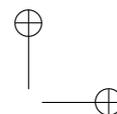
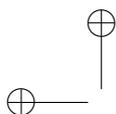




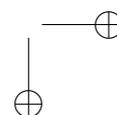
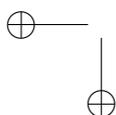
the poet is the great Humanist, who stands for the expression of the Whole Man – for the life of the body and of the mind, of the emotion and of the reason, of the individual and of society, bound all together in the life of the imagination. He understands the trick of the moving balance, which is gained, not by depressing all man's conflicting energies to their lowest expression (for that means loss of momentum), but by speeding them up to the highest, so that, acting upon and against one another, they produce the stability of swift motion. It is this passionate and burning energy that makes every poet a rebel against inertia and against all authority that depends upon inertia. We need not go back to past history – to a Dante or a Shelley, to a Jesus or a Socrates, to see how the man of imagination passes through the inert authoritarian state like a firebrand; the furious persecution of the imaginative artist by totalitarian régimes is evidence enough of his dangerous vitality. If the artist will not come into line – and if he is a truly great artist he will not, – then he must be browbeaten, starved, imprisoned, exiled, or, in the last resort, shot, poisoned or crucified. Totalitarian states have produced no creative art that is worthy of international acceptance; nor is it possible that they should do so, for the artist lives by and for the free expression of opinion, and that is anathema to tyranny. Let us beware how we persecute the creative artist; he is the expression of our greater selves, and when we have lost him, we have lost everything.

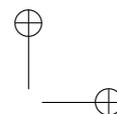
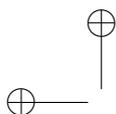
But we do not persecute the creative artist in this country? Oh, no. Not exactly. We only send him to Coventry. We only neglect, ridicule and despise him. We only desert him in favour of the second-rate artist who,





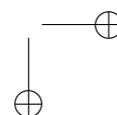
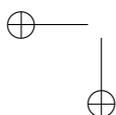
instead of disturbing us with vital truths, shows us the image of ourselves which we should like to take for truth. We only label him “high-brow,” “obscure,” “idealistic,” “pompous,” “arid,” “dreary,” “morbid,” “high-falutin,” “intellectual,” “brainy,” “academic,” “classical,” “educational,” “arty,” “Bloomsbury” – or any other random epithet which it pleases us to employ as an insult. Will you read attentively the Wireless criticism in the journals that cater for the common man? Will you contrast the run of (say) *Family Reunion* with that of *Dear Octopus*, and ponder upon the *sort* of war-time entertainment that popular clamour demands? Will you simply look at the theatre list, and see what kind of plays managers think you will support at a moment when Europe is in the melting-pot? At the time of writing there are thirteen theatres open in the West-End; only two have dared to put on plays with any pretensions to serious thought, and they are among the smallest in London. (It is true that the level of play-going intelligence is exceptionally low in the West-End; things may be better in the provinces.) Will you contrast the hysterical popular reception and the banner-headlines accorded to a visiting glamour-star or professional cricketer with the sober dinner of welcome accorded to a great foreign artist or musician by his intellectual equals and reported in a modest paragraph? Will you brood on all these things, and still maintain that Britain values the creative artist? Will you consider also the hero of popular plays and fiction; the man in real life who is the life and soul of the party and a good mixer in the club; the person who writes to the paper to air his views on art and letters and on the problems that perplex the nations. Will you notice how often he

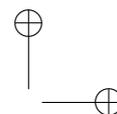
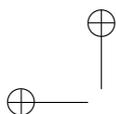




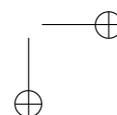
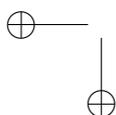
says with a kind of smirk, "I am afraid I'm a plain sort of fellow," "I'm afraid I'm not one of these clever chaps," "I'm afraid I don't know much about art and philosophy and that sort of thing"? It is a damnable lie; he is not afraid at all of ignorance and stupidity; his pretence at modesty is a barely-concealed boast and a bid for your applause. It is to him that the cheap journalist panders; it is for his witless female counterpart that the presses turn out nauseating clap-trap by the mile and the ton. It is to flatter a generation of mental sluggards that the lick-spittles of public life make a virtue of imbecility.

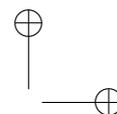
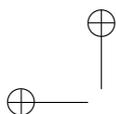
There are people who with a blasphemous insolence will quote Christ's saying about a little child in support of this horrid degradation of knowledge and power. The mildest thing to be said about them is that they clearly know nothing of children. Every normal child is a walking interrogation-mark; its ruling passion is to learn and express itself; it becomes dull and inert only by association with adult dullards. When we cease to grow, when we cease to ask intelligent questions, then indeed we have ceased to be as little children, and the Kingdom of Heaven is closed to us. The Child that was Christ sat at the feet of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions; are we conspicuously given to imitating that example? Do we abundantly honour the scholar and the artist? How many titles are showered upon them, compared with those given to soldiers and statesmen and men who have contributed to party funds? So great is our contempt for letters that we view without surprise or disapproval the conduct of foreign affairs placed in the hands of ministers who speak no language but their own, and are perfectly devoid of any imaginative sympathy





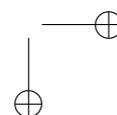
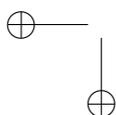
with the culture of other nations and their attitude to life. The chief thing that one discovers when one has learnt any foreign language *thoroughly* – so as to *think* in that language, and not just decipher it like a code – is that it requires and reveals a totally different outlook upon the world from that to which we are accustomed. We can scarcely realise to-day the advantage which Europeans enjoyed up to the 16th century, when educated people of all nations thought habitually in two languages – one their own and another which was actually universal. Frenchman and Englishman, Pole and Spaniard, however different their domestic surroundings, met and conversed in Latin and could understand one another, because their speech was the speech of a single inherited culture. But to-day there is no pan-European language that has its roots in a common tradition; nation is dumb to nation; and so much obsessed are we with the absolutism of economics and administrative formalities that we pack Parliament with lawyers and business men who, when it comes to conversing in the tradition of other peoples or of our own European past, might just as well be deaf-mutes. And yet we complain that our public policy lacks constructive imagination! Do you think it is a coincidence that the one really stirring and inspiring speech on the progress of the present war was made by Mr. Winston Churchill, who is one of the few men in parliament who are also genuine men of letters? Examine carefully all the recent uproar about the Ministry of Information, and the universal cry that British propaganda has been “unimaginative.” You will notice that there has been a protest against the appointment of so many civil servants (who are obliged to be unimaginative if they are to fulfil

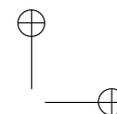
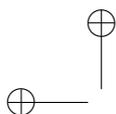




their routine duties), and a demand (chiefly from the newspapers) for more journalists; but only one man that I know of has asserted that the British cause should be proclaimed by creative writers – and that was Mr. J. B. Priestley, who is a writer himself. The call for the creative artist has not come from the man in the street; he has grown accustomed to supposing that creative writers are remote, unpractical people. That is not the case. The imaginative humanist is far too practical; he knows too much; he speaks his mind too plainly; he is disturbing to inertia and complacency. He is the Whole Man, with *all* his faculties alert.

So, lastly, we come to Theological Man, with his complete nature, body as well as mind, communal as well as personal, infused with spirit, which acknowledges an eternal Authority, an intention and object existing outside the course of history as well as within it, and whose values and standards are permanent, however much their expression may change with the changes wrought by time. This is not a theological treatise, nor is it my business here to define that Authority, or to preach any religion whether new or old. I wish only to emphasise two facts: first, that the principles to which we are now clinging amid the wreck of the philosophies are the Christian principles of the Western-Mediterranean civilisation; that they are rocking beneath us because we have knocked away the foundation of eternal values on which they were built, and that unless we can find some eternal basis on which to rest them, they will founder and our civilisation with them. And secondly: that the spiritual man is so utterly a part of our nature that we cannot cast him out; if we deprive ourselves of the eternal Absolute, we shall

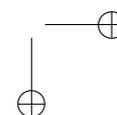
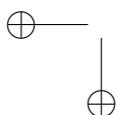


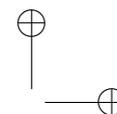
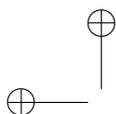


inevitably make an absolute of some temporal thing or other – be it Liberty, Equality or Progress in any of their possible forms; be it Race or Reason, or even Unreason, or the Perpetual Flux of Relativity. Yet there is nothing temporal that can bear the strain of being thus deified; so that every earthly absolute in the end produces a condition of life which is intolerable and provokes revolt into its opposite, with a violence that makes war inevitable. We are accustomed to speak complacently of this law of thesis and antithesis as “the swing of the pendulum” – and we are right thus far, that it is indeed the swing which marks the movement of time; but the pendulum is like the one in Poe’s story, whose edge was sharpened like an axe, and whose swing grew wider and more menacing with every passing moment.

When the spiritual man is enlisted in the service of an earthly absolute, he becomes its fiercest and most fanatical soldier. It is quite true that Nazism has gripped the German people with all the power of a militant religion: it is a religion – the ancient, mystical, persecuting religion of blood and race. It is quite true that the democratic peoples are by comparison timid and lethargic in the defence of their principles, for they have somehow lost the allegiance of the spiritual man. They have, indeed, parted his garments among them, but his garments have no magical power without him; the power is in his living presence.

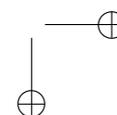
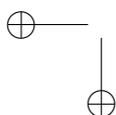
If we are to find the new life which we all hope for, we must somehow contrive to make man “his own man again” – we must put together the scattered pieces and find the Whole Man. We shall never control economics till we have ceased to deify economics and abandoned

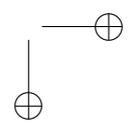
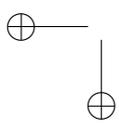
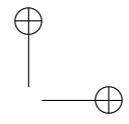
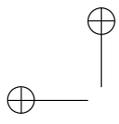


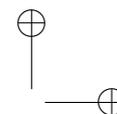
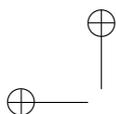


thinking of Tom, Dick and Harry in terms of “economic man.” We shall never establish society till we have abolished thinking in terms of the herd, nor achieve personal freedom and independence until we recognise that the individual can never be absolute in himself. Nor shall we ever find peace, unless we realise that peace itself is not an absolute; otherwise, like every other deified absolute, the tyranny of peace will plunge us again into war, as it has done already.

We must find a new conception for man – one that shall express all his activities and yet shall not be in danger of deifying itself into an absolute. I will suggest that the concept which is going to help us most in our present struggle is that of Creative Man. He it is whom we have of late most sadly forgotten and neglected; he it is who sums up in himself all human faculties and inspires them with the driving energy of will and emotion; yet, in the nature of things, he can never pretend to be absolute altogether. His creation is self-justified and valid in itself, but it can never be more than relative; for though man can make new things out of old, he cannot create anything out of nothing. He is a part of time and space, like every other material being; and he knows (none better) that he is only the mirror of that absolute Creation that created space and time.







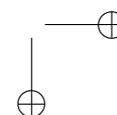
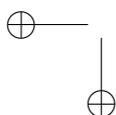
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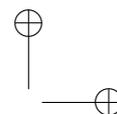
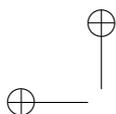
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The Western democracies have to realise that totalitarian fascism cannot be overcome by socialism, by capitalist democracy, or by a combination of both. It can only be overcome by a new non-economic concept of a free and equal society. The fascist countries might be destroyed; they might be reduced to anarchy. But neither capitalism nor socialism can be restored thereby. On the contrary, the Western European democracies themselves will be forced into totalitarianism unless they produce a non-economic society striving for the freedom and the equality of the individual. – PETER DRUCKER.

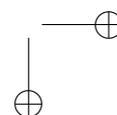
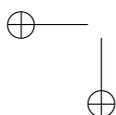
We have made a long fetch, to arrive once more at our starting-point: how we may use the opportunity of the war to think and plan creatively for the future of our civilisation. In this last chapter we shall leave our brief review of the past and offer a few suggestions about the future for the consideration of the average citizen who is resolved to do his own thinking.

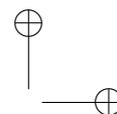
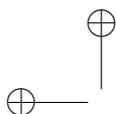
Before we start, I should like to add a few words about experts and professional thinkers. I have said that we should not leave all the thinking to them; but in the section on Rational Man, I have blamed the public for preferring the opinion of amateur thinkers to that of the specialists qualified to speak. This looks like a contradiction, but in fact it is none. All questions of fact and all judgments calling for specialised experience *must* be referred to the people who have that special knowledge and experience. But when we have heard what





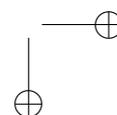
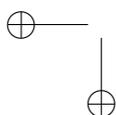
they have to say, we must use our individual judgment as to the action to be taken, bearing always in mind the general principles by which we have decided that the world should be governed. We must also remember that an expert in one department is only an amateur in another; a biologist is no more specially qualified to pontificate about theology than a theologian to lay down the law about stage-management. If the expert is a person of vigorous and open mind, his opinion will always be of great interest, but it cannot be in any sense authoritative outside his own subject, and must always be checked by reference to expert opinion and to the facts. This book, for example, is written by a novelist and dramatist; it is an expression of amateur opinion. It cannot make any pretence to the kind of authority which the same writer might claim in dealing with the novel or the drama. The writer of any kind of fiction is (except in the matter of his own art) the specialised representative, as it were, of amateur opinion. He can speak for the man-in-the-street, because he is himself the man-in-the-street, with perhaps a little more imagination than the average and with a better training in the art of putting ideas on paper. But any reader who summarily accepts (or for that matter rejects) my statements without referring them to fact and expert opinion, on the mere excuse that he likes (or dislikes) my novels and plays, is behaving in a passive, uncreative and foolish way. If, on the other hand, anything I have said starts a train of thought in his mind, and he follows that up by reading and enquiry on his own account, then (whether he ends by agreeing with me or not), he is behaving actively, creatively and in a sensible manner.

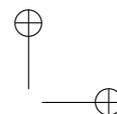
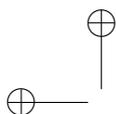




Some of these trains of thought will undoubtedly be directed towards the question of European settlement. It is not my intention to deal in any detail with the possible terms of a peace-treaty. But I should like to say one or two things about peace in general.

All – or nearly all – the people who demand a clear statement of the Allies' war and peace aims call out for some arrangement that shall secure abiding peace and a lasting settlement. *There is no such thing in this world as abiding peace and lasting settlement.* That is, there is no word that can be spoken, no treaty that can be signed, no territorial readjustment that can be made, no magic formula that can be pronounced, that can establish peace and maintain it without continual effort. Peace is not a static thing; it is the supreme example of balance in movement. We are inclined to think of peace-time as a condition in which nothing particular happens; in which we can put our feet on the mantelpiece and retire into our private lives, leaving the status quo to maintain itself. There is no surer preparation for war. The maintenance of peace requires a perpetual vigilance, because as life goes on and conditions change the balance needs ever fresh movement to keep it stable. In other words, peace is an active and not a passive condition. "If," as G. K. Chesterton says, "you leave a thing alone you leave it to a torrent of change. If you leave a white post alone it will soon be a black post. If you particularly want it to be white you must always be painting it again." If people would read the Gospels attentively, instead of quoting texts like a kind of incantation, they would notice that Christ said, not "Blessed are the peaceable," but very particularly, "Blessed are the peace-makers" –



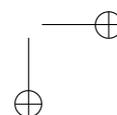
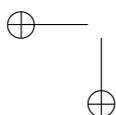


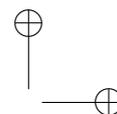
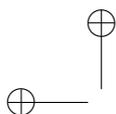
implying that peace had to be actively constructed. But so powerful upon our minds is the soporific suggestion of the word “peace” that I am not at all sure we ought not to banish it from our vocabulary for a little, and talk instead about such things as truth and justice, liberty and mercy, right judgment and sympathy – things which we know in advance to be difficult and perilously poised. I believe that peace is one of those things, like happiness, which we are sure to miss if we aim at them directly; it is when we have been strenuously working for something else that we find we have attained them, beyond all thought or expectation. It is natural that we should long for rest and quietness, when we have made such great efforts and been so long agitated by alarms and conflicts: but it is wiser to recognise at once that peace and ease have nothing to do with one another.

Sleep after toil, port after stormy seas,
Ease after war, death after life, does greatly please.

Spenser, with the poet’s unerring intuition, put those lulling words into the mouth of Despair.

“Death after life” – it is true, in a strange and bitter sense, that the desire for peace is the desire for death. The very fear of death that lies behind our longing for peace is rooted in a paralysing fear of life. We resent death, not because we have found life too good to leave, but because we feel that life has somehow cheated us. Those who fear death most are not those who are passionately in love with life, for these know very well that the shortness of life is the condition and price of its ecstasy; they are those who feel they are called on to pay the price for a joy they have not received. We rail angrily



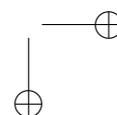
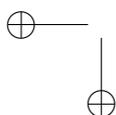


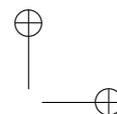
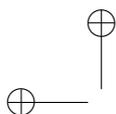
against death as though, but for some exasperating error on somebody's part, we ought to be all immortal; but that is not so.

"I did not bear my son to be killed by a German bomb"; no? And what particular death had you in mind for him when you bore him? Meningitis or cancer, pestilence or a broken neck, pneumonia or tuberculosis, death at the hand of a drunken lout in a road-accident, or the creeping doom of senility? One thing is certain: that he was born for death – of all your hopes and fears for him, this one thing will be fulfilled beyond question. He will die, like every other man that ever lived – like Abraham and Alexander, like Caesar and Confucius, like Shakespeare and Cervantes and Socrates, like you and me and Tom, Dick and Harry, and like the Son of Mary who was the Son of God.

You did not imagine any death for your son; you did not think of death at all; you thought about life. There was a time when you knew that life was worth the living: when life was worth something to you, because you were creating life. If life can be made worth while, death will not matter at all; for life can be good, but it is not and cannot be an absolute, any more than anything else in this world. To make life into an absolute is to exchange it for death-in-life, because, like every other temporal absolute, life takes revenge on those who make it a god.

Will you therefore, when you think about war-aims and peace-aims, put resolutely out of your mind the idea of an endless inertia and a life devoid of death, and consider instead a life of perpetual activity and a peace conceived as the energetic balance of liberty and equality, mercy and justice, truth and charity, individual and



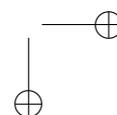
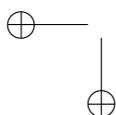


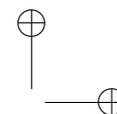
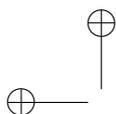
community, world and nation – in terms of the Whole Man tirelessly and eagerly creating.

And first, as to the world; more particularly that Western-Mediterranean-Christian world, of whose civilisation we are the heirs.

Our last attempt to settle the affairs of Europe was made after the war of 1914–1918, by the Treaty of Versailles and the inauguration of the League of Nations. It failed, and we are again at war against the same enemy and, generally speaking, for the same reason. It may be useful to suggest a few lines of thought about that failure and its causes, so that we may not make the same mistakes all over again.

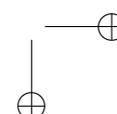
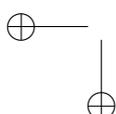
1. The most favourable conditions for a satisfactory settlement with a vanquished enemy are a spectacular victory under arms, followed by a negotiated peace. In 1918 we had precisely the opposite: a rather unspectacular victory followed by a dictated peace. This has made it possible for Germany to persuade herself that she was never beaten in the field, but only betrayed from within. The French have always maintained that the Armistice should have been signed in Berlin, and psychologically they are probably right. The Germans have always maintained that they expected, and ought to have had, a voice in the negotiation of the peace; many thinkers in all countries agree with them, and they are probably right – not only from the point of view of abstract justice and mercy, but from the purely practical point of view of making the peace workable. A magnificent example of an honourably-negotiated peace, though coming at the end of a war which was not altogether honourable on our part, was the peace made after the Boer War.

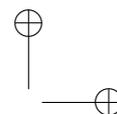
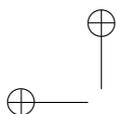




If South Africa stands at Britain's side to-day as a free partner in war and peace, it is because of that honourable settlement in 1902.

2. The Germans say further that they were tricked into laying down their arms by the promise that settlement would be made along the lines of President Wilson's "Fourteen Points," and that this promise was not kept. This is largely true (though they were in fact beaten and must have laid down their arms in any case). But we were not wholly to blame. The Fourteen Points were drawn up by a man of lofty moral principles but inadequate political experience, who did not really understand the enormous complexity of Europe, with its many ancient peoples, all at different stages of constitutional development. They erred a little, that is, by over-simplification; and when it came to actual treaty-making, the President discovered that simple honesty, unassisted by nimble wits and specialised knowledge, was no match for the trained political brain. But the big trouble was that when the principle of the League of Nations was, after all, established, the American people did not ratify the obligations undertaken by their President, and France was left without the safeguards she had looked for. Our own ignorance was largely to blame: we did not realise that Wilson had not the support of his people. And it is most necessary to recognise that the very nature of Democracy decrees that no leader, however inspired, far-seeing, high-principled or prudent, can act ahead of those who are the effective power of the State. This is one of the inherent limitations of any democracy, including our own. It is absolutely useless to demand insight, imagination and bold action from "the Government," un-

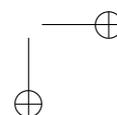
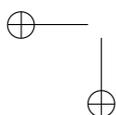


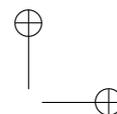
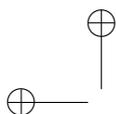


less we ourselves are sufficiently informed to understand the question and sufficiently enthusiastic to implement our leaders' action at whatever cost to our own interests. If we are unwilling to shoulder this kind of responsibility, we have no right to blame other democracies for a similar unwillingness. If we want wise and inspired policy, we must be wise and inspired ourselves; otherwise we had better cease to be a democracy and hand ourselves over, soul and body, to dictatorship.

3. The peace-terms themselves were perhaps not excessively harsh, though it is wicked, as well as irrelevant, to justify them by saying that if Germany had won the war they would have been even harsher. But one item was certainly unjust and psychologically disastrous, and that was the reparation clauses. Though these were quickly seen to be impracticable, and afterwards adjusted, the harm had been done. They were so framed as to inflict an almost limitless punishment upon generations unborn. The people who wildly shouted "Hang the Kaiser!" showed, in a crude way, the sounder psychological sense. *Any* revenge, however cruel and fantastic, so long as it could be quickly finished and forgotten, would have been better than the interminable prospect of hopeless and humiliating indebtedness. I think we should have escaped this dreadful error, had we not been so very much dominated by the bloodless abstraction of Economic Man.

4. The intention to humiliate the vanquished was further pointed by the imposition of one-sided disarmament and the exclusion of Germany from the League. True, rewards for good conduct were promised and in part bestowed; but the sense of humiliation remained. A hu-

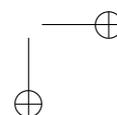
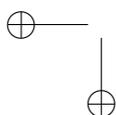


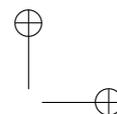
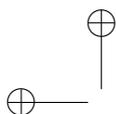


miliated enemy is always dangerous; and to humiliate anybody is not only a direct contravention of all Christian principle but a neglect of all political experience. It does not matter whether the action taken was just or unjust: to make an “absolute” of justice is a wrong against charity.

5. The territorial readjustments of the Peace-Treaty were planned, on the whole, with a sincere intention of doing justice and securing the welfare of the peoples concerned. Considering the complications of the problem, they were not ill-drawn. Unfortunately, though the Treaty provided for revision from time to time under the Covenant of the League, this was never seriously undertaken. For one thing, no nation was sufficiently disinterested to make *real* sacrifices for the common good. For another, we were permeated with the idea that peace was a static thing; that it could somehow be established for good and all by a stroke of the pen, and must not be disturbed. It is necessary to repeat over and over again that this can *never* be the case, and that any attempt to make it so can only lead to war.

6. It is interesting to observe that, in the greater number of cases, the redistribution of boundaries and sovereignty was settled upon a racial basis and by the statistical process of counting heads. This acceptance of the “dogma of race” has given Hitler a justification for his pan-German policy. The democratic countries found it difficult to protest against treaty-breaking so long as the offender was able to plead a principle to which they, at Versailles, had assigned an “absolute” value. That is why the people of this country felt strong scruples about taking up arms against Hitler, till his

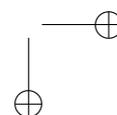
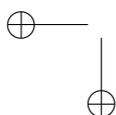


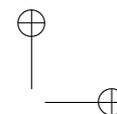
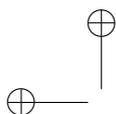


rape of Czecho-Slovakia had proved beyond doubt that he attached no real value to the principle. It would be profitable, I think, to consider whether, in any case, it was wise to assign absolute value to race, and how far other factors, such as geographical defences, economic interests, natural resources and common culture, have been taken in the past and ought to be taken in the future, as the basis for territorial delimitation. We must also ask ourselves whether the “will of the people” is infallibly expressed when we take numbers, and numbers only, into consideration; remembering that one of the principles of democratic freedom is the insistence upon the importance of minorities.

These things are not simple, and ought not to be thought so. Any demagogue can carry fools with him by over-simplifying the issues into a slogan. (It is a great part of Hitler’s influence that he sees all history grossly simplified, like a child’s picture-book full of “good” and “bad” figures in bright colours.) What is hard is to understand the complexity without getting lost in it; to pursue compromise with a burning zeal of enthusiasm; to be deeply stirred by the intricate drama of human affairs without insisting that it shall be spectacular. It is hard, but it has to be done.

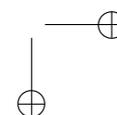
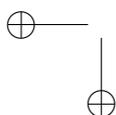
7. In the meantime we shall have to be careful how we put forward grandiose schemes for the postwar federation of Europe, or offer any other panacea of miraculous potency. Changes will undoubtedly come – perhaps very great changes; we may have to give up many things that we once imagined to be indispensable – national rights, economic privileges, personal comforts, and titles to vanity and idleness – and to give them up cheerfully

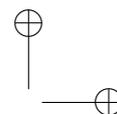
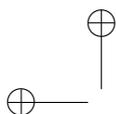




and without reservation. But do not let us intoxicate ourselves with colourful talk about “sweeping changes” – by which we usually mean some spectacular upheaval that will involve other people and not ourselves. When Labour, for example, talks about “sweeping changes,” it usually means doing away with capitalism and the private ownership of property, so as to put economic power into the hands of the workers; it does not mean doing away with the economic basis of life and putting the effective power into the hands of an aristocracy of learning – though that also would be a quite conceivable change and rather more “sweeping” than most. But it is part of the British democratic idea that changes should be made without more sweeping and spectacle than are absolutely necessary; and there is a good deal to be said for that particular conception of democracy.

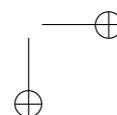
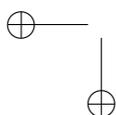
I think myself it was a mistake to have started the League of Nations on quite so magnificent a scale. I have before me now a special number of a French magazine, with illustrations of that pathetic Palace at Geneva, superb in wealth and splendour, with its spacious courts and corridors, its cedar-shaded park, its mural paintings and tapestries, its glitter of glass and metal; on the cover the artist, with deadly intuition, has adorned the foreground with a peacock, and I am reminded that “superbia” is the Latin for pride, and that the fall came even before the palace of pride was completed. Might not a few humble disciples in an upper room have perhaps built better for us, without all the apparatus of luxury hotels, huge secretarial staffs and blazing publicity? Open treaties are well enough; but can the most fruitful discussion of delicate and complicated problems

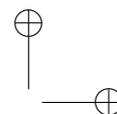
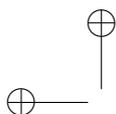




possibly be carried on before the eye of the camera and with lips close to the microphone, posturing to the criticism and applause of the ignorant in five continents? I do not know – it is one of those things one ought to think over. Of this, however, I am sure: that while it is possible to impose order by the use of power, and even by the threat of power, it is disastrous to try and keep order by threats without either power or the will to power. Every schoolmaster knows as much. Germany learnt that lesson from the failure of the League, and Russia has learnt it from Germany. If ever again we seek to make peace by threat of war, the threat must be a genuine threat, and there must be the armed power to back it. Otherwise, we must not threaten at all. The act of a single nation will bring more results than the words of fifty nations who will not act up to their words; for the absence of the will to act brings the words into contempt, even the most magnificent words in the world. Words are powerful, Heaven knows; but words without faith are powerful only for evil; they are, in the blackest meaning of the phrase, sheer magic; they may conjure the devil, but they will never call down God.

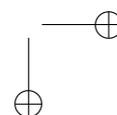
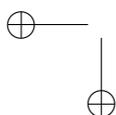
8. When we formulate plans for the reconstruction of Europe, we shall not be dealing with abstract symbols labelled “Britannia,” “Gallia,” “Germania” and so on, like the stout stone ladies on the fronts of public buildings; nor yet with “economic and social units,” nor with “classes,” nor with embodied “ideologies”; but with living men and women. In particular, we shall have to reckon with the German people; and we do not know at all what kind of men will be representing them in the event of an Allied victory. It can scarcely be Hitler

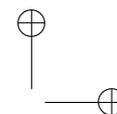
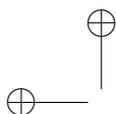




or any of his party, for since they have repudiated the principles that make treaties possible, it is not possible to treat with them. It may be the German Army, which has never greatly liked the Nazi régime; it may be a new republic, or a soviet, or even a restored monarchy; we can decide no details until we know. Whoever it is, the German people themselves will be men and women whose intellects have deteriorated badly under a government that has destroyed free criticism, persecuted arts and letters, and exploited the herd-mentality to the full. The younger generation at any rate will seem utterly alien to us, and abnormal to a pathological degree. We shall need infinite patience and sympathy if we are to make them understand our intentions at all, and we shall have to be very sure that those intentions are, in fact, unselfish and liberal, as well as just and firm, and that they are undertaken in a really constructive spirit.

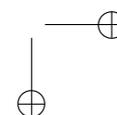
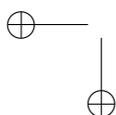
But we do not belong only to Europe; we belong to the British Empire. I say deliberately that we belong to it, and not it to us, because that is the truth to-day. How many people in this country – to say nothing of those outside – understand at all how frail are the formal links that unite the British Commonwealth of Nations, or that the Dominions are for all practical purposes separate Sovereign States, bound to us and to one another by nothing except mutual good will and common interest? The Dominions pay us no tribute, they need not favour us in respect of customs-duties, they need not accept our imports, they need not adopt our foreign policy and they need not assist us in war. The Statute of Westminster, which all are free to adopt, though all have not in fact done so, is a charter of absolute liberty,

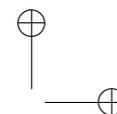
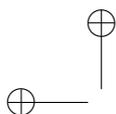




and its essential clauses could be written on a sheet of note-paper. No such astonishing experiment in free association has been made since the world began. It was prophesied in Germany before the war began that the British Empire would fall to pieces; it did not; it stood together – Canada, that might have remained in safe isolation under the protection of the U.S.A.; Australia and New Zealand, half the world away; South Africa, that forty years since was an alien nation and our bitter enemy, when the time came, were steadfastly bound together by a scrap of paper and the shadow of a crown.

All these states began their existence as British Colonies; all, at some period or other, have had wrongs and neglects to resent, any of them might have taken the opportunity to throw off the British yoke, if it had been still a yoke; but the time had come for them to be free and as free nations they made an unforced choice. They have inherited from us the civilisation that was ours: with all their strongly individual characteristics, their differing climates, their differing tongues, they are unmistakably of our tradition. We may have begun badly with them – we may have been merely commercial, harshly oppressive, stupidly unjust in the past; but we have had the grace to improve as we went along and have made those evil beginnings good. Before we accept too easily the opinion of those who would “hand over” British Colonies to this, that, or the other system of control, we may remind ourselves (without boast but also without undue self-depreciation) that the historical end of a British Colony is to become a self-governing state.

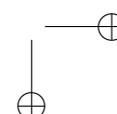
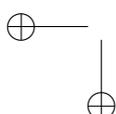


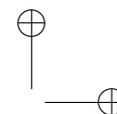
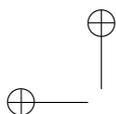


If the world will give us time, that will quite surely become the status of India; in that case, we shall see the most astonishing experiment of all: the Western-Mediterranean-Christian principles in the hands of a free Oriental people. This is going to be an extraordinarily delicate feat of mobile balance; and the critics who are shaking the conference-table in their hurry to get the thing going are being the reverse of helpful. Only the other day a correspondent in *The Times* complained that too much attention was being paid to the Moslem minority: this is the obsession of “head-counting” setting in again; the proper liberty of minorities is the especial care of democracy as we understand it. Truly, in spite of Pope Gregory, the English are not angels; we have committed many injustices and fallen into many errors, we have often been guilty of “rationalising” a selfish aim into a moral purpose; but there is this to be said for us: that having once credited ourselves with good intentions, we do our best to live up to our portrait of ourselves, and may end by bringing the reality into conformity with the picture.

Lastly; we are the people of Britain, and we must set Britain right if we are to maintain our principles before the world. Here are a few suggestions about what we might do at home: –

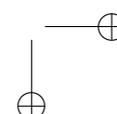
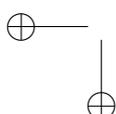
1. In war-time, a great deal has to be done, summarily and under special powers, by the Government, because there is no time to stop and argue every point. Criticism is bound to come afterwards, and is a healthy symptom, provided the criticism is constructive and not mere abuse of the persons in power. It is noticeable that some of the loudest complaints against red-tape and bureaucracy

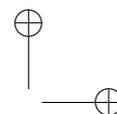
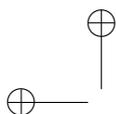




come from those persons and organs which have been foremost in advocating the nationalisation of various concerns that are at present in private hands. War conditions give us a glimpse of what the "Total State" is likely to be like. If we find we do not care about it, we must keep careful watch upon our parliamentary liberties, so as to be sure that they are restored to us when the pressure of war is relaxed. We must keep our members of parliament up to the mark, by seeing to it that they are made aware of our desires and opinions (having first reduced those desires and opinions to reasonable order and informed ourselves as well as possible of *all* the facts). We may also keep our constitutional sense in active condition by taking an interest in local government – a duty we are only too apt to neglect.

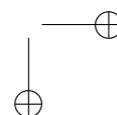
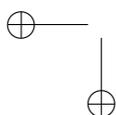
We must really try to be sensible about the balance between individual and government responsibility. For example: the Government evacuated at the public expense a great number of school-children from dangerous areas, and made such arrangements as it could think of to have them educated. A considerable number of people however, preferred to keep their children at home or have since taken them back. Those citizens, therefore, have assumed individual responsibility for exposing their children to death and mutilation by bombardment. But they have not assumed any responsibility for educating the children at home; they still think that is the business of the Government. Quite apart from defects in the evacuation scheme, and quite apart from the fact that the bombs have not yet fallen (though they may have done so by the time you read this) – do you think this is a reasonable or consistent attitude to adopt?

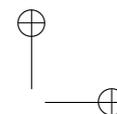
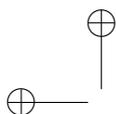




2. Evacuation has brought home to us the fact that a great many people in this country are ill-housed, ill-fed, ill-clothed, ill-behaved and verminous. Much hardship has been caused in the reception areas by the bringing of children of this type into better-ordered homes. Equally, some hardship has been caused to better-nurtured children by their being billeted in unsatisfactory homes. But it is a good thing that the comfortable should be made to understand, by having it literally “brought home” to them, what “bad conditions” really mean among the poor. We *must not* let this opportunity of awakening the conscience of the country be lost in a mist of grumbles about unimaginative billeting arrangements. If bad conditions are caused by bad housing and poverty, then we must seize the opportunity war affords to get the bad housing pulled down and the bad economics put right. Let us clear the slum areas, and not wait for the bombs to do it for us. Now that trade and business are controlled, we must insist that they shall be controlled to the advantage of common humanity.

3. War-time conditions are tending to decentralise business, and to spread the population from the towns into the country. Many people have been advocating this for years. Now is their opportunity to see it in working, and to see that it is made to work. (Incidentally, are you one of the people who have always said that modern life was too gad-about, too citified, too much addicted to the bright-lights, too set upon amusement, and that people ought to find happiness in their homes? If so, do you enjoy petrol restrictions and black-outs, and if not, why not?)

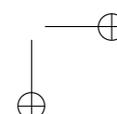
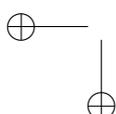


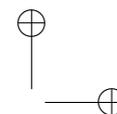
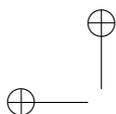


4. Building and public works are going to be held up for the duration of the war. Now is the moment for us to stop and think what is happening to the face of Britain. Ribbon-building, ramshackle bungalows, the waste of good arable for housing sites, unplanned rambling suburbs, revolting commercial vulgarities such as disfigure the Cheddar Gorge, reckless de-forestation, barbarous town-halls, gas-holders festooned with Victorian iron-work, shoddy speculative villas whose half-baked brick and unseasoned timber will scarcely abide the period of purchase – are we going to tolerate any more of this? If not, how are we to secure something better, you and I, and Tom and Dick and Harry? I will tell you a brief tale.

There is a certain old and beautiful town that recently took in hand to build a great Town-Hall. When the building was put up, everybody cried out that it was a hideous outrage, and blamed the Town Council. The Council replied: “Very well. But the designs for this building were displayed for many weeks in the old Town-Hall, and nobody protested then; scarcely anybody took so much as the trouble to come in and look at them.”

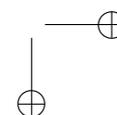
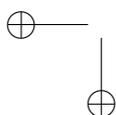
Possibly, if the people had come in and looked at them they would have been none the wiser. How many of us can read an architect’s plan, or visualise what a building will look like by studying the elevations? yet we can easily learn to do this, by spending a little time and imagination. If we want a more beautiful and seemly Britain, we might do worse, during black-out hours, than devote a little attention to making ourselves intelligent about domestic architecture.

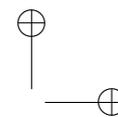
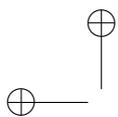




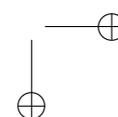
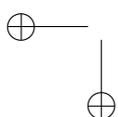
5. This brings us to the question of Education. There is a perpetual quarrel between those who want education to be increasingly “technical,” that is, addressed to fitting people for gainful employment, and those who want it to be along the lines of the “Humanities,” that is, addressed to forming citizens with more interesting personalities and more richly-endowed minds. The former school of thought is obsessed by Economic Man; the latter tends to overlook his existence; neither expresses the Whole Man. In those despised days of the theological state, all the knowledge there was (it was not very much) was conceived of as one thing; there was no hard-and-fast distinction between the artist and the craftsman, as any mediaeval cathedral will show you. Feeling, thought and deed; soul, mind and body, were all held to be integral parts of the same person. In the interval, our knowledge of the world and of ourselves has grown vastly more complex; it was probably necessary to take the whole structure to pieces for detailed examination. But I repeat that the time has come when we must put the Whole Man together again and so restore his full creative power.

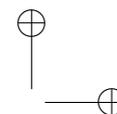
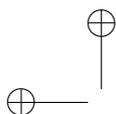
These things and many more are what we have to consider: you and I, Tom, Dick and Harry, in our enforced war-time leisure and retirement. We must think creatively as individuals, always remembering that we are not only individuals, but responsible to the church and state, nation and empire, continent and world of which we are living parts and which have no meaning without us. And we dare not wait too long. Change there will have to be, and if our civilisation will not change itself from within, it will be altered by force from without. If we really want a United States of Europe,





we must combine now by good-will or be compelled into a united state of tyranny. If we want our own state to make reforms, we must learn to control the state, lest the state end by controlling us. If we want some hard thinking done, we must think for ourselves, or others will do the thinking. There are only two ways to move the world: the way of the Gospel and the way of the Law, and if we will not have the one we must submit to the other. Somehow we have got to find the integrating principle for our lives, the creative power that sustains our balance in motion, and we have got to do it quickly. The great Theological State from which we sprang knew that it needed reform, was eager to reform itself, and did in the end reform itself – too late. Four centuries that might have been four centuries of union have been four centuries of increasingly violent conflict as every new Temporal Absolute sent the balance reeling from one disastrous excess to another. The task is urgent; we must not push it into the future; we must not leave it to others: we must do it ourselves, and we must begin now and here.





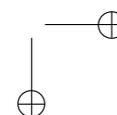
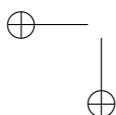
A NOTE ON CREATIVE READING

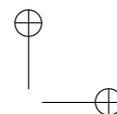
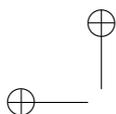
Reading being one of our principal occupations on long, dark evenings, I should like to explain what I mean by saying that it ought to be done creatively. (Here, by the way, I am on my own special ground, and shall take leave to speak with authority.)

Do not, I implore you, continue in that indolent and soul-destroying habit of picking up a book “to distract your mind” (“distract” is the word for it) or “to knock down time” (there is only too little time already, and it will knock us down soon enough). The only respectable reason for reading a book is that you want to know what is in it.

Do not choose your literature by the half-witted process of asking the young woman at the library for “a nice book” and enquiring anxiously of her, “Shall I like it?” Subscribe to a decently serious paper, read the reviews and order what you think will interest you. (Study the publishers’ lists too, by all means, bearing in mind that the “blurb” is written to sell the book and is therefore *not* an expression of free criticism. Do not be too much put off either; many a good book has a sickening blurb.)

If the book, when obtained, does not interest you, ask yourself why; and have the elementary politeness to give yourself a sensible answer. Does the subject displease you? – and if so, is it by any chance one of those disquieting things that you “would rather not know about,” though you really ought not to shirk it? Does the author’s opinion conflict with some cherished opinion of your own? – If so, can you give reasons for your own opinion? (Do try and avoid the criticism that begins: “We do not like to think” this, that or the other; it is often so painfully true that we do not like to think.) Or is it that the author is ignorant, illogical or superficial? (Are you sure? Have you taken the trouble to verify his references? Can you support your own view from your reading or experience?) Or is his style dull, obscure, or ugly? Does he write bad English? If you think so, justify yourself by examples and be sure you know why they are bad. (And don’t trust those horrid little manuals all about how to write correct English; they are nearly always wrong or hopelessly pedantic; consult the people who know real literature when they see it, like H. W. Fowler, Quiller-Couch or A.



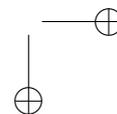
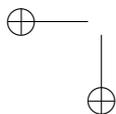


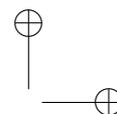
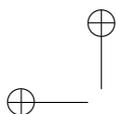
P. Herbert. Language is a *live* thing; you can't confine it in little primers.)

If, on the other hand, the book docs interest you, don't leave it at that. Go on and read other books bearing on the subject, and collect illuminating experience of your own; go out and *get* the experience. See whether, in view of what the books say, you can't and ought not to *do* something about it; make the books part of your life. And if the author's style appeals to you, do make a point of enjoying it. Get the feel of balance in a beautiful sentence, rejoice in the lovely appropriateness of the exact right word and thank your gods that the author had the wit and industry to choose that word, out of a whole dictionaryful of less adequate words, for the express purpose of pleasing you. Entertain yourself by finding other words yourself and discovering why they sound so feeble by comparison.

Pray get rid of the idea that books are each a separate thing, divided from one another and from life. Read each in the light of all the others, especially in the light of books of another kind. Try and see – this is the most fascinating exercise of all – whether a statement in one book may not be a statement of the same experience which another book expresses in quite different terms. (I tried to make a “synthesis” of this kind about biological man and the theological doctrine of the Fall.) Try the experiment of putting a statement of one kind into the terms of another. Try especially putting statements made in old-fashioned language into modern terms. You will often find that things you have taken all your life for incomprehensible dogmas turn out to be perfectly intelligible observations of truth. Take, for instance, those dark pronouncements in the Athanasian Creed that God is uncreate, incomprehensible and eternal, and re-state them like this: “The standard of Absolute Value is not limited by matter, not limited by space, not limited by time.” It may seem more acceptable that way. (The third chapter of this book is, by the way, an expansion of precisely that statement, more or less in those terms.)

Or if you read somewhere a reference to “Aristotle's three Dramatic Unities – unity of time, unity of place and unity of action,” do not (as some writers do who should know better) dismiss Aristotle as a tedious old classic of two thousand years ago who tried to tie up dramatic form in red-tape of his own manufacture. What he said was a statement of fact about the





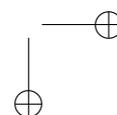
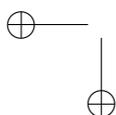
plays he had observed to be successful, and he meant exactly what your favourite dramatic critic means when he says: “The interest in this play is too much scattered, and confused with side-issues. There are far too many scenes, and the story drags on over a period of three generations, so that we have to be continually consulting the programme to know what year we have got to.”

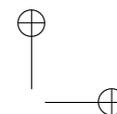
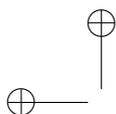
Which reminds me: please burn all your book-markers – even the pretty one Aunt Mabel sent you last Christmas (or at least put that one away and only bring it out when she comes to call). You cannot possibly be so bird-witted as to be unable to discover which page you got to by looking at it.

If the author mentions some other book in terms which make it seem important, whether he approves or refutes it, don't take his word for it: get the other book and read it, and judge for yourself. If he refers to something, or uses some word, which you don't understand, get a dictionary or work of reference and look it up. (Don't write and ask the author to explain; he is not required to be an Encyclopedia, and you will only give him a poor idea of your industry and intelligence.) Especially, examine the *sources* of what he writes; to read Mr. Somebody's critical valuation of Milton's prose or his examination of the economic effects of the Peace-Treaty is quite valueless if you have never read any Milton and do not know what the Peace-Treaty actually said.

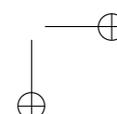
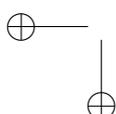
Discuss the books you read. If your husband or your wife is bored with your opinions (they very often are), persuade some friend to read the same books and talk them over. By discussion I mean discussion: not just saying, “Oh, I thought it was *frightfully* interesting, didn't you?” Nor do I mean exchanging gossip about the author's personality and private life and saying he must be a delightful (interesting, unpleasant, dangerous, irritating, fascinating, entertaining) person to know. (It is well to remember that the best of a writer's energies goes into his writing; he may not have much charm or virtue left over for private use. This does not invalidate his opinions; it merely means that he is liable to be disappointing when encountered in person.)

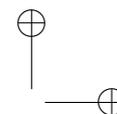
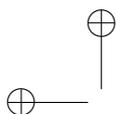
And do please realise that words are not just “talky-talk” – they are real and vital; they can change the face of the world. They are a form of action – “in the beginning was the Word . . . by Whom all things were made.” Even the spate of futile words that pours out from the ephemeral press and the commercial-fiction-mongers





has a real and terrible power; it can become a dope as dangerous as drugs or drink; it can rot the mind, sap the reason, send the will to sleep; it can pull down empires and set the neck of the people under the heel of tyranny. "For every idle word that ye speak ye shall render account at the day of judgment." I do not think that means that we shall have to pay a fine in a few million years' time for every occasion on which we said "dash it all" or indulged in a bit of harmless frivol; but I do think it was meant as an urgent warning against abusing or under-rating the power of words, and that the judgment is eternal – that is, it is here and now.





SOME BOOKS TO READ

Here are a few suggestions for “black-out” reading. They are all books by modern writers, that illuminate some of the questions we have been discussing. A number of them you have probably read; this is just in case you have missed them: –

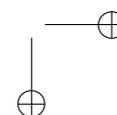
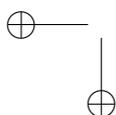
1. Four books about the disintegrated state of mind the world has got into: –

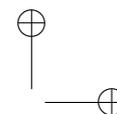
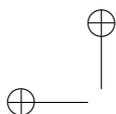
John Macmurray: *Freedom in the Modern World*. This is a series of broadcast talks given a few years ago, and, though written by a philosopher, is quite easy reading. The great point Professor Macmurray makes is that the chief part of our present trouble is caused by fear – the fear of life, and fear of one another.

Peter Drucker: *The End of Economic Man*. A rather difficult book, that needs and deserves to be read attentively – turn off the Wireless Announcer before getting down to it – but it is the most interesting and original book I have read recently. It deals with the failure of the economic state to provide man with a satisfactory and reasonable world to live in. Incidentally, it offers a really intelligible explanation of that very puzzling thing, the working of totalitarian economics.

J. B. Priestley: *Rain upon Godshill*. Mainly autobiographical; the passage that is important for our purpose is the long Chapter XII. In a very stimulating way, Mr. Priestley hauls this country over the coals for its failure to carry out the principles of democracy in its institutions, and for the lack of creative purpose shown by the nation and by individuals.

L. P. Jacks: *The Art of Living Together*. Originally published under the title “Constructive Citizenship.” The chapters on Skill, Labour, and Leisure should be written in letters of gold on the tables of the heart.





2. Four books about Germany: –

Stephen H. Roberts: *The House that Hitler Built*. This tells in considerable detail about Hitler's rise to power and the organisation of the Nazi state. It is interesting to read this and the next two books in conjunction with Drucker.

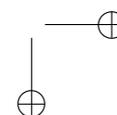
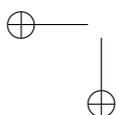
Hermann Rouschning: *Germany's Revolution of Destruction*. The story of Nazi Germany from the inside. The author was Hitler's "right-hand man" in Danzig until the Nazi régime reached a point beyond which he could not tolerate it, and he had to quit the country. It is a long book, rather diffusely written, but full of interest, and gives a terrifying picture of the purposeless "marching for marching's sake" of the over-organised Nazi nation.

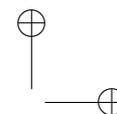
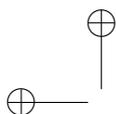
G. R. Halkett: *The Dear Monster*. Another book written from the inside (in spite of his English-sounding name, the writer is a South German by birth), but easier to read and more personal than the last. Halkett gives a very clear picture of the dreadful disintegration of mind and purpose in the Germany of the Weimar Republic, and shows how Hitler was able to take advantage of this to establish his "revolt into authority."

Erica Mann: *School for Barbarians*. A documented account, very simply and readably written, of what it actually means, especially for women and children, to live under a totalitarian régime. It shows how the "absolutism" of the state breaks up all family life, and how the whole of education is directed to war aims. The author is the daughter of Thomas Mann, the distinguished German novelist, who was driven into exile.

3. Two books which illustrate the difficulties of international understanding:

Berard Newman: *Danger Spots of Europe*. An excellent survey of the incredible complications of those territorial questions which *look* so easy when we view them from an armchair, or imagine they can be settled by "head-counting" and plebiscites. Written by a novelist for the ordinary reader, without tech-





nicalities or statistical tables, from observations made on the spot.

A. L. Mackenzie: *Propaganda Boom*. This book, written in a popular style, shows how the propaganda racket is worked by the totalitarian states; how powerful its influence has been; and how important it is that the democracies should not neglect this “fourth arm” of war.

4. A book about the Empire: –

Sir Arthur Willert, B. K. Long and H. V. Hodson: *The Empire in the World*. Rather a book for reference than for fireside reading; but if you want to realise just how lightly (as regards legal ties) the British Empire is held together, here are the facts.

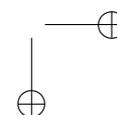
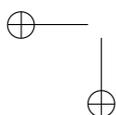
5. Two books about Science: –

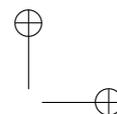
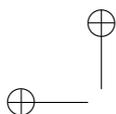
A. N. Whitehead: *Science and the Modern World*. The philosophy of science, by a scientist. This is really stiff reading and no mistake, but is well worth the effort. (It is done in a “Pelican,” so you might risk sixpence on having a good go at it.) A passage of particular interest to us is that in Chapter I which stresses the dependence of scientific method upon that primary act of faith which assumes the universe to be fundamentally rational.

John Macmurray: *The Boundaries of Science*. The philosophy of science, by a philosopher, showing just why science can never deal with ultimate purpose but only with method, and how, with the examination into psychology, it has reached “the limits of the field open to its survey.” Rather harder reading than *Freedom in the Modern World*, but not requiring technical knowledge, only resolute *thinking*.

6. Five books about the Christian view of things:

Essays edited by V. A. Demant: *Faith That Illuminates*. Do not be put off by the title, which suggests something pious and devotional. This is a very practical collection of essays by





both clerical and lay writers, dealing with various problems of to-day. Read particularly, "Religion and Leisure" by P. E. T. Widdrington, "Religion and Economics" by William G. Peck, and "Religion and Politics," by Maurice Reckitt.

V. A. Demant: *The Religious Prospect*. Written by the editor of the above. Rather tough going here and there, especially Chapter 5, but an extremely fine statement of the need for an "eternal absolute" and the disastrous results of investing any temporal principle with "total" authority.

Charles Williams: *He Came Down from Heaven*. A brilliant and exciting little book – though not for those who confuse the mystical with the obscure. I have added it to this list for its beautiful and imaginative treatment of the problem of the "knowledge of good and evil," and the resolution of evil into good.

Christopher Dawson: *Beyond Politics*. The above books are by Anglican writers; this is by a member of the Roman Communion. It defines with great clarity the Christian view of the right relations between Church and State, and the relation of History to the standards of Eternity.

A. D. Lindsay: *Pacifism as a Principle and Pacifism as a Dogma*. This pamphlet by the Master of Balliol clears up many difficulties for the man who instinctively distrusts the doctrine of "total peace," but does not see how to reconcile war with Christian principles.

